



A group of students on the 2016 trip to Germany poses for a picture in the Castle of Neuschwanstein.

Fennema plans to visit three new cities in Germany on future trip

Korina Johnson
Reporter

Illiana Christian High Schools German and Spanish programs have the tradition of offering trips to different countries. These trips give students the opportunity to experience foreign cultures they have studied and the chance to use their second language among native speakers. Both departments, however, had to suspend travel plans during the pandemic, and both have now begun to formulate new plans for potential future trips.

The Spanish trip has traditionally been to either Spain or Costa Rica. However, last year no trip was made, and there is no

trip coming in the near future. "It was a lot of money, and it would raise conflict with the D.R. mission trip happening next summer," said Tom Knapper, Spanish teacher at Illiana. Knapper also pointed out that knee problems have also made it harder for him to accompany students on these trips which have traditionally involved a lot of hiking.

For these reasons, Knapper now encourages Spanish students to go on the Dominican Republic mission trip so they can serve and do good works there while experiencing another culture and language.

"Travel to the DR is better," Knapper said. "When you serve someone, you are blessed in return."

The German trips, on the other hand, will still take place, but different destinations will be visited this year. "In the two trips I've led, we went to Germany and Switzerland," said Luke Fennema, German teacher at Illiana. "Now, we are going to the three largest cities in Germany--Münich, Berlin, and Hamburg."

The trip is now going to be full of history and give students a different feel of the culture. "It is good to go on the trip," Fennema said. "You can see three different personalities of the country. This will be a great trip."

There is also a dream that it changes more in the future so there is a "more cultural exchange" as well as it will continue to grow in numbers.

First year German students connect with pen pals via email exchange

Kyla Bennett
Sports Editor

Students in Illiana's German program have begun exchanging letters with German students thanks to a new pen pal program launched this fall.

ICHS has teamed up with Goetheschule KGS Barsinghausen to create a fellowship with students who are learning German here and students who are learning English in Germany. A former exchange student

from Germany who attended Illiana in the 1990s visited with his family this past summer. The former exchange student's wife is an English teacher in Germany and suggested her students and Illiana German teacher Mr. Fennema's students become pen pals.

All 51 first-year German students at ICHS have their own pen pals whom they have written via email a few times already this fall. The plan is to continue writing them at least throughout this year.

"Both sides can benefit from the

exchange because they get language practice and also invaluable cultural knowledge of what it is like to be a teenager in Germany," said Fennema.

Van Corcoran, a freshman in German 1, said, "This is a cool experience to meet new people from different countries." He said he and his pen pal usually discuss things like sports, the type of food they eat for dinner, and future plans.

The German school is in Barsinghausen, a small town in northwest Germany near the city of Hanover.

Students come together to honor Veterans Day

Danielle Rancifer
News Editor

On Friday, Nov. 11, Illiana hosted its annual Veterans Day celebration with a flag-raising and devotions in the gym, a breakfast for the veterans, and a special assembly where social studies teacher Mr. Jeff White interviewed a panel of four veterans.

Terry Schaaf, Illiana's Event Coordinator, who was in charge of all of the Veterans Day activities, said, "The veterans got here at 7:30 for breakfast; for many of this this is the first time where they can sit down with other veterans who really understand what they went through, so being able to talk with people who understand is so special to them."

Mr. DeBoer spoke at the flag-raising and opening devotions. The choir students sang during the assembly, and band students played a prelude.

Schaaf added, "My goal is to get every student to be a part of this day. Cooking class made breakfast for the

veterans, the band and the choirs were involved in the chapel day celebration, and the SHIELD groups made the posters. The goal of everyone is to make the veterans feel appreciated"

White selected the four veterans who participated in the panel for the assembly. The four men were Ben Hoekstra, Ron Beishuizen, Bert Gangolf, and Ed Klain.

These four men spoke about their experiences in the armed forces, and how being a part of the military community changed their lives in so many ways.

These veterans also gave some closing remarks to the young people of today and some advice on what it means to be in the armed forces. Gangolf said, "Serving your country is so important, but so is getting an education. If you can, please finish school."

Hoekstra said, "Everyone has the opportunity to be the hero in their own life, and being in the armed forces definitely does that for you in some way."



Veterans, students, and staff gather around the flagpole in the gym to cover their hearts and salute as Taps is played.

Learning to ‘Sieve The Day’ one step at a time

And just like that, it’s over. How do 1461 days of high school go by in what feels like a month? About a month ago I came home from my senior class trip and had a realization: high school is almost over. I am excited about the next stage of life, but the excitement sometimes causes me to waste my present by dreaming about my future.



Cameron Evers
Feature Editor

In a recent English lecture, Mr. DeVries asked us if we let time consume us or if we consume time, and it resonated with

me. Put it this way: are you letting life just pass by you or are you making the most of it? Life is a blessing, but it’s easy to take for granted. So whether you’re stressed about college decisions or you are worried about all of your new responsibilities as a freshman, remember to slow down and live in the moment.

So here is my advice for you, and me, on how to put this whole carpe diem idea into action. Homework is required, so you might as well do your best. Try out for the sport that you always were interested in, even if you’re a senior and have never played before. Try to pay attention to those lectures that seem to last forever, and you might just learn a thing or two. You have to be in school anyway, so why not try to get something out of it? Try out for the play or musical. Have stage fright? Then work backstage or just go and watch. Talk to your teachers. You will learn a lot about them if you just start a conversation. You can learn a lot from the adults in the Illiana building and most of it isn’t from the textbooks.

Maybe you are like me and have a longer commute to school than most. I live about 25 minutes from Illiana and sometimes the drive seems to take forever. Even if you aren’t a morning person, try singing your favorite songs to start the day. Or make it a weekly habit to stop at your favorite coffee shop once. Making the most of the drive will make it feel a lot shorter. Perhaps you ride the bus to school. Try to talk to somebody new. You might make a friend but maybe you won’t. But you will never know unless you branch out.

Maybe your mom takes you to school. Next time she drives you, leave the AirPods in your pocket and have a conversation with her. Enjoy the time you get to spend together now because you will regret it if you don’t. If an upperclassman drives you to school, get to know them. Ask for advice. And if you are the upperclassman driving the underclassmen, take the extra step to get to know them.

However you get to school, and however long it takes, remember to be grateful that we can attend a Christian school. Some of us may be going to a public university next year, so for now enjoy every Bible class and chapel.

Don’t think of it as something that’s required; instead think of it as something we are lucky to be a part of. And maybe if we just listen—in chapel, in class, in life—God will start showing up in places we would never have expected.



New trees and bushes appeared on Illiana’s campus this month.
Photo by Jeff DeVries

New landscaping creates windbreak, beautifies campus

Angelica Voyles

Reporter

In the final week of October, Illiana began planting new landscaping around various areas of the campus.

Head custodian Duane Kamstra, who takes part in the landscaping process, explained that the school asked VanRyn Architects to draw up landscaping plans that would beautify and better serve the campus. Those plans are not being put into action.

The school has chosen to split the work between two landscaping contractors: Apple Grove and Plum Valley. Along the east driveway, we will start to see more evergreen trees. People should also notice new trees and shrubbery nearby the baseball and softball fields and the tennis courts.

Kamstra said, “It’s going to look real nice.”

Peter Boonstra, the principal, is excited about the new landscaping. He is a big fan of the evergreen trees so he is very intrigued to see what it’s going to look like when the young trees mature in a few years.

The design reason for the trees is for them to create a type of wind break since the area is more known for being a tornado zone. In fact, a small tornado did pass across campus last year, taking down the south fence of the tennis courts. The new vegetation should help to mitigate some of the wind.

Boonstra explained the campus “wasn’t quite what it could be,” but added that the new landscaping will “help beautify campus” and that he’s “excited for it to all come together.”

Hand dryer hygiene less effective than paper towels

Kayla Bosman

Reporter

A viral tik tok video displayed an experiment in which a petri dish was placed beneath a bathroom hand dryer to collect bacteria. Millions have watched the video to see the experiment’s results. The video displayed colonies of bacteria growing in the petri dishdays of exposure to public air dryers.

This video, done by Dalin Lewis a digital content creator, may be relatively new, but the science behind it is backed up by many studies, reports and articles starting in the 2000s. A report done by the National Library of Medicine incorporated many different reports, one coming from the School of Biosciences at the University of Westminster London. That study concluded that “the performance of both the warm air dryer and the jet air dryer was inferior to paper towels in . . .bacterial numbers on the hands, bacterial

contamination of the air flow and surfaces of the devices, and transmission of bacteria in the washroom. . . .”

The overall conclusion to the National Library of Medicine article, backed by 67 references, was that “paper towels should be recommended for use in locations in which hygiene is paramount, such as hospitals and clinics.”

A 2018 report from the Harvard Health Blog said that more recent studies revealed that the bacteria exposure is largely from the air dryers pulling bacteria from the air and moving it through the dryers. Adding HEPA filters helped to reduce the bacteria content in petri dishes by 75%.

According to the website of Excel dryer (the brand hanging in Illiana’s bathrooms), HEPA filters are an optional attachment that eliminates 99.9% of viruses based on their own studies.

Illiana’s hand dryers do not include the HEPA filter.



Photo by Danielle Rancier

Illiana has chosen air dryers over paper towels.

Illiana beefs up security on campus

Sophia Oostema

Reporter

Illiana Christian High School has employed new safety features earlier this school year including a new building security system, a new visitor protocol, a police presence, and a student parking tag requirement.

The newest safety precaution mainly affects visitors. As soon as guests arrive at Illiana, they must enter through the north doors by the main offices. Visitors are required to show an

the building.

Principal Peter Boonstra sent an email to parents and students in late September stating, “We have been working with local law enforcement and others to implement measures that improve security without tarnishing our welcome.”

Another safety upgrade includes requiring parking tags for student drivers. Although Illiana has been requiring these for years, Illiana has become more strict this current year. If students do not visibly show their current parking tag, detentions will be given.

identification document (like a drivers license) in order to visit Illiana. This i.d. is scanned in order to provide a personalized visitor sticker that the person must wear for the duration of the visit.

The scan will allow the school to carry out a background check on the guest which would checks if the they have a public record or if they are a registered sex offender. This ensures that any visitor is not a threat to students or staff. After the visit is over, guests must check out in the office and proceed to leave

All student drivers must have a current parking tag on display in their cars.

Almost everyday, police officers also patrol Illiana halls, mainly during break and passing periods, to ensure that Illiana is as safe as possible for its students. Boonstra stated that it is necessary for the officers to know the layout of the building, just in case an emergency occurs.

Boonstra stated, “Thanks for your cooperation as we work together to make sure Illiana continues to be a safe and secure place for our children.”

Illiana gives middle schoolers ‘sneak peak’

Lydia O’Riley
Reporter

The 2022 Illiana Preview was held on Thursday, Nov. 10. Illiana Preview is an event Illiana has been having for at least eight years to attract potential students. This fall boasted 110 people representing 40 families in attendance.

Illiana Preview is an open house when 7th and 8th graders (with their parents) from any school can come and see Illiana. Mrs. Jenna Dutton, Director of Admissions, said, “Preview shows families what goes on here whether that be behind the scenes, like tuition, but also shows off what Illiana has to offer. Not just academics, it’s things like athletics, art, hydroponics, etc.”

Illiana held ten breakout sessions from which parents and students could pick three sessions

that they were interested in and attend them. “A lot of families are going to choose tuition and financial assistance because that is a big thing, but if you aren’t interested in something, such as sports, we aren’t going to go and make you sit through the athletic session,” said Dutton. The students and parents could pick between art, athletics, missions, tuition and finances, student (spiritual) life, S.T.E.M., and more.

Ava Kramer, an eighth grader at Crown Point Christian School said after previewing Illiana, that she was looking forward S.T.E.M. classes and to the extracurriculars such as volleyball.

Addy Mills, an eighth grader at Highland Christian School, said, “I’m most interested in the chance to meet new friends and be active in sports.”



Director of Admissions, Jenna Dutton speaks to prospective Illiana families.

Photo by Jeff DeVries



Illiana graduate Jason Schutt plays soccer with local boys from Uganda in 2018.

Photo courtesy of Sara Johnson

Misson trip program returns to Uganda

Emily Bantsolas
Reporter

Illiana on Missions is traveling to Uganda this upcoming summer after deciding to return to international travel.

After taking a two year hiatus from international mission trips, Illiana on Missions made the decision to return to international travel with a trip to Uganda.

Sara Johnson, Illiana on Missions Director, said, “We

have to consider a lot of factors when planning these trips and one of them is what happens if we get ‘stuck’ in the country we’ve traveled to. By moving the international trips to the summer, and by making sure we travel to people who can house us should something happen, we’ve created a situation in which we can try to travel internationally again.”

The plans for the trip are still being developed but during this

trip, students will hopefully visit orphanages, schools, and a crisis pregnancy center. On the student’s away day, they hope to visit Uganda national parks and go on a safari.

Johnson hopes this trip will impact the students and chaperones who attend.

“Anytime you can step into a larger world,” Johnson says, “you are growing in your own understanding of God and who he is, in your relationships with God’s cre-

ation and his people, and with the world in general.”

Originally, Illiana on Missions had plans to travel to Ireland in the summer of 2023; however, the plans for that trip fell through. Johnson hopes to be able to travel to Ireland in the summer of 2024.

In addition to the trip to Uganda, Illiana on Missions will also send students to the Dominican Republic to work with the Pathway to Jesus School.

Praise crowd raises money with taco dinner

Tristen Bell
Reporter

Students, parents, and outside guests convened at Illiana and joined in the commons Saturday afternoon, Nov. 5, to have a relaxing dinner at the annual Praise Crowd Taco Dinner.

The dinner featured beef and chicken tacos, Spanish rice, chips

and salsa, and ice cream and brownies for dessert. This event is a fundraiser for Praise Crowd, an opportunity for students to gather and worship together outside of school time.

The money raised at the dinner funds various activities Praise Crowd does including buying students food for Praise Crowd breakfasts, buying instruments and sound equipment,

and purchasing seniors Bibles as a departing gift.

Mrs. Rachel Drost, who sponsors Praise Crowd along with Mr. Davids, said Praise Crowd is enjoyable because she “loves to see students worship Jesus.”

People who attended the Taco Dinner voiced positive feedback about the food and the event itself

while also giving some suggestions that could help improve the dinner. Alyssa Buxton, a Sophomore student, said that the food was good and that the “desert was incredible.”

Sophomore Atikilt Bosman said she enjoyed the tacos, but she disliked the Spanish rice.

The event raised \$12,900 dollars for Praise Crowd.

Science Department bids farewell to lab snake

Grace Jania
Editor-in-Chief

Recently, Mr. Haan’s classroom snake, Benjamin, found another home at Olivet Nazarene University to be a part of the zoology department, possibly even in reptile shows.

After having him for an estimated 3 years, according to Haan, he chose to get rid of the snake because he “wasn’t being taken care of as well as he needed to be.” Haan also needed to counter space for labs and other classroom activities.

Haan sent Benjamin off to explore the next chapter of his life, but back at Illiana, the science teacher decided to pull a little prank on the other teachers. He sent out an email explaining the situation in truth, leaving out the detail that Benjamin was safe at Olivet.

Some staff members jumped to conclusions and freaked out, thinking that Benjamin was slithering down the halls and climbing the stairs. Haan came clean the day after the email and told them that the snake was gone.

Benjamin will be missed, but always appreciated.



Photo courtesy of Wikipedia

The real Thanksgiving story

Lucas VanderWoude

Arts Editor

Everyone knows the story of the first Thanksgiving. In 1620, Pilgrims from England who sought religious freedom came to Plymouth Rock on a ship called the Mayflower. However, after a brutal winter and many outbreaks of disease, only a half of the original pilgrims who were on the ship were alive. All hope seemed lost, when unexpectedly a Native American named Squanto,

who seemingly by a miracle spoke English, decided to help them. He taught them how to catch fish and plant corn, and also helped them strike a treaty with the Wampanoag tribe.

Pilgrims viewed Squanto's arrival as an act of providence, and he most certainly was, but his story actually serves to show the seamy underbelly to the first Thanksgiving story. Squanto's childhood life is mostly unknown, but the World History Encyclopedia confirms

that when the explorer John Smith came to America, Squanto was seized by one of his men, Thomas Hunt, in 1614. He was then taken to Malaga, Spain, and sold as a slave. He escaped or won his freedom in Spain, went to England, learned English, and became a shipbuilder and an interpreter. He went with a man named Thomas Dermer on a trade mission as an interpreter to North America, only to find that his entire village had been ravaged by disease (most likely smallpox)

brought by European traders to the Native Americans, who had no immunity to it nor any medicine to cure it.

In short, Squanto's story does highlight an important alliance between Pilgrims and Native Americans and a moment of peace, but it also gives evidence of the negative effects that European colonists had on the Native Americans and the terrible things that they did to them, facts which are often ignored when the Thanksgiving story is told.

New take on this year's Thanksgiving dinner

Kailyda Anderson

Sports Editor

We all know the common dishes for Thanksgiving: turkey, stuffing, yams, green bean casserole, pumpkin pie. But what about uncommon dishes? Food that no one would ever even think about eating on Thanksgiving? The Echo sent out a survey to the student body asking what "unique" dishes people are eating this Thanksgiving. At senior Angelica Voyles house, the serve a dish called Danish red cabbage or rødkål. She says this dish is made by her grandmother who is from Denmark but moved to America when she was little. Her grandmother makes this every Thanksgiving. Next is a funny response sent in by junior Chase

Doctor. He said his family eats pizza for Thanksgiving. The recipe they use is quite unique itself. They get in the car, drive to Aurelio's, order the pizza, and eat it. He stated, "It's supposed to be Italian, and we've eaten it forever." Now the next one sounds very delicious. This one was sent in by Isabella Engler, junior. She called it ice cream jello. You mix ice cream with jello before refrigerating it, layer a few flavors, and boom, ice cream jello is made. She said her grandma made it once and since then has made it every year. Have you ever heard of pretzel jello? Gise Gibson, junior, recommends this and in his own words thinks it is "quite scrumptious." It includes three different layers with a certain type of cream

cheese filling on the bottom, mashed up pretzels in the middle, and strawberry jello on the top. "Muy bien," he stated. You're in for a shocker with this next one. Sent in by Andrew Pluymert, his unique Thanksgiving dish is...wait for it...turkey! For the recipe, he simply stated "turkey", and where it originated from, he put "pilgrims". Wow Andrew! This sounds so good! And finally, the most interesting recipe. Felicity Nieves sent in a dish called pasteles. It is green bananas stuffed with seasoned pork, wrapped in a banana leaf. She said it is a Puerto Rican side dish that her family eats for most holidays. Have you ever heard of pasteles? Sounds like it is worth trying this year.



Photo courtesy of North Wild Kitchen
Angelica Voyles enjoys her grandma's rødkål every Thanksgiving



Photo courtesy of The Urban Matter
Chase Doctor and his family order Aurelio's for their Thanksgiving feast

Recipe for Puerto Rican pasteles by The Spruce Eats

- Ingredients:**

For the Pork Filling:

 - 2 pounds pork shoulder, diced
 - 2 tablespoons olive oil
 - 4 small sweet peppers, chopped
 - 1 small onion, chopped
 - 2 tablespoons recaito, or Puerto Rican sofrito sauce
 - 4 cloves garlic, minced
 - 1 tablespoon adobo seasoning
 - 1 tablespoon ground oregano
 - 1 bay leaf
- For the Masa Dough:

 - 4 pounds yautía, or malanga, peeled
 - 6 green plantains
 - 1 clove garlic, minced
 - 2 tablespoons recaito
 - 1 tablespoon kosher salt
 - 1 teaspoon achiote oil

For the Wrapping:

 - 1 tablespoon achiote oil
 - Kosher salt, for boiling water

Recipe:

Step one: Make the pork filling

First, brown the pork in a large skillet with olive oil. Add the sweet peppers, chopped onion, recaito, garlic, adobo, oregano, and bay leaf, while stirring well. Cook until the pork is no longer pink inside. Remove the bay leaf from the mixture and set aside to cool.

Step two: make the masa dough

In a large bowl, grate the peeled yautía and the green plantains (or cleaned and peeled yuca). Use disposable gloves, as uncooked plantains will stain your hands and kitchen towels. Then, blend the grated roots in a food processor until creamy. Place the masa over a cheesecloth or a fine-mesh sieve for at least three hours so the excess moisture drips out. Once the masa is ready, stir in the garlic, recaito, salt, and enough

of the achiote oil to moisten the dough and add a little color. The dough is now ready to assemble and wrap the pasteles.

Step three: wrap the pasteles

First, prepare 20 (10 x 5-inch) banana leaves, 20 (8 x 4-inch) rectangles of parchment paper, and 20 (18-inch) pieces of kitchen string. Next, for each pastel, lay out a piece of parchment paper, topped with 1 piece of banana leaf. Brush achiote oil in a rectangular shape on the center of the banana leaf. Spread 1 1/2 to 2 spoonfuls of masa onto the center of the leaf. Add 1 spoonful of pork filling and top with another spoonful of masa. Bring the edges of the banana leaf over the top of the pork filling. Then repeat with the other side of the banana leaf so that the masa completely covers the top of the filling. Bring the

edges of the banana leaf together and fold down over the top. Fold the edges of the banana leaf underneath the package. Bring the top and bottom edges of the parchment paper over the top and fold or roll down the edges to make a horizontal seam. Tuck the ends under. Tie with a string in both directions.

Step four: cook the pasteles

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Place the pasteles in the water, making sure they are submerged. Reduce the heat and simmer for 1 hour. Using tongs, remove the pasteles from the boiling water. Carefully cut the string of each and very carefully open the banana leaves and parchment paper.



Photo courtesy of The Spruce Eats

How much is too much?

The realities of caffeine abuse

Cameron Evers
Feature Editor

The most widely used drug in America can be seen as a normal part of many Americans’ daily routines. Caffeine is used regularly by 80% of Americans, but do they know how much is too much? Without knowing daily limits, it is easy to abuse the addictive drug.

For example, some Illiana students can be seen sipping on a Bang Energy drink. Drinking this 16 oz can packed with 300 mg of caffeine triples the recommended daily limit for teenagers of 100 mg, suggested by The American Academy of Pediatrics.

Some other popular drinks around campus are 3D energy drinks (200 mg), Celsius energy drinks (200 mg), Dunkin medium iced coffee (200 mg), and grande Starbucks iced lattes (150 mg). All of these popular drinks exceed the teenage 100 mg daily limit. Most popular brands of pop are under

the suggested 100 mg limit, but drinking more than one can a day is an easy way to overdose. Although drinking these drinks on occasion will likely not cause any lasting health effects, consuming excess caffeine daily can be damaging to one’s health.

The Mayo Clinic reported that some signs of caffeine overdose are headaches, nervousness, irritability, fast heartbeat, muscle tremors, insomnia, and frequent urination or inability to control urination. These are not the only side effects that come with caffeine abuse, and some Illiana students, when they have had a high dosage of caffeine, have reported the previously mentioned symptoms and also the following ones : itchy/tingling feelings, jitters, blurred vision, anxiety, light-headedness, stomach aches, and nausea.

Robert Reeder, a sophomore, said, “I have felt heart palpitations and I felt like I was losing control of my mind as it was working at speeds that I am not used

to working at.” Due to this unsettling reaction, Reeder said, “I vowed never again to drink coffee when I wasn’t tired that day.”

While harsh reactions may be visible for some, other Illiana students reported that they have never felt any unusual side effects after consuming high doses of caffeine. The Mayo Clinic’s website said that sensitivity to caffeine varies from person to person: “How you react to caffeine may be determined in part by how much caffeine you’re used to drinking. People who don’t regularly drink caffeine tend to be more sensitive to its effects.”

No matter your sensitivity to caffeine, University of Michigan reported that adolescents are more subject to the harsh effects of caffeine abuse, and long-term effects of caffeine abuse are real such as chronic insomnia, anxiety, diarrhea, an increase in blood pressure, and dehydration.



Common Grounds addresses students’ caffeine requests

Cameron Evers
Feature Editor

Illiana Christian High School offers students an on-campus coffee shop, Common Grounds, giving students easy access to snacks and drinks. Common Ground’s dual purpose name is a play on words that points to the coffee shop’s coffee

“grounds” and the community that can build from drinking coffee with others.

Janna VanEssen, Director of Student Life, works with Illiana parent, Natasha Corcoran, in deciding Common Ground’s menu. VanEssen said, “Among other things, Common Grounds provides coffee, iced coffee, chocolate milk, and protein drinks if students need a lit-

tle extra energy!”

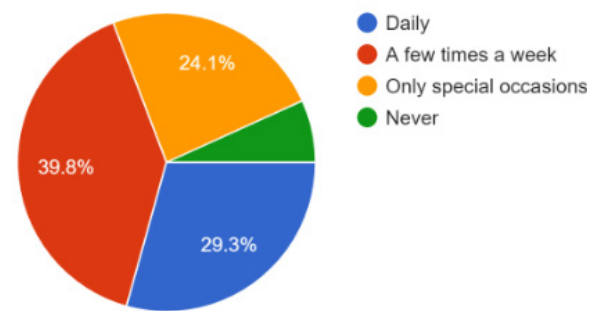
Carol Van Drunen, Common Grounds Director, noted that, “Students, of course, love the Starbucks frappuccinos” and they quickly became one of the best selling drinks in the shop. VanDrunen also noted that students tend to buy caffeinated beverages much more frequently than Illiana staff

members.

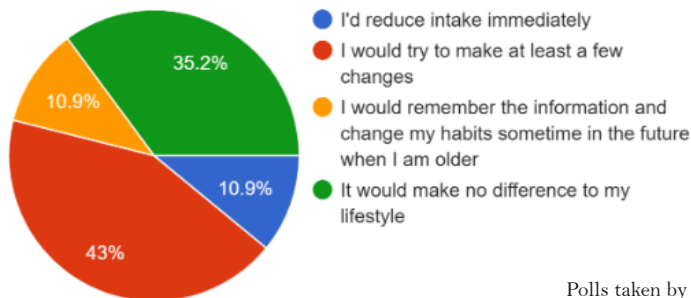
She has also received multiple requests to start selling pop and energy drinks to give more options for caffeinated beverages. VanDrunen isn’t opposed to selling pop at all, she even said, “We would love to sell pop, people always ask us to sell pop and we even sell pop in concessions.”

Although she isn’t against the addition of pop and would even consider adding energy drinks to the menu, she hasn’t received permission to do so. In response to the requests, VanEssen said, “We don’t anticipate selling pop or energy drinks at Common Grounds. As a school, Illiana has made an effort to have pop only

How often do you drink caffeine?



If confronted with solid scientific research suggesting reducing caffeine intake would improve your health, how willing would you be to change your habits?



Polls taken by Echo staff

Illiana students’ caffeine habits

Cameron Evers
Feature Editor

In a November Echo poll, 133 students out of 501 responded to a survey about caffeine intake. 53 students reported that they drink caffeine a few times a week (39.8% of respondents), 39 reported that they drink caffeine daily (29.3% of respondents), 32 students said they only drink caffeine on special occasions (24.1% of respondents), and only 9 students responded that

they never drink caffeine (6.8% of respondents).

The most popular ways students consume caffeine were coffee and soda, both receiving 82 responses. Behind these drinks were energy drinks with 49 respondents and tea with 41. 21 respondents also reported using pre-workout supplements.

When asked why they drink caffeine, 98 respondents said they like the taste of caffeinated drinks. 73 respondents said they drink it for energy. 51 respondents said they drink it if they

don’t get enough sleep.

If confronted with proof of solid scientific research proving that reducing caffeine intake would improve human health, 55 students (43% of respondents) said they would try to make at least a few changes. 45 students (35.2% of respondents) said that they would make no changes to their lifestyle. Only 14 students (10.9% of respondents) said they would reduce their intake immediately, and 14 other students said they would consider making changes in the future.

‘Father of the Bride’ showered with positivity

Fall play receives positive reactions, students show talent for acting

Giannia O’Neal-Schultz

Reporter

The Illiana Drama Department had its annual fall play on Nov 3-5. The name of the play was “The Father on the Bride.” The comedy showed the struggles and the stress that come with planning a wedding.

This year the auditions occurred the first week of school and rehearsal started Aug. 22. The cast prepared for the play by doing a read through, working on vocal depression and character, working on physical expression, blocking (laying out the scenes), and finally adding tech and costumes.

Illiana’s Drama Department has long prided itself on creating a strong community among the people involved. Freshman Renee McClenahan, a makeup crew member, said “The play was really good. I liked it, I made a lot of new friends and I enjoyed being around new people. I’m excited for next year’s play because I get to do it all again.”



Photo by Jeff DeVries

Junior Korina Johnson and sophomore Isabella Girolimon play caterers who drive seniors Ryan Smith and Audrey Yonkman as Mr. and Mrs. Banks crazy.

According to director Jeff DeVries, this play offered several challenges, including a lot of difficult memorization for a few actors. The cast also

had to work to try not to lose track of the humor.

“It’s hard when you do a comedy,” DeVries said, “because when you rehearse it over and over, it starts to lose the humor for you. But our students did great. Comedic timing and expression were spot-on, and they fed off the energy of a live audience. Everyone did a great job.”

Victoria VanderZee, a sophomore member of the props crew, said, “I really liked how Mr. Banks is attached to Kay and how he wants to keep her with him, and I also enjoyed props running for the play.”

The play received a lot

of positive reactions from the audience and crew.

Sophomore Kendall Van-Prooyen, a props crew member, said, “I thought the play was a lot of fun; it went really well and I heard from a lot of people that they laughed a lot during the play.”

Sophomore Addison Lanting, who attended the play, said “I really liked the entire thing, especially the arguing between the parents. It was really funny. I want to be a part of the play next year.”

Community member Jeremiah Wilson, who attended the play said, “The play was amazing! This was the first school play I have watched at Illiana, and I don’t regret it at all.”

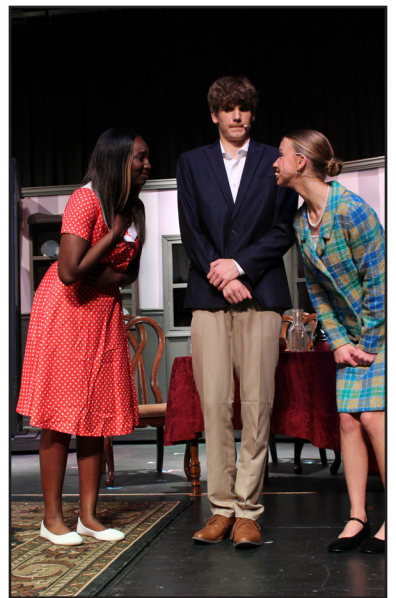


Photo by Jeff DeVries

Students Danielle Rancifer, Elliot Vander Griend, and Audrey Yonkman perform during the Friday, November 4 performance.



Photo by Jeff DeVries

In another scene from the play, sophomore Adia Falvey cracks under the pressure, with Janna van Belle and Levi Sliemers looking on.

Students satisfy craving for Commons sandwiches

Lucas VanderWoude

Arts Editor

An Illiana Common Grounds item served only on Mondays is proving very popular among students this year--the breakfast sandwich.

The sandwiches are Jimmy Dean breakfast sandwiches purchased at Sam’s Club by the Common Grounds staff. Their original price is \$13.58 for 12 sandwiches, and Common Grounds sells them for \$2 apiece. Common Grounds started serving them during the 2nd year of the new building, which was

the 2019-2020 school year. The Common Grounds staff used to only sell the biscuit sandwiches, but when those started to get soggy after sitting in the cooker for a long time, they started to buy mostly croissant sandwiches.

The sandwiches sell very well among the students. According to Carol Van Drunen, the Common Grounds manager, Common Grounds has sold 120 sandwiches every Monday since the 3rd week of school. “We used to serve bagels on Mondays,” said Van Drunen, “but when we started selling the breakfast sandwiches, they sold better than the

bagels, so we replaced the bagels with breakfast sandwiches eventually.” The Common Grounds staff is currently using all but one of the school’s oven shelves to cook the sandwiches, and Van Drunen thinks that the maximum amount that they could cook at one time would be 150 sandwiches.

Many students at Illiana purchase the breakfast sandwiches regularly, “They feel like a special treat because they are only served one day a week,” said Addison Bandstra, a senior.

“I usually don’t eat at home, so they’re a good breakfast,” said Audrey Yonkman, another senior.



Photo by Lucas Vander Woude

A student grabs a tasty breakfast sandwich from Common Grounds before school.

Cheer team competes at state competition

Kailyda Anderson
Sports Editor

On Nov. 5, Illiana Christian’s cheer team traveled to New Castle, Indiana, and captured fourth place in the state competitive cheer championships.

The weekend started off with a walk out on Friday through the hallways with the student body (and Victor the Viking) present. Lots of cheering supported the girls while they walked past their peers. Throughout the season, they’ve had so many supporters. Two of their main supporters are Mr. Fenema and Mr. Bosman.

“Mr. Bosman always asked me how our competitions were, and was probably our biggest cheerleader,” senior Audrey Girolimon stated. They felt very confident when leaving and were in a good headspace.

On the bus ride there, the team bonded. “We took naps, laughed, and made Tik Toks all the way there. We were very excited,” said Rylee Klee, a senior. Upon arrival at the competition, the atmosphere all together was very positive.

“Our competitors were very supportive,” Klee added, “and we’ve been close with them the entire season.



Photo courtesy of Illiana Cheer Instagram
Illiana’s cheer team gathers around the fourth place trophy.

We try to be friends with everyone because without positivity, the atmosphere feels completely different.”

Of the eight teams in their division. Illiana placed fourth overall.

“Our coach [Carissa

Beezhold] was loving and supportive throughout the whole season. If she was ever nervous, she never let it show. Right after we were done performing, she hugged us right away. She was never upset or angry if we messed up,” Girolimon emphasized.

The girls enjoyed a small “celebration” dinner before heading to the competition. “Even if we didn’t win, we knew the season was worth celebrating. We were very proud of ourselves and did not care what the outcome was,” Klee said.

The girls will enjoy a team dinner at school in the weeks ahead.



Photo by Jim Kamphuis
Coach Taylor Zea talks with the girls on his freshman team, the first freshman girls team to play for ICHS in a few years.

Girls basketball has new coaches, new team

Kelsee Smit
Reporter

Illiana’s girls basketball program has experienced growth this year with the return of a freshman team. New coaching staff is also leading the way.

Athletic Director Mr. Darren DeBoer believes that the increase in numbers is due to the bigger freshman class. He also attributes the decrease in girls’ basketball numbers all over the country in recent years to the growth of club sports. Even at the high school level, because of club sports, many athletes dedicate themselves to one sport that they play year-round.

Coach Denise Van Ryn, who has been coaching for 10 years and was previously the JV girl coach, fills the role of varsity

head coach with Coach Raleigh West as her assistant coach. Previous varsity coach Lisa Blocker stepped down to spend more time with family.

Van Ryn said, “Coach Blocker has given so many incredible years to Illiana girl’s basketball. I can tell you all that she loves her female athletes and the program.”

Aubrey Colvin, the new junior varsity coach, has 6 years of coaching experience previously as a coach at TF North, TF south, and Chicago Christian High School. Her goal is to “Be God’s light in the gym and every other gym that we go to, for the girls to become better basketball players and athletes, and hopefully to get some wins throughout the season.”

Taylor Zea, the new fresh-

men team’s coach, has 9 years of coaching experience at the middle and high school levels. Zea is currently a teacher at Lowell High School. He said his goal for the freshman, in particular, is to build their game where they can be successful at the next level of play.

Another addition is Gabby Kreykes, an Illiana alumni and a very experienced basketball player, who serves as a program assistant. Van Ryn said, “We brought her on to coach, to bring her experiences to our athletes and help program wide.”

Van Ryn added, “I truly believe that because of these five seniors and their perseverance, positive attitudes, and love for the game they have ignited excitement and energy back into playing basketball at Illiana.”

Girls wrestling program doubles in size

Marissa Krause
Reporter

Girls wrestling has been growing in popularity across the nation and Illiana Christian’s own girls wrestling program has doubled its size since last year.

Illiana’s girls wrestling program gained about 10 girls this year, with only two returning from the previous season.

According to nwcaonline.com, “Womens wrestling is one of the fastest growing sports at scholastic and collegiate levels.”

“IHSAA is in the process of sanctioning girls wrestling as a standalone sport in the state of Indiana,” said girls wrestling coach Matt VanderLaan. 34 states already have girls wrestling programs with their own sanctioned state championships.

Many girls found this sport through another friend and other social media platforms. When asked about the growth of the sport, VanderLaan said, “It’s not surprising. Wrestling has always been a super inclu-

sive sport.... People of any size can do it...; blind people can do it, deaf people can do it; people who are missing limbs can do it.”

VanderLaan is committed to the idea of growing womens wrestling and making a name for it here at Illiana. “We’ve already made a name for ourselves in this sport. We’ve had girls at state for the last four years. I want to keep that going. I want to keep that growing.”

Sophomore Hannah Hammer, who returns this year, said, “It’s really a great thing to see because not a lot of girls know about this sport. So I feel like if more of us start going up there then more people will see [that] girls can do something that’s typically something boys are usually seen as doing.”

The wrestling program separates girls and guys, although some of the guys may have come across a match with a girl or two. “It’s not weird.. it’s not like nerve wracking. It’s kind of more like I don’t want to lose,” said sophomore Josh Rozendal.

Athletic Department auction raises big money

Grace Jania
Editor-in-Chief

Illiana’s annual sports auction took place on Saturday night, Nov. 12, in the gym. The event was a success, with the profit from the auction exceeding its goal.

The money raised goes towards the general athletic fund,

which can be used to purchase uniforms and equipment, make facility improvements, and pay the staff and officials who work at the games.

\$2,000 was raised at concessions for Missions, and \$17,465 was raised with the Raise Your Paddle live auction.

The athletic department is in

charge of the event, and athletes in winter sports are required to help out in shifts throughout the night to keep it running smoothly.

“We also received a lot of help from Mrs. West, who works in the office,” said Athletics Assistant Bonnie Trepton. “We couldn’t do an auction like this without help.”

Some items are donated, and

some were purchased with money donations.

In preparation for the auction, the athletic department purchases some of the items a year in advance; it focuses on looking for new items to add to the auction.

Trepton is in charge of handling all the items and putting together the winter sports book,

which involves collecting advertising from all the donors and selecting pictures for the book.

Trepton and Athletic Director Darren DeBoer said that what they enjoy most about the night is “seeing people from the Illiana community here in the building, visiting and catching up with each other. It’s a great night for the school.”

Editorial

Echo staff steps into Thanksgiving spirit

In celebration of Thanksgiving, the Echo staff were asked to share three specific things for which they are thankful.

Angelica Voyles

- 1. My family: They never fail to be there for me, especially my mom.
- 2. My friends: They are the funniest people I've ever met.
- 3. My dogs, Gin and Bella: I come to them after a long day of school and they are j happy to see me.

Cameron Evers

- 1. Chick-fil-A: It makes me happy and is very tasty.
- 2. Isaac VanderWoude: He always buys me Chick-fil-A. :)
- 3. My dog, Rocco: He is so cuddly and crazy, but he always calms me down and makes me laugh.

Dani Rancifer

- 1. Target: Being there in general just cheers me up.
- 2. My teachers who truly care about me, not just my grades, but how I feel.
- 3. My friends are people who care about me so much.

Emily Bantsolas

- 1. Sophia Oostema: She is a great homeroom buddy and makes me laugh every day.
- 2. Grace Van Ek who is one of the funniest people I know.
- 3. Family baseball group chat: We always make fun of Tony La Russa together.

Giannia O'Neal-Schultz

- 1. My family: They teach me how to be a good person.

- 2. Music has always been something that I have loved.
- 3. My friends who make me laugh and give me good advice.

Grace Jania

- 1. Taylor Swift: She wrote "All Too Well (10 Minute Version)," the best song of all time.
- 2. Dani Rancifer: She's the best dancing partner.
- 3. Makenzie Mulderink: Everything she says cracks me up.

Kailyda Anderson

- 1. God: He has blessed me in so

drugs.

Kelsee Smit

- 1. Mr. DeVries: Every morning he greets me with a smile
- 2. My family: They always support me in what I do and help shape me into who I am today.
- 3. Ms. Behn: She made soccer fun and grew my love for the sport.

Korina Johnson

- 1. The theater program: It's helped me get to know more people I can count on.

Lydia O'Riley

- 1. My parents: They are my biggest supporters and always encourage me to do my best.
- 2. My dog, Maisy: She is the craziest dog, but she always brightens my day.
- 3. Mr. Zandstra: He makes homeroom really fun and exciting.

Marissa Krause

- 1. My brother: He's always been there with me through thick and thin.
- 2. Sports: They help me cope with negative feelings, and help strengthen my bonds with others.
- 3. Haily Farmer: She is like my sister; she never fails to make me laugh.

Sophia Oostema

- 1. Taylor Stasny who is the funniest person. She is the best swing dancing partner.
- 2. Grace Van Ek: She always drives me around and will always go to Culvers with me on the weekends.
- 3. Emily Bantsolas: She's my favorite homeroom and journalism buddy. She always makes me laugh.

Tristen Bell

- 1. My sister: Although she can be a smart aleck at times, I love her unconditionally.
- 2. My dad: He is like my foundation—he's funny, smart, and encouraging 24/7.
- 3. My mom: She is a caring individual who wants the best for me.

Seeing beauty in diversity

Imagine how it would be if everyone looked the same, walked the same way, and even talked the same. It sounds quite boring, doesn't it? Fortunately, this is not the case in the world. No matter how close you may seem to your best friend, or how much you might look like your mom or dad, we are all different in our own unique ways on the inside and out. Even the most identical set of twins have things that set them apart from each other. This is the beauty of diversity!



Kyla Bennett
Co-Sports Editor

Some people may not be familiar with the term diversity. Diversity is including or involving people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds. While diversity is mainly related to race and social issues, there is a broader conversation connected to this topic. Diversity can be the different genres of music people listen to, the food people eat for Thanksgiving, or even the way people greet someone daily. The list goes on and on. I am a firm believer that there is nothing wrong with differences in people. Just because it is something that you're not used to does not make it weird or wrong.

Though being curious about other people's ways of living life is a great thing to do, there is a fine line between curiosity and ignorance. Curiosity is when you discover something unknown, and it sparks your attention, so you begin to learn more about it. You're also experiencing that certain thing that interests you without being judgmental or biased. Ignorance is lacking maturity when you're learning something new. It also causes you to have a closed mindset. Unfortunately, we have all been victims of this.

Instead of drawing away from the things that seem untraditional to us, we should draw closer to get a better understanding. Doing this will change the way the society thinks about "sticking to the status quo" and only doing things that are familiar to your tradition.

For example, when I was in the second grade, I was best friends with a girl who was Asian. One day she brought sushi and seaweed for lunch and let me try it. When I tasted it, I wasn't a fan of sushi. I did like the seaweed though. Instead of turning my nose up or talking bad about the food, I explained to my friend that it wasn't my favorite, but I did enjoy trying it. This is a perfect example of the difference between curiosity and ignorance.

Diversity is not meant to brainwash you into thinking or acting the same way as someone else, but it should give you an open mind and different perspective on how other people think and act, opening you to the possibility of a change in your behavior and beliefs. If people were only limited to their style of living and way of thinking, there wouldn't be anything unique about each other. There are many benefits that come when people are around more diverse environments. Diversity allows people to build on different views and be inclusive of all the perspectives in the environment. This will also cause people to have better ideas, better experiences, and create better solutions. As a result of more diverse environments, people will be able to see the beauty of each other's differences!

“God has blessed me in so many ways.”



many ways and gives me strength to keep going.

- 2. My aunt: She lets me stay at her house during the week and buys me what I need.
- 3. My sister, Katiana: She is always a shoulder to cry on when I need her and goes everywhere with me so I'm not alone.

Kayla Bosman

- 1. Mr. DeVries: He has been a supporter of me; I feel blessed being in two of his classes.
- 2. Mr. Kamphuis: He has helped me grow my faith more than he'll ever know. He's my all time favorite teacher .
- 3. Omega Mart: It is my heaven. It's a grocery store, but it feels like being on drugs without

- 2. Audrey Yonkman, the most upbeat person who makes me want to be a better person.
- 3. Mr. Bosman, possibly the best teacher I have ever had.

Kyla Bennett

- 1. Music: It's my form of therapy.
- 2. My phone: It's so reliable and is always there for me when I'm antisocial! (LOL)
- 3. Chick-fil-A: nice people, the delicious food, and fair wages

Lucas Vander Woude

- 1. Alex Tambrini: a great Spire and AP Chem partner.
- 2. The Drama Department: A sometimes crazy, but always fun, group of people.
- 3. My low-stress, flexible job at ETC.

Have a happy Thanksgiving!))))



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

the Echo)))

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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.