

HIGH SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL

Powered by Danville Area Community College



SMASH HITS

AT GEORGETOWN-RIDGE FARM: Student council held its annual fundraiser for Pi Day (3/14). Students paid to see a teacher of their choice get a pie in their face, including **Sarah Calderon, Keegan Wills, Travis Tate, Cheslyn Kelly** and **Crystal Myers**. Some teachers got more than one pie in the face, including Wills. 'As an English teacher, I dont usually give much thought to numbers, but Pi Day is definitely when they're at their sweetest,' said Myers (bottom left). Tate (bottom right), who teaches math, added: 'Getting whiffs of whip cream the rest of the day is worth the laughter that the kids have when we get the pies in our face.'

— *Tiffany Taylor*



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YEAR 10 OF HIGH SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL: POWERED BY DACC



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
Questions? Email N-G VP Jim Rossow at jrossow@news-gazette.com.



Mahomet-Seymour

Students in English I Honors finished reading Shakespeare's 'Romeo and Juliet.' To end the unit, they participated in Shakesfest, where every English I Honors class writes its own version of 'Romeo and Juliet' — using themes voted on by students — and perform it to other classes. This year's themes included 'Star Trek,' reality TV, COVID and more. Pictured: **Abigail Schifo, Vada Barton, Everest Guerrero, Liam Kittivanichkulkrai, Ava Cvengros and Claire Boyle.**

— **ABBI EDEN**



St. Thomas More
 Sixth-graders from feeder schools visited for a tour led by house leaders, completing ice-breakers with family and school captains. **Sarah Spang** also brought her falcon, **Stevie**, to the senior British literature class for a presentation on falcons today and in medieval Europe.



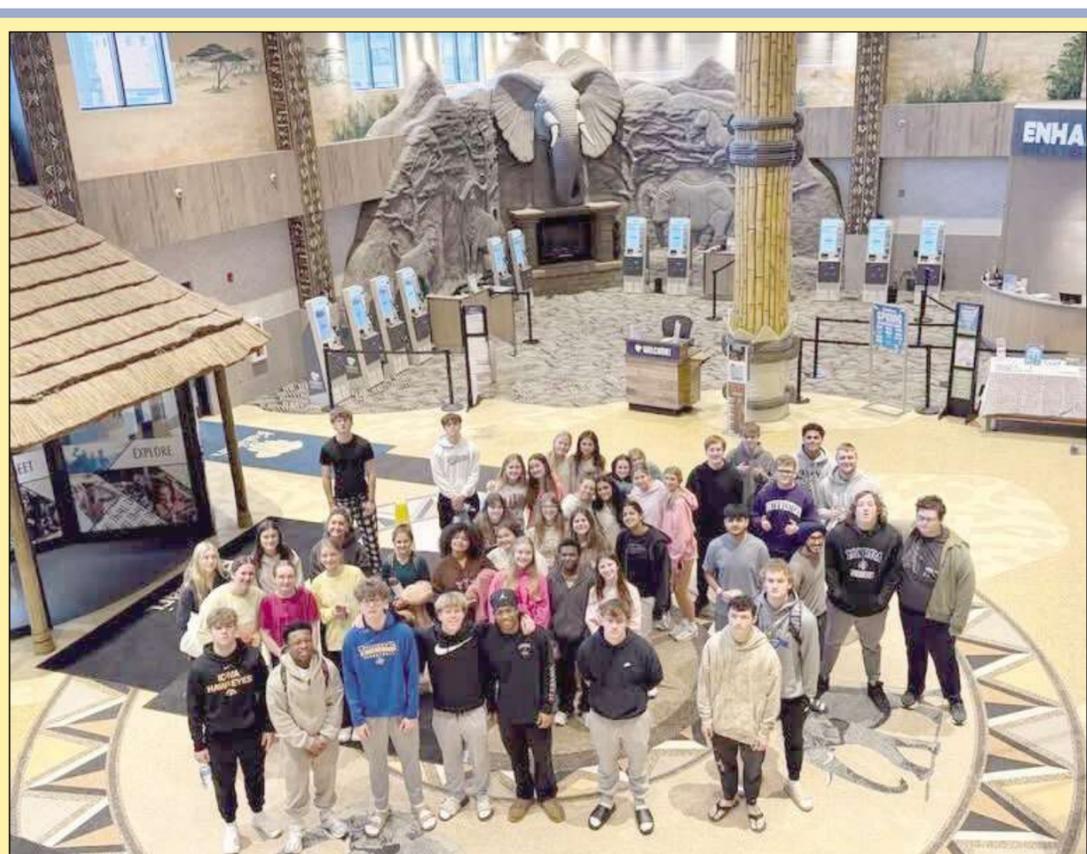
— **DUNCAN OLIVERIA**



Salt Fork

FFA had nine of its members progress to the District 4 Proficiency Awards in Mount Zion, where students competed against others in their Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) area and interviewed on their record book, which they have been keeping up to date all of their high school years. **Jamison Chambliss, Kaitlyn Woodward** and **Anna McCollum** were runners-up in their areas. **Devin Ehler** placed first in Landscape Management, while **Braxton Clem** placed first in Diversified Crop Placement, both moving on to last weekend's state contest.

— **ANNA MCCOLLUM**



MAROA-FORSYTH ADVENTURE-BOUND

Last week, the senior class traveled to Kalahari Resorts & Conventions in Wisconsin Dells, Wis. The class enjoyed the indoor water park, adventure park and shopping.

— **Aubrey Stewart**



Heritage

The National Honor Society and guidance counselor **Patti Knott** sponsored a very important day as students had the opportunity to donate blood for a good cause. **Kaden White** and **Kierra Dunlap** were among the many students who donated thanks to ImpactLife out of Urbana. Students said their favorite part was either saving another person's life or the snacks after donating.

— **RYLAN WHITE**

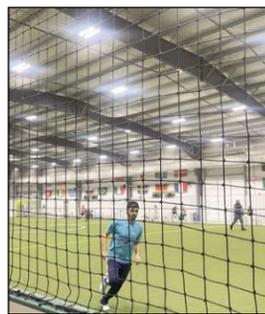
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Centennial

Girls' soccer kicked off its season with a team party at Soccer Planet in Urbana. Coaches, family, friends and Centennial staff participated in fun pick-up games against players. In between games, participants also enjoyed pizza, snacks and manganodas from El Oasis. Centennial soccer is coached by **Paul Hackman, Lindsay Aikman and Thair Al-Saqri.**

— KENNEDY BORDEN



TUSCOLA Star performers

Drama Club presented 'You're a Good Man Charlie Brown' last weekend. The cast and crew put in a lot of hard work, and the effort was worth it because of the success they achieved.

— Claire Leonard



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Blue Ridge

A group of Blue Ridge students was invited to state Sen. **Sally J. Turner's** Spring Youth Advisory Council meeting. They toured the Illinois State Capitol in Springfield and even got to act out a mock bill passing. There was also a photo scavenger hunt contest, where each group had to take pictures in certain areas of the building. All in all, this field trip was informative as well as fun. Pictured (courtesy **Jim Kirkton**): **Andrew Bernard, Thomas Vanderspool, Jim Kirkton, Kelly Weiss and Hayley Dean.**

— KARLY WARNER



St. Joseph-Ogden



FFA celebrated a successful year at its 2025-26 awards banquet last week, drawing a crowd of 200 members and guests. The banquet recognized the achievements of its talented members, recognizing their hard work throughout the year. During this event, 10 different awards and scholarships were given to active members who excelled academically and contributed significantly to the FFA. The event ended with farewell addresses given by the 2025-26 officer team, who then passed the torch to the incoming officers, chosen for their potential to continue the group's dedication and success. From left: the 2025-26 officer team of **Delaney Nekolny, Emma Wells, Leah Pruitt, Charlie Hale, Lydia Huckstadt, Korinne Travis, Mia Jones and Morgan Huls.**

— KATIE ERICKSEN

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Unity

Student council took a trip to Champaign for the annual KDASC District Convention hosted by Tuscola. Students were able to sit in on the meeting and vote on candidates to serve as the 2026-27 KDASC executive board officers. Unity's **Camden Fairbanks** served as KDASC treasurer this year and gave his farewell address during the convention.

— CLAIRE MEHARRY



Uni High

The Muslims Student Association (MSA) held its first 'Fast-a-Thon,' a mock fast spanning the school day for students to simulate the experience of fasting for Ramadan. During Ramadan, Muslims abstain from eating or drinking from sunrise to sunset, and they are encouraged to practice kindness, prayer and reflection. This year, Ramadan started Feb. 18 and ends today. As part of the Fast-a-Thon, students were provided a community-sourced 'suhoor' breakfast meal at the start of the school day and an 'iftar' dinner meal at the end, helping to provide a sample of the long Ramadan fast practiced by Muslims across the world.

— SIMRAH KHAN

URBANA CULTURAL & EDUCATIONAL

The African American Club participated in its annual Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) College Tour, traveling to Baltimore and Washington, D.C. Students had the opportunity to visit several institutions of higher education, including Howard University, Morgan State University, Bowie State University, Coppin State University, the University of Maryland, Georgetown University, Johns Hopkins University and Towson University. Students also explored the National Museum of African American History and Culture, where they engaged with exhibits highlighting the history, culture and contributions of African Americans. The experience provided students with valuable exposure to a variety of college environments while deepening their understanding of African American history and culture.

— Ruby Pittenger



Iroquois West

Cast members of the school's production of 'Cinderella' previewed their talents to middle-school students last week. Members enjoy the practice, as the following week, they put on a three-day back-to-back residency.



— TRAEH KISSACK



Monticello

Last year, the English department began a new tradition for all English 10 classes: a Holocaust Memorial Museum. After reading 'Night' by Elie Wiesel, English teachers **Kara Hettinger** and **Nicki Graham** decided it would be the perfect final project for the unit. This year, the museum was hosted on three nights: March 9-12. Students were able to express their creativity while educating others about a traumatic historical event. Student **Johnna Rawdin** was able to capture the emotion through some of the displays.

— MADY MELTON

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Cissna Park

The Scholastic Bowl team competed in the county tournament, winning four matches last Thursday night to take home the championship. Pictured: **Kipten Steiner** works on a problem; **Asher Scheffer**, **Sawyer Kaeb** and **Ben King** work to answer a question; and **Amelia Hodel** thinks on a question.

— SOPHIE DUIS



Danville

At Friday's annual Career & Technical Education-based Career Fair, the DHS fieldhouse held over 30 local companies. Representatives for Danville Area Community College offered information regarding the DACC Foundation Scholarship as well as various certificates and technical programs offered. Local companies such as Danville Metal Stamping, Longview Bank, Watchfire, the Danville police and fire departments, Robinson Chiropractic and other trade-based companies offered information to sophomores, juniors and seniors. Seniors were offered more specific information regarding employment opportunities and possible transfer programs through several companies at the fair.

— RYLEE JACK

ARMSTRONG SWITCHIN' THINGS UP

FFA had its auction on March 7, raising nearly \$40,000 to put toward their FFA scholarships for the seniors and for next year's chapter activities. Instead of an online auction, FFA switched it up with a silent auction leading up to the live auction. The chapter served a pulled-pork dinner with potatoes, green beans and a variety of desserts. On March 11, **Adisyn McCarty**, **Suzanne Hawker**, **Taylor Smith**, **Addyson Tholl**, **Kyli Davis** and **Ainsley Marron** competed in a parli pro competition for FFA, placing fifth overall. Also, choir students performed in the Vermilion County Music Festival with students from across the county. Even music teacher **Elaina Nelson** joined in! At the festival, Winter Sportsmanship Award nominees and winners were recognized. The Armstrong Potomac boys' basketball team was awarded the sportsmanship team award. **Makenna Ackerman** was nominated for the girls' basketball sportsmanship award, and **Ryan Edwards** was awarded the boys' basketball sportsmanship award.



— AUBREY SELF



Cerro Gordo

Softball started its season against Heyworth on March 12. In a 10-8 loss, **Mya Durbin** pitched a complete game with six strikeouts and one walk. The team is led by a new coaching staff of **Chad Ramey** and **Mycaela Miller**.

— BRIELLE PUCKETT



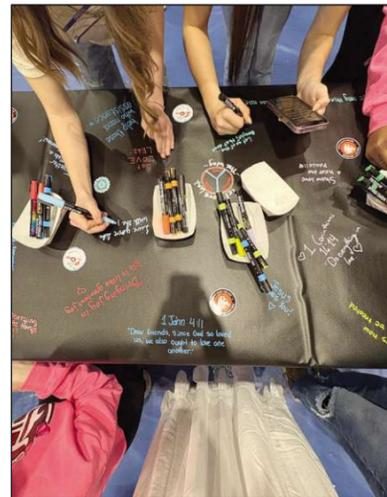
Rantoul

Last week, the music department held its annual March concert featuring several different music groups, such as the Music Makers, All Voices, Concert Choir, Percussion Ensemble and the Screamin' Eagles jazz band! Each of these groups performed a selection of different, beautiful pieces that highlighted the hard work they have put in this school year.

— TAMIA BELL



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BHRA

Students joined peers from several other school districts at Schlarman Academy for the Youth Leadership Conference. Throughout the day, students explored ways communities can work to prevent gun violence. A major focus of the discussions was the role young people can play in creating positive change and promoting safer communities. Students also had the opportunity to engage in conversations with local community leaders, learning more about the important roles they serve and how collaboration between youth and leaders can help address community challenges.

— LAHNA BENJAMIN



GCMS

WELCOME TO DULOC

The Music Department presented 'Shrek' last weekend. Students had been working hard on the musical since December, putting in many hours after school and exhibiting talent and showmanship. Shrek was played by **Evan Killian**, Donkey was played by **Makayla Evans**, Fiona was played by **Keiragan Young**, Lord Farquaad was played by **Bradley Fields**, and Dragan/Humpty Dumpty was played by **Emery Summers**.

— Addison Farmer



Paxton-Buckley-Loda

On March 7, the PBL Chamber Choir, a few band members and several individual soloists attended the all-day Solo and Ensemble at Mattoon High School. The choir performed two songs for judges and ended with a Division 1, the highest rating. Band members also received a Division 1 for their solos. Additionally, several students from the choir had prepared solos to be judged. After a full day of singing and performing, the students all ended with Division 1 scores. High school senior soloist and chamber member **Lauren Krumwiede** received a perfect score (35 out of 35). PBL also had six entries earn 'Best of the Day' from their individual judge, including the Chamber Choir and soloists **Lauren Krumwiede**, **Cora Busby**, **Dylan Otto**, **Morgan Hilbert** and **Carson Langley**. One judge commented that 'PBL is going places' after hearing the performances, showing the perseverance and commitment these students have put into their musical performances. Pictured: Otto, Rylie Landess and Ava Reinhart.

— BRAYDEN KIEF



Villa Grove

During Winterfest, classes competed in two crowd-favorite events: dodgeball for the girls and macho volleyball for the boys. Despite several injuries making it difficult to gather enough girls to play, everyone still had fun and made the most of the competition. Before the games began, juniors **Taylor Duke**, **Lyndsay Zoch** and **Neo Rolando** huddled to come up with a strategy. The freshmen ended up taking the win in dodgeball, while the sophomore boys claimed victory in macho volleyball. **Miles Swigart** impressed the crowd with his incredible jumps as he spiked the ball high into the air. In dodgeball, **Sophia Shaw** was ready to put herself on the line as the last player remaining for the seniors. After the games ended, **Thomas Vandeventer** and **Gavin Taylor** shook hands to demonstrate good sportsmanship between the teams.

— EVA PIERCY



LeRoy

Drama Club performed 'Willy Wonka.' The cast had been working since late January to make this show as spectacular as it was — long days spent building sets, learning music and choreography and setting lights. High school students run the entire show: the lights, the soundboard, the backstage crew and, of course, the performers. Every one in the cast is also involved in other activities, ranging from softball, basketball, Scholastic Bowl, clubs and more. The cast consisted of over 40 students, one of the largest casts in school history. Twelve seniors were involved in the show as well, some for the first time. A special thank you to **Bridgette Wells**, who spent endless hours working on the show (and fueled by 20 cans of Coca-Cola she consumed during tech week).

— MOLLY SCHEUER

