

HIGH SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL

Powered by Danville Area Community College



IT'S PROM SEASON

AT JUDAH CHRISTIAN: Saturday's prom at Lincolnshire Fields Country Club in Champaign celebrated the theme of 'Masquerade.' Students took photos with friends and family beforehand then spent the rest of the night dancing, singing and making countless memories. Some students even decorated their own masks to bring to the dance.

— Jack Dalbey



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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.



Arcola

Retiring Superintendent **Tom Mulligan** signed senior diplomas last week — including his daughter's.

— **ADDEE MULLIGAN**



Hoopeston Area

Saturday's prom was held at the Civic Center until 11 p.m., with after-prom at the high school until 2 a.m. This year's theme was 'Around the World,' featuring setups representing various countries, including Egypt and China. Seniors **Silas Yates** and **Shay Layden** were crowned king and queen (photo by **Ginger Gonzalez**).

— **WILLAMINA CLAYTON**



Cerro Gordo

On April 15, Principal **Brandon Willard** took seniors **Caydence Brown** and **Cooper Benson** to lunch at Yoder's Kitchen in Arthur to celebrate their Lincoln Prairie Conference senior awards.

— **HUNTER MALONE**



Westville

Lainey Wichtowski won Best of Show at the Vermilion Valley Conference Art Show.

— **OLIVIA TROGLIA**



URBANA ROLL YOUR SLEEVES

Seniors **Valentina Gonzalez-Ahuerma** and **Jalayah Irons** painted a banner for the annual blood drive hosted by UHS Journalism. The drive will occur Wednesday and will be done with community blood center ImpactLife.

— **Ruby Pittenger**



LeRoy

If you thought the softball team started hot last season, wait until you hear what's being accomplished this spring. Following Friday's game against Peoria Richwoods, the Panthers broke the all-time consecutive-wins record again, topping last season's mark of 19 consecutive wins. The Panthers started 20-0 as many new faces have stepped up to the challenge. Last season, the team celebrated coach **Doug Hageman's** 250th win, and now he is 10 wins away from 300.

— **MOLLY SCHEUER**

The News-Gazette

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Villa Grove

Student council members took the initiative to give back to their school through a hands-on community service project. After school, students gathered with trash bags and gloves and began cleaning areas across campus, including the bridge, track, parking lot and surrounding grounds. While there did not appear to be much litter at first glance, members quickly realized the extent of the need as they filled multiple bags with trash. **Bailey Keith** and **Ava Hudson** focused their efforts behind the school, while **Kendrick Roy** and **EJ Brown** wrapped up the day by disposing of the collected waste.

— EVA PIERCY

UNITY A GOOD CAUSE



BHRA



On Friday, students traveled to Chicago for their annual Blue Devil Pride Cubs Trip. Every year, selected students are awarded for their good grades with a trip to Wrigley Field to watch the Cubs play. The trip serves as both a reward for their hard work and an opportunity to enjoy a fun, memorable experience with classmates outside of school.

— LAHNA BENJAMIN



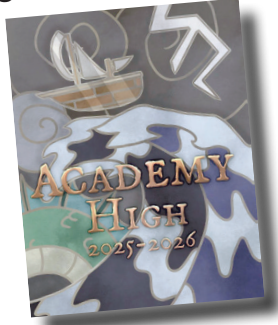
During Student Council Week, there were dress-up days such as 'PJ Day' (pictured: **Ally Shaw**, **Ginna Stierwalt**, **Grace Tempel**, **Claire Meharry**, **Leah Watson** and **Emily Osterbur**), 'Hawaiian Day,' 'Wear Pink Day,' 'Student Council T-Shirt Day' (pictured) and 'Salad Dressing Day.' On Thursday, Unity held its annual Great Auction with funds going to 'A D.A.E. to Smile' to honor the memory and spirit of **Daniel Ennis**, a classmate of the senior class who passed away at the age of 11 due to a rare connective tissue disease. Students played games and bid money in a live and silent auction for an assortment of items. It was a great day to get out of class and raise money for a good cause. Photos courtesy of **Jennifer Meyer**: **Danika Eisenmenger**, **Makenna Boyd**, **Denise Warner**, **Kris Graves** and **Grace Wherley** after the makeup artist game; and **Hannah Stone**, **Julie Decker**, **Kara Leaman** and **Kyleigh Block** after competing in the wig-snatching competition.

— CLAIRE MEHARRY

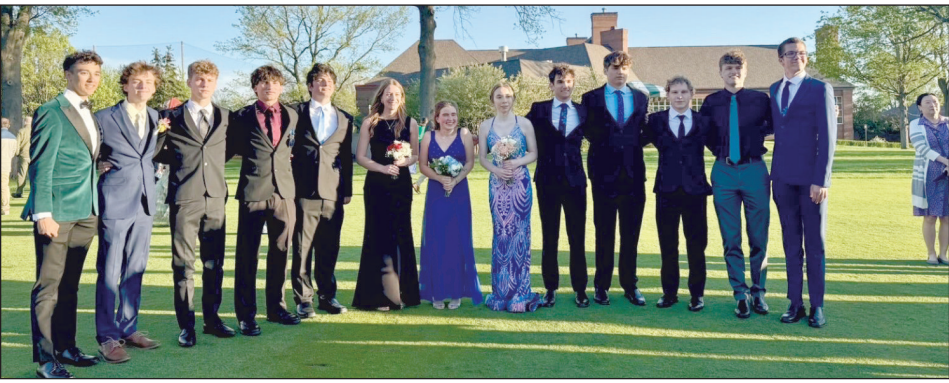


Academy High

Yearbook class taught by **Megan Hutchison** has finished the 2025-26 yearbook. The class voted on an ocean theme, and senior **Camille Kloster** created digital illustrations for the cover, backgrounds and table of contents. The yearbook contains many unique pages, including an 'iceberg Meme' layout of Academy High lore and inside jokes, designed by **Tey Eagles**. Students who ordered a yearbook will get their copy during finals week. Illustration by Kloster.



— EVIE PRICE



St. Thomas More

Students participated in Prom Week by dressing up in different themes, such as 'Illini Spirit Day' and 'Jersey Day,' ahead of Saturday's celebration.

— DUNCAN OLIVEIRA

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Monticello

Last Thursday marked performance night for the Monticello High School One Acts. These are short senior-directed plays that allow new actors to ease into stage life and current actors to continue their theater experience past the spring musical, getting the chance to shine through in larger roles. There were two plays this year, both with differing storylines: 'Check Please,' directed by **Andrew Bledsoe** and **Landon Culpepper**, and 'The Desperate Housewives of Shakespeare,' directed by **Reece Spainhour**, **Maddie Bonds** and **Amara Fulton**. Photos courtesy **Ayson McIntosh**.

— MADY MELTON



Armstrong

Students entered art work for the Vermilion Valley Conference Art Show. In the category 'Watercolor Miscellaneous,' **Elie Lomax** received third, and **Hadley Pruiett** received honorable mention. **Kaizen McCall** placed third in 'Printmaking.' Second place in the category 'Miscellaneous 3D' went to **Savannah Hardwick**.

— AUBREY SELF



CHAMPAIGN CENTRAL ADD TO THE TROPHY CASE

The Academic Challenge for Engineering and Science (ACES) team earned first place in the regional competition, with 10 members placing across various topics. Furthermore, they went the furthest they ever have in state and finished in third place. Members **Tommy Rasmussen**, **Aaron Rubico** and **Lynn Kim** placed in events at the competition.

— Adelaide Kota



Back to front; from left: Bryce Brown, Madisyn Laffoon, Braydon Forbes, Mario Martinez, Jacob Schaubert, Noah Brittenham, Dylan Potter, Garrett Koester, Olivia Leppard, Charity Garcia, Morgan Lambert, London Snyder, Molly Coffey, Jalynn Shelton, Eliana Salinas, Anna Mann, Yi Brittenham, Hannah Borgers, Sydney Seyfert, Kamryn Muehling, Lillie Harris, Sesilia Salinas and Owen Baker.



Danville

On Thursday, Young Men Empowerment held a Teacher/Staff Recognition Luncheon at the high school. Students were provided lessons on what it means to be leaders, and they also went to volunteer at Mark Denman Elementary School's fourth-grade class. Photos courtesy **Ricky Hoskins**.

— RYLEE JACK



Kamryn Muehling, Noah Brittenham and Lillie Harris in the Olivet Nazarene gift shop.



ABOVE: Jacob Schaubert, Yi Brittenham, Dylan Potter, Mario Martinez and Noah Brittenham. BELOW: (left) Bryce Brown, Jalynn Shelton, Molly Coffey and Anna Mann; and (right) Owen Baker and Garrett Koester.



Milford

On April 16, business students attended the Olivet Createur Conference, where they listened to keynote speaker **Earl Seals**, toured of the Olivet Nazarene campus, and had the opportunity to listen to 10-plus Spark Session speakers.

— KAMI MUEHLING

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Paxton-Buckley-Loda

Last week's girls' and boys' track-and-field quad meet served as the girls' Senior Night. The meet included Blue Ridge, Milford and Academy High, the Panthers enjoying the favorable weather and sweeping the competition. **Caleb White**, a three-year senior athlete, said, 'It was overall a fun meet. It showcases what our track team can do at different events and meets.' Senior girls were recognized during the meet, marking an important milestone in their high school careers. At Monticello, several Panthers earned several personal records, including **Shane Alden** in both of his events. **Zane Latimer**, a four-year senior, said, 'Even with the conditions, I'm glad we went. I enjoyed the competitiveness and had a good time overall.' Photos by **Alex Jones**.

— BRAYDEN KIEF



FISHER FARMERS FOR A DAY

FFA had a blast hosting a petting zoo for the school district that included goats, lambs, chickens, a bunny and a cow. Students also brought their very own tractors that all the kids got to go inside and look at.

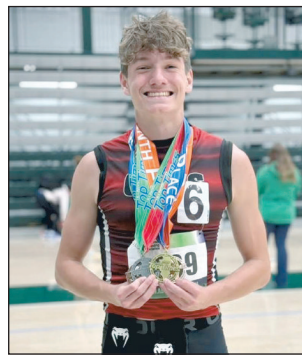
— **Kesiah Musick**



Georgetown-Ridge Farm

Students walked Main Street on Saturday morning to pick up trash. The group started at the high school at 9 a.m. and continued until 11 a.m., finishing with a meal from a local restaurant. Among those pitching in: students **Tyland Trussle, Annika Fraser-Soule, Katie Wersich, Tiffany Taylor, Spencer Ray, RubyRae Fraser-Soule, Lizz Walls, Nadia Sparrow** and **Madi Spesard** and staff helpers **Kevin Thomas** and **Kim Sparrow**.

— **TIFFANY TAYLOR**



Gibson City-Melvin-Sibley

The track-and-field team has been on a roll this season. At Friday's Monticello invite, **Evan Landers-Kristensen** broke the meet record — set in the 1990s — in the 400 meters. His time ranks No. 1 in the state.

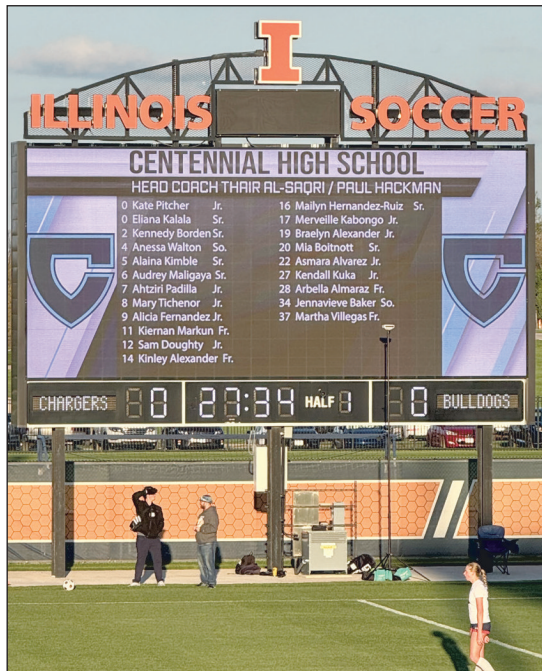
— **ADDISON FARMER**



Uni High

On Saturday, junior student council held prom at the I Hotel and Illinois Conference Center in Champaign. The theme was 'Great Gatsby,' and juniors and seniors gathered together for a catered dinner, music, dancing and the crowning of this year's prom court. Also, University of Illinois dancers held a workshop for Uni students. Over the course of a school period, students practiced choreography in the school's gym. Although Uni offers education in many fine arts, including music, art and theater, the curriculum does not feature dance classes. During the event, students branched out and experienced a new type of fine arts, led by instruction from the UI students.

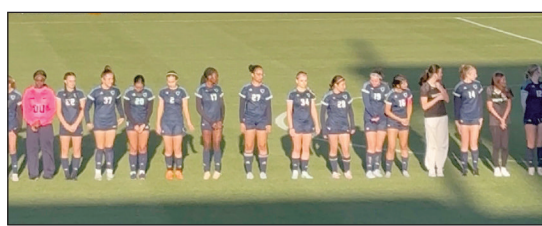
— **SIMRAH KHAN**



Centennial

At Saturday's Champaign-Urbana Girls' Soccer Showcase, the girls' soccer team had the opportunity to play at Demirjian Park. This event included matches between area teams as well as the University of Illinois' team. It was a fun experience for fans, too, who got the opportunity to sit along the field and enjoy game-day concessions. The event was special for another reason, though, as Centennial girls' soccer coach and teacher **Lindsay Aikman** has been a key player in organizing the showcase. Aikman said the idea for the showcase came from the CU Soccer Summit, which she organized after COVID-19. The idea for the summit seemed impossible at first, but it became a reality through the hard work of the staff at Demirjian and Soccer Planet, as well as that of Illini coach **Janet Rayfield**. Aikman said: 'It is always fun to greet teams and coaches when they arrive. The excitement is so genuine and humbling. You can see them take it all in. It's like a dream come true ... We need better for our girls, because soccer can change lives. It changed mine!'

— **KENNEDY BORDE**



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Salt Fork

Art students had the opportunity to put their work this semester on display at the Vermilion Valley Conference Art Show. Thirteen students were named winners, several earning ribbons for more than one of their pieces of art. High-schoolers have multiple art classes they are able to take as an elective, and this event gave them the ability to show off the effort they are putting into their projects in class. Pictured: **Vivian Hunter's** first-place showing in the 'Paper' category; **Ryker Williams'** second-place showing in the 'Photography-People' category; **Kaylee Talbott's** first-place showing in the 'Glass/Plastic' category; and **Alivia Cunningham's** third-place showing in the 'Pencil-Still Life' category.

— ANNA MCCOLLUM



BLUE RIDGE BRINGING THE STORY TO LIFE

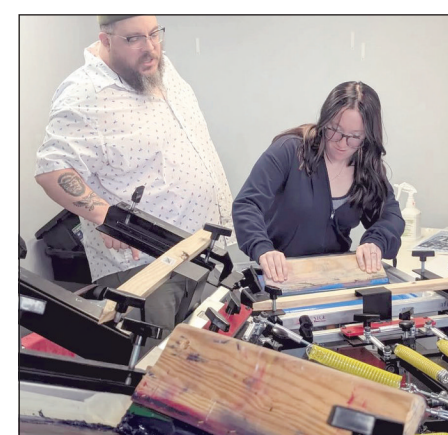
Thespian Troupe 5290 performed three showings of its spring play: 'Too Many Ghosts.' The play consists of a mother and daughter who move into an old house to start a bed and breakfast. Witty spirits start to appear and become very important to the inn. Each person involved with the spring show put great time and effort into making every performance entertaining, community and laughter filling the theater. Pictured: **Kinnley Rowe, Ivy Whitehouse, Jonah Hawn, Benjamin Manuel, Ollie Yeagle, Crystal Chambers** and **AJ Brown.**

— Karly Warner



Heritage

On Career Day, students had the option to be in one of the following groups: STEM, agriculture-vet tech-culinary, ironworkers, arts, screen printing, business, health and human services or education. Students got to do hands-on experiments, learn about the career, and ask questions about the profession.



Kaydynn Curry-Varner (far right) was a part of the screen-printing group that screen-printed T-shirts. **Brayden Jones** (left) was a part of the ironworkers group that cut copper pipe and sawdered the pipe to the fittings. The result was a football field goal post.

The art group (top) explored many places in Champaign, and (below) the agriculture-vet tech-culinary group saw farm animals and surgeries done on animals.

— RYLAN WHITE



Cisna Park

The music program put on the junior version of 'The Wizard of Oz.' **Addison Tipsord** played the lead, Dorothy, with **Asher Scheffer** as Scarecrow, **Trent Schmid** as Tin Man and **Sawyer Kaeb** as the Lion. The musical was directed by **Julie Yergler** and featured a wonderful collection of cast members, tech people and backstage helpers. The turnout was great, and everyone performed well. Pictured: **Amelia Hodel** performs as the Wicked Witch, and Dorothy (Tipsord) defeats the Dancing Jitterbugs.

— SOPHIE DUIS



Tuscola

Students Against Destructive Decisions met to discuss the negative impacts of vaping and distracted driving. They completed a short quiz to test their knowledge beforehand and were surprised at some of the answers. Pictured, from left: **Tessa Brucker, Ava Whitson, Hanna Carswell, Emma Spillman, Montse Xolo, Celeste Rebollo, Elizabeth Quinn** and **Ainsley Rennert.**

— CLAIRE LEONAR