

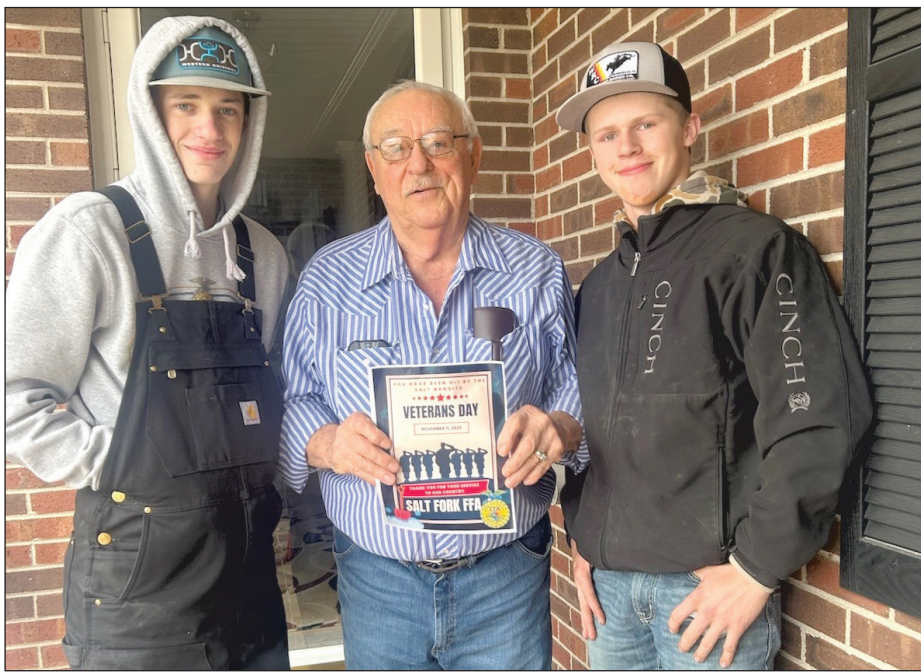


HIGH SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL

Powered by Danville Area Community College

AT THEIR SERVICE

'It was special to do something for them after what they did for me'



Fletcher Clem (left) and Henry Rivers (right) thanking a veteran after cleaning up his yard.



National Honor Society members (from left) Miley Pierce, Brycie Hird, Taylor Remole, Anna McCollum, Callie Richardson, Belle Torbit, Aidan Talbott and Morgan Russell.

Students at **SALT FORK HIGH SCHOOL** spent Veterans Day honoring those in the community in many ways. At the Veterans Breakfast, the National Honor Society decorated the gym, filled the veterans' plates, greeted them at the door and led them to their seats. The high school and fifth-grade chorus also performed a variety of patriotic songs. Later in the day, FFA members visited the houses of local veterans, cleaning up their yards and driveways. They raked leaves, shoveled snow and scraped the ice off of porches. FFA members also left behind bags of salt with a note of thanks. Said **Taylor Remole**: "Being able to help the veterans was very important and special because we were able to see all the people that put their lives on the line to keep us safe, and they all could come together in a happy place. While handing out food to the veterans, each one of them was very nice, and it was just special to do something for them after what they did for me!"

— Anna McCollum



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Meet the crew

This year's group includes 43 students from 42 schools (*visit [news-gazette.com](#) for our photo gallery*). We'll spotlight each correspondent in Top of the Morning on Wednesdays.



Academy High: Evie Price
ALAH: London Dugan
Arcola: Addee Mulligan
Armstrong: Aubrey Self
Bement: Kiana Hunter
BHRA: Lahna Benjamin
Blue Ridge: Karly Warner
Centennial: Kennedy Borden
Cerro Gordo: Alexa Rodgers
Champaign Central: Adelaide Kota
Chrisman: Morgan Simpson
Cissna Park: Sophia Duis
Danville: Rylee Jack
DeLand-Weldon: Nathan Smith

Fisher: Kesiah Musick
G-RF: Tiffany Taylor
GCMS: Addison Farmer
Heritage: Rylan White
Hoopeston Area: Willamina Clayton
Iroquois West: Traeh Kissack
Judah Christian: Jack Dalbey
LeRoy: Molly Scheuer
Mahomet-Seymour: Abigail Eden
Maroa-Forsyth: Aubrey Stewart
Milford: Kami Muehling
Monticello: Mady Melton
Oakland: Sophie VonLanken
Oakwood: Sophia Aquino

Paxton-Buckley-Loda: Brayden Kief
Rantoul: Tamia Bell
St. Joseph-Ogden: Katie Ericksen
St. Thomas More: Duncan Oliveira
Salt Fork: Anna McCollum
Schlarman: Isabella Bogen
Shiloh: Ali Cash
Sullivan: Lillian Moxley, Danica Bell
Tuscola: Claire Leonard
Uni High: Simrah Khan
Unity: Claire Meharry
Urbana: Ruby Pittenger
Villa Grove: Eva Piercy
Westville: Olivia Troglia



School tours

Carrying on a social-media tradition, each student will take over The News-Gazette's Snapchat account to go behind the scenes at their school. Last week, **Cissna Park's Sophie Duis** took us to volleyball state.



GIBSON CITY-MELVIN-SIBLEY INTRODUCING NEW INDUCTEES

Eight seniors and eight juniors were inducted into the **William M. Loy** chapter of the National Honor Society last week. The students were selected for exemplifying the four pillars of NHS: character, scholarship, leadership and service. The senior inductees were **Lane Byers, Maryn Berry, Addison Farmer, Aiden Killian, Alyssa Morgan, Trent Wetherall, Logan Ward and Jaxon Wright**. The junior inductees were **Jason Christensen, Kasen DeFries, Evan Killian, Josie Kleist, Kate McCall, Lilyan Sizemore, Londyn Rodrick and Graydon Leonard**.

— Addison Farmer



Uni High

On Saturday, Uni held the annual Illinois Junior Classical Latin Convention (JCL), an event focused on promoting student understanding of Greek and Roman cultures. It featured academic tests, workshops and Latin-themed Olympics involving events like gladiator fighting. 'It was super fun,' JCL participant and junior **Krishna Jaswal** said. 'I enjoyed putting my Latin knowledge to the test.'

— SIMRAH KHAN



Sullivan

Show choirs performed multiple songs as both the elementary school and high school hosted Veterans Day assemblies. Also, the National English Honor Society and English Language Arts sponsored a blanket and towel drive, collecting donations for local homeless and animal shelters.

— LILY MOXLEY



Chrisman

At the annual Veterans Day assembly, the band played patriotic songs while **Brad Ingram** and **Rick Jenness** spoke to the gathering. Ingram told of growing up in Chrisman and how it helped him in the military, and Jenness told about his experience in the military. **Breydon Butler** of Troop 6057 brought out the flag, and FFA members at the Chrisman American Legion served food to the veterans.

— MORGAN SIMPSON

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LeRoy

Last weekend, the Drama Club performed 'A Christmas Carol,' based on the famous novel written by **Charles Dickens**. The cast had been rehearsing since September. Librarian **Ashlie Marcy** directed the play with help from **Bridgette Wells** and **Heather Marshall**. From left, senior **Ian Bush** was the star of the show, playing the character of Scrooge. Senior **Henry Thayne** played Mr. Dickens. The Ghost of Christmas Past was played by senior **Addi Creech**, the Ghost of Christmas Present was played by freshman **Garrick Dean**, and the Ghost of Christmas Future was played by junior **Izzy Shivers**. Photos courtesy **Matt Shivers**.

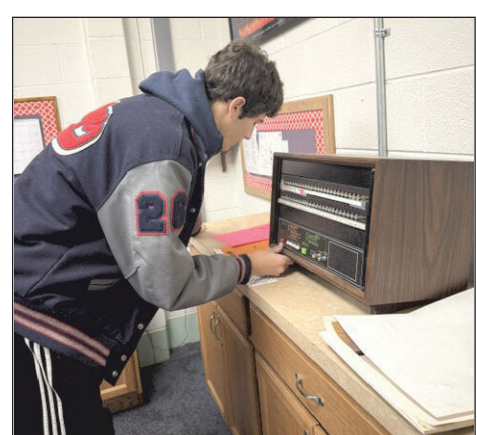
— MOLLY SCHEUER



MAHOMET-SEYMOUR 'MAKE YOUR BED'

At last Tuesday's Veterans Day assembly coordinated by the student council, choirs from each school participated. **David Fones** was the guest speaker. He was in the Navy for six years and taught and coached at Champaign Central for 28 years until he retired. Today, Fones is a substitute at Mahomet-Seymour schools. 'If you want to change the world, the first thing you should do, every morning, is MAKE YOUR BED. This shows you can do the simple things right, and if you can't do the simple things right, you can't do ANYTHING right,' he said.

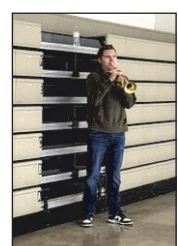
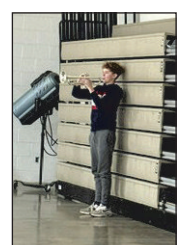
— Abby Eden



Heritage

As part of a Veterans Day assembly, **Joshua Stierwalt** led the morning announcements, including the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence. The chorus performed 'The Star-Spangled Banner' and 'In Flanders Fields.' Senior **Eli Denmark-Collins** read a speech in front of a crowd. Band director **Justin Lee** led the taps performance with senior **Lukas Miller** and freshman **Waylon Young** echoing it.

— RYLAN WHITE



St. Joseph-Ogden

At the annual Veterans Day assembly, students listened to incredible insight from speaker Lt. Col. **John Dwyer**, a Virginia Military Institute graduate (Class of 1996) who served two deployments (Kuwait and stateside). He now serves as the commander of the American Legion post in St. Joseph. This assembly was a great way to celebrate veterans, providing a moment of gratitude.

— KATIE ERICKSEN



Champaign Central

Drama students have been hard at work the past few weeks to put on their production of 'A Chorus Line: Teen Edition.' The cast (pictured via **Caroline Yu**) has been practicing their singing, dancing and acting; the crew has been hard at work ensuring scenes run smoothly; and the pit orchestra has been providing live music the whole way through. The show will run at 7 p.m. today, Friday and Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday.

— ADELAIDE KOT

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Schlarman

Over 1,000 food items were collected for World Kindness Day last Thursday. These items will be provided to local food pantries during a time when many community members face food insecurity.

— IZZY BOGEN



URBANA CULTURAL EXPERIENCE

Students in Spanish 7/8 spent a day in Chicago soaking in the culture at the National Museum of Mexican Art. The museum features Mexican and Chicano art. The group also enjoyed lunch at a nearby Mexican restaurant. The trip was a success (photos courtesy **Lillian Disanto**). Also, musical theater students helped create the setup (right) for the upcoming production of 'Bright Star.' The play with run today through Sunday.

— Ruby Pittenger



St. Thomas More

Veterans Day was celebrated at an all-school assembly with speaker **Tim Hogan**, a retired U.S. Marine and the father of senior **Riley Hogan**, giving a talk about honoring veterans in our community. St. Thomas More also had the Empty Bowl Supper, where students showcase their hidden talents and parents or others who come to watch can enjoy food and buy bowls made in ceramics class.

— DUNCAN OLIVEIRA



Centennial

Students in **Kara Down's** senior English class, taking a break from their regular programming, had the chance to meet **Stevie Pickles**, a wooly Siberian Husky trained as a therapy dog. Stevie will be visiting the school library more regularly with finals season just around the corner. Swim state qualifiers had a busy weekend, traveling to Westmont for the IHSA state meet. They were joined by swimmers from Mahomet-Seymour, Champaign Central and Sullivan (pictured).

— KENNEDY BORDEN

Cerro Gordo

This weekend, theater presents 'She Kills Monsters.' A blend between reality and fantasy, the play visits 1995 to depict one girl's attempt to connect with her sister. Student cast and crew include: **Alissa Johnson, Sabrina Sterling, Makenna Liming, Dillon Ridgeway, Aidan Miller, Tyler Sczselaszczyk, Ramie Shaffer, Olivia Sullivan, Lane Bolsen, Aubri Long, Lilly Johnson, Miranda Miller, Tiffani Howell, Autumn Gant, Maddie Callaway, Bri Puckett, Gracelynn Osborn and Aerabella Gordan** — as well as an interspersed miniconcert by **Ayden Tuel**.

— GRACELYNN OSBORN



BHRA

Sophomore **Lilly Johnson** qualified for the IHSA swimming and diving championships by recording an impressive 2:09.89 in the 200-yard individual medley and 59.37 in the 100-yard backstroke.

— LAHNA BENJAMIN

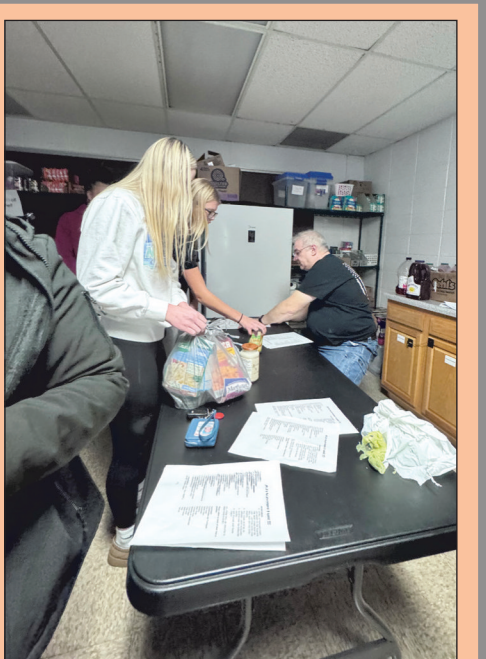
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Rantoul

Last Friday, student council had its yearly lock-in, a fun and productive overnight event where the members stayed at the school to plan upcoming activities and future events. The students played many games, bonded and enjoyed pizza — a memorable experience that brought them closer and helped build relationships. Photos courtesy **Evelynn Graham**.

— TAMIA BELL



WESTVILLE FOOD FRENZY

Last Thursday, student council held its yearly scavenger hunt to collect for the food pantry. Before the groups split off to collect food, they had a carry-in dinner. Members did a great job collecting an abundance of food.

— Olivia Troglia



Tuscola

To celebrate Veterans Day, the high school hosted an assembly to recognize veterans for their service. **Suzanne Rominger** gave a speech about her experiences and journey in the armed forces, and the high school and middle school choir performed patriotic music. Pictured, from left: **Savannah Taylor**, **Lanie Yantis** and **Emma Spillman**. Additionally, Students Against Destructive Decisions came together to put thoughtful and inspiring messages on sticky notes in students' lockers to promote positivity.



— CLAIRE LEONARD

Paxton-Buckley-Loda

The school's annual Veterans Day performance was presented at Clara Peterson Elementary, a local nursing home and the high school. During each performance, veterans were recognized for their service and the dedication they have shown to their country. The ceremony included the presenting of arms, a display of The Missing Man Table and musical selections performed by both the PBL band and color guard. Taps was performed by the high school band, with **Morgan Hilbert** playing trumpet. **Timothy Hess**, a retired U.S. Marine and former high school band director, once again served as the guest speaker, continuing his long-standing tradition of sharing meaningful reflections. Hess said this event is a powerful way for the community to come together and highlight those who fought, teaching everyone about the value of service and sacrifice: 'There's no better platform than this, because not only do we get to serve the community, but we also get to communicate and have a presence with the student body.'



— BRAYDEN KIEF

Bement

At the annual Veterans Day assembly, the school choir performed a variety of songs, including 'This Land Is Your Land.' Students took time to honor each branch of the military, showing their appreciation for those who have served. The event also recognized **McKenna Kindred**, winner of the junior U.S. history class Veterans Day essay. National Honor Society President **Ella Corum** spoke about the history of taps and led the moment of silence.



— KIANA HUNTER



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Unity

Student council raised money the past two weeks for its annual Thanksgiving Food Drive, purchasing food for families in need throughout the community. Student council members spent a day packing up and delivering food boxes to make sure everyone has a good meal as the holidays approach. Pictured (courtesy **Jennifer Meyer**): **Karleigh Jamison** (left) and **Sophia Schuckman** packing food boxes.

— **CLAIRE MEHARRY**



FISHER DESERVED RECOGNITION

At the National Honor Society induction and academic letter assembly, sophomores through seniors were recognized for their hard work and good grades! Also, **Ellie Emberson** finished 63rd out of 253 runners at the state cross-country meet.

— **Kesiah Musick**



Iroquois West

New members were inducted into adviser **Jillian King**'s chapter of the National Honor Society. The induction was sponsored by the Onarga Lions Club for the 65th year in a row and enjoyed a speech given by this year's guest speaker, Superintendent **Trent Eshelman**. The group welcomed six new hardworking and gifted members: **Kailey Vaske**, **Drew Talbert**, **Trenton Read**, **Kaia Kimmel**, **Ashton Eimen** and **Madi Clark**. The chapter has now grown to 16 members.

— **TRAEH KISSACK**



Oakwood

Despite being a short three-day week, students remained active and efficient. It started with an e-learning day — prompted by the first snowfall of the school year — followed by Veterans Day. **Gracie Hanner** was recognized as Comet of the Month, celebrating her positive influence and commitment to the community. **Sidney Dunavan** was acknowledged for showing integrity, the school's designated character trait of the month. **Sophia Hart** earned the title of Athlete of the Month, reflecting her hard work, sportsmanship and dedication. Adding to the excitement, select student-athletes from each winter sport were invited to participate in The News Gazette's annual 'Faces of Winter' event. These athletes had the opportunity to be interviewed, photographed, filmed and even featured on the radio. This was an honor that showcased not only their athletic abilities but also their representation of Oakwood pride.

— **SOPHIA AQUINO**



Arcola

The annual and well-attended Veterans Day assembly brunch was completely student-run.

— **ADDEE MULLIGAN**



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Danville

Last Thursday, the National Honor Society officially welcomed 60 new members. The ceremony included speeches from NHS media director **Brooklyn Warfield**, NHS Vice President of Service **Da'Sani Lewis** and guest speaker Danville alumna and NHS member **Amanda Norton**. Danville has been inducting members into NHS since 1995. The 30th group of inductees brings current membership to 110 students.

— RYLEE JACK



Hoopeston Area



The Drama Department took the stage last weekend for the school's first-ever Shakespeare production. Directed by **Kayden Gonzales**, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' brought a diverse cast of characters to the stage. Having never tackled Shakespeare before, students spent several rehearsals going through lines and learning the basic plot prior to ever working on the stage performance. Many cast members said it was a challenge but a great learning experience. They not only had

to work on delivering challenging lines but also delivering humor and emotion through their acting. Over the course of two nights, students delivered a confident and memorable performance. Pictured (courtesy **Ginger Gonzalez**): **Olive Clayton** as Puck; and **Hunter Warner** as Oberon and **Payton Homman** as Titania.

— WILLAMINA CLAYTON



Georgetown-Ridge Farm

Veterans and members of the community joined students and staff at the annual Veterans Day assembly, where breakfast was served by National Honor Society members. FFA students talked about the flag and its meaning and demonstrated how to properly fold it. NHS students talked about the POW/MIA table and its meaning. Band and choir also performed.

— TIFFANY TAYLOR



Academy High

Last Thursday, students had the opportunity to go on a field trip to the Culture Center of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in Chicago. This trip was organized by **Eileen Chen**, the Chinese language teacher. Students learned about Taiwan's history, traditions and culture and participated in activities like dancing and calligraphy. Photo by **Miriam Thompson**.

— EVIE PRICE

VILLA GROVE UNITY & GRATITUDE

The annual Veterans Day assembly brought the school community together to honor and celebrate those who have served. Kindergarten teacher **Marci Howard** organized the amazing program, coordinating presentations and performances from every elementary grade level. Band members **Sydney Bloom**, **Sarah Bloom**, **Allison Eisenmenger**, **Emma Elston** and **Wyatt Olivero** performed the service songs for each military branch, while Boy Scout Troop 50 members **Jace Bennett**, **Ryker Reyling**, **Owen Kneer** and **Cody Witte** respectfully presented the colors. Students from **Elizabeth Nieto's** Spanish III and IV classes recited the Pledge of Allegiance in Spanish, adding a thoughtful touch to the ceremony. Elementary students also held up coordinated pieces of colored paper to create a large American flag across the gym, offering a heartfelt display of unity and gratitude for local veterans.

— Eva Piercy



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Armstrong

On Nov. 7, students competed in the Potomac Grade School 5K to compete for the champion belts. **Kayla Wernigk** won for the high school girls. There was a six-way tie for the high school boys, though, because they all wanted to finish together: **Samuel Lanter, Ethan Holden, Isaac Kennel, Emerson Blackford, Jaiden Burd** and **Konner Asbury**. At the school's Veterans Day assembly on Nov. 11, the guest speaker was **David Mollet**. He was a Marine combat engineer stationed in Okinawa before being deployed to the Persian Gulf for the Desert Shield and Desert Storm operations. Finally, FFA competed in Dairy Foods (sixth place) and Agronomy on Nov. 13.

— AUBREY SELF



MILFORD

A LIVE-ACTION WHODUNIT

On Saturday and Sunday, students performed their annual fall play 'Mirth and Mayhem,' a comedic murder-mystery that takes place in a haunted house. Pictured: seniors **Sydney Seyfert, Lillie Harris, Sesilia Salinas, Sophie Newman, Erica Felton, Hannah Shelton** and **Jason Moore**; cast members (from left) **Lilly Carter, Nolan Garcia, Xavi Cintora, Lennon Carter, Seyfert, Sesilia Salinas, Braydon Forbes, Noah Brittenham, Sam Mann, Newman, Felton, Kailey Orozco, Taylor Handy, Eliana Salinas, Kara Harwood, Shelton, Bryce Brown, Harris, Joie Girdler, Moore, Courtney Schriener, Anna Mann** and **Morgan Lambert**.

— Kami Muehling



Monticello

The annual Veterans Day assembly took place Nov. 11 to honor heroes — both living and fallen — who served in the armed forces. The entire district, as well as families of students, gathered in Sievers Center, filling the gym with patriotic shades of red, white and blue. The assembly commenced with a welcome from Superintendent **Adam Clapp**, along with words from senior **Mylin Bruhn**. VFW Post 5346 and American Legion Hamm Burke Post 101 began the presentation of colors. The high school choir led with the singing of the national anthem, followed by another piece — 'Pride of America.' Throughout this song, each military branch was individually honored, and veterans in the crowd were asked to stand in order to be recognized. Furthermore, songs were performed by Washington and White Heath school students. These included 'This Flag I Fly' and 'When I see my Flag,' conducted by music teachers **Jenna Kyle-O'Brien, Tricia Shaw** and **Alison Allender**. Senior **Reece Spainhour** led a moment of silence to remember the service and sacrifice of our veterans, while **Egan Curry** played taps — peaceful notes used during military memorial ceremonies — on his trumpet.

— MADY MELTON



Blue Ridge

Thespian Troupe 5290 performed their fall show, 'Game of Myths.' Appearances were made by many Greek gods and goddesses as well as mortals which whom they assisted to try and win the cloud throne. Pictured: **Haylee Dean, Kindle Johnson, Samantha Matakas, Kinnley Rowe, Violet Mintz, Jaxon Beckman, Jonah Hawn, Sebastian Cox, Charlie Yeagle, Romero Fernandez, Benjamin Manuel, Justin Zellars, Kaylyn Eliason, Crystal Chambers, Allison Brown, Broden Soliday, Ivy Whitehouse, Ollie Yeagle** and **Mercedes Manuel**.

— KARLY WARNER



Cissna Park

After winning the first state championship in school history, the volleyball team received the red-carpet treatment when returning to town on Saturday. The team bus was part of a first-responder parade before a celebration at the community center.

— SOPHIE DUIS

