

Grappling for His Glory

QCCS First Boys Wrestling Team Meets on the Mat

By: **Hannah Leihsing and Tempie Ferry** Eagle's Eye Staff Writers

Wrestling is known as one of the most difficult sports; it requires both mental and physical strength, as well as stamina. Despite all odds, QCCS has successfully formed its first ever wrestling team. As a school, we strive to perform for God. This team truly shows obedience to that calling. As the season has progressed, we have seen many big wins and pins from many strong wrestlers. We interviewed our team to find insight on what the season has been like.

When stuck in a close match, wrestlers have to make quick decisions, ones that could determine a win or a loss. We wondered what the most challenging part of wrestling may be. Zeke Lizano, a senior, said, "For me, it's being physical. I don't like being aggressive with anyone. I like to be chill." Korbin Wolf, a junior, says, "The most challenging part of wrestling for me is not my opponent, but myself. I have to dig down deep and find passion to finish my match. Before every single match I get extremely nervous, but I try to turn it into courage." Finally, Jordan Murphy, a sophomore, responded, "The most challenging part of wrestling for me is dealing with losses, especially when I am constantly losing. I understand that you will not win every match you wrestle, but it is hard when you go out and give everything you have and still lose."

Many thought it was a longshot to have wrestling at QCCS. The key to its beginning was Austin Ventris, who fought for a team and believed they could achieve it. We asked some of the wrestlers how it felt to be a part of our school's wrestling legacy. Zeke answered, "It's truly an honor to be able to grow our school even further through this sport and draw others closer to God." Korbin retorted, "It feels good; we are working a legacy here at QCCS. We are a first-year team, I feel like we have made really good progress. I am very proud of our team." Jordan added, "Being a part of the first ever wrestling team feels good, especially knowing that I was a big part of the team getting started. When I came to QCCS as a freshman, I was very sad that I wouldn't be able to wrestle, when that was all I wanted. When I found out that a program was starting, I was very excited."

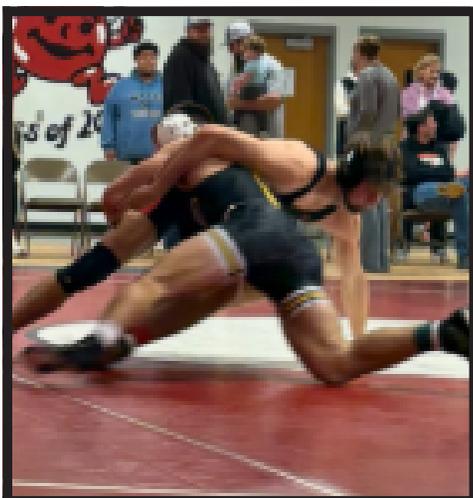


In the middle of a tough match, perseverance is more important than anything. We wanted to know what helps our wrestlers gain confidence when stuck. Zeke commented, "Knowing that my coaches don't expect a win from me every time, they were just proud to see us put up a fight." Korbin replied, "The one thing is not giving up on myself. I would never want to step off the mat knowing I gave up on myself." Jordan explained, "When I am struggling during a match, something that keeps me motivated is knowing that I don't want to lose. When I step on the mat, I am going to give every ounce of energy I have to fight through."

In every sport at our school, we strive to show God's love to all opponents. Relying on our faith allows us to show God in every win or even every loss. We can play for God, even in our struggles, by demonstrating his love. Here's how our wrestlers do so. Zeke says, "I always want to keep a smile on my face whether I win or lose and always complement and encourage my opponent." Korbin explained, "By having self-control whether I win or lose. Showing respect to my opponent and having humility, just like Jesus." Jordan responded, "I honor God by praying with my team before every single duel or tournament and always showing sportsmanship to the other teams and coaches, even after a loss."

Accomplishments help us see our growth. Remembering our biggest accomplishment will give us motivation, knowing we can win. To conclude, here are some of our wrestlers biggest accomplishments this season. Zeke said "Being able to step on the mat not just for myself, but for my school and Jesus." Korbin's was this: "Having a good record, I have more wins than losses. I also got 3rd in a tournament." Finally Jordan says, "My biggest accomplishment this season was probably being able to place in the first tournament of the season. When I wrestled in middle school, I didn't get a lot of time to wrestle because I couldn't keep my grades up. Being able to win really showed me how much I missed in my middle school career."

Thank you for reading about our QCCs wrestlers, and we hope to see you at their next meet or tournament. Come out and cheer on our Eagles!



Team Roster

- Joe Ventris - Head Coach
- Austin Ventris - Assistant Coach
- Caleb Snell - Assistant Coach
- Senior**
 - Zeke Lizano
- Juniors**
 - Korbin Wolf
 - Ricky Lee
 - Hudson George
- Sophomores**
 - Jordan Murphy
 - Asher Garant
- Freshmen**
 - Corbin Miller
 - Sim Lovelady

Record-Setting Season

Boys' Basketball Boasts Team and Personal Records



By Kevin Leonard, Eagle's Eye Staff Writer

QCCS senior Alijah Zentic had not only one, but two record-breaking performances in the first half of this boys' basketball season. Alijah scored a school-record 50 points in a win at Unity Christian on Dec. 18. That topped the school record of 39 points, set by Seth Karl in the NICC championship game in 2024. He then eclipsed that previous mark again with a 40-point game against Geneseo of the Western Big 6 Conference in a home game in January.

One of the questions we asked was how it felt to claim the title for highest points scored in one game. His response was that it was ok; he had put a lot of work into it, so it felt normal to him.

So, how did he score 50 points and what was on his mind when he closed in on the 50-point mark? He said putting in the work everyday made him be able to see the results. The locker room afterward wasn't too crazy and his teammates weren't too crazy but he felt like his teammates knew he deserved it.

Does he think it will happen again in the season? "If it happens, it happens; it's all in the Lord's hands," he noted.

We also asked what it was like scoring 40 points against Geneseo. He said, "It wasn't too crazy. It was a different because my AAU coaches were watching so they got to see me play at home and away, and that plays a role in your reaction.

"I was happy that they won at Unity; that was for Mr. Pluister, shout out to Pluister."

The 40-point game came in a home loss to Geneseo. "We were pretty bummed because we were expecting to win against them." He also appreciated the fact that the strong game was against one of his former coaches.

By: Amiah Morgan and Sommer Pearson, Eagle's Eye Staff Writers

We interviewed five of our QCCS boys' varsity players with questions that will tell you all about their experience playing for our team. Those players were Bayler Garant, Luke Young, Orlando Jardini, Simeon Lovelady and Landyn Steiner. We had questions about expectations, highlights, improving players and more.

Given that the team won the NICC championship a year ago, one of our questions was, "Were your expectations going into the season too high, or was it motivating?" All of the players said it was motivation. Foreign-exchange student Orlando Jardini said, "It has been motivation to recover from my injury," which he received during the fall soccer season. We also asked Orlando a question concerning his exchange year: "How has it been playing basketball for the first time with a new team in America?" He told us he has enjoyed it and enjoyed bonding with his teammates.

The next question we asked was, "What was a goal you were hoping to achieve this season?" Bayler explained how he wanted a brother moment with senior Tanner for their last game. Luke and Orlando both expressed hopes of winning another championship. Simeon expressed his desire to dunk. Landyn has hope to touch the rim.

Another question we asked was, "Who on the team do you believe has improved the most this season?" Most answered by saying Alijah Zentic had improved the most, seeing that he has practiced all summer for this season. Some noted Simeon and Orlando improved the most.

One of the questions with the most common answer was, "Which team was the most challenging to play against?" All said Faith Dixon was the most challenging, with an additional answer being Geneseo High School.

The last question we asked the players was, "What was your favorite moment of this season so far?" Most had answered that playing with their friends and brothers was their favorite part. Bayler mentioned his first and last state tournament he will play in being his favorite part of his season.



Team Roster

Coaches:

Scott Karl - Head Coach
Troy Young - Assistant Coach

Seniors

Tanner Arrington
Alijah Zentic
Orlando Jardini
Luke Young

Juniors

Bayler Arrington
Lachlan Gimble

Freshman

Landyn Steiner
Simeon Lovelady

Hustle & Heart Set Eagles Apart

Girls' Basketball Hoping To End Season Strong

By: Ambrielle Martin and Reese Miller, Eagle's Eye Staff Writers

As January ends, the varsity girls' basketball team is in 3rd place in the NICC and are still striving to reach higher as they prepare for the conference tournament.

Our newsletter staff had the privilege of interviewing three players from our varsity girls' basketball team --- senior Abi Agbezouhlon, sophomore Bailey Hewitt, and freshman Lila Bautista. To see how their season has been treating them so far, we asked them their thoughts.

To start off, we asked all three girls what element of basketball, particularly this season, inspires them to keep playing. Lila said, "The people that cheer me on, even if I miss the shot. Especially if it's the boys' varsity, who cheer me on after I make a shot, because I look up to them." Bailey added, "The opportunity to improve my skills and create friendships that I wouldn't necessarily make outside of that environment." Abi replied, "The energy and the coach is, and still continues to be, an inspiration to keep playing."



Team Roster

Seniors

Maddy Bollinger
Ayda Kyer
Jada Britton
Abi Agbezouhlon

Coaches:

Tanner Jordan- Head Coach
Chris Britton- Assistant Coach

Juniors

Jazmin Fernandez
Megan Hewitt - Team Manager

Sophmores

Audrey Kyer
Bailey Hewitt

Freshman

Lila Bautista
Sophia Iaccarino



We then asked each of them a question that is more connected to their personal experience with basketball. First, we asked Lila how the older girls have helped improve her confidence on and off the court. She responded, "I love when I see them in the hallway between classes and they say 'hi' to me, or just start a conversation with me. And when we're on the court, they cheer me on and help me when I don't understand the play or if I forget the play."

Bailey was asked what she is learning from the older girls, as well as what she is hoping to show the younger girls. She replied, "Something I'm learning is playing with confidence while also playing through the mistakes. That's what I also hope to show the younger girls because growing and learning from the mistakes you make is a key to showing confidence, even if you don't feel it while playing."

Abi added with the legacy she hopes to leave behind after her senior season is over and how she wants to impact the future girls' basketball teams that play for QCCS. She said, "I hope to leave the other girls with fire to keep playing and aggression during the game. I hope that they keep their love for the sport as well as each other."

These girls are more than just teammates; they become a family over the course of the season. Through late-night practices and challenging games, each player plays an important role in the success of the team. Make sure to come support our Lady Eagles as they wrap up their season with the NICC Tournament February 12--14. We are praying for a strong, successful finish to this basketball season.



Eagle Spirit Flies High

Cheerleaders a Key to Basketball Success

By: Abigail Bennett, Eagle's Eye Staff Writer

QCCS fans love to cheer on our basketball players as they pass, shoot, and make baskets, but the real support comes from our exuberant cheerleaders on the sidelines. Loud, proud, and full of team spirit, our cheer team has been breaking a sweat the past three months in practice, and they're not done yet!

The Quad Cities Christian School cheerleaders work relentlessly to pull off clean stunts and fly high, all while encouraging our basketball players at home games. With over 31 cheers, they're able to consistently keep the crowds pumped up and our players feeling their best mentally. This cheer season has been different from any other, however, with a new coach stepping in to instruct our small but mighty team.

Beyond the skirts and pom-poms, cheerleading has helped students form close bonds with one another. "Once I started cheering, I made more friends than I could've imagined," said Ryanne Coder, a junior fourth-year cheerleader. Our long-time cheerleaders are amazing at being encouraging and keeping spirits up for newcomers. Eighth-grader Jaeda Carney recalls early memories that helped foster her passion for cheer. "When I joined in 6th grade, everyone encouraged me to fly. Once I actually hit my first stunt, I really started to enjoy it."

Although this season has been a huge step forward for our cheer team, it has not come without its difficulties. There have been many injuries when practicing stunts, with one member suffering a concussion. "Learning to fly again after being injured has been scary," stated exchange student Sofia Serrano. However, our girls have remained hard at work and have grown from any struggle that has come their way, helping one another and making sure they are confident and safe no matter what. Jaeda highlighted how encouraging Ryanne has been throughout her cheer journey. "She helps us learn the dances when we're stuck and she gives us pep talks when we're unsure," she said.

We are so proud of our Lady Eagles and the way they have shown up this season. Let's pack the stands at their halftime performance for senior night on Feb. 2 at 7 p.m.!



Team Roster

Coach:

Libby Pettifer

Juniors:

Ryanne Coder - 4th year

Sophie Keller - 3rd year

Sofia Serrano - 1st year

Freshmen:

LaShay Sorenson - 1st year

Harmony Buller - 2nd year

Eighth Grade:

Charlie Janczak - 1st year

Jaeda Carney - 3rd year

Anna Freburg - 3rd year

Sixth Grade:

Clara Picciano - 1st year

Staff Stars

Mrs. Keller and Mrs. Klimek, Help In and Out of Class

By: Bailey Hewitt,
Eagle's Eye Staff Writer

One of the staff members who works behind the scenes at Quad Cities Christian is Ms. Klimek, or more commonly known as Miss Anne. She started working at QCCS in 2023 at the elementary campus as a pre-kindergarten assistant to Mrs. Siefken, and came



to the high school campus when a position opened up last year. She heard about us at her church, after praying for a Christian school at which she could work.

When asked about her favorite part of her job, she said, "My favorite part of my job is how I am able to get to know the teachers and students that I work with so much, that they seem like family. I love how each subject is taught with a biblical focus, and the kindness and love the students and teachers have for each other makes me smile every day I am here!"

When asked about her favorite part about working at QCCS, she responded, "My favorite part of working at QCCS is chapel. This is my first time going to chapel at a school (pre-k doesn't go to chapel), and I absolutely love it! How grateful I am for a job where I can sing praises to the Lord during the workday; being a part of a school where administration, teachers and students encourage each other by worshipping Jesus is such a blessing!"

If you ever see her around, especially in Mrs. Merritt is and Mrs. Karl's rooms, make sure you say hello to this wonderful member of our staff.

Mrs. Klimek

By: Aiden Hardin,
Eagle's Eye Staff Writer

At Quad City Christian School, we have a phenomenal staff. One of those has a friendly face greeting us every morning from her desk in the front office. Mrs. Keller has been at QCCS for about three years, starting the 2023-24 school year. Her constant warmth and love helps students start their day on a



positive note, knowing our school's staff cares for them in every way.

Mrs. Keller is a jack of all trades. Her title is administrative assistant. She manages if you need medicine, she monitors attendance, answers calls if you're sick, helps with yearbooks and plans events such as homecoming, prom, and Teacher Appreciation Week.

"On any day, you can also find me handing out plenty of Band-Aids, ice packs, and pencils," Mrs. Keller noted.

Mrs. Keller stated that her favorite part of the job is the people. "I love interacting with the students and getting to know them --- it's so rewarding to see them grow and succeed," she said. I asked Mrs. Keller if she has grown her faith while working here? She replied, "Definitely! One of my favorite moments each week is chapel; I get to listen in on worship down the hall. Hearing students praise Jesus and grow closer to Him is incredibly encouraging."

QCCS is incredibly blessed to have Mrs. Keller. Her bright face is a constant source of encouragement, and she has a unique gift for making every student feel seen and valued. We are thankful for the heart and soul she pours into our community.

Mrs. Keller

New Semester, New Electives

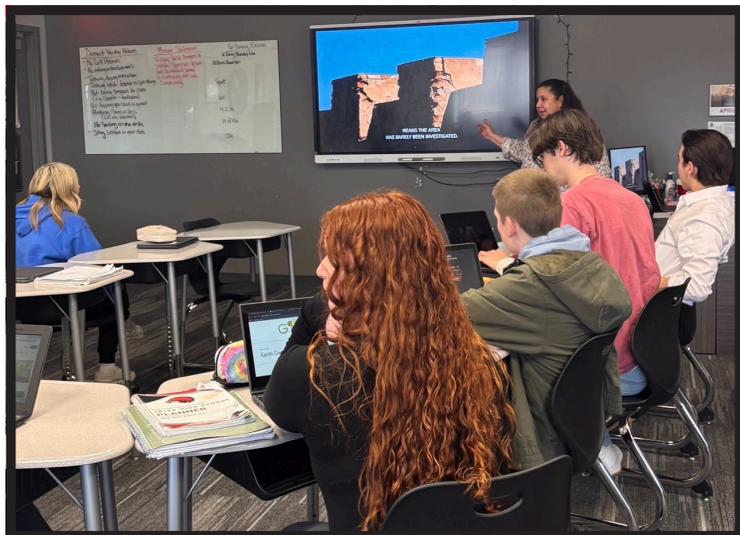
Mrs. Garcia, Mr. Pluister Bring Three New Electives

Pop Culture

By: Jazmin Marceleno, Eagle's Eye Staff Writer

Pop Culture is an elective class taught by Mrs. Garcia where they deeply dive into several hot topics. Those topics include fashion, sports, identity, music, engineering, technology, media, news, buildings, food, etc. They also delve into major “popular” cultural moments that have shaped society throughout time, whether its been a good or bad impact viewing it with a Godly, Christian perspective. For example, they go on a deep dive to understand how the food industry has changed over time. By that I mean, how the products from our day-to-day meals and snacks have changed. Instead of them being beneficial to us, they started to harm us because of the unnecessary chemicals, oils, colors, etc. that are in our food.

I personally believe that this class has knowledge that comes to good use. It is good for us to know what aspects have changed throughout time. They started to become popular. They study how these changes made a positive or negative impact, and if they continue to play a part in our day-to-day life.



Mysteries of History

By: Cailyn Pilon, Eagle's Eye Staff Writer

With the second semester starting up in QCCS, Mrs. Garcia started a new elective class called “Mysteries of History,” I asked her some questions to get to know more about the class and what it's all about.

The first question was, “What are students getting out of this elective, and what is the subject they are going through?” Mrs. Garcia says she has a big soapbox about this. History is lost all of the time. With enough research, discernment and things like that, you can really figure out what you want and how you're going to get the answer. The subject that they are going over right now is the Tower of Babel, and they're talking about 10 of the topics. I think it's really cool that they are going over the tower of Babel because I feel like it isn't talked about enough.

The second question was, “Does the subject change throughout the day?” Mrs. Garcia said that it changes every week. She says she wants the students to learn the relationship between entertainment value and factualness. Specifically, she wants them to be able to distinguish between the two. The goal for them is to be able to identify when the show is trying to appeal to their emotions or get them excited about the TV series. First, what is actually true from the Bible, second what is not from the Bible, and lastly what is historically accurate vs. what is not. That's what she's looking for in this course.

Driver's Education

By: Calvin Pluister and Hudson George, Eagle's Eye Staff Writers

Dr. Pluister is teaching a driver's ed course this year for the spring elective. Dr. Pluister, who attended Millikin University in 2004 and got his doctorate from Liberty University in Virginia in 2025, gained information on driver's education at the same time he was teaching PE and Health in his younger years. Some of his favorite things about teaching are the importance, skill, and safety of preparing teens for the road. Also it opens up opportunities for teens such as social skills, work, transportation and missions in social connectivity.

He says the key to driver's ed is overcoming the mentality as a teacher of high-risk/low-reward. This is a mentality that most have but the job still has to be done, and we appreciate Dr. Pluister for this.

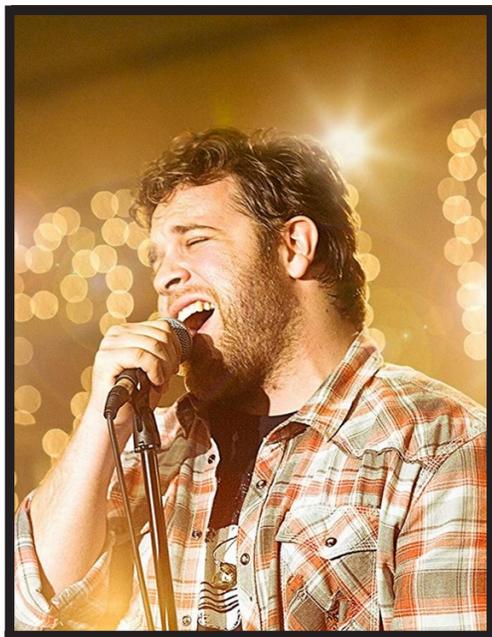
We asked Dr. Pluister what the scariest thing was about teaching 15-year-olds to drive, and he answered with what Jesus says: fear not. Jesus tells us not to worry, so he tries not to worry. He says it is easier to drive with a less-confident driver than a more confident driver, because the nervous driver will respect the vehicle rather than the student who is more confident.

Dr. Pluister moved driver's ed from an after-school course to an elective. The after-school classes met 10 times for three hours over three weeks. The elective class will meet 43 times over 17 weeks. Making that adjustment has had some curriculum changes, but it is more of just pacing.



Movie Review

In February of this year, the sequel to *I Can Only Imagine* is going to be released. Because of the excitement and anticipation for the movie, two from our newsletter staff wrote their opinions on the two main characters by putting themselves into their perspectives and how they feel the movie played out. *I Can Only Imagine* is the story behind the massive hit song that shares the name of the movie. It is by a Christian band called MercyMe. It is a story about finding healing, forgiveness, and purpose through faith and music.



Bart Millard

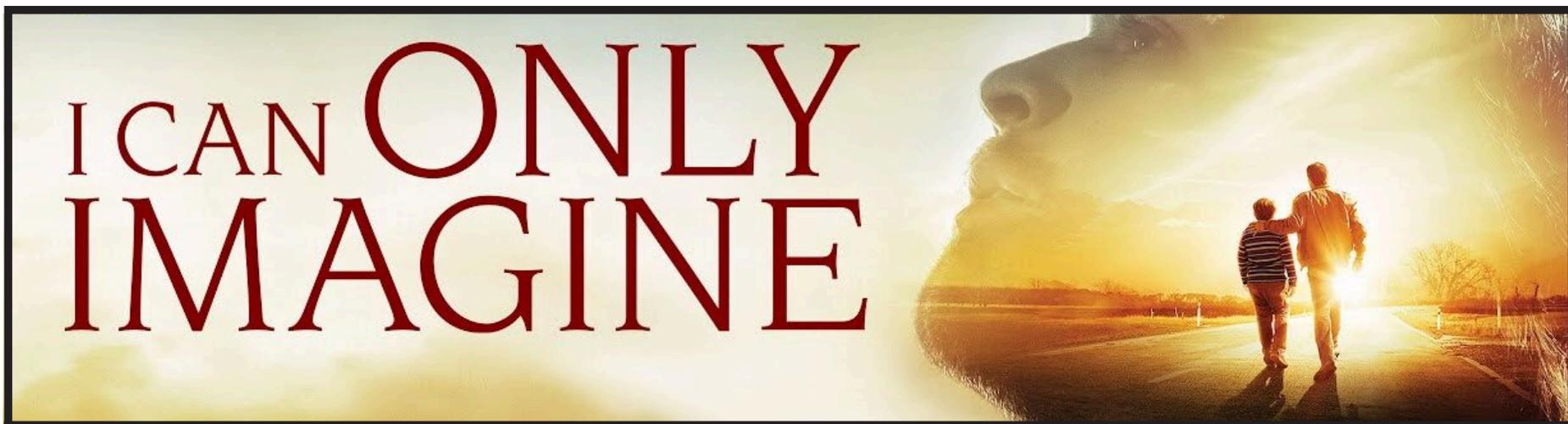
By: Sophia Iaccarino, Eagle's Eye Staff Writers

The movie *I Can Only Imagine* wasn't anything like I thought it would be. I wasn't really expecting it to be as engaging as it was. Everything about it kept me on the edge of my seat, wondering what would come next.

The movie focuses on Bart Millard, MercyMe's lead singer and songwriter. It details his difficult relationship with his father, Arthur Millard. Bart's childhood was marked by severe physical and mental abuse by his father. The movie shows how his father's life changed significantly by faith. It emphasizes themes of God's grace and finding hope even in deep pain. *I Can Only Imagine* directly links Bart's traumatic past and his renewed faith to the lyrics of a song about imagining Heaven.

There's no way for me to associate the movie with one emotion. Yet through all of the pain, heartbreak, loss, and desperation, the strongest feeling I had was hope. Bart Millard kept hoping, through all of the struggle. He kept pushing through adversities and getting back up when knocked down. He showed resilience, facing his problems instead of running away.

I Can Only Imagine was one of the best movies that I've ever watched. Not only was it entertaining, but it was also filled with purpose. In February of this year, the sequel is going to be released. I hope you're as excited as I am to dive deeper into the story of the wonderful Christian band, MercyMe.

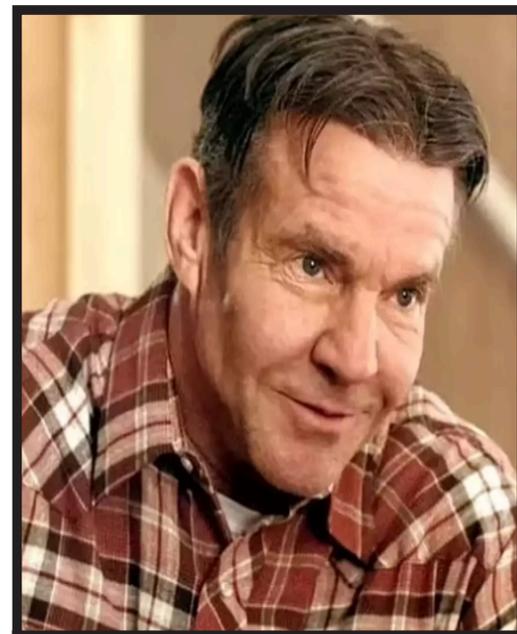


By: Jackson Karzin, Eagle's Eye Staff Writers

When watching *I Can Only Imagine*, I had many judgmental emotions against Arthur Millard, the dad in the movie. In the beginning of the movie, he was really abusive toward his son. He never believed in him, and he tried to prevent his son from reaching his dreams by telling him he was not able to become a successful singer. He did not want his son to be a singer at all. Even when his son wanted him to come watch him perform, he refused to do so. His son ended up leaving him just like his wife did years earlier.

The last thing his son said to him was to listen to him on the radio because the church he performed at put it on the air. So, without his son knowing, he listened to it. Even after the worship was over, he still listened to it during service. He was curious about what they had to say and started reading his Bible and praying a lot, even though he was still confused. He wanted to turn his life around and make it up to his son. So, he prayed to God for his son to come back, and sent him letters.

Even though his son did not read the letters, he still ended up coming back home because it was God's will. At first, his son did not believe him and was very angry, but after realizing that his dad was dying of a sickness, he gave his dad a second chance, and by the grace of God they became really close. Arthur got to see his son become famous before his tragic death. He was a man who changed for the better and was a very proud dad.



Arthur Millard

February Birthdays

Tristan DeVries - 2/05
 Kaden Barnett - 2/07
 Landyn Steiner - 2/08
 Jo Karl - 2/18
 Alyse Britton - 2/18
 Randi Cate Garant - 2/19
 Phin Lovelady - 2/19
 Wesley Foland - 2/20
 Sofia Serrano - 2/27



February Events

February 2 - Varsity Boys and Girls Basketball vs. Tri-State - Senior Night
 February 3 - JH Girls Basketball vs. Hampton
 February 5 - Varsity Boys and Girls @ Rivermont
 February 5 - JH Girls Basketball vs. Unity
 February 6 - Half Day - Teacher in-service
 February 7 - Varsity Boys and Girls Basketball @ Calvary Christian
 February 9 - JH Girls Basketball vs. Tri-State
 February 10 - Varsity Girls Basketball @ Geneseo
 February 10 - JH Girls Basketball vs. Jordan
 February 12 - JH Girls Basketball @ East Moline Christian
 February 12-14 - Varsity Girls and Boys NICC Tournament
 February 16 - No School - President's Day
 February 17 - JH Girls Basketball vs. Morning Star
 February 19 - JH Girls Basketball vs. Jordan
 February 23 - JH Girls Basketball @ Tri-State
 February 24 - JH Girls Basketball @ Coram Deo
 February 26 - JH Girls Basketball @ Geneseo

January Poll

Poll done by: Hudson George and Calvin Pluister, Eagle's Eye Staff Writers

As the 2026 Winter Olympics will begin at the beginning of February, our newsletter staff decided to ask the student population which Winter Olympics sport was their favorite. If you find your favorite winter sport on this list, try to see if you can catch it during the Winter Olympics from February 6--22.

Speed Skating	1
Ski Jump Skiing	4
Figure Skating	27
Curling	2
Snowboarding	26
Hockey	18
Bob Sledding	6
Biathlon	13
Alpine Skiing	2
Freestyle Skiing	1