



TIGER TIMES



April Edition

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Weather whys: Watch vs warning

By Ella D.
Managing Editor

The day is rainy; Local weather authorities have mentioned the possibility of severe weather in your area, you get a notification on your phone. It says you are under a tornado watch. You panic. What does this mean? Is there a tornado on the ground? What should I do? If this has happened to you before, don't worry you are not alone. According to a survey given in 2022 42% of adults in The United States did not know the difference between a watch and a warning. Not only are there watches and warnings but there are also advisories and special weather statements. Knowing the difference between the two, as well as all the meanings of weather notifications that may come across your phone, is very important for your safety as well as the safety of those around you. In this article we will go over the difference between a watch and a warning and what you should do if you find yourself under one.

What is the difference between a watch and a warning? When explaining this, I like to use cupcakes as an example. Cupcakes

serve as a simple metaphor and make it easy for everyone to understand. Think of it this way a watch means a tornado could happen in your area between the time the watch is issued to when it expires. To relate this to cupcakes; a cupcake watch is when you have all the ingredients in your house to make cupcakes. You may not make them but all the ingredients are there. Just like when a tornado watch is issued all the ingredients are in the atmosphere to make tornadoes but a tornado is not being baked or rather a tornado is not on the ground. Additionally a tornado warning is issued when a tornado has been seen or rotation is seen on radar by a trained meteorologist. In a cupcake warning this is when you are actively putting the ingredients together and baking your cupcakes. In a watch you had all the ingredients but in a warning those ingredients are now being put together to create a cupcake or rather a tornado.

Now what should you do when you find yourself in a watch or a warning. The most important thing is to not panic. The wording

on warnings and watches can be anxiety inducing. What you should do is look at the type of watch or warning. Lets say you are under a severe thunderstorm watch; this just means you should keep an eye on the weather and be ready to go in-doors and away from windows if that watch were to turn into a warning, as well as making sure phones are charged and flashlights are working in case of a power outage. In terms of a tornado watch that means that you need to be hyperweather aware for the duration of it; making sure you have a safe spot prepped and ready to go if a warning were to be issued. The most urgent out of all of these is a tornado warning. Most importantly again don't panic; being prepared before the storm will help a lot with easing these worries. What you need to do is get to your safe spot, this should be the lowest floor of your house in the most interior room, putting as many walls between you and the outside world as possible. Another tip to help keep you safe is to turn on your local weather person or even a meteorologist on youtube this



will help calm your worries and let you know what exactly is going on during the storm.

Now that you know the difference between a watch and a warning and what to do you can help keep you and those around you safe, as always remember. Don't be scared, be prepared.



Illini Bluffs students take the ACT

By Addy D.
Editor-in-Chief

The school year is nearing the end, and with that, comes the annual college admissions exam: the ACT. The preparation process for it was lengthy, involving adjustments to classroom instruction from teachers so as to adequately prepare students for the test.

The American College Test, more commonly referred to as the ACT, is a national college admissions exam that assesses the student's performance in english, mathematics, reading, and science, with an optional writing section. At Illini Bluffs juniors took the test, with freshmen and sophomores taking the Practice ACT.

To plan for testing, teachers dedicated time in their classrooms to review content and familiarize students with the format of the exam. Some classes incorporated practice questions and timed exercises designed to reflect

the structure of the ACT. Other teachers reviewed general test-taking strategies, including pacing and question analysis, as part of regular instruction.

"[To prepare students] I use sources from the official ACT website," Robison, a Physiology teacher, said. "It's the closest you can get to the actual terminology on the test, so it's a good resource to use in preparation."

Outside of the classroom, some students prepared independently in the weeks before the exam. The specific studying methods varied, but the most common practices included the use of online practice tests, study guides, and resources given by teachers. While some students followed structured study plans from online sites, others opted to study via physical resources.

"[To study,] I bought an ACT studying book off of Amazon, I wrote down math equations to study, and I've gone over the

English content," junior Annie Swanson said. "I've mostly just focused on studying the book."

Planning for the ACT begins months in advance. The high school guidance counselor, Marvin, organizes the whole thing. "Planning starts in January, and you have to request accommodations for students with IEPs and 504s," guidance counselor Maureen Marvin said. "After [accommodations] get approved, all the other students' information gets put in. Once names appear, I can add classrooms and teachers. Closer to test day, I prepare baskets for each teacher with the roster, timing sheet, no cell phone, and no calculator policies."

The teachers who were not administering the test helped with organizing, answering questions, or assisting in other test procedures, highlighting how the whole high school was involved.

Students were also informed

about testing expectations, including rules regarding electronic devices and breaks. These procedures were reviewed before the test day to ensure that all participants understood the requirements.

"On test day, [the proctors] have you reset your calculator, and you can't bring anything in from outside, so they give you water and a pencil," junior Kainen Postin said. "You can't have any kind of electronic devices either."

The preparation process at Illini Bluffs was a team effort, relying on coordination between students, teachers, and administrators to ensure that testing conditions met required standards.

Although the official test has been completed, further information regarding score reports and next steps is not yet available. Those results are expected to be shared with the students in the coming weeks.

Local flower farms



By Emma H.
Voice Reporter

The Greenhouse Flower Shoppe

The Greenhouse Flower Shoppe offers a wide variety of flowers and gifts, and everything is arranged with care. The shop itself is clean and very inviting, and the customer service stands out: they're patient and great at helping you choose the perfect bouquet. Their arrangements feel creative and unique rather than basic. It's a great place to go if you want something a little more personalized.



Heights Flowers-Plant Farms

Heights Flowers-Plant Farms is perfect if you're looking for more than bouquets. Their selection of plants is impressive, and the greenhouse setup makes browsing enjoyable. The staff is knowledgeable and always willing to give tips for plant care. They also have a wide range of sizes and prices, so there's something for everyone. If you love plants just as much as flowers, this is the place to be.



Meyer's Country Gardens

Meyer's Country Gardens has a small-town feel with really fresh, vibrant floral arrangements. The staff is friendly and helpful, making it easy to find something beautiful for any occasion. Prices are fair for the quality you get. They also have a nice variety of seasonal flowers that consistently look well-cared for. Overall, it's a reliable spot if you want something thoughtful and nicely put together.



Best dressed of 2026 prom

By Carson B.
Voice Reporter



Riley E.

Riley took the floor with her three-piece dress, corset, skirt, and scarf lined in black pocka dots. Riley purchased this beautiful gown from M2 Prom, made by Portia&Scarlett. Riley complemented this dress with a nice updo, giving her an Audrey Hepburn look. This dress was definitely the talk of the prom and was loved by many.

Chloe E.

Chloe's dress was a beautiful red dress with puffy sleeves. But this dress held a secret, the sleeves were detachable! This simple but elegant mermaid-style dress was the talk of town, and Chloe looked gorgeous. No one could deny the charm of the dress with a trick up its sleeve!

Addy D.

Addy decided to stick to her naturally vintage style and thrifted her dress. Her dress was found in a thrift store in Pilsen, Chicago. The brand of beautiful gold and black dress is Gunne Sax by Jessica McCuntoo, which can be sold online for over 100 dollars. We can definitely say Addy brought the party with her stunning 80s gown.

Izzy L.

Just like an internet sensation of a Halloween costume in 2024, Izzy's prom dress was handmade. Dress orders don't always work out, but there is no problem too big that Izzy can't fix by just doing it herself. But simply finding a black dress in her closet, sewing purple satin and black fabric, stitching ruffy lace, and adding some purple gems, Izzy made her prom dress. One could not deny that Izzy, our DIY queen, looked very stylish at prom.

Anna C.

This prom queen's dress was actually a complete surprise! Anna's parents were out of town for New Year's when they stumbled upon the beautiful dress. Anna was immediately enamored with the dress, and after looking at it via pictures in different shades, landed on the bronze color she wore. This very comfortable and gorgeous gown is definitely fit for a queen.

Miley R.

Miley's stunning prom dress was fit for a wedding, especially since she got it at David's Bridal. The detailed hot pink flowers on top of the light pink dress had everyone falling head over heels. Of course, no one was shocked that Miley, with her bright and bubbly personality, would wear such a fitting dress, but no one could deny that she looked absolutely stunning. We can't wait to see what she wears next year.



This years top trending prom dresses

By **Mallory S.**
Copy Editor

When we start to look back at old prom pictures in a decade or two from now, 2026 will definitely stand out for its bold fashion choices driven by trends. This year, several new trends made an appearance, bringing in modern flair with a little bit of nostalgia. Butter yellow is a noticeably new favorite color, with lots of girls wanting to go with this simpler but elegant look. Additionally dresses have been adorned with ruffles of all types, adding a little romantic touch while still giving the whimsical prom vibe.

Polka-dots have also made a cheerful comeback, bringing a little vintage fun and balance between other popular styles. Meanwhile, cheetah print roared into popularity, offering a daring but confident statement piece for those wanting to stand out. Together, all of these trends will capture the spirit of the 2026 prom season, I'd say, the perfect blend of classic patterns and fresh vibrant colors that will be remembered for many years to come.



Emmi W.



Kenzie N.



Riley E.



Kaitlyn H.

Favorite coffee spots

By **Meadow M.**
Voice Reporter

Location: Coffee Connection, 404 Court St, Pekin, IL 61554

Hours: Mon-Fri 6a.m.-6 p.m.

Sat 7 a.m.-6 p.m.

Sun 8 a.m.-2 p.m.

Menu: coffee, smoothies, wraps, panini,

Price + Order: **Small iced caramel latte \$6.50**

Coffee Connections definitely wasn't my favorite. I feel it was a little bit pricey and wasn't something I would be telling everyone about, like it's the best thing I've ever had. The inside was also slightly overwhelming with all the decorations that didnt have a clear theme.

Coffee Connections ★★ ★



Coffee Can ★★ ★

Location: 224 2nd St, Hanna City, IL 61536

Hours: Mon-Sat 6 a.m.-2p.m.

Sun Closed

Menu: wide variety of items, coffees, lattes, sandwiches, salads, ice creams, pastries, vegetarian

Price + Order: **Small iced caramel coffee \$2.75**

The Coffee Can was very cute and aesthetic on the inside; however, I don't know if I'd go back based on the flavor of their coffee. It wasn't my favorite, but very reasonably priced.

Location: 1003 E Fort St, Farmington, IL 61531

Hours: Mon-Fri 6 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Sat-Sun 7 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Menu: coffee, salads, chips, eggs, pretzels, baked goods, tea, juice, slushies, sandwiches, pizza, soda

Price + Order: **small iced caramel \$5.49**

Black Maple was definitely my second favorite place. Although it looks like a little shed, there was a large variety of items you could choose from. It was also very yummy tasting and reasonably priced.

Black Maple ★★ ★★



Black Sheep ★★ ★★

Location: Black Sheep Coffee, 217 N Main St, Hanna City, IL 61536

Hours: Mon Closed

Wed-Fri 6 a.m.-2 p.m.

Sat 7 a.m.-2 p.m.

Sun 8 a.m.-2 p.m.

Menu: lattes, energy/refreshers, soda

Price + Order: **Caramel iced latte \$6.00**

I would definitely go back. For the price, I think it was very reasonably priced and tasted really good. It wasn't the most aesthetic build-wise, but the plastic pull tab cups are fun and fresh.

March Madness womens recap

By Ella D.
Managing Editor

March has come to an end, and with that, the madness of it came to a close. From buzzer-beating upsets to heated conversations between coaches, this year's tournament did not disappoint. Even though the madness of March might be over, the madness of women's basketball has just begun.

Rarely during the tournament does a round go complete with nearly any upsets, but just that thing happened in the first round. Only one upset did occur, and that was by the Virginia Women's basketball team, who then went on to upset two-seeded Iowa in the second round, making it all the way to the sweet sixteen, barely losing to two-seeded TCU in overtime. Weirdly, there were not many huge, shocking upsets this March on the women's side, besides Notre Dame making it to the elite eight over Ohio State and Duke beating LSU in a huge three-point shot, made by Ashlyn Jackson, right

as the buzzer buzzed. The last huge upset that comes to mind is South Carolina taking down undefeated UConn in the final four. This was honestly not a big, exciting game, given that UConn played poorly and South Carolina was there to win. Even though this upset shocked most, what caught many people's eyes was the argument that happened between the two star coaches, Geno Auriemma and Dawn Staley. With roughly a second on the clock, Geno went over and said something to Dawn that escalated quickly, with Geno having to be held back by his assistance although it is unclear what was actually said, given neither coach will comment on it. UCLA, a team led by six seniors who scored all of the team's points in the final two games, dominated in the final four, beating Texas, the only team they had lost to in the regular season, by a large margin. But their dominance did not stop there. UCLA went on to beat South Carolina by 28 points, winning their first-

ever NCAA championship in the history of their women's basketball program.

Just one week after the end of the tournament, players are drafted. The WNBA draft takes place at the shed in New York City. This year, the big question was who would go number one, which felt odd given that in the past five years, the number one pick had been a clear cut. The top four prospects all brought something valuable to the team if they were to be selected. Olivia Miles, a guard from TCU, brings the ability to pass to her teammates from anywhere on the court while also being able to get downhill and score. Azzi Fudd, a guard from UConn, brings a three-point threat, with her quick release from anywhere on the floor. Awa Fam Thiam, a center from Spain, a player who has played in the Spanish professional league and is versatile and a midrange threat. Lauren Betts, a center who gets to



her spot in the paint and scores. With the crowd holding its breath, waiting to hear the pick called, the commissioner walked up to the podium and announced, with the number one pick in the 2026 WNBA draft, the Dallas Wings select, Azzi Fudd from the University of Connecticut. The second pick was Olivia Miles, who went to the Minnesota Lynx, then Awa Fam Thiam went to the Seattle Storm, the fourth being Lauren Betts to the Washington Mystics, and last but not least to round out

the top five, Gabriella Jaquez from UCLA. The draft went on for three more rounds, with players' childhood dreams coming true. A record was even set for the most first-round players drafted in the first round from one school, with five UCLA players. There were even some surprise trades between new and old teams. Now that the draft is over, the WNBA season will begin in early May. The season looks to be nothing short of crazy.



Top times

By Eric P.
Sports Editor

On Mar. 27th, seven IB athletes competed at the Illinois Top Times Indoor, which is, in other words, the indoor state meet. The tigers made a loud noise in the indoor state championship. Starting them off, senior Nathan Owens ran the 60-meter and ran a blistering personal best in 7.14 seconds, to earn him 11th at state.

The Tigers sent two athletes in the open 400-meter, with freshman Whitney Parker and senior Ty Basham. Whitney earned 9th place with a personal best of 1:02, making her the 3rd fastest freshman on the day in the 400m. Ty got 5th place with a time of 52.1

Illini Bluffs was seen as a powerhouse in the 800m. With senior Ty Basham and freshman Audrey Dickinson both winning the state championship title, making it a sweep for Illini Bluffs. With Ty having the major upset over two time defending champion Corriel Green,

with Ty running a 1:58.97 with a blazing last lap closing in a 26.93 to outkick the field and earn him the title

Audrey Dickinson took the lead from the front and didn't look back, clearing the field by a whole second with a personal best of 2:17.31

Illini Bluffs dominating in the 800m field didn't end there. IB sent their 4x800 squad with juniors Crew Fortin, Will Emhoff, and Seniors Eric Pincock and Ty Basham. The boys' team placed 2nd in the state with an 8:17, with leadoff leg Crew Splitting and 2:07, Will, and Eric running back-to-back 2:04s, and Ty rounding off the squad, being the anchor, splitting a 2:01, already being .1 seconds off from the school's record, and the outdoor season hasn't ended.

Be on the lookout for Illini Bluffs to make some noise at the IHSA State Track Meet, girls May 21-23, boys May 28-30.

Baseball Photo Highlight

Credit: @coras.photography_



Senior columns



The life through a time capsule

By Skylar G.
Voice Reporter

When I was in fourth grade at Jefferson Elementary School, we dug up the senior graduating class' time capsule and buried our own. It was a fun event because it was so out of the ordinary. If I was to go back and to this today, I would put in the following items.

I would still put a rubix cube in to remember my best friend Griffin, who passed away three years ago. When we were in fourth grade, we were a little nerdy and had a shared love of solving puzzles, and when I saw him solve a rubix cube in two seconds I was intrigued and wanted to learn from him to impress my family. He was the most unathletic kid I knew, and even though he wanted to solve puzzles, he would do what I wanted to do. I even showed him how to pop a wheelie. He was my closest friend at that time in my life, and I cherish those moments every day.

Last year, my brother made me a necklace at home from these rock crystals he collects. It's usually on my rearview mirror, but I would put it in a time capsule to remember my brother. He takes after me a lot and looks up to me; it makes me feel successful and like I contributed something to his upbringing.

The collar I'd put in my time capsule would be for my dog Letty. Letty meant everything to me and was my dad's emotional support dog, she was an American pitbull and was the most well behaved dog you will ever meet. The first time I saw my dad cry was when we had to put her down. She was just a lover, and since we got her when I was four, we grew up together.

I'd put a picture of my squatted truck in because it's aura. Even though everyone hates it, I love it. I don't really know why I like squatted trucks, and when I'm in it, I feel like a king. My powder coat on my lift is illusion pink, so if you don't like my truck, I'll make sure you really don't like it. I also want to make sure I capture this moment because once I turn 23, I'll probably be too mature to drive a squatted truck again.

The bear key chain I'd put in my time capsule is my sister's and has her name on it. I don't really know why I have it; it kinda just appeared on my key ring one day and it reminds me of her throughout the day.



The things you learn in the Principals office

By Bradin B.
Voice Reporter

The first recess slip I ever got was in Kindergarten. We were watching a movie, and I flipped an entire bookshelf by accident.

Over the course of elementary school, I probably earned 50 more recess slips—at least 10 a year, which is why no teachers liked me. But because I was in the principal's office so much, I ended up forming an important bond with the late Mrs. Huene.

I've never really cried when family members have died, but when she passed, I cried for days. She was like my second mom, and she always gave me good advice. She always had flowers in her office and pictures of her kids and she was always happy, even when I was in trouble. It showed me that she had a heart. A lot of kids were afraid of her because they were afraid of getting in trouble, but because I was in her office so much, I didn't feel the same way. I remember when my grandmother was dying and my sister picked me up to check you out. She gave me a hug, and it meant a lot.

Having that extra parental figure helped, and I was sad to leave her for middle school.

I didn't like Mr. Almasi at first. I saw him come into the school and was like, "Who's this?" I got in trouble with him a lot, but he was still a good guy. He taught me real things like respect. He would share about his life in high school and how he often found himself in situations like mine. It made me feel like I could talk to him, and I realized that he had something decent to say because he went through the same things. He always talked about his family and always made sure everything was okay at school.

After high school, I want to go into the military and go into firefighting after so I can make a good living and raise a family.

The life of a college student in high school

By Shayley D.
Voice Reporter

Being in high school, you wouldn't think about college at the same time. I thought the same thing until I had the opportunity through my church to do a college extension from Georgia. I've been in this extension for three years now and have earned my THG, which will convert into an associate's degree when I graduate high school. I will be getting my bachelor's degree in Theology this June. This extension is more in-depth about the King James Bible. Each lesson is on a different topic, and the many miracles that God made for the people, every story that was recorded had a purpose.

My first year, I got put in right at the final exams and had to take them without doing all of the work, and had to work with my grandma. I ended up doing fine, but I had to use my grandma's notes instead of my own because I did not have any.

It was easy to fall behind on work because you don't just have one lesson; you have multiple lessons to get done before the next week. If you skip them, they pile up fast. The lessons themselves vary; Some have essays, some have fill-in-the-blank, and the majority have response questions.

My favorite lesson was the stewardship lesson from the book of Proverbs, a lesson about how to be a better person as well as a better witness to others about God and how he cares for each and every person; no one is left out. It changed how I speak to people, and it made it easier for me to understand difficult situations. If you had to help someone who is going through a difficult time, this lesson would help you know how to help them.

This course changed me for the better. It helped me to stop overthinking and get through the hard times more positively while relying more on God than on myself. God has given me peace and joy, so once I get through the hard times that are put in place to help me learn, avoid manipulation, and get rid of the hard feelings, I then feel more loved and have peace. Being a senior in high school is not as hard to get my college work done, but when I was in the lower grades, I had more classes, so doing the work for both high school and college at the same time was tough, but in the end, I made it through!



Recess Slip

Last Name First Name

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Number of Demerits _____

Offense _____

Present this stub in person to the teacher that was in charge at the time demerit was made.

Teacher's Signature

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Senior comic:

By Myles N.
Cartoonist



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