

HIGH SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL

Powered by
Danville Area
Community College

HAPPY DAYS

IT'S PEAK HOMECOMING SEASON:
Parades and powderpuff, dress-up
days and hallway decorations, kings
and queens.

Grand
marshal
Sandy Henley
Teaching at IWB
9 YEARS
Overall
42 YEARS

At Iroquois West: Spanish teacher Sandy Henley served as parade grand marshal.



At Villa Grove: Seniors showed up and out in macho volleyball.



At Maroa-Forsyth: Hallways took on a creative, colorful look.



At Danville: Plenty to cheer about with a 'There's No Place Like Homecoming' theme.



At Centennial: Kenaya Ngunga and John Tran were named queen and king.



At Westville: Homecoming court shared center stage with the football team at Friday night's game.

ACCELERATED COURSES

at Danville Area Community College

Starting **October 13th...**
Stay ahead of the curve and enroll now!

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: Allison Baldwin
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. Next: **BHRA** (today)



London Dugan showed us around ALAH during Homecoming Week.



SALT FORK FFA ADVANCING TO STATE

The FFA chapter kicked off the school year on a great note. **Ryker Williams, Anna McCollum, Charlie Shortz** and **Devin Ehler** competed in the Section 18 Ag Sales contest, selling Rimol Greenhouses to judges. Not only did they place first as a team, but they each won their individual sales rooms as well. All four will be competing at district on Oct. 22. Salt Fork also placed first in the Section 18 Land Use contest, where members (above) evaluated slope, determined site suitability, and identified necessary soil practices. The contest's top 10 individuals: 1. McCollum, 2. Williams, 3. **Rain Pitlik**, 4. **Bella Kurtenbach**, 5. **Jamison Chambliss**, 6. **Blake Trimmell**, 7. **Lainey Ehler**, 8. **Lucy DeAth**, 9. **Kaitlyn Woodard** and 10. **Annalise Chambliss**. All 10 will represent Salt Fork at state on Oct. 15 along with **Bennett Smoot**, who placed 11th; **Devin Ehler**, who placed 13th; and **Gage Riggle**, who placed 14th.

— Anna McCollum



LUCY DEATH



ELLIE BROOKS



CHARLIE SHORTZ, DEVIN EHLER, RYKER WILLIAMS, ANNA MCCOLLUM and LUCY DEATH



RAIN PITLIK. DEVIN EHLER



ALAH

Students showed their school spirit by decorating hallways, dressing up and celebrating homecoming in style. Activities included powderpuff, macho volleyball and homecoming games. Pictured: **Annabelle Vanausdoll** and **Carson Reed** building a piece of their float.

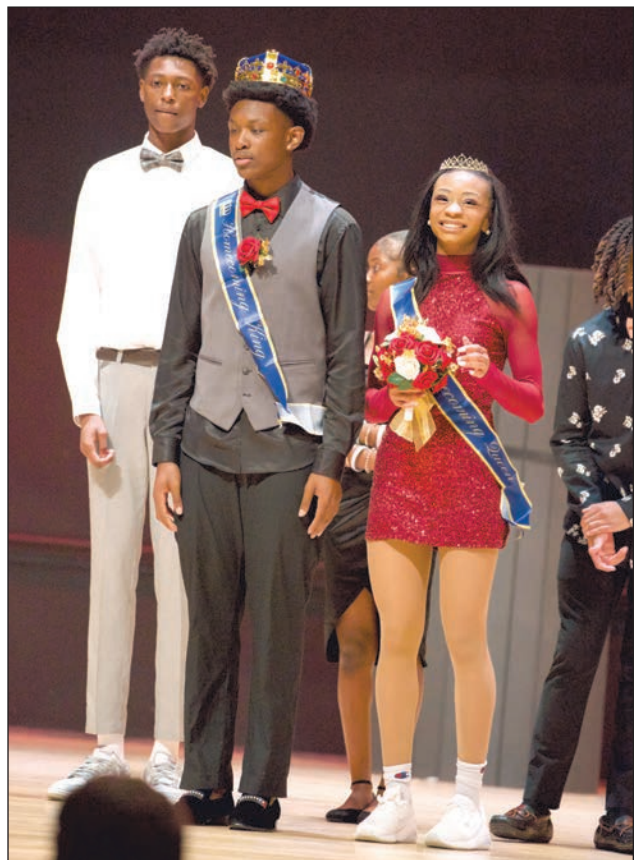
— LONDON DUGAN



LeRoy

Each year, two seniors are recognized as Outstanding Good Citizens by the local chapters of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) and the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). The students are nominated by teachers and staff based on dependability, service, leadership, scholarship and patriotism. The selected seniors are given an award and also have the opportunity to earn various scholarships. This year's winners: **Isaiah Schertz** (DAR) and **Molly Scheuer** (SAR).

— MOLLY SCHEUER



Danville

The theme for homecoming: There's No Place Like Homecoming, which ended with a Wizard of Oz-themed dance. On Monday, the court was announced, and **Ajani Davis** and **Serenity Reed** were crowned king and queen. On Wednesday, powderpuff football games took place as freshmen and sophomores tied 6-6, and seniors beat juniors 6-0. Friday was the homecoming football game against Champaign Central. At Saturday's dance, student council reported sales of approximately 600 tickets.

— RYLEE JACKSON

YEAR 10 OF HIGH SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL: POWERED BY DACC



Monticello

Last Thursday, students participated in Rock Your School, put on by White Heath and Washington schools. This event was a way to get young students excited for the school year by engaging them in different activities based on a theme that this year was sports. Student groups from the high school got involved to make the day a success. In the morning, cheerleaders went to the two schools to teach cheers, sing the school song and pump kids up for what was in store for the rest of the day. In the afternoon, everyone gathered on the high school football field, where the cheerleaders, marching band and color guard made a tunnel for every White Heath and Washington student to run through. With blasting music and roaring cheers, the kids ran down the field into a banner, which was custom-made by each class. Teachers even got to participate in a few activities themselves, as their students cheered them on. This included a game of tug-of-war and a mystery blowup costume race. Pictured (left to right): **Bailee Wierman** and **Riley Willis**.

— MADY MELTON



Centennial

Centennial brought back a long-standing tradition: a homecoming parade. Special guests included Champaign Mayor **Deb Feinen** and the Champaign fire and police departments. Several teams also participated, including the marching band, girls' and boys' soccer, the football team and the 4-H Club. On Friday night, students celebrated a football victory and crowned homecoming King and Queen **John Tran** and **Kenaya Ngunga**.

— KENNEDY BORDEN



At news-gazette.com

GALLERY: Photo Editor Robin Scholz was on the scene at Centennial's parade.



Mahomet-Seymour

Students in **Jeremy Davis**'s anatomy class dissected cats last week. The purpose: see how muscles work together, and learn more about the human body. Students skinned the cats on the first day and, on Day 2, studied their muscles and organs. Pictured, left to right: **Rowan Evans**, **Austo Li** and **Landen Dowers**; and **Bella Almaroad** and **Addyson Dunkelberger**.

— ABBY EDEN



HERITAGE BRAINSTORMING

The school's Family, Career and Community Leaders of American chapter joined others from around the state in Springfield for the Ignite Conference. Students attended workshops and gathered ideas to bring back to their chapter. Pictured, left to right: (back row) **William Ballard**, **Tatum Morgan**, **Clair Davison** and **Kierra Dunlap**; (front row) **Mary Bensyl**, **Leigha Tatar** and **Jayden Schrock**.

— RYLAN WHITE



Villa Grove

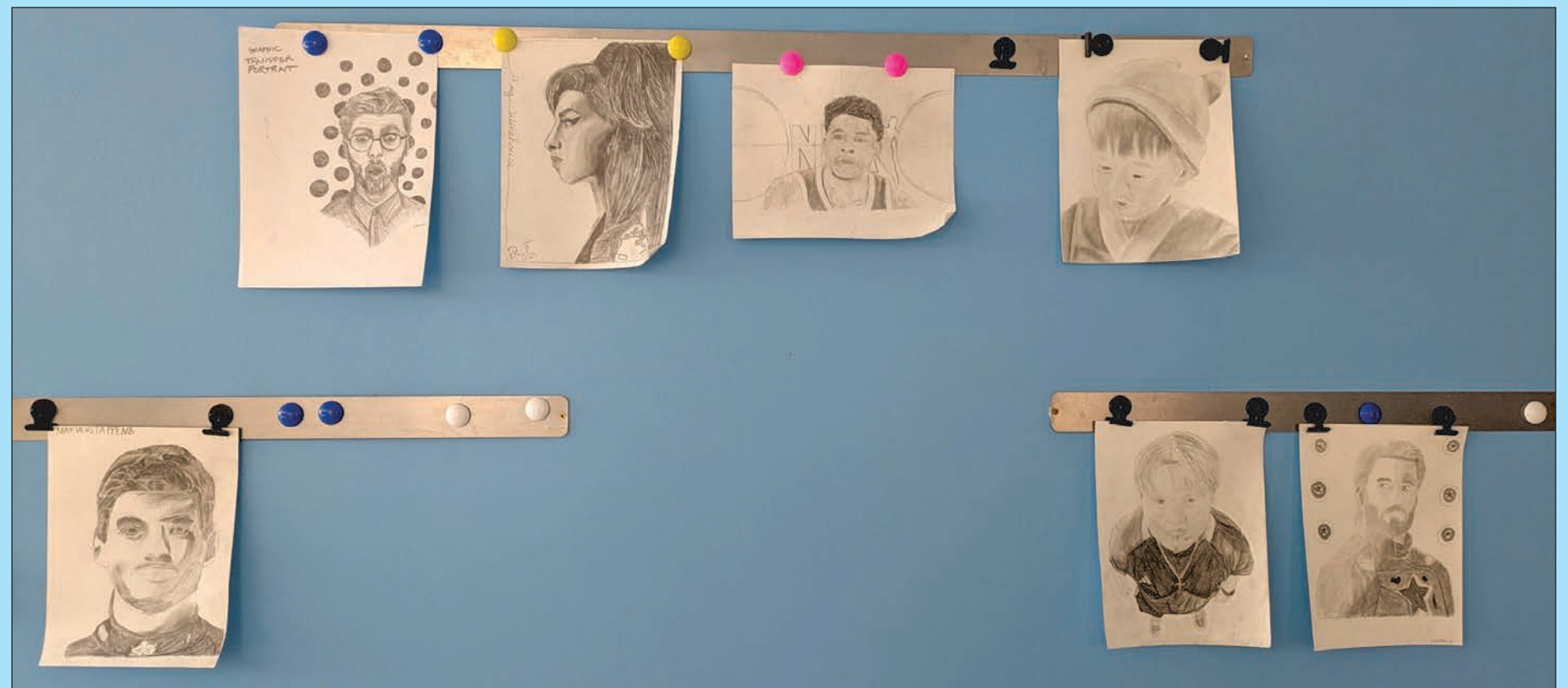
The senior class won the annual macho volleyball game and earned points toward the homecoming spirit stick. Seniors **JJ Duke** and **Jackson Gilles** hit their celebration dances to show off their win. After three years of competing, they finally got the victory they were hoping for (photo courtesy **Amijah Riggelman**).

— EVA PIERCY



Champaign Central
The Fine Arts Department held its annual Pops Concert on Sept. 30 as choir, concert orchestra, symphonic band, chamber orchestra and wind symphony performed recognizable tunes. From "Wicked" to "The Jungle Book" to "Les Misérables" to "Star Wars," the groups displayed the skills learned so far this year. Pictured: The concert choir dances while singing "Dance!" by Robert T. Gibson.

— ADELAIDE KOTA



ACADEMY HIGH FROM PAPER TO PORTRAIT

In the drawing techniques class taught by **Shannon Percoco**, students have been creating portraits of people they admire. Using graphite pencils or pens, they have been applying what they've learned about shading and form to create masterpieces featuring everyone from celebrities to family members. Sophomore **Maxwell Milling** even drew a picture of his classmate **Tyler Ingerson**. After finishing the portraits, the class will learn how to draw with colored pencils.

— Evie Price



Maroa-Forsyth

Homecoming Week included a class banner-decorating competition as students were awarded points throughout the week ahead of Field Day. On Wednesday, senior girls beat the juniors in powderpuff football, 28-14. Statistic class hosted "Family Feud" on Thursday, and juniors won first place. Finally, on Friday, there was an assembly and Field Day, where seniors were the overall winners with 157 points.

— AUBREY STEWART



Unity

In Introduction to Agriculture class, students got a visit from Illinois State FFA reporter **Ethan Bremmer**, FFA Section 17 President **Charlie Hale** and FFA Section 17 Treasurer **Callie Turner**. Students participated in a hands-on activity where they made model farms to learn about overcoming challenges in the agriculture industry as well as making personal goal plans. Photos courtesy **Ginna Stierwalt**.

— CLAIRE MEHARRY



Gibson City-Melvin-Sibley

On Oct. 2, the volleyball team hosted its annual Pink Out game in support of breast cancer awareness. Each player wore a jersey dedicated to someone they know who has battled the disease. The team also organized a bake sale to raise funds for breast cancer research. All baked goods were prepared by the players themselves, with additional contributions provided by Rising Baking Company, owned by assistant volleyball coach **Natalie DeSchepper**.

— ADDISON FARMER



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Uni High

Last Friday, the Moon Festival Committee held the annual Moon Festival on Uni's lawn. In many Asian cultures, the Moon Festival is a celebration of the autumn harvest and a reunion with family and friends. The event featured performances from student clubs as well as dancers from the community, with a traditional lunch provided. "We really wanted to create a space that was really inclusive of a lot of people," says Moon Festival Committee member and senior **Renee Wang**. "We honestly love the diversity of performances we get and the food we choose, so everybody likes it."

— SIMRAH KHAN



Cerro Gordo

Students celebrated homecoming weekend by gathering at their school dance. The homecoming theme was "Disney," seniors as "Angled," juniors as "Moana," sophomores as "Princess" and the Frog, and freshmen as "Up." Each grade designed their own class shirts and float themes for the parade. Student council members helped decorate and set out food the morning of the dance. They strung lights outside, forming a canopy over the dance floor as the dance was held on the back patio, with snacks and drinks inside. Decorations were recycled from the homecoming parade class floats that students hand built. Afterward, student council helped take down decorations and lights.

— ALEXA RODGERS

URBANA BONDING IN NATURE

The cross-country team went on its annual camping trip last weekend at Weldon Springs State Park. The tradition started in 2018 and — after breaking for COVID-19 — resumed in 2023. The team relished its time in nature by playing outdoor games and watching the sunset in what was another successful team bonding experience.

— Ruby Pittenger



Westville

Spirit Week led up to Saturday's homecoming dance. At Friday's football game, the court was honored at halftime, including freshmen **Tobie Lyons** and **Owen Atwood**; sophomores **Cheyenne Maquet** and **Liam Hughes**; juniors **Daylin Zaayer** and **Chance Quick**; and seniors **Jazmyn Bennett** and **Jack Ajster**, **Sophia Hutchins** and **Easton Barney**, **Whitley Wheeler** and **Grant Beckley**, **Lainey Wichtowski** and **Ty McMasters** and **Tinley Zaayer** and **Ethan Miller**. Wichtowski and Ajster were crowned queen and king. Photos courtesy **Maggie Potter**.

— OLIVIA TROGLIA



Armstrong

Ryah Peters finished 12th at last week's golf regional, capping a terrific season. The boys' team placed fifth as **Konner Asbury** and **Luke Townsend** advanced to sectionals. Above: Peters (front) and (left to right) **Kolton Morgan**, **Asbury**, **Carson Whitlow**, **Davyn Franzén**, **Townsend**, **Ryan Edwards**, **Aidyn Deck** and **Benjamin Hunt**. Also, **Trent Childers**, **Destiny Gray** and **Adisyn McCarty** (left) used a podcast (Farm4Ward) to talk about the school's FFA chapter.

— AUBREY SELF

Tuscola

Former NFL player **Steve Grant** visited to give a talk about reaching goals and making sure life has purpose. A key quote in his speech: "Don't be a could-have-been, urging students to follow their dreams so they don't have regrets later in life."

— CLAIRE LEONARD





Rantoul

Last week's National Honor Society induction ceremony saw many students recognized for their dedication inside and outside of the classroom. NHS encourages new inductees and returnees to continue striving for excellence every day.

— TAMIA BELL



Georgetown-Ridge Farm

In its win against Oakwood, the volleyball team wore pink to support Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Pictured (courtesy Sarah Runyan), left to right: Madi Spesard, Kiley-Jo Miller and Milee Elise.

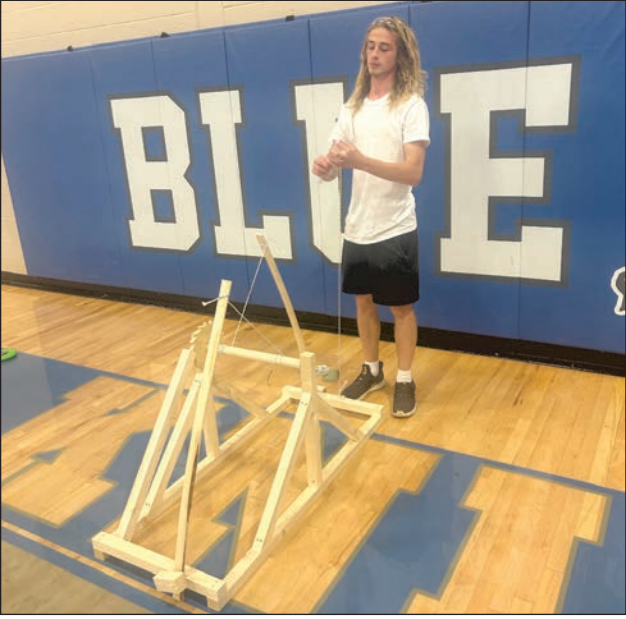
— TIFFANY TAYLOR



Blue Ridge

To further their understanding of force and motion, Science of Energy students built their own catapults. Each one exemplifies potential and kinetic energy, as well as good craftsmanship. Pictured: Broden Soliday, Benjamin Manuel and Benjamyn Clevenger.

— KARLY WARNER



CISSNA PARK COMING OUT ON TOP

The FFA soils team competed last Wednesday, placing first overall. Among individuals placing: Trent Schmid and Asher Scheffer (tied for second), Ashlyn Schmid (fifth), Skyler Estay (sixth), Sawyer Kaeb (seventh) and Piper Scheffer (eighth).

— Sophie Duis



Bement

Congratulations to the homecoming court (left to right): Avont Jackson, Addie Roberts, Quinn Flach, Ella Corum, Gunnar Auth, Ariel Ponce, Will Fuson and Sierra Fay. Joining them: kindergarten attendants Everly Thorman and Harrison Price.

— KIANA HUNTER



St. Joseph-Ogden

The biggest student section yet turned out for Friday's homecoming game against Monticello. The students were decked out in neon, keeping up the tradition of a theme every homecoming. The week was packed with fun activities, and ending it with a home football game was perfect.

— KATIE ERICKSEN

Hoopeston Area

School board President Will Clayton said many projects were accomplished over the summer:

- Four new welding stations were installed in the FFA area.
- The softball field was regraded with new red dog dirt to replace a limestone surface,

and a new net backstop and padded bumpers were added.

→ In the Music Department, a variety of instruments, stands and sound equipment were purchased. The practice rooms were remodeled with soundproofing added, along with carpeted floors for improved utilization

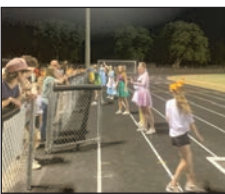
of private practice space. Storage areas were also remodeled to more efficiently store instruments and equipment.

Our goal is to increase access to vocational programs, sports and music to as many students as possible, Clayton said.

— WILLAMINA CLAYTON



YEAR 10 OF HIGH SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL: POWERED BY DACC



Fisher

Band students recorded music auditions for state. Asked for her best advice, band director **Abby Freymuth** said, "Do things scared." Also, an FFA state officer and two Section 17 officers came to the school to give a presentation. In golf, **Ethan McFarling** (first), **Emily Coulter** (sixth) and **Gage Harseim** (top 10) advanced to sectionals. Finally, the cheer team led a Disney-themed clinic with the grade school cheer team at Friday's football game.



— KESIAH MUSICK



BHRA CONNECTION AND PRAYER

Last Wednesday, FCA and the junior high CSI sponsored the annual "See You at the Pole." Students from kindergarten through 12th grade, along with teachers and community members, gathered at the school before classes for donuts, juice and time to connect with one another. Afterward, everyone formed a circle around the flagpole. **Jake Weece**, a youth pastor from Second Church of Christ, opened with encouraging words before guiding everyone into smaller groups for prayer. The event concluded a powerful time of group prayer, led by Weece, **Stacey Sackett** and **Chris Robinson**.

— Lahna Benjamin



Iroquois West



Homecoming Week started with Tuesday's Ironman Volleyball Tournament, the sophomore class coming out victorious. Student council members voted 10-year Spanish teacher **Sandra Henley** grand marshal of Wednesday's parade, which included the homecoming court. Attendees included freshmen **Barick Meadows** and **Atslan Alverado**, sophomores **Claire Schumacher** and **Brody Mueller** and juniors **Ruby Leon-Sanchez** and **Owen Borders**. Queen and king candidates were **Leah Honeycutt** and **Aidan Davis**, **Wyatt Breen** and **Camren Bork**, **Regan Kanosky** and **Corbin Bull** and **Ivan Ontiveros** and **Kairi Rossi**.

The seniors won the float-decorating contest with their "Roast the Buffaloes" theme. After the parade, the annual powderpuff football tournament was held, with the sophomore class ultimately coming out on top again in a nail-biter against the seniors. On Friday, cheerleaders hosted a pep rally, enticing students to come out to coronation and the football game later that night. At coronation, Ontiveros and Bork were crowned king and queen. Following coronation, the football team lost a hard-fought battle to Georgetown Ridge Farm, 20-12. On Saturday, student council sponsor **Abby Redenius** and her members hosted a fabulous dance with a wonderful turnout.

— TRAEH KISSACK



St. Thomas More



Homecoming-related activities included hallway decorating, themed dress-down days and a pep assembly with games like inflatable mattress races, hungry hungry hippos and pizza box knockout. Also, seniors painted their own parking spaces for the year, and all grade levels participated in macho volleyball and powderpuff football. At Saturday's football game, seniors **Philip Lee** and **Rina Tanigaki** were crowned homecoming king and queen.

— DUNCAN OLIVEIRA





Sullivan
Dual-credit classes planned trips to Lake Land College in Mattoon to collect books for their research papers, and juniors are going for a career day. Also, marching band placed second in Class 1A at the Effingham Marching Invitational on Saturday. The group also received the caption award for Best General Effect, which is awarded for design, execution and impact of the show on the audience.

— DANICA BELL



JUDAH CHRISTIAN MAKING HISTORY

Senior volleyball player **Avoni Kelly** made school history by setting the career kills record, surpassing the mark of 550 kills by **Hannah Jackson** (Class of 2024). Her achievement reflects the years of dedication, hard work and leadership she's shown on and off the court and was celebrated by teammates, coaches and parents.

— Jack Dalbey



Shiloh
Students participated in a community service day for the third time. Students were involved in landscaping at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Broadlands, while others went to Hume and cleaned firetrucks. At Shiloh, students also helped in elementary classrooms, cleaned buses, helped club projects, filed music and so much more. Pictured: (front row) **Hunter Reese, Brayton St. Clair and Avery Grise**; (middle row) **Kalvin Budd, Kolten Key, Chase Rhode, Russell McIntyre and Bentley Dudley**; and (back row) **Ema Johnson and Kaylynn Key**.

— ALI CASH



Oakland
Students in speech class are working on their first presentations, and freshman **Clayton Apple** brought his race car to school. He isn't racing often due to his football season.

— SOPHIE VONLANKE



Milford

On Friday, FFA hosted its annual hog roast. The group worked hard to prepare and serve pulled pork, potatoes, green beans and rolls. The event helps fund a trip to the national and state convention, along with dairy and other competitions throughout the school year.

— KAMI MUEHLING



Schlarman

During Homecoming Week, each grade gets a hallway to decorate for points — which can get very competitive with amazing results. Pictured: Upperclassmen in action.

— LIZZY BOGEN