

# TIGER TIMES



*Back to School Edition*

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## From the Ground up:

*Creation of community garden offers new opportunities to school and community.*

**By Delaney O.**

Senior Reporter



The newly constructed Community Garden at Illini Bluffs High School has introduced many new opportunities to Illini Bluffs elementary, middle, and high school. These many bonuses of our brand new student-built Community Garden include salad bar additions, greater classroom and student skill development opportunities, increased community contribution efforts, and much more.

“We wanted to expose kids to gardening because a lot of kids have never done it before,” incumbent superintendent Dr. Roger Alvey said when asked about his initial hopes for the garden. Dr. Alvey wrote the grant last year alongside high school principal and future superintendent Mr. Dimitri Almasi and assistant superintendent Mr. Cody Martzluft.

“We also wanted to hopefully make an opportunity for older kids to work with younger kids simultaneously,” Dr. Alvey said.

However, before anything could happen in regard to the garden, the garden needed to be constructed.

At the end of April 2023, Mr. Teel’s Industrial Technology students came together and began to build.

“It was fun and hard work to build,” said senior Chris D., one of the students who helped construct the garden from scratch. “It was very rewarding for how well it worked out and how accessible it is to use.”

The head of our lunch staff, Mr. Ryan Murphy, is currently taking advantage of the accessibility of this garden to improve the quality of lunches for our students.

“[The tomatoes] are sweeter. They’re homegrown. They taste better than what you get in the store normally,” Mr. Murphy said.

These tomatoes are not the only thing our school is planning to utilize from the garden.

“The miniature pumpkins are going to get used for the little kids. We will do those around Halloween,” he followed. The possibility of utilizing the community garden in the classroom was also brought up, specifically in Foods class.

“If I get a bunch of zucchini, students could cut them up for zucchini bread,” Mr. Murphy added.

Some have expressed their hope that the plants grown in the garden will be used not only for classes and lunch around the school, but also to help support families around the community.

“It would be really cool if we could manage to take what we were growing in the garden and

have it contribute to what’s going on around the area eventually,” stated Lauren Classen, one of the Interact students who contributed to the planting of the garden over the summer.

She and many others are eager for new opportunities and what the future has to hold for our community garden.

## Senior Send-off:

**By Celine L.**  
Editor-in-Chief

The beginning of the new school year marks the beginning of the end for our seniors. For some, it’s bittersweet, while for others, it’s just time to go. For Ethyn D., Jack M., and Adrienne G., it has been quite an adventure.

The last four years have been a rollercoaster for Ethyn. When he started freshman year, COVID was still around, seemingly with no end. That made the first year of high school difficult for Ethyn, but things really picked up for him towards the end of his sophomore year. This is when he joined the drama club and met new people who would soon become some of his best friends. These friends helped get him through his junior year and are also what makes it difficult to think about graduating soon.

Ethyn’s favorite high school memory is joining theater in his junior year. He’s thankful for the opportunities, memories, and, of course, the friends that came with the experience.

After high school, Ethyn plans on going to Millikin College and becoming a creative writer and voice actor.

Adrienne started attending IB halfway through freshman year, which meant she had to learn a lot of new things pretty quickly. Previously, she had gone to school in Pekin. School has never been her cup of tea, but now that it’s coming to an end, she realized that she might miss it more than she expected.

Adrienne had made the Notables, a choir in Pekin, right before moving here, which made the move more difficult. Adrienne stated “I would have loved to do it. So many people have got good scholarships from it just by being in the group.” Though, it got easier when the season for notables had ended due to COVID, despite that coming with its own issues as well.

The best part of highschool for Adrienne is the relationships she has both gained and lost. She has met so many people and learned so many things since coming to IB. She is very thankful for having the privilege of having these people in her life.



Interact Club members in finished garden. Photo by Ms. Gorsuch.



Interact Club members put soil in raised beds. Photo by Ms. Gorsuch.

After high school, Adrienne plans on moving away from home and going to cosmetology school. She’s not sure where she will move to, though she plans to go with the flow and see where life takes her.

For Jack, high school has gone by pretty smoothly. Despite COVID in freshman year, things opened up for him after sophomore year. Though highschool has been great, Jack doesn’t feel too bad about it coming to an end. “It wasn’t a bad time in high school, I’m just ready to move on and get a job.”

Jack is currently enrolled in a welding program through ICC and plans on doing that for the rest of this year. He also plans on getting a job in the trades after high school. If that doesn’t work out, then he would like to go to college for business or entrepreneurship related majors.

The most memorable moments from Jack’s high school years is leading his grade to three consecutive football powderpuff wins. He states that he looks forward to winning again this year and claims to be “the best football coach in the 309.”

These seniors truly showcase the variety of possible experiences here at Illini Bluffs High School. On behalf of all the Tiger Times Staff, we wish them the best of luck on their journeys and a wonderful senior year!



From left to right: Adrienne G., Jack M., and Ethyn D.

# Library News

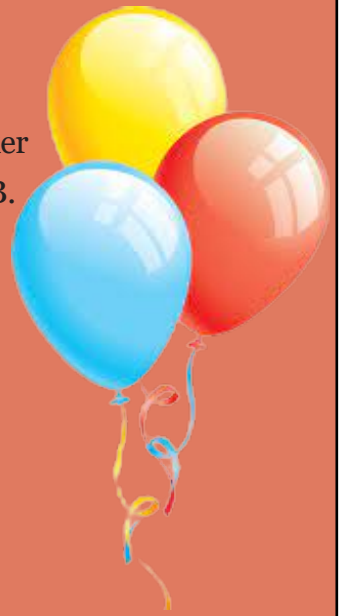
By Mrs. Coulter  
High School Librarian

Hello, Illini Bluffs! Here is a brief update about what's been going on in your library:

We are off to a busy start in the library this year! Along with training two new service project library helpers, Delaney O. and Zoe C., and welcoming back students in grades 6-8 for their twice-monthly library visits, the library hosted the entire Junior class for a "book tasting" event, and Mrs. Coulter's "I'm With The Banned" Book Club has started its deep dive into the growing issue of book censorship in America.

In September, the library looks forward to hosting a portion of the IBHS Mental Health Fair with activities themed around the idea of "busy hands, quiet mind," and Mrs. Coulter is currently preparing her largest book order of the year, so if you have book requests contact her ASAP, and stop in and see what's new in the coming weeks!

# Happy Birthday



- September 1- Jaden C.
- September 2- Josie P. Miley R.
- September 5- Riley E.
- September 6- Ellory S.
- September 7- Collin B. Dries F.
- September 9- Chloe E.
- September 13- Aubri M. Nick S.
- September 14- Joce P. Mrs. Patrick
- September 15- Addy C. Ian O.
- September 18- Ethan G.
- September 19- Brenna D. Tommy P.
- September 21- Mrs. Bricker
- September 22- Brendan B.
- September 24- Ben K. Jacob R.
- September 25- Justus D. Mr. Teel
- September 26- Nolan S.
- September 27- Levi T.
- September 28- Jace H.
- September 29- Eric P.
- September 30- Hank A.



Students Fisher D. and Hank A. play bags at the School Luau.

# Stuco News



By Annabelle F.  
Student Council President

Hi Tigers!

Hopefully everyone is having a great start to their school year! We were busy as a Student Council right out of the gate with two big events: Senior Sunrise and the Back to School Bash. Both were a success!

On Friday, August 18th, seniors enjoyed an early morning sunrise to start their last year at IB and then followed it with breakfast at the Bartonville Diner. Later that day, we hosted a Back to School Luau in our new outdoor pavilion.

Students enjoyed games, contests, and snacks during the event. After a long limbo contest, freshman Kelsey O. was our winner! Thank you to everyone who showed up! We've had a fun start to our school year, and we're looking forward to our upcoming events.

Homecoming is next on our agenda! It will be on Saturday, September 30th from 7-10pm. Make sure you're listening to the daily announcements for the theme! To kick off homecoming week, we will be having fun events to lead up to the big day!

First, we will have a pep rally on Thursday, September 28th at the end of the day. During this, we will announce homecoming court and recognize all of our fall athletes. Our homecoming soccer game is that evening at 4:15pm, so make sure you come out and support our team! Next, on Friday, September 29th, Student Council is hosting our homecoming Powderpuff games beginning with a tailgate. Following that, girls will begin with playing football, and boys volleyball will follow. The class of 2024 has won the past two years, let's see if they can do it again!

Student Council is here to help make school more enjoyable for everyone, so feel free to share any ideas you may have for the upcoming school year with us! The more people that get involved, the better!

# Tiger on the Prowl:

## What is the most interesting thing you did this summer?

By Adrienne G.  
Senior Reporter



"I bought a dirt bike."  
-Ben K.



"Watching guitar shows."  
-Izzy D.



"Going to car shows around Illinois."  
-Skylar G.



"I was a Russian mobster in a play."  
-Cole J.

# New Staff:

Meet the new faces of Illini Bluffs High School.

By **Celine L.**  
Editor-in-Chief



Ms. Babbs and Mr. Dunn pose for a photo in the English hallway. Not pictured: Ms. Marvin

Summer has ended and with that comes the dawn of a new school year full of opportunities to learn and connect with others. But who would we be as students without our teachers? As we settle into this new year, we should keep in mind that our teachers are working diligently to ensure our success. With that being said, we should all give some recognition to our new staff at IB.

First we have Mr. Dunn, who is from Pekin, IL. He always enjoyed history from a young age and knew that's where he wanted to go in life. Mr. Dunn attended Illinois State University for teaching and was a student teacher at IB near the end of the last school year.

Mr. Dunn stated that he had a very inspirational history teacher during his freshman year in high school. After that, he had really gotten into history and even traveled to different historical markers across the Midwest. Since then, he has always known he wanted to be a history teacher and stated that he hopes to be supportive and show students that he cares both inside and outside the classroom.

Ms. Babbs grew up in Pontiac, IL. She attended Joliet junior college, originally majoring in ag. business. When she transferred to ISU, she decided to go for ag. education.

Ms. Babbs was a little shocked to find out that we didn't have any agricultural programs at Illini Bluffs despite being a farming community. She is very excited to be the first to teach this new program and continue learning along the way. Ms. Babbs stated that "Being able to bring my experience to a farming community is interesting seeing all the kids in my class that are farmers."

Ms. Marvin, the new high school guidance counselor, attended the University of Maryland and has spent over 25 years working in schools. She has provided counseling services in many places, including Limestone and Florida schools!

Ms. Marvin explained that she loves working in high schools because it gives her the opportunity to watch and assist as young people are "going from being scared to death as a freshman to senior year having their plan."

## Summer's hottest movies ranked: A review by Illini Bluffs' AMC expert

By **Adela G.**  
Contributor

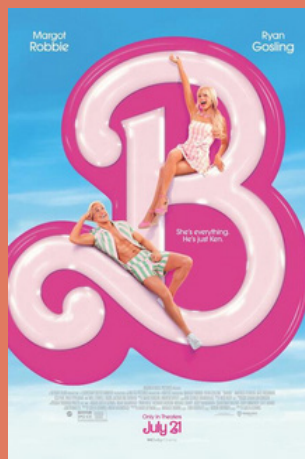
### 1. Barbie - ☆☆☆☆☆

The top movie of the summer was undoubtedly "Barbie."

Skyrocketing in box office, Barbie has made over \$1.34 billion, the second movie of the year to reach the billions, with the first being the Super Mario Bros movie.

The movie starts with Barbie and Ken discovering the "real" world, a far cry from the one they live in in Barbieland. For Barbie, this is a world-shattering realization. Ken, however, is overjoyed and returns to Barbieland with some new ideas and chaos ensues.

"Barbie" was a very whimsical and empowering movie for all ages. Overall, this movie was pretty good, notably for its dancing, its music, and all of the above. Watching this movie was truly an experience.



### 2. Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse - ☆☆☆☆☆

Second on that list not too far from "Barbie" was "Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse," which ended the summer with a shocking \$663 million in box office.

As Miles Morales reunites with Gwen Stacy, they navigate the spider-verse and all of the other Spider people in the universe. The movie ends on a huge cliffhanger that has fans awaiting the 3rd movie's arrival.

This movie's animation style was what drew me in at first, but what kept me watching was the fact that it was an astonishing movie that kept fans intrigued and on the edge of their seats the whole time.



### 3. TMNT: Mutant Mayhem - ☆☆☆☆☆

The third best movie of the summer has to be "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle: Mutant Mayhem," which grossed nearly \$153 million world wide. The movie followed the four turtles as they navigate trying to be "normal" teenagers, going to school, doing things with friends, and even trying to navigate relationships.

For me, this movie was incredible. It really focused on the teen part of their lives. In this adaptation, the characters were more rebellious and definitely more relatable to current teenagers than in past interpretations. Everything about this movie was just so good: the animation, the story, and everything else.



# One-on-One: Which is Better? Beach vs. Mountains

## Team Beach

By **Lalaina Z. and Kyra P.**  
Senior Reporters

Beaches offer a perfect mix of relaxation and adventure. You can soak up the sun, feel the sand between your toes, and take refreshing swims in the ocean. Plus, beaches are great for activities like water sports like surfing and snorkeling, unlike mountains whose higher altitudes make it hard to do any physical activity.

Other activities to do on the beach include swimming, sunbathing, beach volleyball, and sand-castle building. Beaches provide a serene and tranquil environment, perfect for relaxation. The rhythmic sound of the waves and the gentle sea breeze creates a soothing atmosphere that is hard to replicate anywhere else.

Not only are mountains challenging to get to, especially if hiking and long drives are not your thing, the high altitudes can cause sickness which can be life threatening to older or more sickness-prone individuals. Additionally, the weather in the mountains can be quite unpredictable with sudden changes in temperature and can have potential dangerous storms. The bumpy landscape can also make it more difficult to navigate, making getting lost a lot easier.

For those reasons, beaches are clearly the preferred vacation outlet.

## Team Mountain

By **Katie A. and Lauren B.**  
Sophomore Reporters

Envision waking up to a breathtaking landscape of green and gold, destined to make your heart flutter. With life at every corner, the mountains are a portrait of Earth's vast beauty, and you just can't resist capturing the moment. \*Click\*.

Up in the mountains, there are assorted plants and animals you won't be able to see every day. Take the Alpine Avens, for example. These fetching flowers can grow at elevations up to 4,000 meters (13,123.36 feet). What they lack in height, they make up for in color, with popping yellow colors that draw attention no matter the adventure.

Elk and bears are other examples of the magnificent creatures seen in the wild. Both powerful creatures thrive in mountainous environments and are sure to attract the attention of every traveler.

When traveling in the mountains, there are so many activities to indulge in, with hiking, rock climbing, swimming, and cavern touring being a few choices. With endless possibilities, you are sure to find something you like!

Although you won't have a typical vacation day on the sand, the quiet and calming scenery is a paradise unlike any other.

# Season Preview:

*IB Soccer kicks off new season.*

**By Will G.**  
Junior Sports Reporter

The new school year opened up many new opportunities for your Illini Bluffs/Farmington Soccer Team. The Tigers, having been eliminated by Peoria Christian last year in regionals, look to bounce back this season.

Losing seniors Paul Ishikawa, Ella Wight, Grace Hutchinson, CJ Grice, Avery Speck and Farmington Co-op player Ayden Ackers hurt the team; however, given the number of senior injuries last year, the current players are primed for gameplay without these members of the team.

With the graduated seniors departing, the Tigers are keeping their young core of starters together from last year, aided by a talented freshman class.

Coach Gerard Smith and Assistant Coach Brock Aksun have been coaching the IB Soccer Team for many years now and, as of 2020, have been able to incorporate interested players from Farmington as well.

Last season, the IB/Farmington Tigers were tied in goals scored by Ian O. and Devon W. with 7. The next top goal scorer was Will G. with 6, but with new freshmen and core veteran leadership, the goal scoring field should be open for everyone on the pitch.

On the defensive side, senior goalie Hank A. is staying the Tigers' primary goalkeeper and for good

measure. Last year, Hank saved 210 goals, letting in only 36 goals all season.

And while the defensive line will be controlled by Hank, the two main defenders, seniors Wyatt H. and Levi A., make Hank's job easier as the most trusted defenders to get the ball away from our goal.

"Levi and Wyatt are the best duo on the team because they have the most chemistry while playing together," Hank A. said when asked about the two.

Both of these experienced players are sure to be instrumental to success later in the season and put up a valiant effort at the Pekin Invitational Tournament.

The Tigers had high hopes going into the Pekin tournament, but didn't play as the team they are. Many incidents happened before the tournament that hindered their progress, with the game against Monmouth being canceled and three straight practices taking place in the elementary gym due to excessive outdoor temperatures. And as the Tigers were set to face Pekin in the first game, they were denied the opportunity because of inclement weather that caused the game to be canceled.

The first game of the tournament thereafter didn't go so well, as Monmouth would create a commanding 3-0 lead at halftime. At halftime, another storm occurred, canceling the remainder of the game and preventing the Tigers from earning redemption in the second half.

After, the team would go to Willow Elementary School and relax and wait for their next game to start. At Willow, coaches and players talked about improvements for the next game.

These improvements included passing, which has been a weak point in the past few years. With the new freshmen and much-needed practice, though, the Tigers came out and passed during their game against IVC, which led to plenty of shots on goal. Unfortunately for the Tigers, though, none of the goals would be completed successfully, causing the Tigers to fall to IVC 1-0.

After the game against Canton on Aug. 31 that resulted in a 5-2 win for the Tigers, I was able to sit and talk to Head Coach Gerard Smith for a quick Q & A about the season.

Q. "What do you think the strengths are for this year?"

A. "Strengths for this year would be that we are scoring goals, playing with more togetherness, and playing a lot stronger this year."

Q. "What are the weaknesses for this year?"

A. "We still aren't passing enough in games; passing isn't as consistent as it should be, and the passing gets less when the games get going. Our heads go down as we get scored on early, but when we are confident, our heads stay up."

Q. "Will the lineup for the games be consistent or will they be switched up?"

A. "Game by game there will be changes; I think that's fair, but I think we will be more consistent. Also, we will have to deal with injuries, suspensions, and then we may have to change it."

# Gym Remodel:

*A soggy start to a new school year.*

**By Addy D. & Lauren B.**  
Freshman & Sophomore Reporters



Seeing the gym in its uncharacteristic state was quite a shock for many students returning to school this year, and with the court and the locker rooms being off-limits, sports teams and gym classes were left to find other options. Although everyone knows the gym needs some work, not many people know the story behind the gymnasium's current form.

It all started at the beginning of summer. Spirits were high as the school began remodeling and repainting "The Oak," yet sudden disaster struck when water from large rainstorms came through an unsealed door and soaked the gymnasium.

A new storage room is currently under construction, but before it was properly sealed, there were days of heavy rainfall and the storage room filled with water. The water pressure caused the door to burst, flooding the high school gymnasium.

As water soaked the gym floor, the floorboards began to cup (curve upwards at the ends), and dreams of what the renovated gymnasium was going to look like quickly turned into nightmares of how to get the water out.

Though the school is currently in the process of removing the moisture, the ripples of this flood were

undoubtedly felt by students returning from summer break.

While some students are experiencing a change of location for P.E. classes, the real impact is felt by our student athletes and their coaches.

"I was looking forward to playing my senior volleyball season in the gym, but it doesn't look like it is going to happen," said Morgan Lowe, referring to how the highschool girls volleyball games will be played in the middle school gym this season during renovations.

Sophomore volleyball player Sophia Gordon is also disappointed in the change of venue, while trying to remain positive. "I'm disappointed but I'm glad that we can still hold games."

While volleyball remains underwater for the season, what's the forecast for basketball? Though the location of open gyms and pre-season practices are still under speculation, IB P.E. teacher and varsity basketball coach Clay Vass remains optimistic that the high school boys will play their season in the newly renovated highschool gym.

He even pointed out a silver lining to the whole mess: the newly redone floor will provide IB athletes and visiting teams a new, smoother court to play sports on.

# Student Spotlight: Dries F.

**By Katie A.**  
Sophomore Reporter

At IB, students who never turn down an opportunity to help others in need don't go unnoticed. Dries Fick is an outstanding student that rises to any occasion where he is needed and makes sure to give his best efforts in every setting.

In the classroom, Dries is a star student dedicated to his school work; outside of class, he doesn't shy away from volunteering.

During the 2022-23 school year, he took part in the Green Thumb Club community hour.

Ms.Gorsuch oversaw the club and shared. "No matter the greenhouse chore, Dries was the first to volunteer."

As a committee member of the Interact Club, you are asked to put in a lot of time and effort. Since this is the first year of Interact, the task changes and grows as the club progresses.

Dries "has dedicated many hours outside of school towards fundraiser planning," Gorsuch said.

Dries also serves on the inaugural committee for Interact Club. In his freetime when he isn't throwing for track or planning for any clubs, he enjoys cooking and hiking.

There are many events that draw student interest for one reason or another. For Dries, that means powderpuff.

His favorite memory so far during his high school career is "finishing my quilt freshman year

for family consumer science."

Dries applies his motto "do it right the first time" to everything he does. He is self-driven and has an optimistic outlook on life.

After high school, Dries plans to attend medical school. Dries' intentions to "apply [himself] on the front lines of America's wellbeing" will no doubt be fulfilled. Just another example of why Dries is a well-deserving Student Spotlight.

