

Getting tickets to Illini basketball games and recently being asked to announce at the Unity Girls Basketball Senior Night has me feeling very grateful to gather again.

When we were going through the worst months of the pandemic, things were looking so grim in the athletic world. I never realized how much I took these outings for granted! In fact, I started supporting the dance program at Unity back in 2006-07 when we hosted our German exchange student, Esther, and I learned about following the team, wearing our spirit wear, chipping in for gifts and paying our entrance fees at tournaments. That continued with my two daughters and as an active person on the Unity Athletic Booster committee, I learned about the behind the scenes volunteering hours it takes to make our experiences so great in Unit 7 from the food in the concession stands, to the clean bathrooms and school grounds as well as the music and announcing (my favorite!) and our courteous and respectful fans.

After our Illini double overtime loss to Purdue recently in men's basketball, my son said "The team played well mom, and had good sports-



Diane Ducey accompanied by her brother Gary Ducey and his son Luke at the January 17 Illini basketball game. Photo by Diane Ducey.

manship til the end." I was thinking to myself about all the boos and critical yelling about the officials calling so many fouls on us that clearly were uncalled for after the replay, but I digress. In fact, as the announcer at the girls basketball game, just before I played the National Anthem on my laptop, I reminded fans of the importance of staying positive as they cheer on their favorite team and players to victory. Wow, our eight seniors we honored at the January 13th game sure played well together and had so many great memories in their picture boards on

display near the cafeteria in the Rocket Center. Be proud of your athlete or student participating in something that's getting their creative juices going as they stay engaged and try to get ahead in life.

All the best to those competing, supporting and coaching our Rockets as we relish these good times enjoying a few wins along the way... even if we lose. Just being present in the moment (not looking at a screen) and having good health and seeing the smiles while high fiving each other, sure makes me feel like a champion.

Public Health Officials Report 207,203 New COVID-19 Cases cont'd from pg. 3

tered in Illinois as of last midnight. The seven-day rolling average of vaccines administered daily is 51,070 doses. Since January 7, 2022, 357,487 doses were reported administered in Illinois. Of

Illinois' total population, almost 74% has received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, 65% of Illinois' total population is fully vaccinated, and more than 42% boosted according to data from the

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). All data are provisional and will change. Additional information and COVID-19 data can be found at <https://dph.illinois.gov/covid19.html>.



The Night Sky

By David Leake

Retired Planetarium Director of
Staerkel Planetarium at Parkland College,
Co-Founder of the
Champaign-Urbana Astronomical Society, Inc

January 19-25

We lose Saturn to the glare of the Sun this week as it appears to pass behind the Sun. It is actually the orbital motion of a quicker Earth that causes this. Saturn will be available to curious eyes in the morning sky at the end of February. That leaves Jupiter as the lone bright light

in the west-southwest after sunset. You'll have to stay up later and later (or just get up early) to see the Moon. It is ¾ of the way around the Sun on Tuesday, rising just after midnight. The third quarter Moon looks a little like the first quarter Moon except the light and dark halves are switched. First and Third quarter (when

the Moon appears half lit) are the best times to observe the Moon with binoculars or telescope. The Sun's light is coming in from the side and then mountain peaks and crater rims cast shadows. It really gives the Moon a three-dimensional appearance.

Rocket Replay

By: Sarah Rink

This weekend the Unity High School wrestling team took home another big success for the school and the program. They won the Illini Prairie Conference Duals hosted by Monticello High School across both Friday and Saturday. Led by head coach Logan Patton and assistant coaches Josh Inman, Dakota Patton and Chadwick Eaton, the team started the competition on Friday with a 4-0 record against St. Thomas More (81-0), Rantoul/Paxton-Buckley-Loda (84-0), Chillicothe IVC (84-0), and Monticello (72-6). Unity only lost one contested match that night, leading heavily in points going into Saturday's duals. Unity won all

four duals again, winning the conference with an 8-0 record. They were just as competitive, beating Olympia (65-18), Pontiac (69-9), Prairie Central (68-12), and St. Joseph-Ogden (62-13) for the title. It was a very successful weekend for the Rockets wrestling team, and there are high hopes for the students continuing into the later portion of the season.

Last Tuesday, the varsity boy's basketball team may not have won against the incredibly competitive Tuscola, but the game was certainly one to be at. The energy in the room was unlike anything else, the student section returning in full force and the stands exploding with noise at every score. It was an incredibly

close game, Unity trailing a few points behind for the first half only to tie the score 42-42 at the end of the third quarter. Unfortunately for Unity, Tuscola managed to pull ahead and win the game, but it was definitely a fight. Unity sports continue looking up, the Rockettes dance team taking home third place at their Saturday competition as well and gearing up for their regional competition this coming weekend. Winter sports continue as the school's arts programs including Unity Vocal Rush's competitive season and the fan-favorite All-Out A Capella approach quickly. Make sure to come out and support our talented students however you can!


Unity Student Council Senior Spotlight

Senior Spotlight: Macie Knudsen

Plans after graduation: She plans to study elementary education at EIU.

Best StuCo Memory or favorite thing about StuCo: Homecoming! This year's clean up was fun and funny! Why join Student Council?

I joined student council to spend time with Mrs. Meyer and other students!




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