

# HIGH SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL

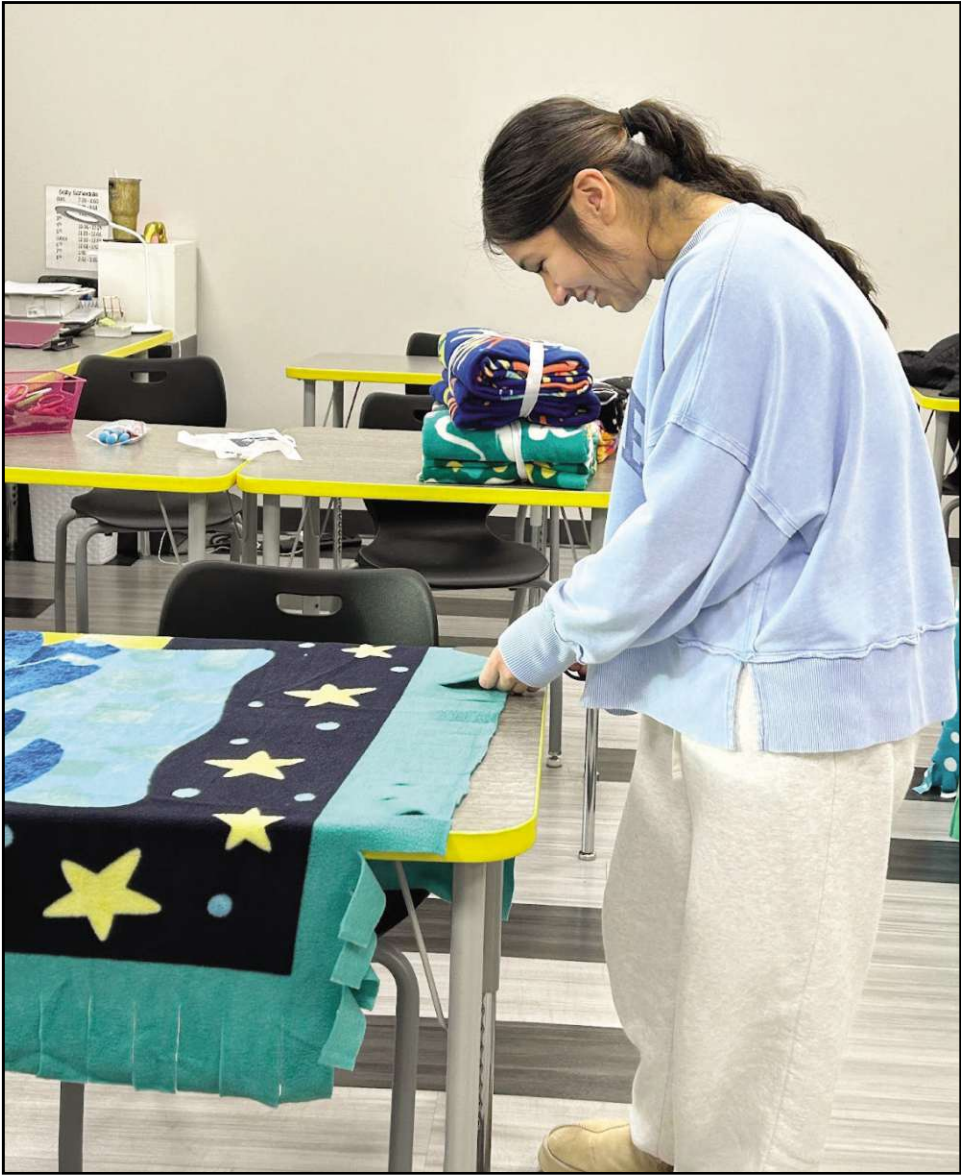
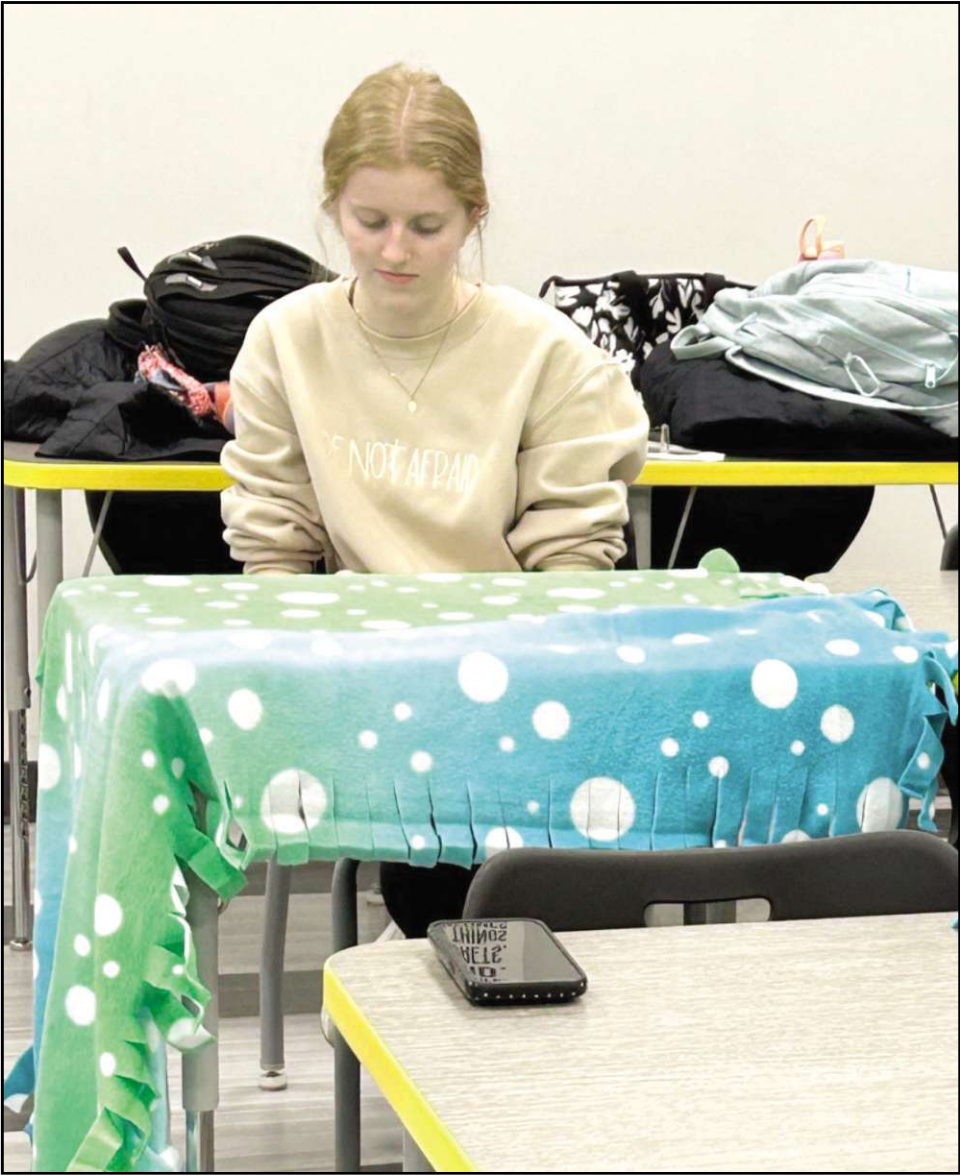
Powered by Danville Area Community College



## COMFORT ZONE

Members of **TUSCOLA's Key Club** started to make blankets for **Project Linus**, an organization that provides blankets to children in the United States who are seriously ill, traumatized or otherwise in need. Each week, students like **Montse Xolo** (bottom right) take time after school to help make blankets. Volunteer **Nicole Tschopp** (bottom left) said: 'It's so amazing to have a place where I can volunteer myself and help the community. I'm glad my time is going toward helping others while still having a fun time with my friends.'

— *Claire Leonard*





Danville Area Community College

dacc.edu

217.443.3222

## Nursing at DACC

- Personal Support
- Community Connections
- Accessible Transfer Pathways
- Affordable Excellence

Application Deadline for Spring '26 is  
Friday, Oct. 17, Noon

## Where Passion Becomes Profession





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](https://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](mailto:jrossow@news-gazette.com).



MONTICELLO  
DECKED OUT IN THE COLOR RED



On Friday, high school students and members of the community packed the stands of the Sievers Center for the annual 'Red Out' basketball game, as the Sages took on the St. Joseph-Ogden Spartans. There were many activities going on both before and during the game that helped accumulate a total of \$512.15 in donations that will be given back to the American Heart Association. Student council President **Ashley Stiverson** was the hero behind the scenes, for she took on the immense task of organizing Red Out Week. This included running a bake sale during all school lunches Tuesday through Friday, selling festive heart glasses and heart cakes at the door of the game, and arranging the popular 'Chuck-the-Duck' competition during halftime. For this competition, three hula hoops were placed in the middle of the basketball court, and fans threw their ducks, which were purchased for \$2 apiece at the door, toward the hoops. The fan who threw the duck closest to the center of each hula hoop received a prize. 'Chuck-the-Duck' was a new addition to the Red Out festivities last year, and it was such a hit that it made its appearance again this year.

— Mady Melton



Champaign Central

The dance team enjoyed another successful season, placing highly in multiple competitions around Illinois. On Saturday, the team hosted IHSA Competitive Dance Sectionals at Central, placing sixth. They are competing in the IHSA state competition on Friday.

— ADELAIDE KOTA



Centennial

Centennial's Friday night basketball game against Urbana had a great turnout — despite sub-zero temperatures. Spectators and players came sporting accents of pink in honor of the game's "Pink Out/Coaches vs. Cancer" theme. The girls' and boys' varsity teams and the girls' JV team earned wins. It was a busy week for Centennial athletics, as sports and clubs had the opportunity to meet incoming Chargers at Future Freshman Night. The event was coordinated by **Lyndel Holmes-May** and has become a great way for incoming students to get involved with extracurriculars. Pictured: Soccer and Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA).

— KENNEDY BORDEN



Urbana

Bands hosted their fourth annual Trivia Night last Thursday at Biaggi's in Champaign. The event was held to raise money for the band department. Overall, the event was a success.

— RUBY PITTENGER





YEAR 10 OF HIGH SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL: POWERED BY DACC



Mahomet-Seymour

A total of 104 students in the choir and drama programs went to Chicago to see last Wednesday's matinee performance of 'The Phantom of the Opera.' This field trip is held every year to give students access to high-quality, professional theatrical productions. In addition to seeing 'The Phantom of the Opera,' students visited Chicago's iconic landmarks: Millennium Park to see 'Cloud Gate,' Marshall Field's Department Store, the Chicago Theatre and the Picasso statue in Daley Plaza.

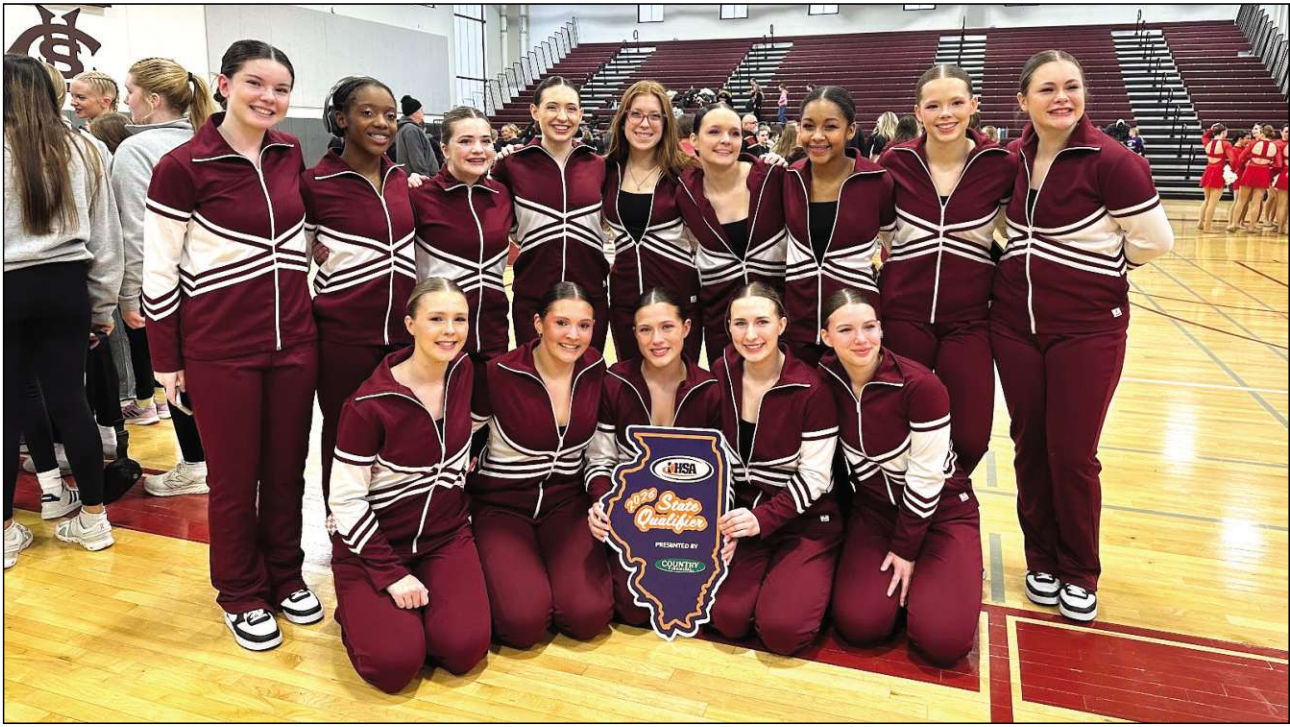
— ABBY EDEN



UNI HIGH  
A WRITTEN TRADITION

Last Thursday, the Japanese class held kakizome, a Japanese New Year tradition of calligraphy writing. In kakizome, participants write personal goals and express hopes for the year. Pictured, from left: **Ava Roberts, Charlotte Lin, Zoe Parker, Shanna Duay, Addison Wright, Jenny Nham** and **DJ Wang** pose with their calligraphy writing. Photo by **Shanna Duay**.

— Simrah Khan



Unity

The Rockettes dance team competed at sectionals on Saturday at Champaign Central. They earned third place to qualify for the state prelims. The Rockettes will be competing in Bloomington in the preliminary rounds on Friday to hopefully place top 12 and advance to the second round. Pictured (courtesy **Vanna Schriefer**), from left: (back row) **Madi Spohn, Za'Brya White, Jordan Hamilton, Katie Knoll, Mallory Tiemann, Skylar Savona, Jauniyah Lisanby, Lilly Bailes** and **Makayla Goff**; and (front row) seniors **Taylor Daly, Vanna Schriefer, Ella Darnall, Faith Lampe** and **Olivia Egelston**.

— CLAIRE MEHARRY



LeRoy

Four FFA members competed at the Illinois Farm Bureau in various public-speaking competitions. Junior **Claire Kuipers** finished fifth in her division for extemporaneous public speaking. She wrote and recited a speech in the same day. Sophomore **Faith Dean** finished fourth in her division for prepared public speaking. Finally, freshmen **Halle Hahn** and **Izzy Goldman** competed in the creed speaking contest. Pictured, from left: **Dean, Goldman, Hahn** and **Kuipers**.

— MOLLY SCHEUER



Georgetown-Ridge Farm

The Westville/G-RF wrestling team competed at Litchfield as the boys' team finished first with several individuals placing in the top 10: **Jason Cramer** (third), **Camden Schoolcraft** (fourth) and **Zach Wilson** (sixth). The girls' team had two individual placements: **Kiley Knight** (second) and **Amya Drew** (10th).

— TIFFANY TAYLOR



# YEAR 10 OF HIGH SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL: POWERED BY DACC



## Gibson City-Melvin-Sibley

On Jan. 15, the cheer and boys' basketball team hosted a 'Cancer Awareness Night' honoring survivors and those who have lost their battle to cancer. Before the game, cancer survivors walked out with some of the basketball players and cheerleaders. The boys faced the Watseka Warriors and won 65-32. It's always a great day to be a Falcon, especially as we honor the bravery and strength of those who have fought so hard.

— ADDISON FARMER



## Bement

The Decatur Area Chamber of Commerce spent last Wednesday with seniors, helping them sharpen their skills, build resumes and learn about local job opportunities. Students also connected with area employers from Macon and Piatt counties.

— KIANA HUNTER



## Oakland

The girls' basketball team started its Lincoln Prairie Conference tournament with a 42-26 win against ALAH 42-26.

— SOPHIE VONLANKEN



# IROQUOIS WEST 'THIS ... IS RAIDER IDOL'

The music department hosted its annual 'Raider Idol,' showcasing the talents of their students. With 12 contests this year, **Aubrey Chandler** edged out the competition and received the Judge's Choice Award. Aubrey will also be playing the lead in our spring musical this year. Attendants of Raider Idol get the opportunity to vote on their favorite contestant, making up the People's Choice Award, received by **Kenzie Keller**. Pictured: Chandler and Keller.

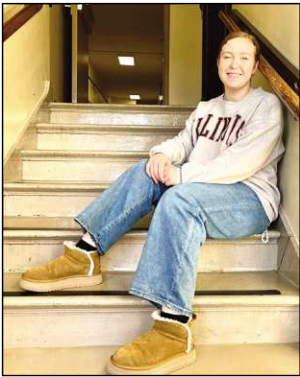
— Traeh Kissack



## Heritage

The Scholastic Bowl team competed in its only home match of the season on Jan. 22. Three seniors were recognized for their dedication, commitment and leadership on Senior Night: **Ethan Lyons**, **Eli Denmark-Collins** and **Lukas Miller**. The three were joined with their parents to help celebrate their accomplishments. The Hawks varsity team went 1-1 on the night, beating Argenta-Oreana and losing to Blue Ridge, to improve to 5-2 on the season.

— RYLAN WHITE



## Chrisman

A shoutout to first-semester Students of the Month, who showed hard work, leadership, compassion and respectful attitudes. The award-winners: freshman **Gracie Cash** (September), junior **Chance Chaney** (October), junior **Dylan Lucas** (November) and senior **Elysia Lorton** (December).

— MORGAN SIMPSON





# YEAR 10 OF HIGH SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL: POWERED BY DACC



## Paxton-Buckley-Loda

Congratulations to art students for earning Honorable Mention awards for their artwork at the Small Works Art Show, hosted in December by the University of Illinois Fine and Applied Arts Department. This annual exhibition highlights the artistic talent of local high school students and featured over 200 pieces of artwork from schools across the area. The selected works were displayed at the Link Gallery at Krannert Art Museum in Champaign, giving students the opportunity to showcase their art in a professional gallery setting. Students receiving Honorable Mention included **Nicole York** for her 3D clay checker pieces and a mixed-media painting, **Addie Smith** for a 3D air-dry clay bust, and **Lauren Krumwiede** for her mixed-media cornucopia.



— BRAYDEN KIEF



# FISHER MUSIC AT THE RINK

FFA competed in the Section 17 Vet Science CDE. The team finished in fourth place and will be competing in state. Also, band and choir had the opportunity to perform at the Bloomington Bisons hockey game, every member saying how much they enjoyed the experience. Finally, FFA is selling fresh Florida strawberries that are \$4 a container and \$30 a flat. Email Kesiah.Musick@gmail.com or Maddy.Morris@fisherk12.org to make an order.

— Kesiah Musick



## St. Joseph-Ogden

The dance team had an impressive weekend at IHSA sectionals, securing fourth place in their group dance and earning a spot at the IHSA state competition for the seventh consecutive year. Their performance this season has set a strong foundation as they go into state. Pictured holding the IHSA state qualifier sign: (back row, from left) **Avary Buhr, Alivia Learned, Ava Gallo, Leah Stephenson** and **Lily Sollars**; and (front row) **Darby Manion, Gracyn Sjoken, Abby Getty, Jillian Davis** and **Hadley McDonald**.

— KATIE ERICKSEN



## St. Thomas More

Students from a pro-life group traveled to Washington, D.C., for the annual March for Life. Students spent the week sleeping in gyms and making small sacrifices such as giving up phones and praying the rosary daily for the mothers and their babies.

— DUNCAN OLIVIERA



## Rantoul

Special-education students took on the responsibility of running the Eagle fly-through concession stand and Eagle Dash. With the support from staff members and other students, they practiced life skills such as communication, time management and problem solving all while having fun together. Programs like this really make my heart happy as they continue to show the importance of inclusion and providing meaningful opportunities for all students to succeed.

— TAMIA BELL

## Academy High

Senior **Camille Kloster** has been given a regional Silver Key award for the Comic Art category in the 2026 Scholastic Art Writing Awards, presented in partnership with the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers. Camille wrote and illustrated a short comic titled 'Trancendessicant' that follows two aliens who live billions of years in the future, their star nearing collapse. The Scholastic Awards is 'the nation's longest-running, most prestigious recognition program for creative teens,' with winners being selected for their 'originality, skill and the emergence of a personal voice or vision.' Academy High celebrated Camille's amazing achievement with chocolate cake.



— EVIE PRICE

## Arcola

Student council has started its annual 'Crush Can' fundraiser. Students can fill out an order card and pay and then to have a Crush can delivered to whoever you want the week of Valentine's Day.



— ADDEE MULLIGAN



# YEAR 10 OF HIGH SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL: POWERED BY DACC

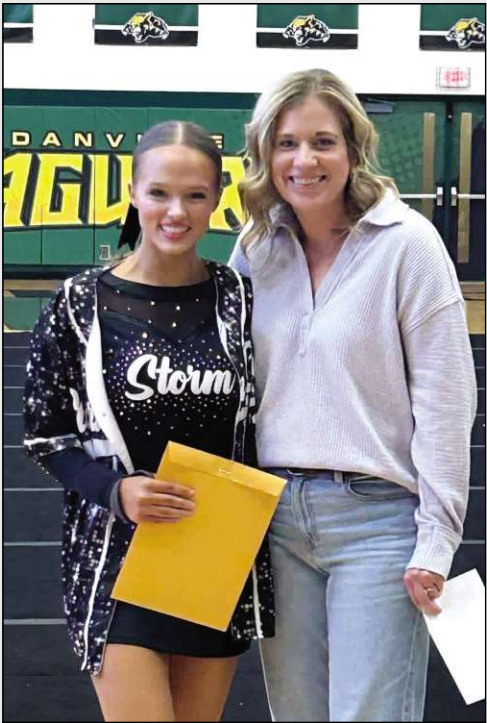


## Blue Ridge

On Jan. 20, FFA students attended the annual Interview Blitz, a series of mock interviews that allow students to prepare for their future careers. The interviews were for SAE, state degree, chapter officer and many more. Pictured (courtesy **Carmen Ellis**): **Brooklyn Hardesty** and **Mercedes Manuel**.

— **KARLY WARNER**

# SALT FORK SMALL BUT MIGHTY



The competitive cheer team placed second at the Vermilion County Cheerleading Tournament. Despite the team being much smaller than the rest, they showed up and left a huge impact. During the event, senior **Payton Cox** won the **Ashley Wilson** Cheerleading Scholarship. This is a major accomplishment as she was the only winner out of the senior cheerleaders in the county.

— **Anna McCollum**



## Villa Grove

A Cheer Ex-Rah-Vaganza took place during the varsity boys' basketball game, bringing together cheerleaders from past decades to support the team. Each decade showcased its own routines, highlighting the evolution of cheer through the years. Alumni band members also joined the pep band, with familiar faces such as **Ryker Reyling**, **Max Kneer**, **Ellie Oberg**, **Allison Eisenmenger** and high school Principal **Sara Jones** spotted in the stands playing their instruments. For many, it felt like no time had passed.

— **EVA PIERCY**



## BHRA

The boys' and girls' basketball teams competed in the county championship games held at Danville Area Community College. The girls' team lost to Salt Fork 51-20 to finish second. The boys' team took on Westville in the championship game and fell 50-49, bringing an end to their impressive six-year county title streak.

— **LAHNA BENJAMIN**

## Westville

Congratulations to junior **Aiden White** and senior **Easton Barney** for reaching 1,000 career points at the county basketball tournament, the Tigers beating BHRA to win the title.

— **OLIVIA TROGLIA**



## Cerro Gordo

The high school held its third blood drive of the school year on Jan. 21. There were a total of 21 presenting donors, including two first-time donors. In the second blood drive on Sept. 3, there were eight first-time donors, and they stuck around and donated for the third time.

— **JOSH POLLOCK**

## Hoopeston Area

The high school is looking at making a list of district improvements from 2025 and developing a 2026 priority plan. The plan will include expected projects and improvements to be made in the Hoopeston Area School District. The list of 2025 district improvements was lengthy, including several key points such as a school resource officer, a school nurse and sports and band improvements, among other things.

— **WILLAMINA CLAYTON**