



# Tiger Times



A Student Publication of Illini Bluffs High School

September 20, 2022

Volume 02, Issue 01

## Meet the Editor

By Ms. Sewell

On April 25th, 2022, Illini Bluffs High School saw its first newspaper publication since 2005. The first edition of that paper, Tiger Times, featured sections on current geopolitical events, school happenings, and notable sports achievements.

This accomplishment certainly would not have been possible, though, without the work of one highly dedicated student: Kristina Petrey.

This IBHS senior first developed a love of writing in Mrs. Seller's eighth grade English class after an activity where students had to write the ending of a story they read together in class.



Kristina Petrey - Editor in Chief  
"As we were doing it, I went to a different head space where I was 'in' the story, and looking back, it was something I was really proud of," said Petrey.

Although Petrey's love of writing would continue after eighth grade, her idea to launch a school newspaper was not realized until halfway through her high school career.

Petrey originally got the idea of starting a high school paper after watching the popular teenage rom-com "The DUFF."

"The opening scene of 'The DUFF' starts with characters talking about an article about homecoming, and watching it seemed like a lot of fun—having a dedicated group of people work on something together," said Petrey.

After getting the original idea, Petrey ran in past middle and high school librarian, Mrs. Coulter.

"Kristina was full of ideas, and I helped provide her with the resources she needed to make it happen," said Coulter.

Petrey was able to find the time to work with Coulter during the "Creative Communications" community hour. According to Petrey, the thing that was the most time consuming, though, was sending out emails.

"I had to send emails to Mrs. Coulter to ask for help. I also had to email students to reach out for information about articles and to the teachers for "Student Spotlight," plus, with the help of teachers, I'm currently writing most of the articles, so we're working on recruiting some other students with an interest in journalism so the Tiger Times can be a 100% student-created publication. And so the publication can continue after I graduate."

When asked why she decided to take on such a big task all on her own, Kristina had this to say: "I want to give the school something to look forward to, help to create school unity, provide recognition for students who might go unrecognized in academics and in their outside of school extracurricular activities."

If you are interested in becoming a part of the Tiger Times team, contact Kristina Petrey or Ms. Sewell.



## Student Council News

By Autumn

Congratulations, IB Tigers, on making it through your first month of school! We hope you are ready to make lots of memories during the 2022-2023 school year!

One of the Student Council's most memorable events each year is Homecoming. This year, we are taking it back to the '70s with a theme of "Saturday Night Fever."

Homecoming festivities will begin the week of September 26th with spirit days scheduled each day. Please be on the lookout for the themes so you can participate! On Thursday, September 29th we will be having our Homecoming Game where we will announce the 2022 Homecoming Court and

support the Volleyball team as they take on Mt. Pulaski. Friday, September 30th, will be the exciting Powderpuff games! Get ready to compete against the other grades in Football and Volleyball to see who will take the title of Powderpuff Champions!

We will finish up on Saturday, October 1st, with the Homecoming Dance. Come ready to get groovy on the dance floor at Homecoming 2022: Saturday Night Fever! We can't wait to see you all there!

If you have any questions or suggestions, please talk to one of your Student Council Representatives. We love to hear from you!





Left to Right: Ms. Gorsuch, Ms. Sewell, Ms. Lestina

## New Teachers at IB

By Kristina Petrey

This year we welcome three brand new teachers to the halls of IBHS!

### Ms. Sewell

Ms. Sewell, a former IB student, will be the junior and senior English teacher! This is her first official year of teaching after completing her student teaching at Farmington High school, and graduating from Bradley with a degree in education. Ms. Sewell lived in Bartonville for a bit, but continues to call Glasford her hometown. Some fun facts about Ms. Sewell: she's been a vegetarian for the past 5 years and her favorite travel destination (so far) is Oregon because the plant-based food options were "divine." Her classroom is decorated with posters from her favorite series, *Stranger Things*, and during her time at Bradley she served as editor of the Bradley Scout, the university's newspaper.

### Ms. Gorsuch

Ms. Gorsuch is also a first year teacher. She graduated from Western Illinois University in May with a degree in Science in Mathematics and will join the math department as the freshman math teacher. Some facts about Ms. Gorsuch include: she has a dog named Zoey that she rescued while volunteering at a veterinarian's office, and though it might be a

controversial opinion, she thoroughly enjoys pineapple AND ham on her pizza. Ms. Gorsuch has seen every episode of *NCIS*, and over the summer she went to Lake of the Ozarks to show off her skill in the water with water skiing, wake boarding, and wake surfing.

### Ms. Lestina

Finally, Ms. Lestina joins the IB staff as the new choir teacher! She graduated from Bradley with a Bachelor's of Music in Instrumental Music Education. She specialized in the French Horn. When she's not performing, she will be listening to music, Metal music to be exact. Along with music, She enjoys painting, Ms. Lestina likes to spend her free time playing either Animal Crossing or Minecraft. Along with that, she enjoys collecting *Pokémon* cards, and has an ever growing collection of Minecraft Lego sets.

All three of our new teachers are settling into their new roles as classroom teachers, and are looking forward to continuing to learn and grow as a part of the Illini Bluffs learning community.

## Senior Send-Off

By Kristina Petrey

This section of our newspaper will be used to highlight some of our IBHS Seniors. In this edition, we talked with Bradley, Emily and Lindsey about their plans for the future and what they'll miss about life at IB.

Bradley doesn't have an exact plan for what he wants to do after high school. He's ready to just get out of school and live life. "The most important time of our lives is right out of high school. It's when we can't sleep in, I plan on getting negative sleep. I'll go to bed at 6:00 and wake up at 5:59," he jokes. Bradley's favorite thing about high school is the gym and he's enjoyed working out in almost every class.

Lindsey plans on going to college, potentially at ISU or SIUE, to become a speech pathologist or audiologist, depending on what path feels right once she starts her post-high school career. Looking back on her time in high school, Lindsey says she loved her time in Community Hour, going to the school sporting events, and all of the time spent in Mr. Hallstrom's classes.

Emily plans to join the ICC transfer program for public relations and communications, and potentially go to U of I, then join the Disney Program, which will allow for them to work for the Disney team and in the Disney parks. Depending on those experiences, Emily may choose to stay at Disney or become a flight attendant. Emily's favorite thing about high school is the teachers and their ability to make everyone feel like they have a spot in their classroom.

After graduation, Bradley is ready to make money all day, Emily is ready to leave home to start a journey of self-discovery, and Lindsey is ready for a fresh start. Don't be fooled, though. As excited as they are for the future, there will always be things they miss from IB. During our interview, they admitted they'll likely feel homesick when they embark on their new adventures. "Don't get me wrong," says Bradley, "I don't want to be here forever. But I don't want to NOT see the people I've known my whole life." Lindsey will miss "the unity of friendly competition that takes place at events such as Powderpuff and Anything Goes; those are the things that won't be the same in college." And Emily says, "I think what I'll miss most is the environment and routine of being in the same place for so many years."

## Current Events

By Mr. Adamczyk

On August 24th of this year, President Biden finally settled the long standing debate on whether or not there would be student loan forgiveness for former college students. As part of President Biden's announcement, anyone who makes less than 125,000 dollars a year or 250,000 dollars in the combined household is eligible for 10,000 dollars in student loan forgiveness. People can receive up to 20,000 dollars if they had received a Pell Grant, which assists low income students to attend college. This decision is expected to change millions of lives as the majority of the student loan forgiveness is expected to go to people who are making less than 75,000 dollars a year.

The student loan issue has become a crisis in recent years as the total loan debt has skyrocketed to 1.75 trillion dollars, enough for every person in the United States to have to pay about 5,300 dollars each to fully pay it off. This is mainly due to the fact that attending

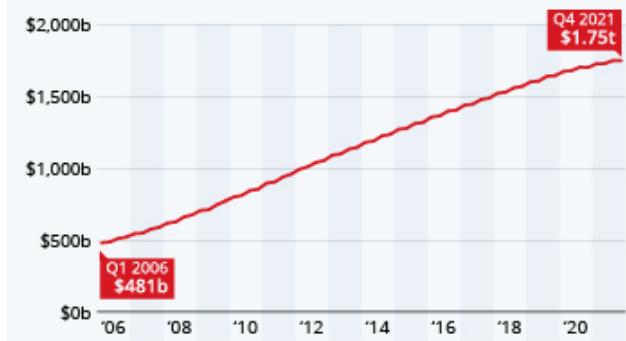
college has become much more expensive in recent years as tuition costs and living costs keep increasing. On the chart on the right, you can see how the student loan debt has more than tripled in the last 15 years. President Biden and the supporters of this action hope that the forgiveness plan will give borrowers much needed financial help, and free up money that can be actively spent to boost the economy.

However, the recent action has not been without criticism. Opponents of Biden's program say it is unfair to people who already paid off their loans as they will now have to shoulder the burden of paying off other people's loans through tax increases. Why should people who have already paid off their loans responsibly be required to pay off people who voluntarily took out loans and now cannot pay them back?

Furthermore, some critics claim that the 10,000 dollars is not enough to make any real progress towards solving the

## Americans Owe \$1.75 Trillion in Student Debt

Value of outstanding student loans in the United States (not seasonally adjusted)



Source: U.S. Federal Reserve



statista

problem, and is more of a political stunt to increase voter support for the upcoming elections.

Finally, opponents of the forgiveness plan believe that the plan will only continue to increase the United States national debt which will hurt our nation's economy in the long run. Regardless of how people view the issue, student loan forgiveness is here. So we can only hope that people with student loan debt get much needed help without any other negative side effects for the nation as a whole.

## Student Survey - Ghosts?

By Kristina Petrey



In an effort to encourage student participation in our school newspaper, we will present students with a question each month and provide a snapshot of student responses and perspectives in this section of our newspaper. This month, we asked students this burning question: Do you believe in ghosts?

Of the student population surveyed, 40% believe that ghosts are 100% real. A lot of them claim that they are real because it would make no sense for them NOT to be real.

One student shared a personal experience, claiming that late at night, their father saw a girl with blonde hair sitting in a rocking chair. Assuming it was his mind playing tricks on him, he went back to bed. Later that same night, the student went downstairs and saw the same thing. The student also claimed that their house was part of the underground railroad.

Some students interviewed claim that they

have had things fall off their shelves, lights turn on in the house with no one flipping a switch, hearing footsteps in the house where there weren't any people, and even reports of faucets turning themselves on. Some students claim that they've even felt the presence of a passed love one.

32% of students thought that there MIGHT be a chance that ghosts exist, but remain on the fence due to lack of hard evidence. Some students argued that believed that there was more of a chance for spirits or guardian angels, but they didn't necessarily believe that ghosts "haunt places," because spending their afterlife haunting one place would get boring.

Finally, 28% said that there is no chance ghosts could exist. One student explained it this way: "It all comes down to religious paranoia. Places can be scary without them being haunted. People dying and coming back with the ability to be seen is just too far-fetched of a theory."

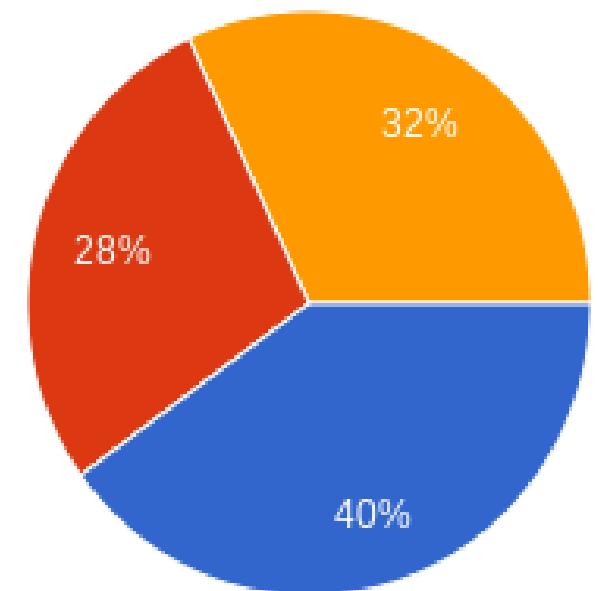


Chart based on 50 student responses.

Another non-believer said, "If I don't believe in them, then they can't come back to haunt me," which, at the end of the day, is a valid assessment, especially with Halloween just around the corner. Stay safe out there.

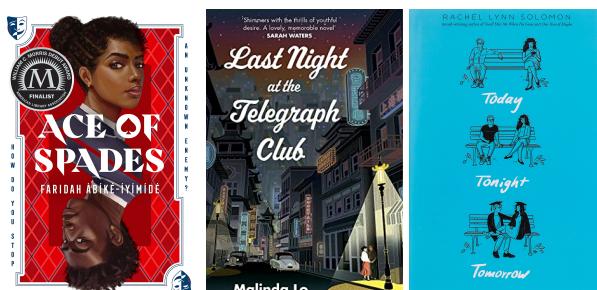
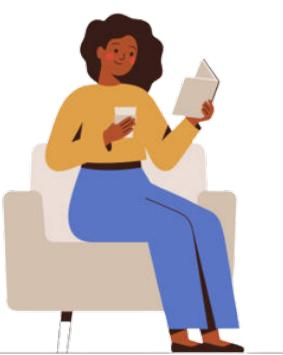
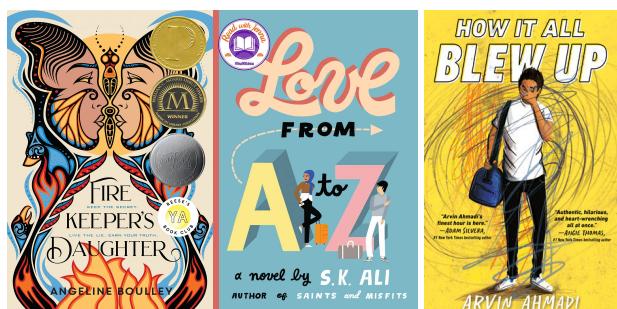
## News From The Library

Love to read? Want to make your voice heard? This year, Illini Bluffs High School will join schools across Illinois to cast our votes for the 2023 Illinois Teen Readers' Choice Lincoln Book Award.

20 books are nominated for the award, and participating students must read or listen to at least 4 of the nominated titles by February 1st, 2023 to be eligible to vote. "This is our first year participating as an official voting school," says Mrs. Coulter, the IBMS/IBHS librarian, "and we have a group of students and teachers who are eager to get started reading some of this year's outstanding selections."

A list of nominated books can be found on the library bulletin board and on the Association of School Library Educators website. Students who choose to participate will be eligible to attend quarterly, invitation-only Lincoln Award Book Club events during advisory period. "It is very important to me to plan our book club events during the school day so that they are accessible to all students," says Mrs. Coulter, because not everyone is able to attend before or after school activities. Advisory will be a great time for our IB book lovers to meet, talk about books, and probably eat some snacks. Snacks and book club go hand in hand."

Middle school students will also have an opportunity to participate in similar program geared toward the their age range, and they will be able to vote for this years Rebecca Caudill Young Reader's Choice Award. To find out more information or to sign up to participate stop by the library or email Mrs. Coulter at [emcoulter@ib327.com](mailto:emcoulter@ib327.com). Happy reading!



## Student Spotlight



Most people do not start as a two-sport varsity athlete their freshman year of high school, and even fewer gain recognition in and outside of the class for their hard work and dedication. For IBHS sophomore Toby, though, getting involved and going the extra mile are essential to who he is.

Toby was nominated by Ms. Gresham and Mr. Hallstrom for his "ability to navigate a busy week of athletics and academics with a POSITIVE ATTITUDE." Gresham states that no matter what kind of week he's having, he has the ability to pick himself up and start every day anew. Toby likes to think he's a pretty funny guy who "enjoys giving everyone a good laugh." To which Ms. Gresham reluctantly agreed, but "don't let him know that," she jokes. "He enjoys making the people around him laugh in a way that's positive. Which I think is because he doesn't like seeing people upset." His ability to cheer up those around him is something that we should all strive for.

Outside of class, Toby is involved in basketball, baseball, and soccer. He's played varsity for both basketball and baseball in his freshman year and will be continuing that his sophomore year. Other than school, Toby spent most of his summer playing travel ball, where he has a tournament almost every weekend. When he wasn't playing baseball last summer, he would mow his neighbors' lawns. Toby laughed as he stated he mowed, "At least 30 miles of grass" over the course of the summer break for \$20 a lawn.

For Toby, money is a significant motivator. If sports don't work out, he plans on becoming a stock broker. After taking a community hour on financial success with Mr. Belville, Toby's interest in stocks began. He currently uses Tiktok as a resource to learn more about the stock market and plans to invest soon.

During the interview, Toby seemed like a very grounded individual who's determined to go far in the world. The work ethic he has cultivated while participating in athletics is something that will help him flourish in the other parts of his life, no matter if he decides to pursue sports or the complicated world of finance. His ability to cheer up those around him, his commitment to start everyday with a positive attitude, and his determination to do the best that he can is something that IBHS stands for, and is something that this newspaper is proud to recognize.

## Message From Mr. Almasi

Hello, IBHS! I want to thank everyone for a great first month.

Now that we are into the month of September, I want to reinforce the importance of in-class learning. When a student is gone, the classic question is, "What did I miss?" The answer is a lot more than just an assignment. When students miss class, they miss out on great discussions, examples, and collaborative learning from their peers. We don't want students coming to school sick, but please try to avoid scheduling appointments during the middle of the day. We want our students to be successful, and being at school is the number one indicator of student growth.

As a reminder to everyone, when a student misses 5 class periods, they will have to the final exam for that class.

On Friday, September 9th, 2022, you all should have received an email from Dr. Alvey discussing a school safety incident. That morning, I stopped by each classroom to help answer students' questions and reinforce the importance of "see something, say something, do something." If a student or family member ever sees or hears something that would make them feel unsafe, please report it to a staff member. We take great pride in ensuring the school is safe, and we can't keep everyone safe without the eyes and ears of all our students and families.

As always, if you ever need anything or have any questions about our school or students, please reach out!

Mr. Almasi



IF INTERESTED IN HELPING  
WITH FUTURE PAPERS,  
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