



Bloomin' good musical

My Fair Lady production proves popular

Cameron Evers
Reporter

Illiana's performance of "My Fair Lady," a musical based on the play "Pygmalion," took place on March 10, 11, and 12. The musical is based on the strange relationship between Eliza Doolittle, a poor flower girl, and Henry Higgins, an established professor teaching Eiza how to speak like a lady. All four shows had "a'bloomin'" turnout, with roughly 1,300 seats filled over the four-show run.

The show has been receiving a lot of positive feedback and Mary Lagerwey, a co-director of the musical, said, "Every year things come together, but it was particularly good this year and particularly difficult."

A large part of acting in "My Fair Lady" was being able to perfect talking and singing in an accent. Sophomore, Elliot Vandergriend, who played Henry Higgins,

said, "The accent was a trouble for the first couple of weeks, but it kind of just clicked eventually."

The settings were colorfully painted and the musical was accompanied by a live pit orchestra. Lagerwey said, "We are so privileged to have a live pit because there are so many high schools that don't have a pit or sets."

This was Vandergriend's first time being involved in Illiana's drama department and he said, "Everyone was super nice...and no one told me I was doing a bad job even if I was a beat behind."

Junior Audrey Yonkman, who played Eliza Doolittle, has been in multiple musicals, and she said working with the cast "is always fun" and "it's definitely an encouraging group."

Both Yonkman and Vandergriend encouraged students who are interested in joining the drama department to give it a try.

Vandergriend said, "Just do it. I didn't know my lines till two



Colonel Pickering (Hannah Sliekers), Eliza Doolittle (Audrey Yonkman), and Professor Higgins (Elliot Vandergriend) celebrate successfully teaching Doolittle how to speak like a lady.

weeks before the performance... managed." Along the same lines, Yonkman said, "Everyone has gone in to it thinking 'I don't know if I should,' but they all came out saying 'I'm so glad I did it.'"



Junior Grace Jania smiles while donating blood.

Students donate blood to save lives

Lucas VanderWoude
Reporter

Twenty-one students left some of their classes on Tuesday, March 15 in order to participate in the school Blood Drive run by Versiti. Students who wished to participate in the Blood Drive had to be over 16 years old. If they were 16, they had to give their parents a permission form to sign and then hand it in to Mrs. Kelly Aardsma, a Student Council sponsor.

The Student Council played a big part in prepar-

ing and running the event. "Student council had to advertise for the blood drive by hanging posters, talking to as many students as possible, and other things," said Aardsma. "On Tuesday morning they showed up at 7 am to set up for the blood drive, then volunteered during at least one of their class periods to register students and help Versiti with any needs they had. They also worked during 7th period, club, and after school to clean up."

Many students who were in a spring sport were

discouraged by their coaches from giving blood because it would affect their performance, but that didn't stop Elliot Vander Griend, a sophomore on the golf team. Vander Griend said, "I wasn't originally planning on giving blood, but Student Council members convinced me at lunch to do it," he said. "It didn't really affect my playing all that much. My arm hurt a little bit while I was swinging a club, but that's it. It's for a good cause, so if I had the chance I would do it again."

Looking to serve?

Here are a few opportunities to earn service hours before May 15



Danielle Rancifer
Reporter

As the end of the school year slowly approaches, so do the second, and last round of finals. Students searching for ways to complete the required ten service hours in order to receive the exam voucher, might consider the list of opportunities below. Remember, a voucher allows a student to skip the final exam of any class.

Here is a list of possible service hour actives for the upcoming months, confirmed by the service hour administrator Sarah Johnson:

- Sauk village mission trip during week of March 28-April 1. Talk to Miss Johnson for more info.
- Cedar Lake Ministries will be hosting a Spring Break Day Camp for students ages 7-12 during the week of March 28 - April 1. They are in need of 6-10 volunteers, ages 16-18, who are willing to be with a group of campers each day that week. If interested, please contact Brooke Nofer at program.director@cedarlakeministries.org or at 219-374-5941.
- Our Daily Bread Food Pantry at Emmanuel CRC in Sauk Village is open every Saturday from 9 - noon. They are always in need of volunteers to greet the clients and load groceries into cars. If you want more information on this opportunity, see Miss Johnson or reach out to Gary Dykstra at outreach@emmanuelcrc.com.
- Community Church in Roselawn needs students' help filling eggs for their Easter outreach event again this year. Think about joining them on Thursday, April 7 at 3:00 in Mr. Sylvester's room to fill some Easter Eggs for service hours. Contact Julie Sylvester julie@communitychurchroselawn.com

More opportunities may become available as the year progresses.

Do you pursue happiness or let it come to you?

During one morning break this school year, a very interesting question came up: What is the secret of happiness? Happiness, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, is “the feeling or showing of pleasure or contentment.” Of course, many answers came up: finding the bright side to any situation, being loved and loving life, being comfortable and in tune with yourself, living for Jesus (obviously).



Hailey Ross
Arts Editor

But our discussion did make me genuinely wonder, what is the true meaning of happiness,

and am I truly happy? After thinking of a genuine answer to this question this is what I came up with. There are many different factors that play into happiness, and here are the ones I think about constantly.

According to Forbes.com, the 75-year-long longitudinal studies led by George Vaillant and Sheldon Glueck, happiness is love or “good relationships [that] keep us happier and healthier.” Whether people are social extroverts or introverts doesn’t matter. Human interaction is something we need. Be it a large group of friends or two or three people, we need to have people to talk with and to lean on.

Others argue that happiness comes to us naturally if we just get out of our own way. Robert Puff, Ph.D., writes in “Meditation for Modern Life” on psychologytoday.com that happiness is our natural state, as long as we let go of certain “conditions” for happiness. He says that these expectations (conditions) come in two forms: fears and desires. We may desire to one day fall in love, become rich, or move to a different country. Desires take on so many forms. In order to let true happiness into our lives, we must acknowledge that these desires prevent us from being happy because they attach conditions to our happiness. We think to ourselves, “I won’t be happy until this condition in my life is met.” However, happiness doesn’t work this way. In order to be truly happy, you can’t desire anything; you must flow with life and accept what is and love what is. This practice is something that I think I need to remind myself of more. Rather than setting expectations for happiness, I need to be at peace and go with the flow and ride the waves of life.

Still, some might protest, this acceptance is not happiness; it is just a form of settling, and leaves the question, can I ever be happy? A troubling if unsurprising survey conducted by the NORC at the University of Chicago, an academic group that does research and analysis of human experience. Insidehook.com reports that NORC published in late May that record numbers of Americans currently consider themselves, “Not too happy,” which itself feels like a bit of an understatement given the current state of literally everything. According to the study, the data represents a five-decade happiness low in America, and it reveals an all-time low in Americans who feel “very happy,” (just 14-percent), coupled with an all-time high in Americans who say they are “not too happy at all” (23-percent).

I think I’ll stick with Robert Puff’s notion that happiness is our natural state.

The secret of happiness is no real easy thing to find but there are little tips to remember to understand it a little better

After four years at new campus, school still searches for way for seniors to leave their mark

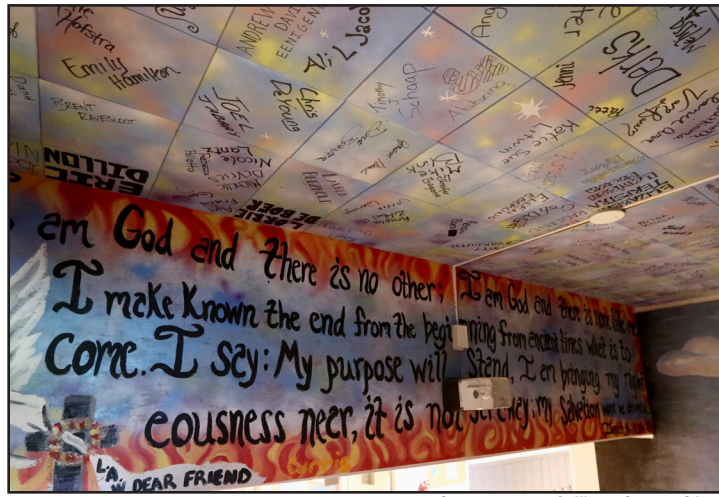


Photo courtesy of Illiana photo archives
The old campus stairwell ceiling was decorated by students after they ran out of room on the wall.

Cameron Evers
Reporter

Throughout Illiana’s history in Lansing Illinois, there was a tradition of senior classes getting the opportunity to paint a mural in remembrance of their class. When the school moved into a brand-new building in Dyer Indiana, this tradition did not follow along.

Jim Kamphuis, the art teacher of Illiana Christian, used to have a hands-

on role with the murals. He said, “I always liked the tradition...when senior classes had a good concept” and that the old building had really good spaces for the project such as “above the lockers, in stairwells, and in the media center.”

Peter Boonstra, the principal of Illiana Christian, said, “The tradition was wonderful for the old school. The old school lacked decor and the murals made up for that. However, I am not so excited for replication of the

murals in the new building.” Kamphuis said his concerns for continuing this project in the new building is that it is a smaller space and in years past, students would have to “paint over other murals which would remove someone else’s legacy” which could be a concern more frequently with a smaller building.

Boonstra also said he is “all in favor of coming up with some other way to commemorate the senior classes” but he wants the

new tradition to “capture something about the senior class” and have a bigger meaning.

In past years, some classes made banners or used the laser cutter instead of painting a mural. Kamphuis mentioned the idea of painting drop ceiling tiles or maybe painting individual cinder blocks as a different way to leave a legacy. Boonstra said he was willing to accept new ideas to begin a new tradition in the new building.

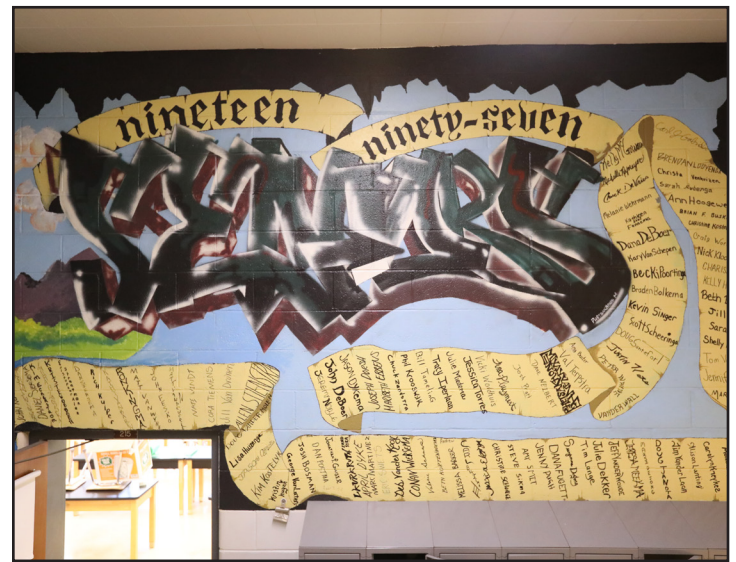


Photo courtesy of Illiana photo archives
Illiana’s class of 1997 left their mark on the old campus walls.

Search for full-time science teachers for next year continues

Lucas VanderWoude
Reporter

Next school year, Illiana will be saying goodbye to its current Integrated Chemistry and Physics (ICP) teachers, Mrs. Kara Terpstra and Mrs. Jen Smith, and Mrs. Jill Rozendal has agreed to fill in as a new, part-time ICP teacher.

Terpstra and Smith both had a one-year deal with

Illiana to teach ICP, so Illiana posted an advertisement on Christian Schools International to look for a new teacher, but so far, the advertisement has stirred little interest from potential candidates.

“Science teachers have always been very hard to find, and I am finding that there are very few teachers of any field,” said Principal Peter Boonstra. “We were not able to find a full-

time science teacher last year and I do not yet have any this year.”

The school administration is very grateful to Terpstra and Smith for teaching ICP this year. “Mrs. Terpstra and Mrs. Smith did Illiana a huge favor by filling our uncovered classes this year as a one-year deal,” said Mr. Brian Sylvester, the head of the Illiana Science Department. “That year is nearly up and they

both have other obligations to attend to.”

Boonstra is confident that they will find a full time ICP teacher sometime in the future. “Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Terpstra have both done a terrific job this year of stepping up to meet the school’s needs...,” Boonstra said. “We’ll need to meet that need differently next year, and I am hopeful that the Lord will provide as we continue to

P.I.E. Spring Supper raises over \$57,000

Citlali Sanchez
Reporter

This year’s P.I.E. Spring Supper did not take place during Fine Arts week but was on March 18 instead.

Parents involved in Education (P.I.E.) raises funds for the Excellence in Education program, and the Spring Supper is one of the group’s chief fundraisers. P.I.E. is administered by a board of parents. Through the efforts of many volunteers, P.I.E. makes significant financial contributions each year to fund classroom purchases not

covered by tuition. This year, the P.I.E. Board was able to donate over \$57,000 for items such as the Close-Up Program, a 3-D printer, music stands, propane grills, folding chairs, math and filtering software, a mini PCR thermocycler as well as Photography, PE and Consumer/Family Science equipment.

This year, the P.I.E. Board continued its fresh look for the Spring Supper and offered a delicious meal for pick-up or delivery. They featured 10” Rosati’s Take ‘N Bake Deep Dish Pizza, Salad, and Rise’n Roll Bakery Apple Pie.

“We [the board] decided to have the supper be done the same way & day as last year

because it had worked out well last year,” said P.I.E. President Melissa Vis.



Photo courtesy of Illiana’s Facebook page
Colin DeVries and Kristin Bribiesca pose while packing the meals.

Some say SAT ‘effective in determining abilities of students’

Danielle Rancifer
Reporter

This past February, the class of 2023 took the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) during school hours as part of the state of Indiana’s new regulations measuring school success. The test scores can also help meet certain requirements for graduation for students who

score well enough. This test is the same nationwide test taken by juniors and some seniors across the country; it often helps determine college acceptance and scholarships. In a new wrinkle, the students who took the test took it on their Chromebooks rather than on paper. Junior Fritz Olthof said, “I would think [the test is] pretty effective in

determining the abilities of students, and I think I did okay. I wasn’t sure about the change of taking it on the computer at first but after taking it, I think it was a good decision. The experience as a whole was fine, but it’s a four-hour test. It’s not very fun. Illiana Counselor Neil Zandstra, shared his opinions on the SAT, and its

effectiveness. He said, “No test is perfect but I think that the SAT is a fairly good way to assess a student’s knowledge. Colleges need a way to compare students from across the country coming from vastly different high schools so the SAT is a way for them to evaluate...” Zandstra also spoke to the recent changes made to the SAT, and what effect

they had on students. “I like that the SAT is [now] given on a Wednesday for free to every junior in Indiana. Students can assess from their score on this one if they should take it again and it gives them valuable testing experience. The students gave me mixed reviews about the SAT being on their chrome books vs paper/pencil tests.”

DeYoung earns first place in statewide contest Letters about Literature, eight other students finish in top 24

Kyla Bennett
Reporter

Senior Lorelee DeYoung, a student in Advanced English with Mr. DeVries, has captured first place in the Indiana State Library Letters about Literature contest. Each entrant wrote a letter to the author of a book that has changed or impacted their life. Run by the Indiana State Library, this statewide contest was held in fall and winners were just announced in mid-March. Lorelee was not the only Illiana student to do well

in the contest. Of the 24 top letters in the state, 8 of them were from Illiana students; Jessica Bergfors, Emma DeBoer, Christine DeYoung, Grace Goodfellow, Olivia Oostema, Oliver Postma, and Hannah Sliemers all joined DeYoung on the winners’ podium. Over 1,000 people entered the contest. Oliver Postma and Christine DeYoung both placed 5th place, finishing just behind Lorelee DeYoung who won first writing to Markus Zusak, the author of the book The Book Thief. DeYoung suffered a hard loss in middle school

when her great aunt died. “Intellectually, I knew there were others going through the same feelings but it was hard talking about it”. DeYoung’s 7th grade friend recommended The Book Thief to her, and DeYoung found that the book helped her process the death of her great aunt. Her letter shared that experience with Zusak. “I connected with this book on a different level,” said DeYoung. Teacher Mr. Jeff DeVries explained that he asked students to enter the contest as a reminder of why we read. He said, “We do a lot of analytical work in class all year. This contest lets my students step back and remember why we do it. Writing these letters reminds us of how important books can be in our lives.” DeYoung wasn’t expecting to win. Friday, March 11, DeVries told her that he needed to speak with her after class. Once class was over, DeVries showed her the email that revealed that she was the winner of



Lorelee DeYoung wrote to the author of The Book Thief. Photo by Jeff DeVries
the Letters about Literature contest. “I was extremely surprised,” said DeYoung. “I’m very proud of Lorelee,” said DeVries. “I’m proud of all of the students. Illiana students made a remarkable showing in the contest.”

Mission trippers serve at Pulled Pork Dinner to raise funds for trips



Maria Perez, a chaperone for the LA mission trip, helps serve food to hungry people. Courtesy of ICHS Facebook

Kyla Bennett
Reporter

Illiana Christian has raised money to go and serve on mission trips during Spring break. This year Illiana chose to raise money by holding a pulled pork fundraiser dinner. Sponsored by Miss Johnson, the Missions Director at Illiana, the pulled pork dinner was held on Saturday, March 12. Some of the food was provided by Illiana alumni, Illiana farms, and staff members. “The food was delicious,” said Johnson. Having the pulled pork dinner event was a great way to come together and build community. Students going on mission trips worked the dinner with their families, allowing the families who plan to serve on the mission trips were able to meet each other and see who was on



Students, parents, and families grab food between the matinee and night performances of My Fair Lady. their team. This fundraiser raised money for the West Virginia trip, Los Angeles trip, and Sauk Village trip held for seven days from March 26 to April 2. “I hope to bless the students I’m with and get to know them better”, said Mrs. Schaaf, a staff member at Illiana and chaperone for the West Virginia trip. On this one-week trip, the volunteers will be without electricity and water for two days. They are doing this because they will be serving families in the mountains who live like this on a regular basis.

PETS OF ICHS

Nicole

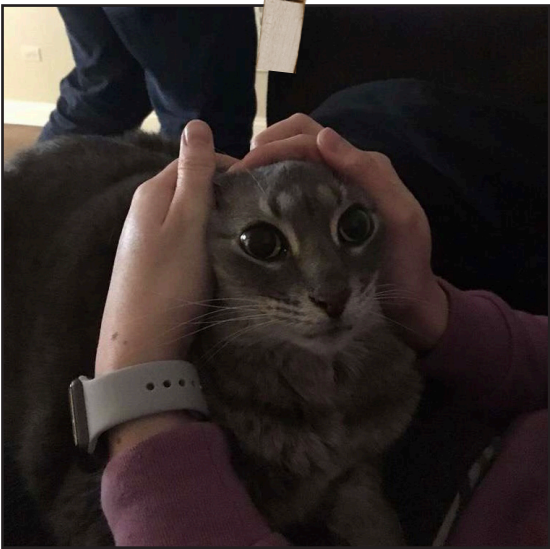


Photo courtesy of Amanda Kooyenga

Owner: Senior Amanda Kooyenga
Gender/Breed: Female Dragon Licat **Age:** 13 years old
Favorite activity: “When she goes outside with us in the summer and we will just walk around”
Favorite memory: “When she was a baby and wore a little bell around her collar, so we’d know where she was.”
Quirky Fact: “If she hears a bowl or a spoon, or anything like that, she will run in the room meowing, thinking it’s ice cream, even if it’s not.”

Benjamin



Photo courtesy of Jessica Bergfors

Owner: Science teacher, Kevin Haan
Gender/Breed: Male Florida king snake
Age: Haan has had him for 2-3 years
Favorite activity: “Feeding him and watching him devour his food”, said senior Correy Williams.
Favorite memory: Correy Williams said, “when he crawls up people’s sleeves and stays in there”.
Quirky Fact: He has only escaped once, and his homeroom students call him “Mr. Wiggles.”

Rhino



Photo courtesy of Grace Foster

Owner: Senior Grace Foster
Gender/Breed: Male Bearded Dragon **Age:** 6 months
Favorite activity: Letting him walk around and explore areas other than his tank
Favorite memory: “When I bought him home and how tiny he looked in his big tank”
Quirky Fact: “We will show him videos of bearded dragons and he will sit there and watch, which is very strange of him to stay in one place when he is out of his tank.”

Akito

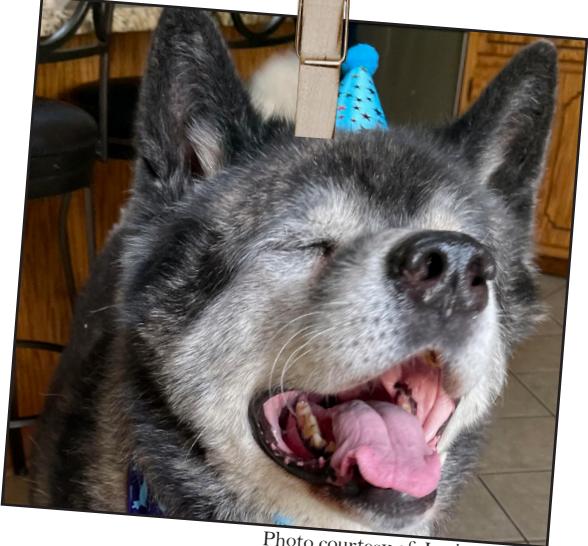


Photo courtesy of Jessica Bailes

Owner: Senior Jessica Bailes
Gender/Breed: Male Japanese Akita **Age:** 9 years
Favorite activity: Going on walks, going to Starbucks, and napping together
Favorite memory: “When he ate my parents wall and the corner of the wall in our kitchen.”
Quirky Fact: He doesn’t like to eat spinach or jelly and he sheds a lot

Clyde

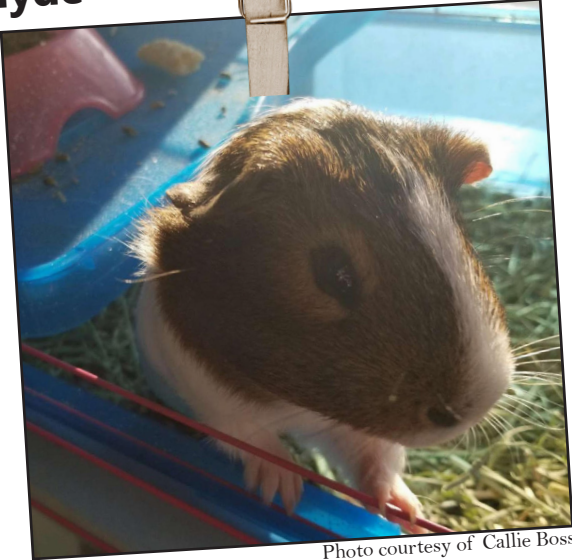


Photo courtesy of Callie Boss

Owner: Senior Callie Boss
Gender/Breed: Male Guinea pig **Age:** 8 months
Favorite activity: Letting him climb all over her
Favorite memory: “Everytime I walk into my room and he starts chirping. He will meet me at the door of his cage as a way to greet me.”
Quirky fact: “I chose to get him because I work at a pet store, and I fell in love with them. My friend was giving hers away, so I gladly took it.”

Seth Neumeyer’s baking skills rise

Aubrey Porter
Feature Editor

You’ll see him watching baking YouTube videos during his free time after finishing a test. You’ll hear him talk about how he just can’t wait to make a souffle this weekend. He is senior Seth Neumeyer. Alongside his other hobbies that consist of playing his violin, listening to music, and reading, Seth also has grown a love for baking. Through memories from his youth, the hobby has come to him through hard work and experience.

One particular memory that formed his love for baking is from when he was seven years old. Seth asked his dad, who baked pies frequently, if he could bake pie with him. The pie Seth chose was lemon meringue, a very difficult recipe. Whipping the meringue just right, keeping it solidified, at the right temperature, keeping it from weeping, and maintaining the texture are just a few factors that need to be observed while making it. Despite the obstacles it might involve, Seth’s dad agreed, and they

went on to make the pie together. Seth noted that he messed up a lot, almost every step he helped with. However, he did not get discouraged after the failure. Throughout that same year, he made 10 more

of the same pies, and finally, perfected the recipe.

Another instance that steered him towards this hobby happened when Seth was around nine. He would help his grandma at their Christmas parties, and since hundreds of people were there, he was all over the place. From stirring mashed potatoes to cooking a goose, working with his grandma taught him to multitask and handle high-intensity situations, both of which help him now when he works in the kitchen.

Today, Seth is a cultured, well-rounded, seasoned baker. From making a banana foster creme brulee, to fixing apple strudel



(both pictured.)

he is always willing to try new things and experiment with the art of baking. Some of Seth’s favorite things to make are bread, pies, and French pastries.

“For the future I hope to bake even more, memorize recipes, and perfect them,” Seth said. “I also hope to bake and cook for other people besides my family, whether it’s starting a small business or simply giving food away.”

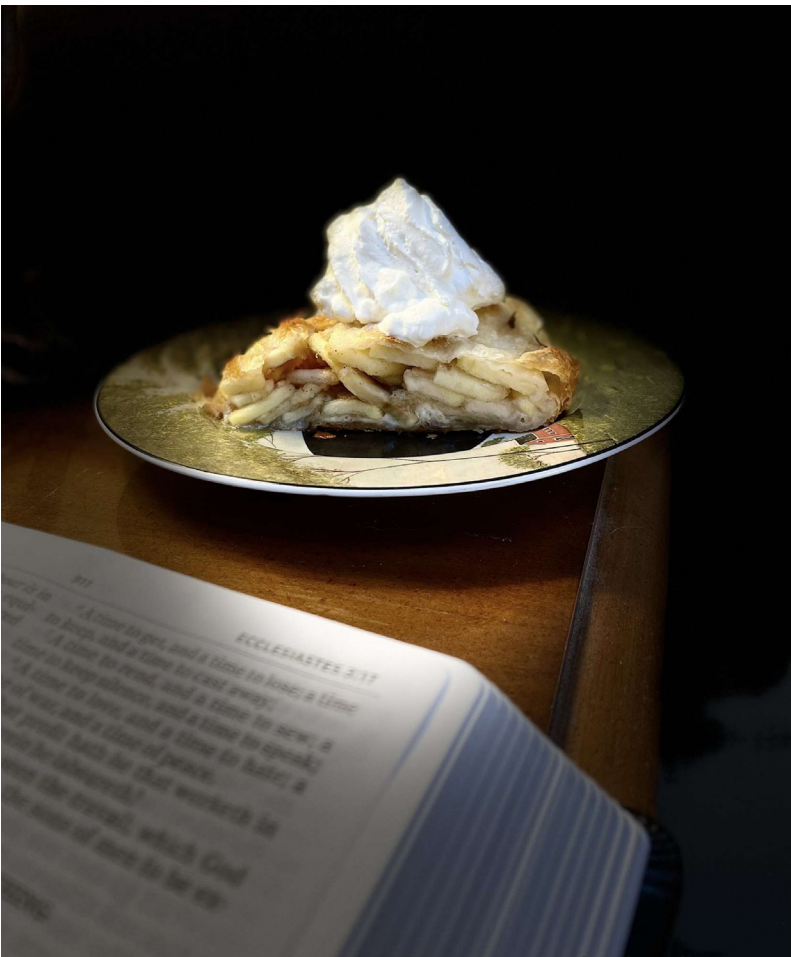


Photo by Seth Neumeyer

Apple strudel and bananas foster crème brûlée are two desserts in Neumeyer’s repertoire.



Camille painting “Lillypads”



Photo by Hailey Ross

Untitled (left) Leaves (right)



Photo by Hailey Ross

Death by the Shore

Camille VanLaten, young artist on rise

Hailey Ross
Arts Editor

Everyday during fourth period you can find senior Camille Van Laten in the art room where she first sets down her stuff, pops in her ear buds, gets her materials, and then gets down to work, expressing her creativity.

Though an accomplished artist, her senior year brought the first

exposure to any art classes at Illiana. VanLaten has taken a semester-long drawing and painting class and a ceramics class, and this semester she is taking another ceramics class and studio art.

Dedicated to her artwork, VanLaten will frequently stay till five to work. VanLaten said, “I do it because it is relaxing and I want to continue where I left off.”

“Camille is very dedicated,” said

Bella VanderWoude, a fellow senior art student.

“I fell in love with art again [this year],” said VanLaten, who in studio art has considerable choice in what she wants to pursue. “I have a lot more freedom to do what I want.”

VanLaten works with media such as painting, drawing, ceramics, printmaking, and watercolor, but her favorite media is graphite. “I love working with Graphite because it is

something that I don’t get to work with besides pencils, so when I do get the chance, it’s pretty cool.”

“Most of the things that I do in here I’m very proud of,” added VanLaten, though she admits that occasionally different forms give her trouble. Realistic portraiture is one area she’s found challenging. “There are some things I’ve never done before, and there is always a learning curve.”

That learning curve frightened her at the start of the academic year. She said, “I was really scared because I didn’t take Introduction to Art,” but art teacher Jim Kamphuis helped reassure her. “Kamphis cares a lot and helps calm my fears.”

Spending so much time tapping into her creative side has been enjoyable, and she recommends it to others. She said, “Just have fun with it; it’s a fun experience, and I enjoy it.”

Behind the scenes of the Athletic's Department

Jessica Bergfors

Sports Editor

In the athletic wing of Illiana, Darren DeBoer and Bonnie Trepton do more than just schedule and host games. The two work together to manage fundraisers, schedule sports seasons, hire referees for games, and much more. Trepton is in her second year of working for the athletic department, and DeBoer took on this job nearly 7 years ago. The two have a great working relationship together, Trepton said.

Flooded with emails from people as varied as students, parents, and coaches, the two are behind their computers most days. They talk together about what the day will look like. Any games to host? Do they have any meetings? What are they working on? From there, they get busy working on the tasks. Things may come up during the day like rescheduling a game, talking to a student athlete, or confirming the game officials for a home event. Trepton schedules several sports, including boys volleyball, boys and girls tennis, track and field, cross country, and boys golf, as well as staffing all the workers for the home sporting events.

"There's some big tasks and



Photo by Jeffrey DeVries

Bonnie Trepton works hard to complete her daily tasks for the Athletic's Department.

then a million smaller responsibilities to make sure teams are in a position to have successful seasons. We build schedules for each team, staff every home game, hire coaches, run three major fundraisers, oversee athletics facilities projects, and set vi-

sions for athletic programs," DeBoer said. The three major fundraisers the two plan each year are the golf outing in September, the auction in November, and the 5k Pancake Pacer in April. DeBoer continued to say that they are responsible for athletic facil-

ities as well, like making sure equipment is stored properly or preparing gyms/fields for games or practices. When it comes to creating an event or game, the Athletic Department looks for schools that will give the best competition for that sports team.

Basketball gives their final thoughts from the season

Grace Jania

News Editor

After their last game of the season against Andean, the varsity basketball players finished with an overall record of 21 wins to 3 losses. The team's coaches and seniors shared their season takeaways below.

Coach Tom Roozeboom:

Coach Roozeboom listed his highlights of the season, including: their 20 game win streak, being Boone Grove/Hebron Christmas Tourney Champions, their 43

points/game defensive average, the wins over Timothy and Chicago Christian, and "watching the growth in maturity and character of the individual players throughout the season."

He wrote that next year he is looking forward to "building off the momentum set by this year's team, mixing in new players with veteran players, defending [the team's] conference championship, and growing together as a team."

"The coaches are very proud of these outstanding, hard-working young men," Roozeboom said.

"They are phenomenal role models and should be proud of the way they played and acted this year."

Assistant Coach Erinn Behn:

Coach Behn remarked that her season highlights were "winning Conference (8-0 record), winning 20 games in a row, and winning the Red and Blue Christmas Tournament."

"I am looking forward to building on what we accomplished this year. It was so exciting to win the Conference Title the first year we were in it, but we know there's so

much more we are capable of doing. Winning a Sectional Title and beyond is definitely on our list of things we want to accomplish moving forward."

"Despite a disappointing Sectional loss to Andean, the boys had an incredible, record-breaking season," she said. "It was so fun to be a part of it."

Adam Gibson:

"[The season] ended sooner than we wanted. We could still be playing right now if given another chance, easily."

"As for the season, it's sad it's ending and I'm glad we flipped the script on a lot of games this year, like Timothy, Chicago Christian, and Homecoming; I'm sure it's been a while since an Illiana team won all three of those games in tough environments, home or away. We also won our winter tournament for the second year in a row."

"It was a year Illiana basketball needed to say, 'Hey Illiana, basketball is in Indiana now.'"

Adam Walters:

"I think some of the biggest highlights during the season would be our second win—oddly enough, it jump started us into a winning streak where we were just on fire all around. Others would be winning the winter tournament... and winning conference and going undefeated in the conference; that's something extremely difficult to do especially with the competitive teams in our conference."

"A closing thought would just be that I had a blast this sea-

son with my guys. This was the best basketball season I've had for sure, and there's no other team I would've liked to end my senior season with."

Tyler Barker:

"The highlight of the season was the team chemistry we had. Whether we were practicing or hanging out before games, we always had a good time. I couldn't have asked for a better senior season and teams."

Ian VanBeek:

"This season was great, and we had a great group of guys. Playing basketball since 6th grade has been very fun, but I haven't had a season like this one. There were great memories this season, whether it was on the court or off the court. Before every game we went to someone's house and either watched YouTube or played video games."

"One of the best memories this year on the court was the game winner against Calumet New Tech. Even though it shouldn't have counted, but hey—it was great."

"I am going to miss this sport very much, especially knowing I won't be playing competitively in this sport anymore."

Colin DeVries:

"I enjoyed the close games that we had. This team had strength and a "never give up" attitude. These guys worked hard till the last second of each game, and that attitude led to our team being great and successful."

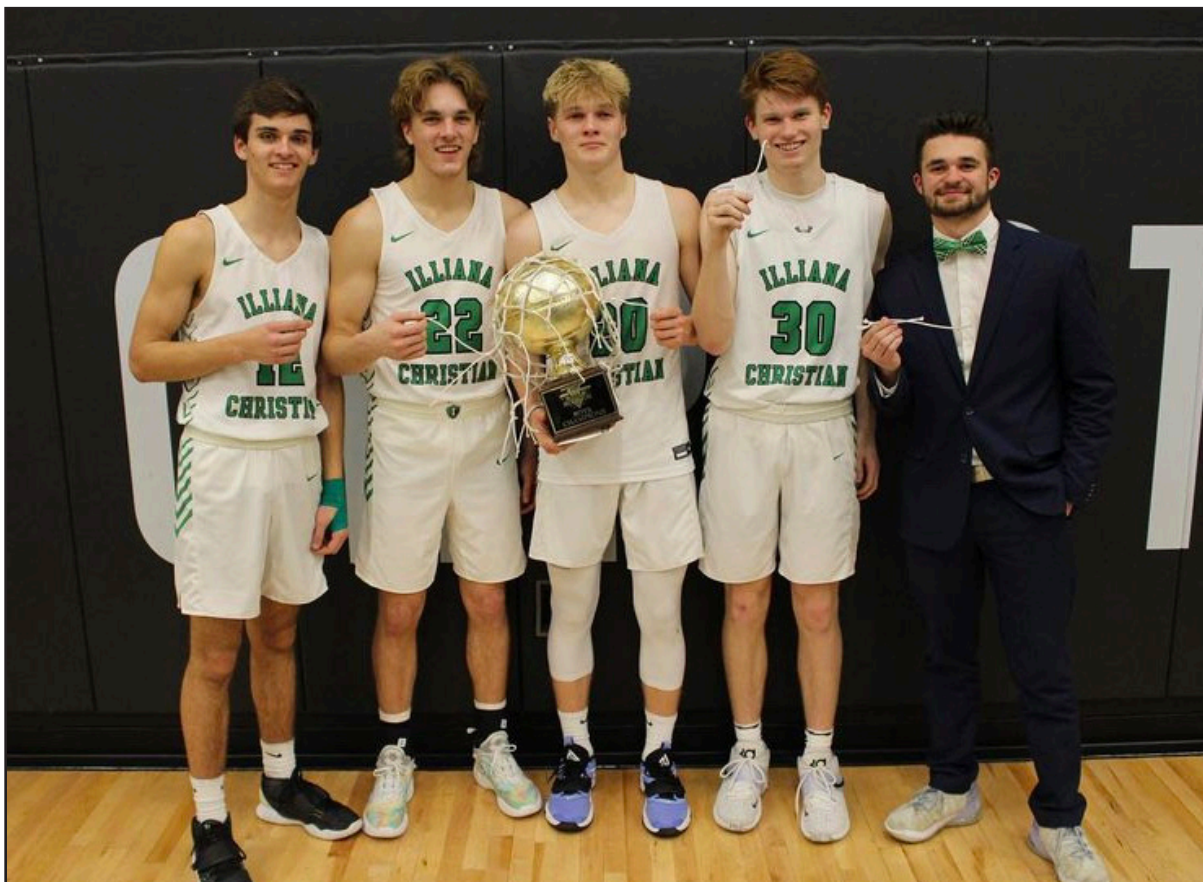


Photo courtesy of Instagram.com

The seniors pose together with the Traveling Conference Champion trophy after playing Hanover Central.



Viking sports briefs



Track begins season of building, athletes continue to better their scores

Olivia Oostema

Editor-in-Chief

Illiana's track team has begun this season in a spirit of building. During meets on March 5 and 12, students focused on individual performance over team performance. New athletes got their first times of the season, and numerous returning athletes got personal bests over their time from the same meet last year. Coach Deb Top said it was exciting to see the athletes start off even stronger than she expected. Sophomore Audra Davids jumped a long jump of 15' 8" which was "by far her best ever long jump," said Top. Freshman Nolee Van-Drunen tied her personal best high jump of 4' 8". Girls in the 4x8 relay also did outstanding, she said. Top said that these accomplishments were especially impressive as the team hasn't practiced much due to the weather. Coach Luke Fennema said there's a really good group of people on the team, and he thinks some may even qualify for state. At the first meet, the 4x8 boys

got third out of all the schools. At the second meet, the boys got fifth overall in the distance medley relay. Specifically, Jacob Rule did well in the pole vault competition and, said Fennema, "shows promise for more things to come." Fennema said that the theme of the season is "reflecting Christ's love, grit, and purpose." He wants to make sure the team grows spiritually as "brothers and sisters in Christ who support, respect, and build each other up." Coach Top said that there are many freshmen and sophomores on the team, and upperclassmen help out at meets, go through routines with younger athletes, and just have fun getting to know underclassmen on bus rides to and from meets. "Track is a really fun place to find your group," said sophomore Nora Filler. "There are so many different kinds of people, and there's a spot for everyone on the team." Top said the coaches need more "guy long jumpers and high jumpers." She added with a laugh, "Freshman boys, please listen."



Part of the track team poses for a photo after their meet as they watch their teammates. Photo courtesy of Luke Fennema



Senior Will Gibson prepares to spike the ball against their opponent. Photo courtesy of Adam Clark

Volleyball pushes on, despite missing players for first tournament

Aubrey Porter

Feature Editor

The Illiana Boys Volleyball team has started the season off so far with a record of 1-4. They opened the season by playing in a tournament with 5 of their players missing while also opposing some well seasoned teams and it was a rough day, Coach Adam Clark noted. However, despite the obstacles, he looked at it as a way to get the younger players on the team some playing experience.

Their most recent match against Homewood-Flossmoor High School on Monday, March 15, 2022 was their first win thus far. "It was nice to have our full team, and they played really well," Clark said. Team chemistry is a huge part of this years' team, said both by older and younger players. Sophomore Gise Gibson notes that the conditioning over the summer really helped them bond as a team before their season even started. A couple of things Gise enjoys about playing the sport is the

intensity that comes with the close matches against the bigger schools that they now get to play as a part of the conference. Senior Colin DeVries said that he can't wait to grow with the team this year. They are off to a great start, practicing extremely well together, which has really begun to show in their gameplay, DeVries said. "This team works hard in practice and stays on task, and strives to improve each day," DeVries said. "I think with that attitude we can go far and catch a lot of wins."

Male Athlete of the Month

Senior Brady Vroom is in his fourth year of track & field at Illiana. Vroom is a middle/long distance runner and runs from 400m to 3200m. He has had great success throughout his previous years. Vroom has worked hard off-season to help prepare himself for this year's season. Coach Luke Fennema said that Vroom is respectful to all his teammates and is also a strong leader who does the little things right every time.



Female Athlete of the Month

Junior Alex Vis returns for her 3rd year on the track and field team. She is a middle/long distance runner who runs from 400m to 3200m. Coming off of an injury at the end of the cross country season, Vis worked hard during off-season in rehab to come back with a bang for the start of the track season. She has also led the girls team to a great start in their indoor meets. Coach Luke Fennema said, "She is a hard worker who gives her all in practice everyday. She is a smart racer whom we can count on to pace herself perfectly. She also brings a fun-loving attitude to the team."



Editorial

Rebuilding relationships: lessons from gardening

Gardeners know that for plants to flourish, they need to be watered and given nutrients. If they’re not properly tended to, they can fade and die. Relationships too can fade and die if not cared for properly: we can become distant with a family member or fall out with a friend. And as with plants, the neglect sometimes reveals itself slowly, and sometimes things seem to blow up and go bad all at once.

But there’s good news. Like wilting plants, relationships can be revived and strengthened with consistent care. Below is an oversimplified guide to fixing broken relationships. Use the following steps as necessary.

Step 1: Assess the relationship. Look back at its highs and lows-- is this something you want to fix? If so, try to figure out what led to the relationship’s downfall. It could be something a specific dispute or an underlying issue. If your actions were the primary cause of damage to the

relationship, can you make things right? If the other person is at fault, can he or she remediate the problem? If so, how? Are you willing to forgive the hurt? Remember that it’s likely both people’s actions contributed to the problem in some

pate in a mature discussion. This will involve addressing shortcomings and listening on both parts. Be vulnerable about why the relationship ended up in its current state, and be aware of how your words are perceived in order

if both parties agree to reconcile, things will not be the same as they were before. But they could, with work, be even better.

Step 3: Reconnect. If step two proved successful, ask the person to meet up. Bond over shared interests or find new common ground. Decide if this would be better done one-on-one or in a group setting for support. From here, the relationship can once again grow strong.

The work of maintaining strong relationships doesn’t end after step three. Keep caring for and nurturing the people you love.

People who garden will tell you that caring for one’s plants is a continuous effort. There’s never a stage at which plants can be left for an extended period without care.

Similarly, be prudent in your relationships. Tend to healthy relationships and they’re more likely to stay healthy, leaving fewer times you will need to follow these steps.

Like wilting plants, relationships can be revived and strengthened with consistent care.

way, and although one person may be at fault, it’s rarely helpful to accuse.

Step 2: Approach the person. Choose a time or place conducive to thoughtful discussion. For this step to work, both individuals need to be willing to partici-

to prevent the problem from worsening. Don’t come on too strong. If the discussion is not going well, perhaps you should part ways peacefully. Because relationships are two-sided, you alone can’t force a relationship to be the same as it was before. And even

Ten of my favorite things

Do you ever get that warm, fuzzy feeling when you see something you absolutely love? It may be a person (aw!) or a thing or a pet. Here’s a brief list of random things I am seriously obsessed with (in no particular order), including descriptions explaining why.

1. Watching two people fall in love. If you know me, you know I’m a hopeless romantic. I’m in love with the idea of love, so when I watch rom coms, you already know I’m in my happy place. But in every great love story, there is a certain point when you just know that that boy and girl are falling for each other– it’s crystal



Grace Jania
News Editor

clear. This could be a line in the novel, a look they give each other in a movie, or a smile the two give each other in real life. It’s so pure and sweet to witness, and you can’t help falling in love with the idea.

2. Hearing your favorite song randomly. I don’t know why it’s so addictive, but hearing your favorite song in a random setting is so much more exciting than turning it on yourself. Whether you’re strolling down a Target aisle, flipping through radio stations, or on a run with your playlist on shuffle, hearing your favorite tune randomly makes your heart beat a little faster.

3. Winning Monopoly. This seems self-explanatory to anyone that plays Monopoly hardcore, complete with house rules, but I will elaborate further still. At my house, playing Monopoly is an entire event; we start, usually late at night, and play until the game is done. I, my dad, and my two brothers play together, and a lot of drama goes down when we make deals with each other. So when you win Monopoly, it’s a house-known event, and the winner is awarded bragging rights.

4. Receiving an unexpected gift. I don’t know why this one means so much to me, but it does. Whether it be a small gift on a holiday or an iced coffee for no particular reason, it just warms my heart to know that someone was thinking of me.

5. Getting an A on a test. I think I speak for everyone on this; getting an A on a test, especially when you didn’t study very hard or at all for it, is a major confidence booster.

6. Everything about fall. I can admit that I’m obsessed with the fall season. The leaves on the ground, the oversized jean jackets, the pumpkin spice lattes, the cozy sweaters, Taylor Swift’s Red album. . . I’m in love with it all. While I can’t wait for spring to be here already, fall takes the cake as the ultimate best season.

7. Laughing so hard you can’t breathe. Everyone has laughed like this at some point, and it is such a pure moment to experience. Getting that slap-happy feeling and having someone return the exact same energy back with you is addictive. It’s the best when your laughs stop making noise, you’re laughing so hard.

8. Naps after school. After a long day of classes, anyone would feel worn out; but you know it’s serious when you have trouble staying awake in class. Once you get home though, it’s game over and you’re cuddled up in your bed, ready for a nap before you start the stack of homework. Best. Feeling. Ever.

9. Crossing things off the to-do list. Why is this so satisfying!?! Maybe it’s the stimulation of productivity, or perhaps the quick strike of the pen across the task. Whatever it is, all I know is that it makes me want to get things done.

10. Secret handshakes. Best friends are hard to find. But when you find a person you’re close enough with to have a secret handshake, something just clicks. Plus, it looks insanely cool to execute it randomly when you see each other in front of big groups of people.

the
Echo)))

Editor-in-chief

Olivia Oostema

News

Grace Jania

Feature

Aubrey Porter

Arts

Hailey Ross

Sports

Jessica Bergfors

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.

Thanks for raising awareness about disabilities this month!)))

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

Play this puzzle online at <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/3466228>

autism, paralyzed, dyslexia, blindness, epilepsy, down syndrome, scoliosis, aspergers, adhd, mental health

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