

Seniors explore Washington, D.C. on class trip

Grace Jania
Editor-in-Chief

The seniors spent the week in Washington, D.C. for their class trip, where they visited a variety of memorials and monuments. They left on two buses Tuesday night, Oct. 18.

Illiana history teacher Mr. Jeff White planned the trip, a few of the tasks he carried out being booking the hotel and getting tickets for the museums and monuments that required them. He posted sign up sheets weeks before the trip for the students interested in visiting these sites in their free time. Some of these sites included the Washington Monument, Spy Museum, and Air and Space Museum.

Karina Mulder was among the group that visited the Washington Monument during her free time on Friday.

“The view [from the top] was definitely the best part,” Mulder said. “I definitely recommend going up and seeing everything if you have the chance. It was so pretty.”

For some of the time, the senior class was split into groups of about 30-40 students, each group with a tour guide, to bring them through the Washington National Cathedral, Lincoln Memorial, Arlington Cemetery, and more.

White brought the students to other historical sites that he talked about in his classes, such as Mount Vernon, the home of George Washington, and Ford’s Theatre, where Abe Lincoln was shot.

At Mt. Vernon, students were given free time to explore the grounds and walk through the house on a guided tour.

At Ford’s Theatre, seniors

could see the box overlooking the stage in which Lincoln was shot and killed, even though the stage itself was undergoing construction.

Throughout the trip, seniors were encouraged to get to talk with other students they didn’t know very well, even after spending the past three years with them.

Addi Bandstra reflected on putting this advice into practice, saying that her favorite part was “spending time with people [she] normally wouldn’t.”

“I made a lot of new connections and friends from the bus seats and dinner seats,” Bandstra said.

After a busy three days of exploring Washington, D.C., the seniors headed home Friday night after concluding with brief stops at the White House and Iwo Jima Memorial.



Arden DeGruff, Kaitlin Dykstra, and Emmery Kloosterman smile at the World War II Memorial. While there, Illiana students had the opportunity to thank WWII veterans who were visiting on an Honor Flight.



The commons will be expanded in Phase 2, and are planned to look like this set up. Photo courtesy of Illiana YouTube

Phase 2 building plans scheduled to begin in Spring 2023, finish Fall 2024

Sophia Oostema
Reporter

Illiana Christian High School approved phase two building plans, which includes 17 new classrooms, an auditorium, and an expanded Commons.

Illiana has been blessed with a growing number of students, but the school is only built for 500 students, a threshold the student body passed this fall when it hit 501. Hallways are beginning to become crowded, parking lots are packed, and lunch lines seem

endless. To fix these issues, a proposal for phase 2 of Illiana is underway.

“I never, EVER want to be in the position to turn kids away who want a great Christian Education because we don’t have space,” wrote Lance Davids, Head of School, in an email to parents.

A building proposal meeting was held to discuss the new plans on October 12. The meeting included an introduction and prayer by Raleigh West, Board President. Then Davids took over and explained the plans. The plan calls for 17 classrooms (some for vocational classes) and

an auditorium to be built. The Commons will also double in size. Phase 2 would allow up to 750 students to fit comfortably in this building.

Davids stated, “It means more kids who get to hear every day about our awesome God.”

The projected cost of the addition is \$22 million. Davids says that the community surrounding Illiana is generous, and funds are already coming in for this project.

Illiana hopes to break ground in the spring of 2023, with plans of completing some of the renovations by fall of 2024.

Fall dance ticket cost raises money for Living With Hope ministry

Emily Bantsolas
Reporter

Illiana Christian’s annual Fall Dance provided a chance for students to build friendships while raising money for Living With Hope, a ministry that sends wheelchairs to Africa. The dance was on Oct. 15 from 7-10 p.m. and admission was \$10 at the door.

Students were encouraged to attend the dance with friends or alone, rather than with a date (but dates were still permitted). Only Illiana students could attend the dance.

“The dance boosts friendships among students because it is a way to come together as a school for a night and just have fun,” junior Student Council member Maisy Vroom said. “It’s cool seeing people come out of their shells... and just have fun at the dance.”

The dance dress code was casual. Students were encouraged to wear something they already owned.

The \$10 dollar admission charge raised money for Living With Hope. The organization aims to provide training and resources to the estimated 35 million people with disabilities living in Africa. The organization’s founder, Michael Panther, spoke in a chapel in September.

Vroom said, “We [Student Council] had a hard time deciding which organization we wanted this fundraiser to be dedicated to, but then we had a Chapel where we learned about Living With Hope’s purpose. The next day in our StuCo meeting we all felt moved by the chapel and knew that it was going to be our cause.”

The dance was DJed by Operation Get Down. Students enjoyed the music and had a great time.

“It was fun,” said Cassie Otto, a senior who attended the dance, “the DJ was good, and I had a lot of fun with my best friends.”

Thirteen things I wish I knew before high school

Well, the time has come. I am finally a senior in high school. Although just saying that feels unreal, I must admit that it's exciting (and slightly terrifying) to be able to see the end of my high school experience. At the same time as I look toward the finish, however, freshmen are just beginning the journey. So for them, and for anyone else who might find this helpful, I thought it would be appropriate to give thirteen tips on things I wish I knew through high school: Participate in all the silly spirit days, game themes, dress up days, and challenges. Trust me, they are great memories to look back on.



Danielle Rancifer

News Editor

Remember to always pack deodorant when you have gym; you will use it.

Common Grounds is the fastest way to lose your money, so try to pack snacks once in a while.

Try your best to do at least one extracurricular activity-- it's the best way to get to know new people, and I can guarantee that you will have so much fun.

Try and get a Spire every year you can. They are so much fun to look through, they have really fun categories, and they will chronicle these years so you can look back on them when you are older.

Plan for dances two weeks in advance. It seems too early in the moment, but you will really appreciate it when the dance comes around, and you aren't scrambling for dinner plans and trying to figure out the best location for pictures.

You don't need a date for any dance. I can promise that going with your friends will be much more fun than going with some random person just to have a date. Trust me. I know from experience.

Take a foreign language class. It doesn't matter which one, but I promise the experience of taking a language in high school is an amazing way to broaden your horizons and expose yourself to a culture besides your own. It is so fun, and I would highly recommend it.

Yes, grades are important, but don't let them run your life. Checking Renweb constantly can be a hard habit to break, so unless you have a big test or something, maybe try to limit yourself to checking it once or twice a week.

Go to the Loud Crowds and Praise Crowds; they are big parts of Illiana traditions for a reason. Loud Crowd games are so much fun, and Praise Crowds do so much for your relationship with Christ.

Invite people into your circle. It's okay to have people you prefer to hang out with, but try to include others.

You don't need a significant other to complete your high school experience. Enough said.

Your relationship with Christ is so important. Use these four years to grow it while you're young.

So there you have it, my list of thirteen things I wish I had known earlier. Of course you may not use everything on this list, and maybe you think that I left something out, but if this list can help at least one person avoid some of the hiccups I had to experience during these four years, then it will have all been worth it.



Photo by Jeff DeVries

A boys dodgeball team gets prepares for the start of the round after hearing the rules from student council member Audrey Girolimon. The boys stretch while waiting for the whistle to blow.

Cereal Killers highlight Dodgeball Tourney

Grace Jania

Editor-in-Chief

The annual dodgeball tournament was held on Oct. 14 as a fundraiser

for the spring and summer missions trips. Teams dressed up and competed in a costume contest and dodgeball competition.

A team of underclass-

men girls, the Cereal Killers, all dressed up as different cereal mascots inside their matching "boxes," won the award for best costume.

Blood drive helps to save lives

Giannia O'Neal-Schultz

Reporter

Ms. Sara Johnson, a student council sponsor and blood drive organizer, said she felt compelled to donate blood at Illiana's recent blood drive because she has O negative blood.

Having an O negative blood type is rare, and it is valued by blood banks and hospitals because it is the only universal blood type. Only 7% of the population is O negative.

Johnson said, "I think it is really important to donate blood because there is a blood shortage right now and hospitals and blood banks need our help to help people. It's just the right thing to do if you are able

to."

Illiana's student council sponsored the fall blood drive on Tuesday, Oct. 11. The blood drive goal this year was to have at least 30 appointments, but the effort came in just shy of hopes with only 27 appointments.

For the first time since before Covid-19 emerged, Illiana allowed members of the public to donate blood.

"It was nice to have some parents and friends of Illiana donate," said Johnson.

Versiti Blood Center of Illinois was the blood bank working Illiana's drive.

Each unit of blood collected at the blood drive will potentially help three people. The student council will sponsor another blood drive in the spring.



Photo by Jeff DeVries

Student council members pose for a picture with Mr. Boonsra while he donates blood.

Horrific reality of Instagram hackers

Kayla Bosman

Reporter

"I ended up losing a couple hundred dollars that I never got back," said Christopher Kinkade, an Illiana senior, after his Instagram account got hacked.

It was about a year ago when bad actors took over Kinkade's account, leading to multiple hacks of many of his other personal accounts. He explains how saying

"They hacked into my email," Kinkade explained, "and that's how they were able to get a bunch of more information because they were able to do the 'forgot password' on everything I have. That was detrimental... They made a paypal account using my information, [and through that] they directly tapped into my bank

account and took out the money."

Though he lost hundreds of dollars, he did get control of his accounts again, he said.

Kinkade is just one of at least eighteen Illiana students and thousands of Instagram users who have found their accounts hacked.

According to computer security experts at AVG, "Instagram hacks usually happen when attackers find your account information and password details after a data breach, getting access through phishing or third-party apps." If a person is the victim of such a breach and he or she uses the same password for multiple accounts, the situation can get dire quickly.

In an Echo survey conducted on Oct. 7, eighteen Illiana students reported that their Instagram accounts had been hacked. Everyone

of these victims used the same or similar passwords for all their social media accounts.

Once hackers get control of a person's account, they can easily get the passwords for other apps, phone numbers and a treasure trove of other personal information.

Sometimes the hacks don't seem all that serious. For example, senior Megan Ruffolo's Instagram account was hacked and then turned into a Keanu Reeves fan page.

On the other hand, Hackers can also use your account to contact followers trying to sell them bitcoin, get into people's Paypal, cash app or Venmo accounts, or open new accounts as well. Hackers can also seek to sell an account or blackmail the victim to get it

"The Face of Illiana," a team of senior boys who dressed up as Kevin Corcoran, won the dodgeball tournament itself, after taking on and beating the team of returning male alumni.

Sophomore Bryn Housman, who was on a doge-ball team said, "It was fun, [being on a team] was a little scary because I had never done it before but overall I had fun.

Following the tournament, the Praise Crowd Committee hosted its first student gathering of the year, where it served Chick-Fil-A and Head of School Lance Davids spoke on what it means to be a leader in facing personal storms instead of running from them. The night closed with songs of worship and fellowship.



Junior Isaac Sherwood leads his group in an activity during Challenge Day.

Photo by Jeff

IMPACT’s Challenge Day encourages students to be lead-

Marissa Krause

Reporter

Illiana’s second year of Challenge Day, a day to help connect students and build leadership skills, occurred on Tuesday, Oct. 4 in the ARC. Challenge Day, sponsored by Impact Club, gives teachers and students of different grade levels, ethnicities, social groups, and interests an opportunity to step out of their comfort zones to spend a day participating in fun games and small group discussions. The activities help students get connected with peers in Illiana and be leaders, reflect God through their actions, and empathize with others on a deeper

level. Impact Club, led by Mrs. Melanie Benes and Mrs. Heidi Teach, selects the students who participate after considering input from teachers. According to Benes, the students invited all show leadership potential and have demonstrated a willingness to make a positive difference in school culture. Students said the day was an enjoyable time with a safe environment to be vulnerable, nonjudgmental, and share with others similar experiences. It was a time to learn how to act and react towards others, hear other people’s stories, and learn about shared struggles. “It was a good opportunity to meet new people and

help stay connected in our [school] community,” said freshmen Moses Knight. Senior Abby West said, “People have struggles that you don’t really see and as a student body we should work to get to know people better, so they aren’t afraid to share their struggles.” Illiana’s main goal of Challenge Day “is to build our leadership skills so that we can follow Illiana’s vision of developing a passion for God, people and the world,” said Teach. Benes and Teach said they hope to plan for another Challenge Day in the spring. “Go out and be change makers!” said Teach.

Honors history students “travel back in time” on field trip

Kelsee Smit

Reporter

A handful of Illiana students in Mr. Jeff White’s U.S. history class attended the Feast of the Hunters’ Moon on Saturday, Oct. 1-2. According to the Tippecanoe Historical Society’s website, the Feast of the Hunters’ Moon is a re-creation of the fall gathering of the French and Native Americans which took place at Fort Ouiatenon, a fur-trading outpost in the mid 1700s. It is held every year on the banks of the Wabash River, four miles southwest of West Lafayette, Indiana. White, a big enthusiast of the festival, offers the trip as an extra credit opportunity for his honors US history students. Some students who are not in White’s class attended with friends.

Junior Abbey Helmus said, “It was a great celebration of early American culture.” The re-enactment included French and Native American music and dance, drum corps performances, military drills and demonstrations, fashion shows, games and contests. There were also many different hands-on opportunities for attendees of all ages including children’s trade blanket, costume try-on, candle-dipping, story telling, bead bracelet making, cross-cut sawing, and tomahawk throwing. Junior Alex Tambrini said, “The Feast of the Hunters’ Moon is a great way to understand history more. My favorite thing that we did was driving with friends up there and having a great time. And the canon.”

Praise crowd committee kicks off year with “marvelous” breakfast



Students of all different classes gather for food and fellowship before devotions.

Photo by Jeff DeVries

Lydia O’Riley

Reporter

The first Praise Crowd Breakfast, a time for food and fellowship, happened on Oct. 13 from 7:00-7:45 a.m. Praise Crowd Committee holds a breakfast every month on a Thursday morning. Anyone in the school, students or staff, can go, grab their breakfast, and sit with other classmates and faculty to have fellowship. Mackenzie Mulderink, a junior on the Praise Crowd Committee who helped plan the breakfast, said the point is to “have a great time, do devotions, and praise the Lord with your

classmates.” She also mentioned it is a great way for students who have never been to a Praise Crowd Breakfast to meet new people and create friendships. Alex Tambrini, a junior, said the best part about Praise Crowd Breakfast is the fellowship between friends and classmates. “Sitting and talking with your friends is the best part of the Praise Crowd Breakfast,” said sophomore Atikilt Bosman. “It’s a break from all the busyness and stress of school. Normally we hardly have time to communicate with our friends, with the exception of lunch. I think we need more time to have fun with our friends instead of hav-



Junior Makenzie Mulderink thinks of a message to write in a friend’s yearbook.

Photo by Jeff DeVries

Reminiscing, binging yearbooks

Annual Spire party debuts Netflix theme

Tristen Bell

Reporter

Students flooded the commons on Friday night, Oct. 7, to receive and sign each other’s yearbooks at the annual Spire Party. The gathering is dedicated to the publishing of the yearbook and the memories students made the previous school year.

The theme for this year was Netflix, picked by last year’s editors Katherine VanDrunen and San-yah Samson. Both editors joined other graduates in attending last Friday. Senior Ellie Kamphuis, a current editor for Spire, said the party was a success. “A lot of graduates from last year came back, and it was great to see them,” Kamphuis said.

Senior Priya Sen, the other current co-editor, said, “I liked the yearbook a lot. I like how it turned out. It was great, actually.” The Spire Party got the current editors excited for next year, when the book they are designing will be released. “Oh, I’m excited, for sure,” said Kamphuis. I’m excited to be creative on our own now and to see how our book turns out next year.”

Morgan Bland takes on LA mission trip

Grace Jania

Editor-in-Chief

After finding out that one of last year's spring mission trips was to Los Angeles, California, then-freshman Morgan Bland was convinced that she had to go. Being a member of the Illiana Missions Club, she signed up, thinking, "Why not?"

There was one issue, though: Bland didn't know anyone else going on the LA trip.

"I didn't really think about that part. I was just excited to be going to Los Angeles!" Bland remarked.

Leading up to the trip, the freshman wasn't able to attend the informational meetings before school due to not having rides, but this didn't stop her from taking part in the fundraising to help pay for the trip.

Bland attended the Pulled Pork Dinner fundraiser, where she and her mother served dinner and helped clean up after guests who donated money for the kids going on mission trips. Overall, she enjoyed the experience, serving and getting to make small talk with others going on the trip.

But still, the question lingered: What will I do on this trip when I know no other students that will be there?

"It made me second guess if I should go," Bland said. She soon took notice of the friendships formed in the group prior to LA, friendships that had developed at meetings she'd been unable to attend, and felt shaky, wondering if she would want to be a part of a mission trip next year.

She resolved to go anyway, and before she knew it, she was on the bus ride to the airport with the rest of the Illiana students, a group consisting of students from every class. The group was divided to fit on two mini-buses. Bland rode with seniors Marisa Vazquez, Christine DeYoung and Annalee Wang, and junior Grace Jania.

The group was thrilled for the trip, and talked almost the whole way to the airport, about prom, homecoming and, of course, LA.

"They made me feel welcome," Bland said. "I thought, yeah, I can go on this trip."

But even after that wave of reassurance, Bland still didn't feel particularly excited to leave, due to her homesickness from being away from her mother.

"I just thought, I'm leaving home for a week; I'm going to miss my mom. I don't know anyone here." The nervous thoughts kept piling up, but that didn't cause Bland to

lose sight of the real reason she was going to California.

The freshman thought, "I knew we weren't there to have fun; we were there to do work."

And work was one of the first things the team did. After splitting into groups at Inside Out LA, the church where the students stayed the first two nights, they went to work painting rooms and old furniture. Bland's group painted the pastor's office.

"I had a blast painting that room," Bland reflected. "We were cracking jokes, I almost fell off the ladder, we got paint on the carpet, we were painting each other's shorts. I actually still have those pants."

That night the Boonstras' daughter, a head member of Inside Out, took the students to a roadside taco truck for dinner. It was then that Bland's homesickness was really starting to sink in.

She said, "I was on the phone with my mom and burst out in tears because I was feeling so anxious."

Junior Brenna Thompson took action upon seeing Bland and asked how she was feeling and if she needed anything. Bland didn't forget this act of kindness.

The group got closer and closer, having fun running around the church that night, playing hide-and-go-seek and laughing together.

Soon after leaving Inside Out LA, the group headed to the Dream Center, a Christian organization that focuses on transforming people's lives through community outreach, residential, and resource programs.

Seeing just how much good the Dream Center had done for struggling people touched Bland. She said, "The Dream Center took care of people in the [discipleship] program who couldn't take care of themselves or hold themselves accountable." It gave them a second chance to turn their lives around.

Throughout the week, Bland experienced what it was like to serve others, including knocking on doors and inviting people to church, handing out food to the hungry in neighboring towns, and vis-



Photo by: Grace Jania

Morgan Bland helped paint the pastor's office at Inside Out LA.

iting Skid Row to talk with those suffering from homelessness.

"When we went to Skid Row and talked to some of the people; it really opened my eyes and showed me that I have a lot to be grateful for," Bland said. "It really touched my heart. While there, I thought, 'What if this was my life? What would I do in this exact moment?'"

Before she knew it, Illiana's group was on its way back home to Northwest Indiana. But this time, Bland had a new mindset after seeing how some in LA lived versus some in the Midwest.

"A lot of people feel like they have to have things, but they should know how blessed they are," said Bland.

Upon reflection, Bland remembered a line from Thompson's older brother, Jacob, who worked at the Dream Center in LA.

"When we got to Skid Row, [Jacob Thompson] said that sometimes you go in thinking you're going to help the people there, but you leave and you realize that they re-

ally helped you," Bland said. She later reflected that "LA had its rough parts, but at the end of the day it was beautiful."

Even though the start of the week was rocky for the freshman, she made the most of her situation.

She said, "At the beginning, I just wanted to get the week over with and come home. But towards the middle of the week, I thought, 'I'm here. Let's just make the best of it.' You can be homesick but try to change your mindset."

Bland was able to speak about her adventure in California at her church, remarking that the trip taught her how to be "more vocal and open about [her] experience."

"To anyone interested in mission trips, do it! You become closer with everyone in the group after spending a week with them. You remember all the funny memories," Bland said. "If I didn't go on the LA trip, I wouldn't have gotten the chance to help the people I helped, and I wouldn't have met the friends I have now."



Photo by: Grace Jania

Morgan Bland and Brenna Thompson enjoy the view as they look for the famous Hollywood sign.

2023 mission trip destinations

Lucas VanderWoude

Arts Editor

Illiana will be hosting four mission trips in 2023: Los Angeles and West Virginia in the spring, and Ireland and the Dominican Republic in the summer.

Missions Director Sara Johnson, who organizes the trips, explained, "We try to find places where we already have

a relationship with someone doing the work there. We've been going to West Virginia for several years, so we've established relationships there over time. However, in the other three locations, we'll be joining Illiana graduates in the work they are doing in those locations."

Johnson also shed some light on what students will be doing during the trips: "West Virginia will be

largely labor. We'll be doing work with Zara House and with YoungLife while we are there. In the DR, we'll be helping the Pathway to Jesus School end the school year and possibly run a vacation Bible school. In LA, we'll be working with the Dream Center again. And the Ireland trip just came to be in the last three days, so we don't have any firm plans yet."

Revolving rehearsal space clips actors' wings

Unable to find sufficient room for play practice, Illiana's Drama Department finds its practice ability limited

Cameron Evers

Feature Editor

Since the move to the new campus, Illiana Christian's drama department has continued to struggle to find a permanent place to prepare for shows. The crew can be seen practicing in English classrooms, the commons, hallways, gym floors, the music room, the courtyard, and whatever other space they can find. The stage is located in Illiana's second gym, the ARC, making it a popular place for athletic teams, the drama department, school dances, and chapel committee.

This shared space often pushes the drama department to the back burner. Jeff DeVries, the director of the play, said, "We are last on the chart no matter where we go. I can go in the gym, unless someone else needs it. I can go in the ARC, unless someone else is using it. I can go in the music room, unless someone else is using it."

In regards to athletics taking precedence Jim Kamphuis, the set designer of the play, said, "The comparison we always make that is you would never tell the basketball team that they can practice in the parking lot with temporary hoops, that [they] will play all of their games in the gym, but they must practice elsewhere... You would never require a basketball team to do that, but that's the situation we often get put in."

The only guaranteed space for this bunch is DeVries's classroom, which brings space issues of its own. Audrey Yonkman, an actress in the drama department, said it's hard to get a feel of where to walk on the stage when they work in other environments. The

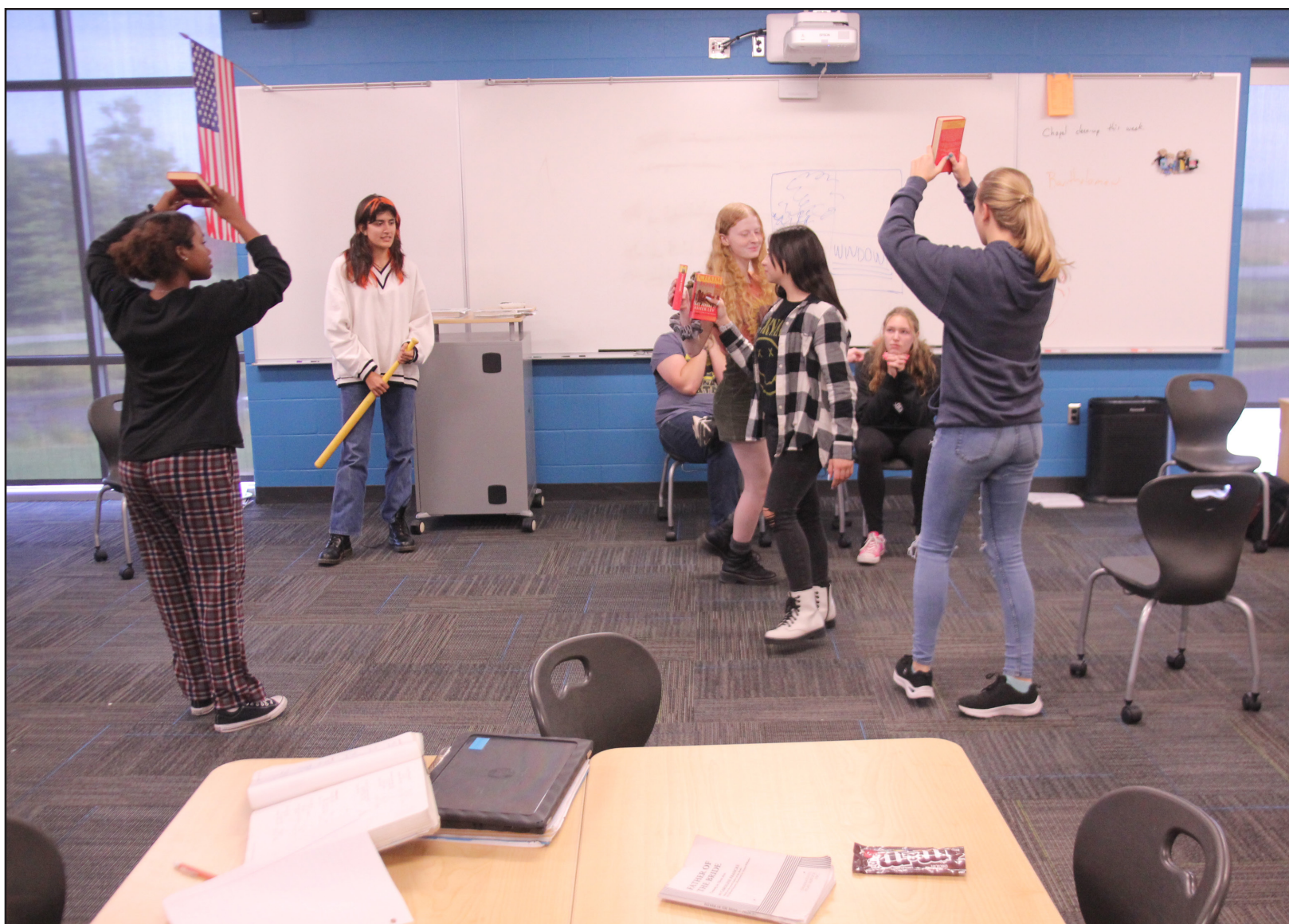


Photo by Jeff DeVries

Cast members of the play The Father of the Bride attempt choreography in Mr. DeVries's room, a space that is approximately half the size of the stage that they will eventually use.

cast practices wherever it can find space for about two months and then gets only a couple days to perfect their performance using the stage.

DeVries said, "The actors have trouble getting a vision for what is happening on stage or even knowing where entrances and exits will be made because the rehearsal space changes size and dimensions every day. And timing, for the same reasons, is just about impossible to work on."

Kamphuis said, "We don't get to have our performance space, and rehearse in that space till about a week and a half prior to the show...giving us only about 5 or 6 days to interact with the stage space before its time to perform." Kamphuis

is commends his crew for being "a pretty adaptable bunch," but trying to fix issues just days before the show is not an easy task.

One of the biggest difficulties with sharing the stage is the technological issues. Kamphuis said, "Setting up for every show is like reinventing the wheel, especially with the sound, because our sound system is not permanently fixed... and there are always new problems with it when we set it up. If we had an auditorium, the system would be permanent and not cause as many issues."

DeVries and Kamphuis expressed hope for a permanent space in the future, but for now DeVries said, "I would love more of a right to space in the ARC."



Photo by Jeff DeVries

Crammed between instruments and chairs, cast members of the play act out a scene in the music room.

Drama students participate in 24-hour theater project at Trinity College

Angelica Voyles

Reporter

The 24 hour theatre project is an event sponsored by the theater department at Trinity Christian College and open to students of Trinity and local Christian high schools who are interested in dealing with play writing, acting, stage managing,

and much more. This year's project, the 7th annual one, happened from Friday night, Sep. 23 to Saturday night, Sep. 24, and it included two Illiana students, sophomore Levi Sliemers and senior Kayla Bosman.

Sliemers performed as an actor for the theatre project. He said that since he had done it last year and "had a lot of fun," he figured he

would do it again this year. He started off at 8 in the morning on Saturday, talking with directors and writers about different ideas. He then rehearsed all day. He also met a lot of Trinity students and alumni.

Bosman got involved on the crew side and did many things for the theatre project. She was backstage, a makeup artist and a costum-

er. One skit was produced by Matthew Huizenga, a Illiana alumnus, and Bosman did the makeup for one of the grandmas. On top of all this, she taught adults step-by-step on how to build a paper boat and even has one hanging on her wall now from this project.

Mr. Jim Kamphuis, Illiana's art teacher and a Trin-

ity Christian College alumnus, recruits students to give them the chance to do this opportunity, and he has done so for a number of years. He said, "I never have sent someone that didn't have fun."

Trinity had originally reached out to Illiana and invited some other schools also. Kamphuis said that "Trinity is really good about involving high schoolers."



Photo by Jeff DeVries

The cheerleaders show off their dance routine at Lake Central Tournament, where they won in their division.

Competitive cheer advances to state finals

Kyla Bennett

Reporter

Illiana's competitive cheerleading team has been on a roll this season so far. Their coaches Carisa Beezhold and Marcia VanDrunen have helped them achieve their goals of winning more than losing.

"They're always pushing us to do our best, and they really care for us on the inside and out," said Rylee Klee, a senior on the cheer team.

Their highest score of the

season so far was at the Lake Central competition, where they won 1st place two times. Their goal is to continue winning and finish in at least the top 3 in state in their division.

On a typical day at practice, they usually sit and talk about what's coming up, do their warmups, practice their stunts and routines, and then they do them full out. After that, they always make sure to pray before leaving.

Beezhold said that the team stands out from other cheerleading teams because "they

are the most successful and can hit all their stunts and tumblers under pressure. They are set to do big things in the state series."

Though the competitive cheer season started in May, it is not finished yet! The cheerleaders have a semi-state final competition coming up on Oct. 21. Klee mentioned that this will probably be one of their most important competitions because it determines whether or not they will be competing at state.

Competitive swimming makes splash among number of Illiana students

Kailyda Anderson

Sports Editor

Illiana may not have a pool, but the student body has enough competitive swimmers to wonder if the plans for campus expansion ought to include one.

At least five current students swim competitively, including junior Taylor Stasny and senior Cassandra Otto. Stasny and Otto met in 2019 at a meet hosted at Lake Central High School, and they have been friends ever since. Although these girls swim at different places and compete in different events, their sport is what brings them together.

Stasny started swimming at age seven. "When I got into the water for the first time, I knew this is what I loved and was going to do," Taylor proclaimed. She started off at Lake Central, but currently swims for Munster High School. The switch took place when she was 15.

"I felt like I needed better training, and a lot of my friends swam at Munster, so I decided it was best to switch there. I'm very happy there now," she said.

Her favorite part of swimming is competing and meeting new people at every meet. "It's fun to go and meet so many different people you instantly bond with just because we do the same thing," Stasny is a

three time state champion and her events include the 100 and 200 breaststroke, and the 100, 200, and 400 freestyle. Not only does she swim after school, but also gets up at 4:30 almost every morning to go to practice before coming to school. She has so much drive and passion for what she does.

Otto started swimming when she was 12. "I was inspired by peers and thought that what they did was cool, so I decided to give it a shot," Otto explained. She currently swims for Highland High School.

"My favorite part about swimming is getting to see my friends and going

to meets," Otto said. "It's hard to bond with people who don't swim because they don't know what it's like, but as soon as I get to practice, I know I'm right where I need to be." Otto's events include 100, 200, and 400 backstroke, and 50 and 100 sprints.

These girls are proud of themselves for what they accomplish.

"We love what we do, and hope to continue working hard for another state championship. We're always here to support each other, and are very glad we got to share a little of what we do. If you're interested in swimming, do it! Don't be afraid to try something new," Stasny emphasized.



Bishop Noll edges out Vikings in regional championship

Boys soccer team secures first place in conference, but season ends on heartbreaking 1-0 loss



Photo courtesy of Jill Rozendal

Senior Caden Buxton was a leader in the Vikings' soccer program this fall.

Cameron Evers

Reporter

The Illiana Christian boys' soccer seasons came to a close with varsity having a record of 12-5-2 and JV with 12-2-2. Varsity's season ended in the sectional finals at home against Bishop Noll on Saturday, Oct. 8.

Bishop Noll drew first blood, scoring a penalty kick to put the game at 1-0 which senior captain, Caden Buxton, said gave Noll the momentum.

The game ended 4-0, killing the widespread anticipation that the team was going to advance to regional play. The loss was a difficult way for Buxton to end his senior season.

The loss was especially

difficult because on Sept. 27 the Vikings had beat Bishop Noll 1-0 on a goal from freshman Grant Terpstra, and that victory had secured the team's first-place finish in the Greater South Shore Conference. Now just a few weeks later, the Warriors ended Illiana's dreams of going downstate.

Despite the loss, Buxton said, "The biggest positive of this season was working out of a rough patch... We really put our heads down and persevered even if the season didn't end the way we wanted it to."

Junior Zach Davids said, "I think our team next year will be just as good, and I hope we can win as many games as we can and make it further than we did this year."

Cross country teams take huge strides in state competition

Both the girls and boys teams advance through sectionals, regionals to compete at semi-state, sophomore Ella Olthof qualifes to run in state finals

Danielle Rancifer

News Editor

The Illiana Cross teams, both boys and girls, have captured the conference championship and advanced to semi-state in state competition. Competing at New Prairie High School on Oct. 22, the girls team closed out its year with a ninth place finish, and sophomore Ella Olthof was the team's top runner, finishing in 11th place. She will advance individually to the state finals on Oct. 29. Her cousin,

junior Avery Olthof, finished exactly eight seconds behind her, grabbing 16th place and missing qualifying for the state finals by only two places.

The boys closed out their year with a 16th place finish. Junior Nolan Bouwman, Illiana's top runner in the meet, captured 29th place individually. Senior Fritz Olthof was the next Viking to cross the line, finishing in 87th place.

In the sectional race on Oct. 15, both teams finished in third place. The girls had three medalists: junior Avery

Olthof (2nd), sophomore Ella Olthof (3rd), and senior Faith VanRyn (19th). The boys also had three medalists in the competition: junior Jarvis Mickles (9th), junior Nolan Bouwman (12th), and senior Fritz Olthof (16th).

Both teams finished in the top three in the majority of meets during the season.

Senior leaders Alex Vis, Fritz Olthof, and Faith VanRyn have also had great seasons and made a significant impact on the teams' overall performances.

Coach Luke Fennema spoke about the seniors, and the team overall by saying, "This year's team is committed, united, and focused. Our student leaders have a strong work ethic and a positive attitude, and those two qualities have been contagious."

VanRyn said, "I think I've contributed to the team a lot this year by putting a lot

of effort in. I was able to drop my time significantly, from last year, and become our third best runner behind Avery and Ella."

Vis, a four-year member of the team, said, "I have been impacted by this sport in so many ways. It's been in my life for the past four years now, and I'm so glad I stuck with it because it has made my life better in so many ways."

Girls' soccer team finishes season with high record

Kyla Bennett

Reporter

Illiana's girls soccer team had an outstanding season, finishing the year with a record of 12-3-3. The coaches, head coach Erinn Behn and assistant Vanesa Hui-zenga, have put in a lot of time helping their players become even better athletes and better people on and off the field.

"This is by far the best team we have had in several years at Illiana," said Behn.

Coach Behn mentioned that the team's most important game was beating Demotte Christian in the first round of Sectionals because "it was our second time beating them this season, and it

also gave us our first ever win in Indiana postseason play."

Each day at practice, the girls would do their warmup drills, shooting drills, use soccer mannequins, and play a game of World Cup to end the practice. Alexi Shaffer, a freshman member of the soccer team, said, "It has been a lot of fun being on the soccer team. I have been playing all my life."

According to Behn, one strength was the experience of the returning players and their ability to incorporate new players into the system. Another strength was bringing in a super talented freshman class. This team was also able to execute a lot of what the coaches wanted them to do.



Photo courtesy of Jeff DeVries

Senior Katie Meján completed her fourth year of varsity soccer this fall.

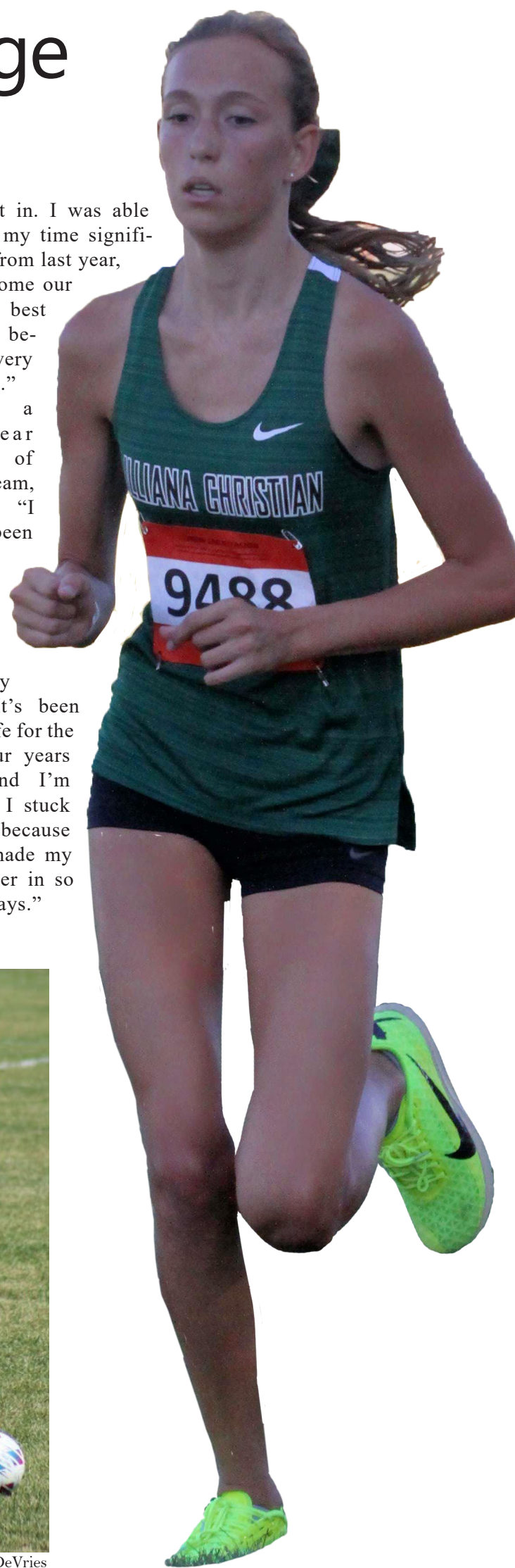


Photo courtesy of Jeff DeVries

Junior Delanie Voss leaps to tap the volleyball over the net at a home game earlier this year.

Vikings play with guts through finish

Grace Jania

Editor-in-Chief

The girls' varsity volleyball team wrapped up its season on Oct. 15 with a loss against Andrean. Even though the team made it a close three sets, their effort wasn't enough to bring them the victory.

The team finished with a record of 17-15. They were 7-1 in conference.

Senior player Abby West said

that the team was like a family for her.

"I wouldn't want to end the season with any other game [sectional finals] because everyone put their heart and soul into it," West said.

Coach VanderZee said, "Sectional finals went really well. I could not have asked for the girls to play any better than they did. They left everything out on the floor and did their absolute very best. I'm very proud of how they played on Saturday."

Senior player Anneka Zylstra said her favorite part of the season

was growing as a team.

"You're thrown into the mix with a bunch of different people and you're expected to meld together right away; through the season I think we did that pretty well."

Senior Arden DeGraff, who attended the sectional finals game instead of the Fall Dance, said, "It was very fun to watch [the girls]."

VanderZee said, "The girls worked hard in practices and games. The excitement during each game that radiated from our bench was tremendous."

Editorial

In praise of volunteer tutor, Alex Tambrini

As a student who struggles academically, it is sometimes difficult to ask for help. The idea of being judged for not understanding what is being taught, not feeling smart enough like the rest of the class or feeling stressed out at the thought of being behind on homework. Any of these reasons can get in the way of asking for help. Homework hall at Illiana has given an opportunity for students to be able to ask for help. There are not many students who are willing to give up their time to help tutor others after school. In fact, there is only one student who has given up his time to help his peers after school to give them encouragement and assistance.

Ever since the start of January 2022, one student in particular, junior Alex Tambrini, has been volunteering to help tutor students after school. His dedication to doing this on top of everything else he does is what makes his efforts so special. He values his time working with students and does his best to help them achieve their academic goals. Not many people know of him doing this, so that is why

it is important to recognize him for his hard work. Tambrini started tutoring because he felt the need to help people and use his “academic smarts” to teach students who struggle. On top of volunteering, he is also getting service hours for doing this good deed. “Ever since I started doing this, I’ve seen more

bored for ‘having’ to tutor. It’s actually more enjoyable than people stereotype it.” Tambrini’s tutoring schedule is currently Wednesdays and Thursdays from 3 to 4 p.m. He typically tutors anywhere between two and four people each day he’s there. “Not only does tutor-

I get to understand some of the struggles students go through academically and it makes me feel happy that I’m able to help them understand what they’re learning,” said Tambrini. He hopes to continue tutoring students throughout the rest of the year, leading into his senior year.

“One of the best parts about tutoring is when they come to me excited because they got a good grade on the test they were nervous about,” he stated. Giving students the opportunity to ask for help is crucial. Having volunteer tutors after school is a good start. Everyone is wrapped up in their own lives but giving up an hour to feel good about helping is what shows compassion and empathy for others.

Illiana could use so many more volunteer tutors for homework hall. If you are academically successful and have time on your hands, feel free to reach out or show up to homework hall when you can to help other students out. As Tambrini’s example makes clear, one student can make a tremendous difference in the lives of so many others.

Illiana could use so many more volunteer tutors for homework hall. If you are academically successful and have time on your hands, feel free to reach out or show up to homework hall when you can to help other students out. As Tambrini’s example makes clear, one student can make a tremendous difference in the lives of so many others.

“As a Christian, I feel like God has shown me how important helping others is.”

and more students become enthusiastic about wanting help and not being scared to ask me. Sometimes students are nervous to ask their teachers for help because they don’t want to be rejected from it, but I always say yes, so students know they can come to me whenever they need me,” Tambrini explained. Tambrini enjoys tutoring very much. “Some people ask me if I ever get

ing help others, but it also helps me get to know other people while doing it. I’ve created some good bonds with some students, and I never would have discovered those relationships if it weren’t for me tutoring,” Tambrini said happily. Tambrini hopes to inspire other gifted students to start tutoring after school. “As a Christian, I feel like God has shown me how important helping others is.

Overcoming struggles with driving

I was driving to school in my dad’s car. It was my sophomore year of high school, and I had finally gotten my permit after doing all the online Driver’s Ed and passing the test. Now, all I had to do was drive for 50 hours. Easy as pie, right? Well, there were a few rough spots along the way.

I was just about to reach Shoe Corner intersection when I felt a huge BUMP! The whole car shook as I ran over a pothole, and with a sinking feeling I heard a flat tire hitting the road. Let’s just say that my dad was not very happy with me after that.



Lucas Vander Woude
Arts and Leisure Editor

I was not a very confident driver before this incident, and after it, I would much rather let my mom and dad drive than do it myself. I went the whole fall and winter without driving at all, even after turning 16 in October.

This was not the end of my troubles with driving. After this incident, I didn’t get another flat tire, but I still had the problem of self-confidence. After I made a mistake, I wouldn’t move on. Instead, I would get flustered and be prone to make more. For example, I would freeze while trying to turn, change lanes, or something else; I was too afraid to make another mistake. However, I pushed through this, because I really wanted my license, no matter how tough it might be.

Well, fast forward to last summer, when I realized that I was a junior in high school and still didn’t have my license. My sister would be leaving for college soon, and it would be my responsibility to drive my brothers to school. I tried to drive as much as I could, but it wasn’t enough, and my dad drove me to school the entire month of August, which was super embarrassing for me. I thought that I would be mocked for this at school, but I wasn’t. In fact, some people in my class didn’t have their license either, which made me feel a little better.

In September, I finally finished all my hours, and scheduled my driving test. I was very nervous that I would have to parallel park and that the instructor would fail me if I didn’t do it exactly right, but as it turned out, I didn’t have to. I passed the test and got my license, feeling both relieved and silly for being so nervous.

One thing that I took away from this experience was that most things work out eventually. During my long slog of getting my hours in, I thought sometimes that I would never reach the end and that I would never get my license. Now that I have it, I look back on that feeling and wonder, “Why wasn’t I more hopeful? It did work out eventually, right?” I think that this experience was good for me, because it taught me a valuable life lesson: no matter how tough something may seem at first, and no matter how many times you mess up, if you keep trying, you will succeed.

the Echo

Editor-in-chief

Grace Jania

News

Danielle Rancifer

Feature

Cameron Evers

Arts

Lucas Vander Woude

Sports

Kyla Bennett
Kailyda Anderson

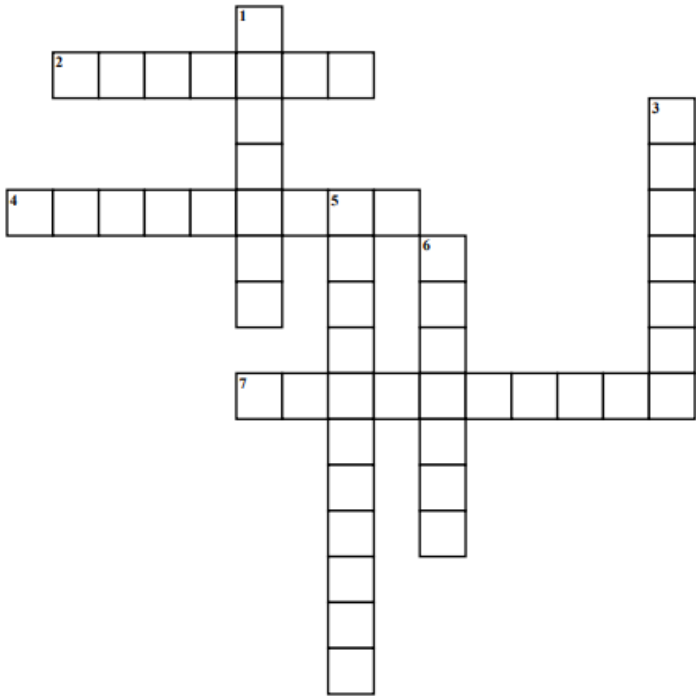
Advisor

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.

Find the clues in the Echo!



Across:

- 2. One of the international summer mission trip locations
- 4. The new title of Sadie Hawkins
- 7. The destination (city) of the mission trip Morgan Bland attended

Down:

- 1. The month Alex Tambrini began tutoring after school
- 3. The name of the space that will be expanded in Phase 2
- 5. The first name of a student whose Instagram account was hacked
- 6. ***1***

Correction. The September 30, 2022 issue stated that Kevin Truong sold his painting, “Surrender,” to Illiana Christian High School. While the school did offer to purchase the painting, Truong, in fact, donated it to the school’s collection. The Echo regrets the error.

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