

HIGH SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL

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Danville Area Community College



Monticello

IT'S ALL GOOD

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Taking it all in

High School Confidential reporters (left to right) **Mady Melton** of Monticello and **Claire Leonard** of Tuscola were on hand for Illini volleyball home matches against Purdue and Michigan last weekend at Huff Hall.

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
Questions? Email [@NG_VP_Jim_Rossow](mailto:NG_VP_Jim_Rossow) at jrossow@news-gazette.com.

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.



JUDAH CHRISTIAN
THANKS FOR A JOB WELL DONE

At last Tuesday's final home volleyball match, the Tribe recognized coach **Caesar Talili** for his 20 years of dedication to the program. Coach **Hilary Porter** shared a heartfelt speech highlighting Talili's many accomplishments, years of service and his steadfast heart for the Lord. At the end of the speech, the current volleyball team unveiled a banner officially naming the court "Coach Caesar Talili Volleyball Court." The banner includes the names of over 200 athletes Talili has coached at Judah. Reported by **Lidia Santiago**, photo via **Xavier Russell**.

— Jack Dalbey



Oakland

The volleyball team's Volley for the Cure night went amazingly well. They ended up donating over \$1,000 to a local woman fighting cancer, while spreading awareness of the disease while playing the sport they love.

— SOPHIE VONLANKEN



This section contains original work by News-Gazette student reporters. If you are not a subscriber, please consider becoming one, because local journalism is only possible with your support.



BHRA

On Saturday, the volleyball team brought home the county title, topping Westville in the championship match in two sets. The week was full of excitement with Senior Night celebrations for volleyball on Thursday and football on Friday.

— LAHNA BENJAMIN

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Rantoul

On Friday, the Eagles celebrated Senior Night for over 40 student athletes. There was a lot of recognition and tears for cheerleaders, band and football on a bittersweet night, knowing it would be the last time cheering with friends.

— TAMIA BELL

CERRO GORDO



IT'S A MESSY SITUATION

On Oct. 8 the Arcola/Cerro Gordo/Bement football team played at Tri-County before Bement's homecoming dance, notching its first win of the season. Halftime marked the end of the Battle of the Principals. The week leading up to the game, a jar was placed in each principal's office to collect donations during Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The principal with the most money in their jar would end up getting pied in the face; if the goal of \$1,000 was reached, all six principals would get a face-pull. All six did (left to right): **Tiffany Huisinga** (Kansas), **Doug Kepley** (Bement), **Brandon Willard** (Cerro Gordo), **Nick Lindsey** (Arcola), **Amy Jones** (Shiloh) and **Kendall Huffman** (Oakland).

— ALEXA RODGERS



Danville

Theater Club and its cast of talented performers prepared since late September to put on a Monster Calls. Club directors



Jordan and **Kady Richey** worked diligently to cast, direct, plan, design and rehearse the show Oct. 23-25. Lead roles included Connor, played by **Brooklyn Warfield**, and Monster, played by **Sarah Tabela**.

— RYLEE JACK



Robin Scholz/The News-Gazette

Hoopeston Area

Cross-country coach **Erika Seidel** said the girls' team set several personal records with their 3-mile times, but injuries reduced the available roster to three (**Siana Hernandez** has been a top finisher). On the boys' side, the Cornjerkers for the second consecutive year and for the first time since 1981-83 won both the Vermilion County and Vermilion Valley Conference titles. **Owen Garrett** won the Vermilion Valley Conference race.

— WILLAMINA CLAYTON



Champaign Central

On Saturday, Central's Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) and Spectrum Alliance clubs banded together to host a booth at CU Pride Fest! Volunteers from both clubs sold flower crowns, printed sweatshirts and snacks during the parade. Some students marched, as well. Pictured (left to right): **Keira Ulick**, **Samhita Gubba**, **Aanya Rangaiahgari**, **Joanna Lin**, **Taylor Thomassie** and **Eric Fagerlin**.

— ADELAIDE KOTA



Tuscola

Art Club visited Parkland College for an art seminar, where students created pieces that were related to design and ceramics. They also toured Parkland's art gallery and heard a presentation from one of the artists showcased, **Hannah Buchanan**. Art Club learned valuable information to use in their pieces in the future. Pictured (top to bottom, left to right): **Amelia Manus**, **Michael Cravens**, **Karsyn Lyons**, **Hayley Skinner**, **Callie Cook**, **Claire Leonard**, **Sara Sexson**, **Macy Coed**, **Alex Guzman-Moreno**, **Willow Cravens** and **Brooke Mann**; and **Lyons** and **Cook**.

— CLAIRE LEONARD



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Blue Ridge
To celebrate the end of the season, the soccer team had a chalk battle pitting teammates. They each got a bottle of colored chalk powder and made one last memory with the team. Pictured (courtesy **Payton Heiser**): **Jacob Johnson, Elias Nolan, Bo Clark, Benjamin Manuel, Kaleb Forrest, Billie Peterson, Broghen Flannell, Jakob Kristen and Landen Soliday.**

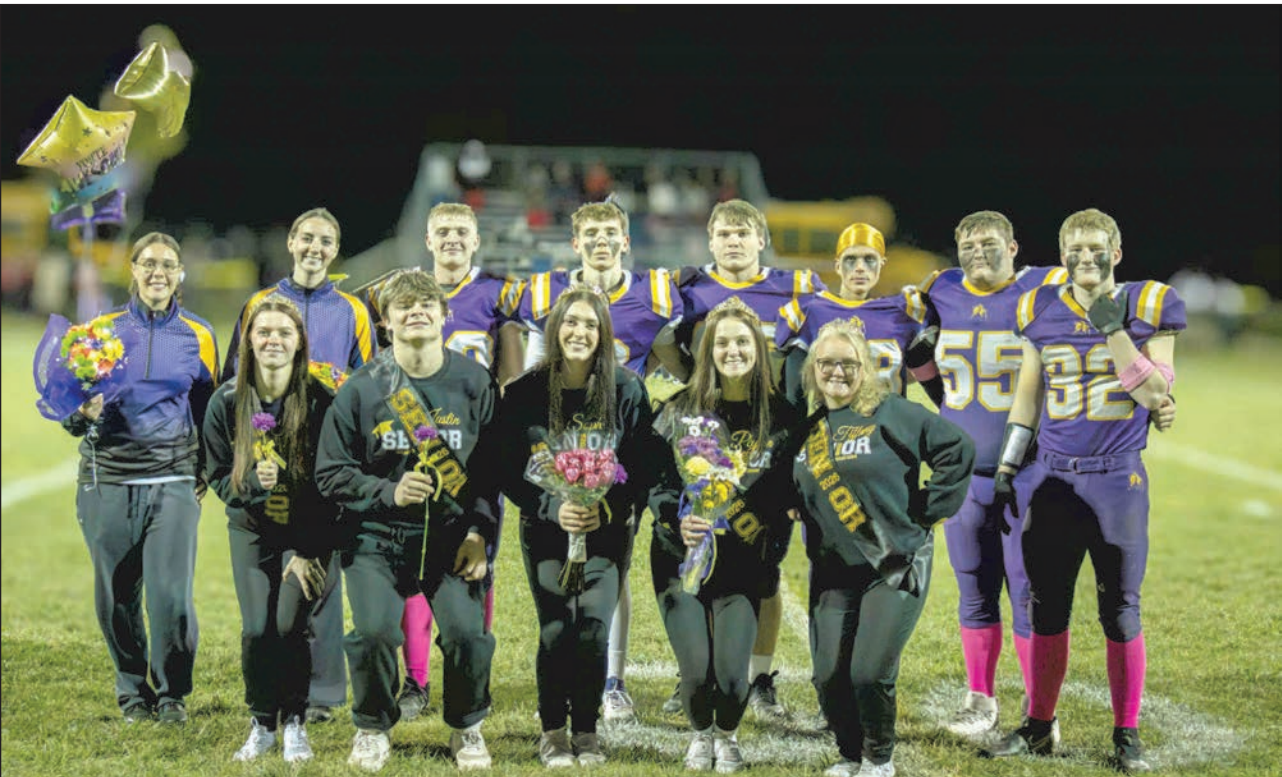
— **KARLY WARNER**



MONTICELLO KISSES FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Throughout October, Pep Club has been hard at work raising money for Piatt County's breast cancer awareness and fundraising campaign, Paint Piatt Pink. In total, the high school raised \$4,690, beating last year's earnings by \$115.40. It was accumulated through working bake sales, selling Pink Out apparel and promoting a unique fundraiser, Kiss the Goat. One of Pep Club's most exciting Pink Out activities, the student body and staff donate money for whichever football and cheer captains they want to kiss a goat. The captains who earned the most money, **Heyden Romano** (\$122) and **Bailee Wierman** (\$126), had to kiss a goat during the pep assembly on Oct. 22. Photos courtesy **Brooklyn Wierman** and **Ashlee Burton.**

— **Mady Melton**



Georgetown-Ridge Farm

Football cheer and band members celebrated Senior Night. Announced before the game, the students met parents on the field. After the game, the cheer and football teams finished with Buff Jacks and huddle — not a dry eye on the football field. Pictured courtesy **Sarah Runyan**, left to right: (top row) **Autumn Warner, Milee Elise, Cale Cavanaugh, William Graves, Logan Pearson, Mathius Hutchison, Ashton Pilkington** and **Alex Wade**; and (bottom) **Kiley Knight, Justin Nose, Sophia Loucks, Peyton McComas** and **Tiffany Taylor.**

— **TIFFANY TAYLOR**



Centennial

Impact Life visited Centennial for its yearly blood drive. Students from Science National Honor Society, National Honor Society and several other clubs participated. Also, Centennial hosted the annual Twin City swim and dive meet to honor and remember those who have had cancer.

— **KENNEDY BORDEN**



Armstrong

Among the students recognized at last Thursday's fall sports Senior Night: **Cala Reifsteck** and **Aubrey Self** (cross-country); **Aidyn Deck, Ryan Edwards** and **Luke Townsend** (golf); **Nate Burd** (soccer); and **Makenna Ackerman, Caroline Kuntz, Tinley Parkerson** and manager **Mia Carpenter** (volleyball).

— **AUBREY SELF**



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Urbana

Friday's annual Hispanic Heritage Month assembly was a lively event filled with culture, tradition and excitement. Math teacher **Bianca Aguirre** closed the celebration with a crowd favorite line dance, Payaso de Rodeo, a staple at nearly every fiesta. Her performance was such a hit that students and staff couldn't resist joining her on the dance floor.

— RUBY PITTENGER



BEMENT PLAYING THEIR CARDS RIGHT

The theme was Casino Royale. At the dance, 2024 Queen **Gabby Block** crowned the Queen of Hearts, **Ella Corum**, as this year's queen, while 2024 king **Brayden Strack** crowned the King of Clubs, **Will Fuson**, as the king. Afterward, the placements for the Boat Building competition were announced: freshmen fourth, juniors third, seniors second and sophomores first. The evening ended with the senior song, Vienna, by **Billy Joel**, before the gym was efficiently cleaned up as students left to enjoy the rest of their weekend.

— Kiana Hunter



Gibson City-Melvin-Sibley

FFA has been hard at work this school year, members taking part in several community-focused activities. During Highway Cleanup, FFA partnered with Future Business Leaders of America to pick up litter along several highways in the Gibson City area, helping keep our community clean and welcoming. For Thank a Farmer Day, FFA members prepared and delivered around 250 meals to local farmers across five grain elevators, showing appreciation for their hard work during harvest season. Thanks to FFA reporter **Kasen DeFries** for providing insight into what the group has been doing.

— ADDISON FARMER



DeLand-Weldon

This year's career fair, sponsored by Constellation and the Illinois Farm Bureau, included several schools like Monticello, Cerro Gordo, Argenta Oreana, Bement and Maroa Forsyth.

— NATHAN SMITH



Maroa-Forsyth

Marching band ended its season by competing at the University of Illinois competition at Gies Memorial Stadium. The Trojans placed third in their class. Earlier, they placed first at Monticello, second at Mount Zion and third at Eastern Illinois.

— AUBREY STEWART



Oakwood

Even with 1:40 p.m. dismissals on Wednesday and Thursday for parent-teacher conferences and a day off Friday, students continued to stay active, engaged and involved. Art students visited a pumpkin patch, where they showcased their creativity by designing and painting pumpkins outside of the traditional classroom setting. And 10 Family, Career and Community Leaders of America students took part in a Fall Leadership Conference at Eastern Illinois. Pictured, left to right: **Norah Aquino, Madison Goble, Makenzi Goble, Ireland Harrison, Jett Pierce, Sidney Dunavan, Rylan Wilson, Ayessa Nabor, Vanessa Martinez and Addison McFadden.**

— SOPHIA AQUINO



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Cissna Park

At last Thursday's Senior Night, 10 seniors who have been a part of our program for four years were honored. Underclassmen decorated the gym and locker room and presented them with roses and balloons. Pictured (via **Ashlyn Schmid**): senior **Lauryn Hamrick** gets her rose from junior **Ava Henrichs**; senior **Faith Kaeb** poses with her parents; and senior **Addison Lucht** receives a hug from her dad.

— SOPHIA DUIS



St. Joseph-Ogden

The Environmental Club — originally the Sustainability Club — was started in 2022 and continues to grow. The club, led by **Marshall Schacht**, hosted a community bike ride along the Kickapoo Rail Trail, kicking off the school year by spending time outside appreciating the nature the club hopes to protect. The club plans to host more community events to raise awareness while also working to register with the Adopt-A-Highway program.

— KATIE ERICKSEN



Academy High

Students in *Imagining the Future*, taught by **Megan Hutchinson**, took a field trip to The Idea Store to get materials for an upcoming project. The store at Lincoln Square Mall sells used craft supplies and found objects — perfect for the class, as every student has to create artifacts from a future world they invented. Students will create a museum to showcase their artifacts, from worlds featuring superheroes and robots, to zombies and dystopias. Pictured, left to right: **Gabriel de la Cruz Crespo**, **Chris Chan** and **Maxwell Milling**.

— EVIE PRICE



Milford

During Red Ribbon Week (Oct. 20-24) — a campaign to help stop drug and alcohol addiction — National Honor Society students used dress-up days as a way to spread prevention messages. For example, Neon Day was used to shine away drugs.

— KAMI MUEHLING



SULLIVAN OUT AND ABOUT

Students in National English Honor Society took their annual Barnes and Nobel trip for new books. Also, at student council's fall workshop at Lake Land College in Mattoon, students learned about leadership. Students in Family, Career and Community Leaders of America went to their fall leadership conference to share ideas about promoting leadership growth in chapters. A 20xwin volleyball team celebrated Senior Night, and the band traveled to Oblong and finished first place in Class 1A as well as the best drum major caption award, best visual caption award, best music caption award, best parade performance and best auxiliary parade performance.

— Lily Moxley and Danica Bell



Mahomet-Seymour

At Senior Night for the Marching Bulldogs, cheerleaders and football, each team had its own way of celebrating. Band seniors have a tradition of wearing costumes to their final halftime performance. Cheerleaders were joined by their moms for the first quarter. And the football players announced before the game — walked up and down the field for one last time with coaches afterward. Pictured: **Aurda Bell** (playing saxophone), **Brooklyn Dyer**, **Cade Ashby** and **Rowan Evans** (drumline).

— ABBY EDEN



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Iroquois West

On Sunday, **Jennifer Nitsche** Family Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) hosted their annual Trunk or Treat, offering a free and safe space for children to celebrate Halloween. The event, which welcomes local businesses and organizations to set up trunks for exposure, drew the largest crowd yet as over 200 costumed kids took part. To add onto the fun, Iroquois West Art Club (**Nora Mann**) provided face painting in addition to the Entrepreneurs (**Carrie Miller**) serving popcorn and offering a photo opportunity.

— **TRAEH KISSACK**



ST. THOMAS MORE TAKE A BOW, KIDS

Sophia Hill, Audrey Gooding, Cassidy Monahan, Campbell Philips and **Hunter Madigan** were recognized at volleyball Senior Night. Preparation also continued for next month's Logos retreat for juniors and seniors in Springfield. Finally, students celebrated Mass on Friday followed by an academic award ceremony.

— **Duncan Oliveira**



Uni High

Last Tuesday, the volleyball team held its Senior Night against DeLand-Weldon. Following the match, players and families celebrated the team's graduating seniors with speeches, posters and food. Pictured: Volleyball players pose with and present posters and gifts to seniors **Helen Fu, Chloe Noronha-Hostler, Chizara Onyemere** and **Emmie Vargas**.

— **SIMRAH KHAN**



LeRoy

On Friday, LIFE class traveled to Eureka High School for a Fall Carnival. Inside the Red Barn, students played homemade carnival games like ring toss, Connect Four, putt putt and flip the chick. There were also bracelet making and face painting stations. Card games and snacks were provided, as well.

— **MOLLY SCHEUER**



Westville

On Friday, seniors were recognized at the football game before kickoff. The event began with the senior influencer video, which featured each student and the teacher they chose as their influencer. Afterward, each senior was announced and walked the field with their parents or guardians.

— **OLIVIA TROGLIA**

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Schlارman

Last week's Senior Night and Pink Out volleyball match raised donations for the OSF Cancer Institute.



— IZZY BOGEN



Villa Grove

The Villa Grove Devillettes hosted their annual Youth Clinic for students in pre-K through fifth grade, and it was a big success. This year's theme was "Hilo & Stitch," and the young dancers brought plenty of island spirit to the field. **Sydney Bloom, Trinity Linstead, Harper Drake and Eva Piercy** worked with the Pre-K through second graders to learn a fun routine to "Hawaiian Roller Coaster Ride," while **Sarah Bloom, Lyndsay Zoch and Emma Golightly** taught the third through fifth graders a lively dance to "Burning Love." The participants showcased their hard work and enthusiasm during a special halftime performance at Friday night's football game, earning cheers from the crowd and proud smiles from their parents. Photos courtesy **Zeva Kirkman**.

— EVA PIERCY

UNITY COSTUME PARTY

Student council hosted its annual haunted house Saturday to raise money for the Thanksgiving Food Drive. Visitors enjoyed a kid-friendly scare in the afternoon and a real scare in the evening. Members of the student council wore costumes to match the different scares and spent the night handing out candy and scaring visitors. Pictures courtesy **Jennifer Meyer and Emily Osterbur**.

— Claire Meharry



Salt Fork

Students and student council members took time out of their day to help at the elementary school's Scholastic Book Fair. Students assisted the younger kids with picking out books for purchase, helped them color pages and worked through fall-themed worksheets. It not only helped elementary parents and teachers, but the high schoolers also developed leadership skills. Pictured (clockwise from top left): Student council member **Cayden Richardson** (right) with elementary students; **Hayden Schmidt** (front left) and **Karli McGee** (back); and **Britta Rivers** helping a student with a Halloween worksheet.

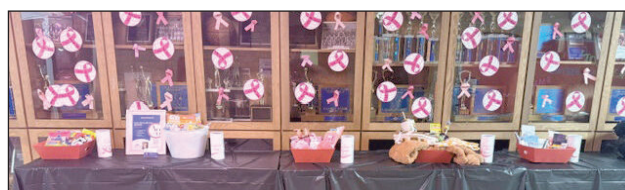
— ANNA MCCOLLUM



Heritage

The volleyball team hosted Pink Out against Arco on Oct. 21. Both teams wore special pink jerseys to show their support during Breast Cancer Awareness Month. On the screen in the hallway, Heritage players said who they were playing for; **Kalyn Miller** (pictured), for example, said it was family friend **Jenny Birge**. The student section of the Red Zone showed their support wearing pink (pictured). **Clark Roland and Tyler Lisanby** helped lead the chants (pictured) to cheer on the Hawks to victory. Raffle baskets, chuck-a-duck and other goodies helped raise money for the Mills Breast Cancer Institute. Pictured: Raffle baskets donated by Heritage's Family, Career and Community Leaders of America; three seniors in the front enjoying their last Pink Night, (left to right) **Faith Latham, Kiara Jones and Breanna McGarigle**.

— RYLAN WHITE



Fisher

The Fisher Principal Advisory Council went to the Jostens Renaissance Student Leadership Conference, where students learned about creating a positive and successful environment. FFA had its fall chapter meeting, where pumpkins were painted and a fall dessert contest took place. Art students went on a field trip to Parkland College in Cham-paign to learn new skills, too.

— KESIAH MUSICK

