

HIGH SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL

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A TRIP TO REMEMBER

AT BEMENT: Students who reached 150 points enjoyed the annual end-of-the-year Family, Career and Community Leaders of American field trip to Chicago. First stop: IKEA, where students not only got to tour the massive complex but also enjoyed an extensive lunch. Afterward, students visited Shedd Aquarium for a look at different varieties of aquatic life, a dolphin show and a chance to purchase souvenirs from the gift shop.

— Kiana Hunter



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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
Hoopston 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.



Georgetown-Ridge Farm

The archery team competed at last weekend's state tournament, placing 10th out of all high school teams to advance to nationals in Kentucky on May 7-9. This team has put in the effort all season long and can't wait to see what nationals has in store for them. Individually, **Andrea Switzer** placed eighth out of 205 high school girls with a score of 284/300. Photo courtesy coach **Jeremy Stark**.

— TIFFANY TAYLOR



Rantoul

Ronald Beldo — aka coach Dre — was named the new head football coach. He hopes to build an 'aggressive bonded team. Any athlete that wants to get better at any sport should come out and try football, especially right now. It is high paced and high intensity and will make you better at any sport,' Beldo said. Players met with him and are working out in the weight room to prepare for the upcoming season.

— TAMIA BELL



BHRA

Creating community

Student council put together the annual Senior Citizens Dinner on Saturday and had a great turnout! The afternoon was full of laughter, good conversations and lots of shared stories, which made for a welcoming and fun atmosphere. Student council members served food to the senior community, organized bingo, and gave tours around the high school, making it a really special day for everyone involved.

— LAHNA BENJAMIN



Armstrong

A new feature for art classes: pottery wheels for the first time. Art teacher **Bri Berger** is introducing many new things that students might not have otherwise learned or experienced.

— AUBREY SELF



Urbana

The girls' soccer team played its first home game against ALAH, starting the season off with a kick.

— RUBY PITTENGER



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Centennial

Centennial 4-H took advantage of the spring weather and enjoyed a club field trip to Turkey Run State Park. While there, club members hiked through the park, explored different rock formations, and took in the scenery. Beyond being a fun opportunity for club bonding, the trip was also a great way for students to observe nature and wildlife.

— KENNEDY BORDEN



ST. JOSEPH-OGDEN THE STAGE IS SET



The talented Drama Club is presenting the musical 'Dreamland,' a chaotic, fun and out-of-this-world production. The cast has been working hard behind the scenes, dedicating many long nights to making bedazzling costumes, choreographing scenes or practicing lines. At work since January, they would not be able to create something so special without student leaders/choreographers: **Claire Hartman, Madi Kelley and Lilly Kelley**. Pictured: **Sydney Steinbach, Easton Ray, Grace Preston, Reid Bewley and Adalyn Bell**.

— Katie Ericksen



Heritage

Students and staff were given a lecture about the dangers of tornadoes by **Nick Bartholomew** from Storm Science, based in Joliet. Bartholomew talked about safety, the negatives of storm-chasing, and gave students the chance to participate in experiments. **Brooklyn Hardaway, Cameron Johnson, Addi Hopper** and science teacher **Lauren Hopper** got to feel a shock while trying to get their hair to stick up from the Van de Graaff generator (100,000 volts). Bartholomew also mixed liquid nitrogen and boiling water that created a 'cloud.' Students also got to see the damages from the Storm Science car from the Kankakee tornado on March 10. Pictured: Addi Hopper shocking her mom, Lauren Hopper, using the Van de Graaff; Bartholomew boiling water into liquid nitrogen to make a cloud; and hail damage on the Storm Science car from the Kankakee tornado.

— RYLAN WHITE



Academy High

In the module Music Production, taught by **Mark Wyman**, students have been working on creating covers of their favorite songs. Throughout the semester, they have been studying what goes into creating music, from sound design and digital audio workstations, to recording live instruments and vocals. By the end of the semester, every student will have created an original song. Pictured, from left: **Ezra Zook, Breanna Patten, Tyler Ingerson and Max Milling**.

— EVIE PRICE



Mahomet-Seymour

Members of Sonder met to check in on publication progress. Sonder is the literary magazine at the high school. Students can submit photos, stories, poems and art pieces that get compiled into a magazine, which can be purchased by students.

— ABBI EDEN

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Blue Ridge

Over spring break, the Marching Knights went on their band trip to Orlando, Fla. The band marched down Disney's Main Street and around Universal Studios, too. Each band member exhibited their musical talent and made great memories.

— KARLY WARNER



Monticello



Last month, Sievers Center was electrified by fans cheering on their teams in the boys' basketball sectional championship. Now, it's being used for a different purpose. On March 25, FFA and Pep Club partnered with Dairyland Company to host a Donkey Basketball Fundraiser. There were four teams: juniors, seniors, staff and first-responders, all of whom battled it out on the court (first-responders won the championship). In order to score a basket, players had to shoot the ball through the hoop — just like any normal game of basketball.

But they also had to ride on a donkey from one basket to another. Tickets were sold for \$10 ahead of time and \$15 at the door, with proceeds going to support the Piatt County Animal Shelter and Hope Lives Youth Ranch. Photos courtesy Meg Cassel.

— MADY MELTON

DANVILLE FOR WOMEN

To celebrate the last week of Women's History Month, a Spirit Week was coordinated by the Women's History Committee. To bring the week to life, along with a month of decorations, gift bags for athletes and surprise celebrations, the committee received incredible support from both the student council and Young Women Empowerment. The project focused on connecting students with female alumni who shared their stories and inspiring words. While **Haley Youhas** leads the Women's History Committee, she said she couldn't do it without a dedicated team and the contributions of others, including **Breana Buford, Meg Burton, Marla Dye, Alexa Elliott, Kara Hile, Zoë Hulet** and **Bryan Simmons**.

The themes for the week included a 'Dream Big' Pajama Day, Tuesday was 'Double Trouble' Twin Day, Wednesday was Pink out for Women's Suffrage, Thursday was Tie-Dye for Title IX, and Friday included handing out crowns for 'Queen Energy' Day and handing out goodie bags to athletes.

— RYLEE JACK



Leroy

Before spring break, senior **Kendyl Spratt** signed her letter of intent to play volleyball at Danville Area Community College. Spratt is a three-sport athlete at LeRoy, participating in volleyball, basketball and softball. She received an HOIC honorable mention in volleyball and was HOIC second team in basketball. Spratt was also a volleyball and basketball captain this past year. Outside of sports, Spratt is the student council liaison and a member of Key Club. At DACC, Spratt plans to study nursing.

— MOLLY SCHEUER



Paxton-Buckley-Loda

To celebrate spring break, PBL hosted its spring pep assembly. Games such as 'mattress surfing' and tug-of-war were played. Students also had the chance to pay \$1 to vote for a teacher to get pied, with the top three teachers who received the most votes being pied by a student. At the assembly, both **Rowan Caposieno** and **Taylor Cole** were announced to be advancing to state for their supervised agricultural experience projects.

— BRAYDEN KIEF

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Villa Grove

School records are falling at an impressive pace as the girls' track team continues a standout season. During indoor competition, **Kenna Koeberlein** set a school record in the 60-meter hurdles in 10.73 seconds. **Baylee Martin** also made her mark by breaking the indoor long-jump record with a leap of 5.14 meters (16 feet, 10.5 inches). The 4x400 relay team of **Evalina Kinkade**, **Kenna Koeberlein**, **Areigha Hauversburk** and **Alice Mitsdarfer** etched their names in school history by breaking a 27-year-old record with a time of 4:00.57, surpassing the previous mark of 4:50.7. The outdoor season has brought continued success, as Martin now holds the school record in the long jump with a distance of 17 feet, 2 inches, while **Evalice Callison** set a new record in the high jump at 5 feet, 5 inches.

— EVA PIERCY



Hoopeston Area

The high school hosted a career fair March 25 in the middle school gym and trophy-case hallway during the school day. The event featured 21 career representatives, five of whom offered interactive experiences, including a tractor-driving simulator and virtual-reality headsets. High school counselor **Katie Grice** said, 'The feedback from both teachers and students was very positive!' Overall, teachers found the presenters' quality and the opportunities they provided impressive. Students enjoyed engaging with local businesses, asking questions, and exploring different career paths. Grice added that the event helped connect students with future career opportunities within their own community. Picture credits go to **Ginger Gonzalez**.

— WILLAMINA CLAYTON

ST. THOMAS MORE UNITED IN PRAYER

An all-school Mass took place to celebrate the Annunciation, when the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would become pregnant with Jesus. This Mass was celebrated with the bishop of the Peoria diocese, **Louis Tylka**.

— **Duncan Oliveria**



Champaign Central

Last Thursday, Central's Asian American and Pacific Islander Association hosted a celebration for Holi, the festival of spring and colors. They learned about the celebration and threw colored powder at each other, as is done during the holiday.

— ADELAIDE KOTA

Unity

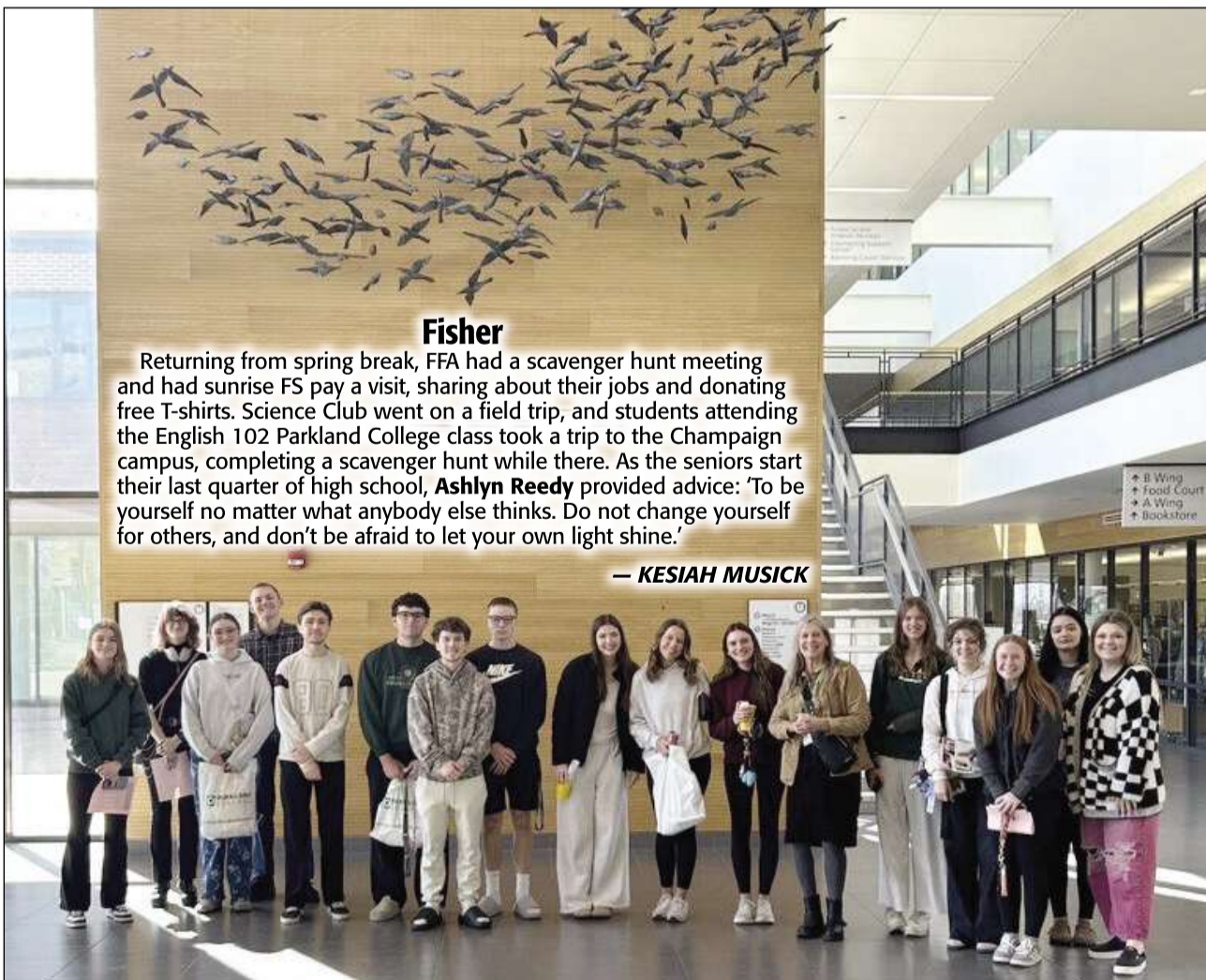
FFA visited the University of Illinois Beef Farm and Feed Mill to tour the facilities and learn about the different processes that take place there daily. Students also got to tour the Parkland College agriculture facilities to learn about what programs are offered. Pictures courtesy of **Ginna Stierwalt**.

— CLAIRE MEHARRY

Fisher

Returning from spring break, FFA had a scavenger hunt meeting and had sunrise FS pay a visit, sharing about their jobs and donating free T-shirts. Science Club went on a field trip, and students attending the English 102 Parkland College class took a trip to the Champaign campus, completing a scavenger hunt while there. As the seniors start their last quarter of high school, **Ashlyn Reedy** provided advice: 'To be yourself no matter what anybody else thinks. Do not change yourself for others, and don't be afraid to let your own light shine.'

— KESIAH MUSICK



Uni High

On Saturday, freshman student council hosted Spring Fling, the fourth of five school dances. Students joined together decked out in the dance's mystical-garden theme, with refreshments and photo spaces available. The dance is part of a X-Week, an annual weeklong fundraiser organized by student council members of all grades to donate money to a local charity.

— SIMRAH KHAN



Westville

On March 27-28, the Drama Club performed its show 'The Shadow Stories: A Cursed Play.' Photos by **Maggie Potter**.

— OLIVIA TROGLIA

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CERRO GORDO ONE BIG REUNION

On March 21, the annual Cerro Gordo/Bement alumni basketball tournament was played in the high school gym, while volleyball was played in the junior high gym. The day was filled with reunions, laughter and friendly competitiveness, as former students reunited to show off their skills. The winning team for the basketball tournament was Team Warren, featuring: **Colin Warren, Connor Brown, Carson Brown, Tyson Moore, Ian Bettinger and Mason McDermith**. The winning team for the girls' volleyball tournament was Team Smith, featuring: **Lauren Smith, Annan Peter, Sydney Walker, Kadie Walker, Devyn Bowsher and Kristie Krigbaum**. Winning the coed volleyball tournament was Team Curran, featuring: **Dustin Curran, Leah Durbin, Tarynn Schulte, Jake Schulte, Brandon Willard, Lindsay Blickenstaff and Andrea Kocher.**
 — Grace Hawk



Salt Fork

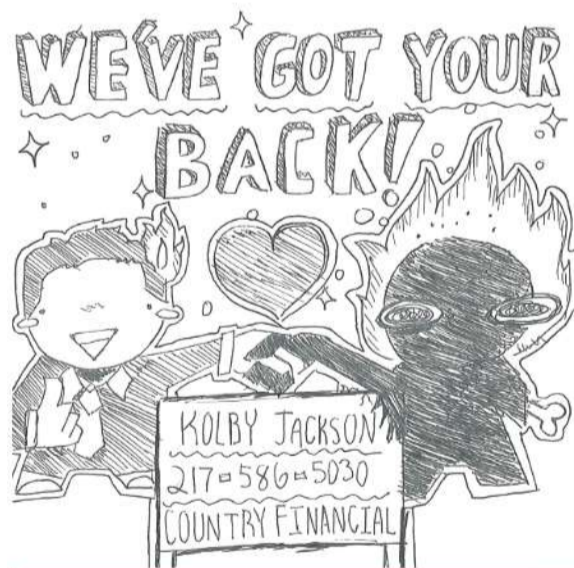
FFA hosted a Friends and Alumni Pickleball Tournament that had a turnout of over 60 community members. Participants faced off in a double-elimination-style bracket, and there were prizes for the tournament champions and for the best-dressed team. This event not only acted as a fundraiser for the FFA chapter, but it also allowed for students and alumni from across Vermilion and Edgar counties to display their support for the program and have a fun night connecting with one another. Pictured (from left): **Bella Kurtenbach and Brant Bennett; Carolyn and Daniel Surowka; Lily and Lucy DeAth** playing against FFA advisers from another school in the tournament; and **Isaak Bemis, Tripp Huffman and Henry Rivers**.

Also, four student-athletes were acknowledged as nominees for the Vermilion County Sportsmanship Award for fall and winter sports: **Kade Smith** (football), **Karli McGee** (volleyball), **Braxton Clem** (boys' basketball) and **Morgan Russell** (girls' basketball). Additionally, Smith, a senior, was named the individual sportsmanship winner for football. Pictured (from left): Smith, McGee, Russell and Clem.



— ANNA MCCOLLUM

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