

THE VICTORY VIEW

Lenten Love!

BY SOFIA ARANETA



This year on March 5th, Christians all around the world will celebrate Ash Wednesday which will mark the beginning of the Lenten season! Lent is seen as just one of the “purple” seasons on the liturgical calendar where you have to stop eating sweets or fast food, but there’s so much more both spiritually and mentally that goes into it.

Mrs. Ferro gave us a wonderful description of the season explaining, “Lent is a Fast before your feat. Taking time away from the things of this world to refocus on our relationship with God. Through prayer, fasting and charity, we follow the example of Christ towards glory with His father.”

We know Lent as a time of preparation for the second coming of Christ, acknowledging his sacrifice for our sins and his death, but it’s also a time to acknowledge ourselves. One of our amazing Theology teachers, Mrs. Farias, describes the Lenten experience saying, “As someone who values comfort and enjoyment, I humbly admit that that Lent was never something I looked forward to doing every year, but I’ve grown this unexpected appreciation for the Lenten practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. I realized that the habits I was resisting the most were the ones I needed so badly; connecting with God, sacrificing something out of love for Him, and lovingly serving those in need- is the basis of our Christian faith, and uncoincidentally, the basis for all loving relationships that help us to give up our selfishness, make meaningful connections, and to give of ourselves until it hurts. As Mother Teresa said, “I have found the paradox, that if you love until it hurts, there can be no more hurt, only more love.” Lent is not glamorous, but neither was the sacrifice of Christ, which is what I need to focus on to truly reflect on love, on life, and on redemptive suffering.”

With these new outlooks on the upcoming season, let us enter with open hearts and minds to welcome Christ for Lent!

SINGING IN THE SWAMP

BY SOFIA ARANETA

This spring, the JCA Drama club presents “**Shrek: The Musical**”! See your favorite DreamWorks movie alive on stage with puppets, fairytales, love, and tapping rats! From the swamp to a princess’ castle, and even Farquad’s perfect town of Duloc, join us for this musical trip. Craziness and the unexpected should be expected and this show will be anything but short of fun. A production with this much pizzazz and catchy songs is a perfect way to start off the Spring season with the whole family. Working on such a big show can only require hard work, dedication, and tons of energy, so let’s hear how members of our cast are feeling about this musical!

Natalia Anemone '28: “This has been such an amazing experience, and the process start to finish is incredible! Everyone is so hardworking and talented and I’m so happy I am able to perform with them. These memories are unforgettable and the friendships I’ve made are unbreakable. I can’t wait to experience this all again for my next three years at JCA!”

Cheyenne Kafka '27: “I feel that we have put a lot of sweat and fun into this show. Personally, everyone has done a really good job from the beginning to now we have made so much progress and we couldn’t dip it without our amazing directors. I love this show and can’t wait for everyone to see.”

Joshua Stewart '26: “I feel we, as a cast, have been making great strides in our progress! I can’t wait for everyone to see the fruits of our labor!”

Alivia Schertz '25: “I am beyond thrilled to be a part of this cast, it has truly given such and amazing experience and I’m so happy I have gotten to meet so many new people. We have all been working hard to get performance ready and it is showing. I am so excited to perform with my fellow cast and I know the shows will be amazing, don’t forget to buy your tickets, they are selling out fast!”

THE CHICAGO AUTO SHOW

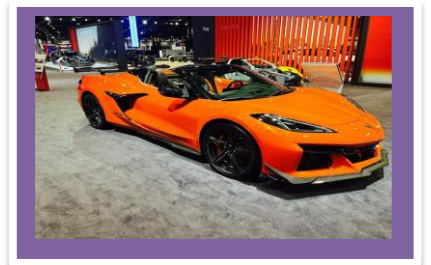
BY ALISON JAKOVICH

Since 1901, the historic Chicago Auto Show (CAS) has given manufacturers a platform to showcase new and exciting vehicles to the public. The show is the largest and oldest automobile exhibit in North America, held at McCormick Place in downtown Chicago since 1961, which was the first year that all American and imported cars and trucks were able to be featured together in one vast arena. 2025 is the 117th year of the show's running, and it might be the best one yet. From eye-catching super cars to your everyday SUVs, the show has something for everyone, even teen drivers.

An almost universal coming-of-age moment for all high schoolers is the day they get their first car. Teens dream of the freedom and excitement that come with being able to drive, waiting for the day when they can hit the open road on their own, and the independence that comes with it. But, like Uncle Ben said, "with great power comes great responsibility." Because driving is such an important responsibility for those just getting their license, parents worry about their children going off on their own. To ease these worries, parents often look for vehicles with the best safety features and highest ratings for teen drivers. Popular safety features that are good to look for when purchasing a new vehicle are All Wheel Drive, auto emergency braking, lane departure warning, adaptive cruise control, lane-keeping assist, high-beam assist, blind-spot monitoring, and rear cross traffic alert. The most recommended brands for teenage drivers are Honda, Toyota, Subaru, Ford, Chevy, and Hyundai. These brands all have displays in the 2025 Chicago Auto Show and have had new models released annually in recent years. Historically, models from Cadillac, Chevrolet, Jeep, Chrysler, Dodge, Buick, and Pontiac have had displays at the show. Some of these brands- like Chevrolet, Dodge, and Cadillac- remain prominent features of the CAS, with various luxury and international companies becoming popular in past years. Well-known brands like Lamborghini, Lexus, Kia, Hyundai, and Honda have earned a spot to showcase their vehicles, and now the Auto Show holds displays from 35 companies.

According to Kelly Blue Book, cars from some of these brands with displays at the show are the best cars for new drivers. Kelly Blue Book voted that the 2024 Toyota Prius, the 2025 Honda Civic, and the 2024 Toyota Corolla are the best new models for teen safety. These models have been popular for years, and like many vehicles, they have been updated and adapted with more extensive safety features, making them even better options for both parents and teens looking for their first vehicle. In addition to this list, Car and Driver rated the best cars for teens, and their top ten include:

1. 2025 Honda Civic/Honda Hybrid
2. 2025 Subaru BRZ
3. 2025 Toyota GR86
4. 2025 Honda Accord
5. 2025 Honda CR-V
6. 2025 Ford Maverick
7. 2025 Chevrolet Trax
8. 2025 Toyota Prius
9. 2025 Mazda CX-30
10. 2025 Mazda 3



While parents might want to go to the Auto Show to scope out the most protective vehicles for their children, we all know that teens aren't going to check out the safety features or gas mileage. Instead, teens could go to see the exciting, wide range of exotic and imported cars from flashy brands like Ferrari, Lamborghini, and McLaren. The most notable and exciting 2025 releases include many of these exotic cars which have been featured at the CAS this year. "Exotic" cars, also known as super cars, are \$100,000 or more ultra-high-performance sports cars/grand tourers. They are usually limited in production, with generally less than 5,000 produced each year and lows as far as only 100. More popular models are limited editions of mass-produced makes, like the Chevrolet Corvette, with super car models like the Z06 and ZR1 being limited production of the regular Corvette model. On the CAS website, you can find a list of all make and models featured at the show this year, along with pictures of each car. The models that stood out to me were the 2025 Lamborghini Revuelto, 2025 Chrysler Halcyon, 2025 McLaren 750S Spider, 2025 Chevrolet Corvette ZR1, and 2025 McLaren Artura Spider. Any of these vehicles would be entertaining to go and see at the show for teens and adults alike, in addition to the more reasonable models for teens and their parents.

The Chicago Auto Show opens up a world of possibilities for drivers young and old to witness feats of automotive engineering and design which improve year after year. It allows manufacturers to share their creations with the world and supports many wonderful organizations with its First Look for Charity event the night before the show opens to the public. After 117 years of running, the show continues to innovate and adapt, showcasing new and exciting brands and editions of cars for everyone to enjoy. If you are in the market for a new vehicle, or simply love the fast-paced auto world, consider visiting the annual Chicago Auto Show next year.

THE WICKED PHENOMENON

BY ALISON JAKOVICH

Wicked, the hit movie released in 2024 and based on the popular Broadway musical, had massive success on the big screen, earning over 727.9 million dollars. The film also went viral on Tik Tok, inspiring multiple trends across the platform and propelling the success of the movie in theaters. Some of the most popular trends include users recreating the challenging choreography of dance scenes, videos of Tik Tokers rating songs, users dressing up as characters from the film, and users attempting to sing Cynthia Erivo's "Defying Gravity" riff. This last trend was one of the most popular and was largely inspired by Target's collab with Wicked. This ad features shoppers buying Wicked merchandise and singing the riff while Cynthia Erivo enters, ending with her saying "that's my line," before singing her iconic riff.

After this ad was released, thousands of videos were posted to Tik Tok of users jokingly recreating the ad, or edited videos of Erivo singing this part of the song. These trends caused younger audiences to be exposed to the musical and film and encouraged people who saw these videos to see the musical or film adaptation. The popularity of the film just goes to show how Tik Tok has become a powerful platform to spread information, raise awareness, and advertise different products and productions, including Wicked. Based on how well the first movie did, it's clear that the second movie is not only highly anticipated but will most likely be even more viral than the first.

THE GRAMMY'S

BY ALISON JAKOVICH



This year's 67th annual Grammys award ceremony has been one of the most surprising and record-breaking yet. If you haven't seen it, buckle up, because it was a wild ride. Popular artists, both new and seasoned, had notable wins, memorable performances, and inspiring speeches.

Beyonce won her first Album of The Year and became the first Black woman to ever win an award in the Best Country Album category, she won for her album "Cowboy Carter," after being nominated four times in the past for the same category. Another jaw-dropping win was Kendrick Lamar's clap-back track "Not Like Us," which swept wins in five categories, including Record of The Year, Song of The Year, Best Rap Performance, Best Rap Song, and Best Music Video. In addition to performing at the awards ceremony, Chappell Roan also won Best New Artist. In Roan's speech, she advocated for artist's rights, sharing personal experiences with the health care system and dealing with labels that did not support her. The singer also performed her song "Pink Pony Club," to which almost every artist in the auditorium sang along to.

Overall, this year's celebration was eventful, from the many exciting wins and nominees to the entertaining performances from our favorite artists. The event celebrates the music that these artists put so much care and effort into, uplifting those who create joy for the world even during times of trouble. The 67th annual Grammys has been one of the best yet, and we are excited to see what happens next!

'25 JCA INTRAMURAL SEASON

BY ADDI FARNAUS

We had ten teams throughout the two divisions and roughly over 75 students participating. *Big Baller Brand* took home the championship for the Junior/Senior division and *Lethal Ladies* for the Frosh/Soph division. Special thanks to Coach Jaworski for organizing this each year!



STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

BY EMMA COUILLARD

November

Aidan Medina - Kiwanis Club

Went to St. Mary Immaculate Grade School

Aidan is a member of the National Honor Society, National English Honor Society, National Spanish Honor Society, and Mu Alpha Theta. He is Student Council Executive Board President, Medical Science Club President, and Varsity Soccer Team Captain while being a Student Ambassador, Eucharistic Minister, and Cal's Angles Ambassador. Plans to study biomedical engineering at college.

Alivia Schertz - Rotary Club

Went to St. Raymond Grade School

Alivia is a member of the National Honor Society, National English Honor Society, National Spanish Honor Society, National Art Honor Society, and Mu Alpha Theta. She is the Student Council Executive Board Vice President, President of Habitat for Humanity, and a member of Key Club, Student Ambassadors, Euchre Club, and Big Buddies/ Little Buddies. Plans to study business at the University of St. Mary's College

Kevin Casey - Lions Club

Went to Holy Family Grade School

Kevis is a member of the National Honor Society, National English Honor Society, and Mu Alpha Theta and is an AP Scholar. He is in Key Club and Economics Club and a member of Varsity Volleyball and Varsity Soccer. Plans to work for a large tech company in the future.

December

Xander Keating - Kiwanis Club

Went to St. Mary Immaculate Grade School

Xander is a member of the National Honor Society, National English Honor Society, National Spanish Honor Society, and Mu Alpha Theta. He is a member of the Robotics Club, Tech Club, and Varsity Tennis Team. Plans to study electrical engineering in college.

Nora Buss - Rotary Club

Went to St. Raymond Grade School

Nora is a member of the National Honor Society, National English Honor Society, National Spanish Honor Society, and Mu Alpha Theta. She is the Class President of Student Council, Vice President of Habitat for Humanity, and Vice President of the National Honor Society. Nora is in Key Club, Student Ambassadors, Pickleball Club, Big Buddies/ Little Buddies, and is a Eucharistic Minister she is also the Varsity Dance Captain. Plans to study criminology or business in college.

Brooke Simon-Chenelle - Lions Club

Went to Holy Family Grade School

Brooke is a member of the National Honor Society, National English Honor Society, and Mu Alpha Theta. She is an AAU Academic All-American and has received Academic All-State recognition. Nora is on the Varsity Volleyball team and Gardening Club.

January

Nick Bueno - Kiwanis Club

Went to Timber Ridge Middle School

Nick is a member of the National Honor Society, National English Honor Society, and Mu Alpha Theta. He is on the Varsity Football team and has received Academic All-Conference and Player All-Conference awards in Football. Plans to study civil engineering at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology.

Matthew Simmons - Rotary Club

Went to St. Mary Grade School

Matthew is a member of the National Honor Society, National English Honor Society, National Spanish Honor Society, and Mu Alpha Theta. He is in Key Club and Big Buddies/ Little Buddies. Plans to study business in college.

Sofia Araneta - Lions Club

Went to St. Andrew the Apostle Grade School

Sofia is a member of the National Honor Society, National English Honor Society, Tri-M Music Honor Society, and the National French Honor Society. She is the President of French Club, Co-Editor of Victory View Newspaper Club, Secretary of Drama Club, Officer in the Band, is in Yearbook Club, and an individual competitor for eSports. Plans to study biochemistry and molecular biology at Benedictine and eventually attend medical school.

February

Molly Ryan - Kiwanis club

Went to St. Jude Grade School

Molly is a member of the National Honor Society and National English Honor Society and is a JCA Heritage Award Scholarship recipient. She is on the Varsity Softball Team and is in Key Club, Student Ambassadors, Pickleball Club, Garden Club, and Habitat for Humanity. Plans to study nursing in college.

Heavenly Sarfo - Rotary Club

Went to Aux Stable Middle School

Heavenly is a member of the National Honor Society, National English Honor Society, National French Honor Society, and Mu Alpha Theta. She is in Key Club, Medical Science Club, Student Ambassadors, French Club, and Habitat for Humanity. Plans to become a biomedical engineer, neurological physician assistant, psychologist, or biotechnician.

Quinn Swienton - Lions Club

Went to J.F.K. Middle School

Quinn is a member of the National Honor Society. He is in Key Club, Student Ambassadors, the Varsity Golf Captain, and the Assistant Captain of his AAA club hockey team. Plans to play golf at Monmouth University, majoring in business, focusing on finance and real estate.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CANDY?

BY KATIE RZASA AND ANYA HRECHKO

Chocolate candy won the vote of favorite Valentine's Day candy! Out of 60 students and faculty members 32 people prefer chocolate more than fruity candy and 28 people prefer fruity over chocolate candy. Some of the most popular chocolate candies were Hershey Kisses, Kit Kats and Snickers. The most popular fruity candies were Sour Patch, Skittles and Gummy Bears.

SPORTS SPOTLIGHT

BY ADDI FARNAUS

The Victory View had the opportunity to interview some the coaches from our sports teams that competed this winter. Here are some of their current viewpoints on the season!

Coach Cumbee- Wrestling

How's the season going? It's been a very trying season, a season that's forced me to exercise patience. Reason being, we've had to battle through injuries from the start.

What is your favorite memory of the season so far? Without question it was being frustrated talking to Dawson Mack through his long hair covering his eyes. I told him mid match he needs to get his haircut asap! Unbeknownst to me, immediately following the match he went to the trainer and asked him to cut the hair covering his eyes. Hair looked awful but was so impressed by his attitude!

What is your favorite thing about coaching our Hilltoppers and Angels? I love being more than a wrestling coach. I love using wrestling as a vehicle to teach them about life and everything you can take away from the sport.

What would you like to say to our seniors? I hope in 1, 4,10, 20 years from now, when you look back at your experience at JCA, you think of our wrestling program with a great level of respect. And...I will miss you all!

Coach DeGroot- Boys Basketball

How's the season going? Our season is going well so far! We are currently 13-10 and have a handful of games left before postseason play starts. We won the Aurora Christian Tournament in the beginning of the season and took 2nd at the Kankakee Holiday Tournament. Regionals start in just a few weeks, and we are excited to be hosting this year!

What is your favorite memory of the season so far? My favorite memory so far this season would have to be our overtime victory on the road vs. Notre Dame. I am not sure the last time our boys varsity team has won at ND but it's been awhile! I was very proud of our guys for playing well in such a crazy environment on the road. Anytime you get a road victory in our conference it's a big deal!

What is your favorite thing about coaching our Hilltoppers and Angels? This is my 10th season coaching at JCA and I can truly say it's a special place. The support we get from our administration, faculty, and students is amazing! My favorite part is definitely getting to coach such amazing student athletes that take pride in what they do on and off the court. To be a successful student athlete takes a ton of work and I appreciate everyone in our program.

What would you like to say to our seniors? I can't thank our Seniors enough for all their hard work and dedication. It is a special group of young men that really represent our Culture of JOY well! Connor Louthan, Jack Superits, JJ Sterrett, Mike Lynch, Jack Govoni, and Alex Valencia all have made a massive impact on our team and program over the years. Our journey is not quite over yet, and I am excited to see how our final few weeks of our season plays out.

Coach Matthew Adler- Girls Basketball

How's the season going? Our season has been great so far. Playing in a rigorous conference and being a young team, we have had a lot of ups and downs. Our team has continued to grow and get better each and every week.

What is your favorite memory of the season so far? My favorite memory so far this year has been the team winning the Peotone Holiday Tournament. The team played fantastic, winning each game by double digits and showcasing their growth as a team.

What is your favorite thing about coaching our Hilltoppers and Angels? Being able to coach at JCA has always felt like such an honor. Coaching young women in our school who exemplify academic and athletic success is very fulfilling. We have had a great group of students who come together with their time to better themselves and their school.

What would you like to say to our seniors? We have one senior this year, Maddie Moran, who has been a 4-year player with the program. She brings energy and attitude every day, showing her personality and leadership. I'm so proud of the player and student she's grown in to being and excited to see it continue into her college career.

Coach Toole- Cheerleading

How's the season going? The season went really well. The girls on sideline did an amazing job cheering, making locker signs, and decorating yards. Then competition season began, and it was a lot of work. The girls got along really well. The comp team consisted of 10/13 freshman and sophomores. As a very young team competing against teams that only had upperclassmen it was challenging, but they did not disappoint. I am excited to see what the future holds for this team.

What is your favorite memory of the season so far? I have several favorite memories this season. From "getting a 100" to singing on the bus, they always had a good time and were there for each other. I love how hard they fought to not let their only senior down and the bond they formed that will last a lifetime.

What is your favorite thing about coaching our Hilltoppers and Angels? My favorite thing about coaching is seeing them happy and succeeding. Every new skill that makes them proud, makes me proud. I loved seeing all the success from summer until now.

What would you like to say to our seniors? I cannot wait to see what the future holds for you! I cannot wait to see where you choose to cheer. Gianna was a trooper this year being the only senior. She did an amazing job, and the girls all look up to her.

Coach Maddy- Dance

How is your season going? Our Competitive Season just came to an end two weekends ago as we attend Dance Team Union Nationals in Orlando Florida. We were so excited to take on a New Nationals this season for our program, as JCA has historically done UDA Nationals. We were so excited to have placed 13th in both the Small Varsity Jazz and Hip-Hop division, competing against over 50 teams in both categories.

What is your favorite memory of the season so far?? My favorite memory this season was seeing my team continually overcome adversity. This season, we dealt with many illnesses as well as revamping both dances numerous times. With that being said, we were pleased to take top 10 at state, placing 6th in the Finals. We continued our success as we advanced to Nationals. One of the biggest accomplishments was at Nationals when our Small Varsity Jazz routine advanced straight from the Preliminary Round right to the Finals Round! As a team, it felt as if our creativity and uniqueness within our routine was finally being acknowledged for its beauty!

What is your favorite thing about coaching our Hilltoppers and Angels? I have never worked with a group of dancers who are so well rounded athletically, academically, and creatively. My dancers have the ability to come up with choreography that is unique to the team's strengths, but also their own individually. These girls are so talented individually and as a team they are a force to be reckoned with. Aside from their astonishing dance talent, these girls are genuinely and authentic no matter where we are...to me this is what makes our team special. The girls are more than a team, they are truly sisters. The sisterhood that has developed and is apparent at JCA is something I feel blessed to be a part of.

What would you like to say to our seniors? To my amazing seniors, I want to thank you for being you this entire season long. You both bring such a different perspective and approach to leadership, but it was a key factor in our team's success this season. Being your coach these past two years has been such an honor and privilege. Thank you for trusting in me and always being dancers that I can turn to for advice. You have taught me so much and have been crucial components in my growth as a coach. For that, I am forever grateful for you both. I can't wait to see God's plan unfold for you both athletically and academically. Remember to lean on him in challenging times, but most importantly thank him for all the blessings he has given you. Keep your values close to you and let them be your guide in new obstacles and decisions that arise. I am always here for you and love you both very much!

Coach Megan O'Brien - Swimming

How is your season going? Our season finished strong! We had some amazing swims at Sectionals with placements which was very exciting.

What is your favorite memory of the season so far? I enjoy watching Adam perform at Sectionals. All the work for the season leads up to this point and watching him leave everything in the water was incredible.

What is your favorite thing about coaching our Hilltoppers and Angels? I love being a part of a school that has so much pride. It is fun to come back as an allium and watch the next generation of Hillmen and Angels succeed. It's such an honor to watch these kids carry on the tradition of our school.

What would you like to say to our seniors? It's been such an honor coaching Adam this year. I wish you nothing but the best on your future. JCA is proud of you & will always be a place you can come back to.