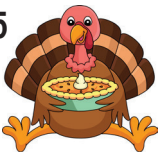


THE I-W JOURNAL

A monthly publication of the Irene-Wakonda High School Journalism Club

Nov. 2025



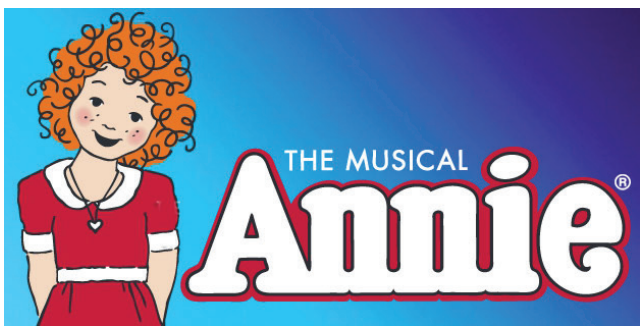
Annie the Musical being performed this month at I-W

By Mario Dimitrovic

This month, travel back in time to the 1930s to experience the beloved musical “Annie”!

The high school choir under the direction of Stacey Kirschenman, I-W music teacher, has been working for months to bring this beautiful production to life on stage.

The story follows a young orphan girl named Annie, played by freshman Lucy Hansen, who lives in an orphanage after her parents left her there. Despite



everything, Annie remains cheerful, brave, and full of hope that one day her parents will return for her.

One day, a mysterious lady arrives — and perhaps this visit will change Annie’s life forever. Will it be for better or for worse? Come find out!

Starring in the production are the following students, who play multiple parts (some familiar parts are in mentioned): Duncan (Daddy Warbucks), Alyssa (Grace), Jocee (Miss Hannigan), Mario (Rooster), Lydian (Lily), Bellah, Lillian, Alexa, Keeley,

Adelyn, Lara, Madie, Lyllee, Gavin, Chris, Brecklyn, Rose, Josalin, Ava, Joshua, Tristin, Jefferson, and Asher.

Performances will be held Friday, Nov. 21, at 7 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 22, at 7 p.m. at the school.

Come support these young performers in this wonderful production. With great dedication, creativity, and teamwork, they have created something truly special— a reminder that art, music, and theatre still live in all of us, and they can’t wait for you to watch!

Q & A with the I-W Bee Club

By Cash Johnston

I-W Science teacher Landra Knodel has been the advisor for the I-W Bee Club for three years and was the one who started the Bee Club after getting a grant for bee education at Irene-Wakonda. *The I-W Journal* asked her some questions.

Q: What products do you and the bee club make?
Candles, Lotion bars, and lip balms.

Q: What are the bees doing this time of year?
Some of the bees are in Texas, The rest of the bees here are forming their winter cluster.

Q: How many bees does it take to make one product?
It takes 12 bees their entire lives to make one teaspoon of honey.

Q: How long does it take to make one product?
It depends on the product. Wax takes a couple weeks to filter, and honey depends on what the weather is like.



Duncan Sharples-Schmidt, Asher Johnston, Joshua Hauck, and Alyssa Kirschenman are four of six students in oral interp this year.

Oral Interp season underway

By Duncan Sharples-Schmidt

The oral interp season at Irene-Wakonda is underway. This year, six students are participating with two solos, two duets, and one Reader’s Theater piece.

Oral interp, short for oral interpretation, is a “performance art that involves interpreting and presenting literature, poetry, or prose aloud.” It is a category of speech events in competitions, where participants present their interpretations of selected pieces, judged against similar presentations. As oral interp is a combination of speech and theater, there are specific and interesting rules that students must follow: They must not go over 10 minutes in length, participants in duet or Reader’s Theater pieces can’t actually address each other, etc.

I-W students have attended five competitions so far, earning various rankings at them including Excellent, Excellent Plus, and Superior. At one competition that was a preliminaries/finals format, the duet team of Duncan Sharples-Schmidt and Alyssa Kirschenman made it to the final round (out of 24 teams), placing 5th.

This week, Irene-Wakonda students will compete at Districts, with some or all of them hopefully moving on to Regions on Nov. 18.

Those participating in oral linterp this season are: freshmen Asher Johnston (duet) and Joshua Hauck (duet), sophomore Lara Spurrell (serious and Reader’s Theater); junior Duncan Sharples-Schmidt (non-original oratory, duet, and Reader’s Theater), and seniors Alyssa Kirschenman (duet), and Mario Dimitrovic (Reader’s Theater). The students are coached by I-W’s Alannah Vlasman.

I-W Journalism Club members earn writing awards

Members of the Irene-Wakonda Journalism Club attended the South Dakota High School Press Association Convention October 20 at the Univeristy of South Dakota.

At the event, which drew 250 journalism students from across the state for a day of learning from journalism experts, the students enjoyed various sessions on writing, design, use of AI, photography, and more.

In the afternoon, after a question and answer session with professionals in the field, awards were given. The awards were based on published work by I-W students done between October 25, 2024, and Sept. 12, 2025.

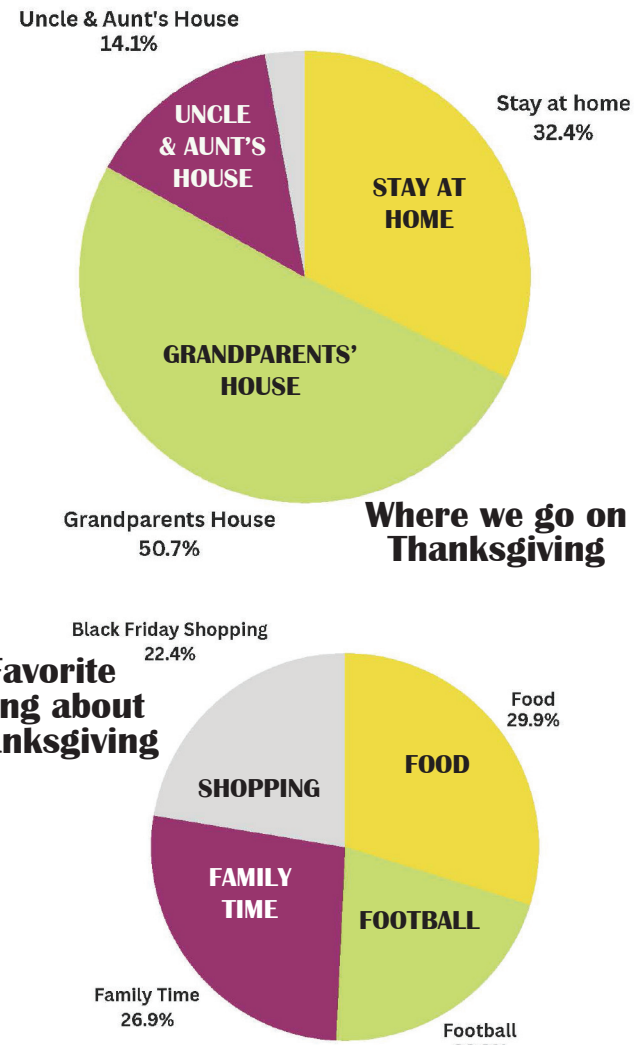
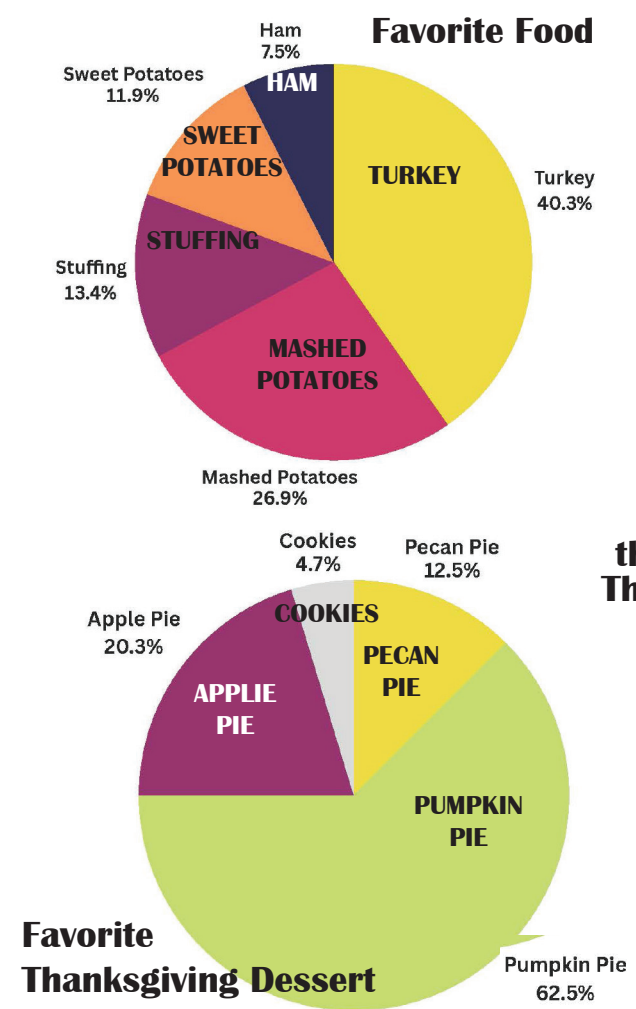
Individual awards won by I-W Journalism Club students included:

- Asher Johnston: Excellent in General News Writing, Excellent in Feature Writing, joint Excellent award in Sportswriting
- Duncan Sharples-Schmidt: Superior award for General Writing, Excellent award for Editorial writing, Excellent award for Feature writing, Joint award with Asher Johnston for Sportswriting
- Alyssa Kirschenman: Excellent in General Newswriting
- Bella Brumbaugh: Excellent award in Feature writing
- LaTika Blakey: Excellent award in Sportswriting

Survey: Thanksgiving Favorites

By Asher Johnston

The I-W Journal surveyed 60 students at Irene-Wakonda about their Thanksgiving favorites.



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Nov. Editor: Mario Dimitrovic



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