



# TIGER TIMES



*December Edition*

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## Seasonal depression:

*What is it and what can you do?*

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

Every year as the seasons change, about five percent of Americans will face the struggles of seasonal depression, otherwise known as seasonal affective disorder.

As the days are shorter and the weather gets colder, Americans feel more sad than usual. It is believed that part of the cause is the lack of sunlight as the days grow shorter. This lack of sunlight can stop a part of the brain, the hypothalamus, from working properly. This can cause the production of melatonin in the body to increase, making you much more sleepy. This change in the brain is also linked to the lower production of serotonin, creating feelings of depression.

The two main types of seasonal depression are winter-pattern and summer-pattern. Both are affected by the night-day cycles of the year, but are quite opposite of each other. The winter-pattern is typically due to the lack of sunlight and vitamin D, while the summer-pattern is affected by shorter and hotter nights, which disrupt sleeping patterns. If you are experiencing seasonal depression, it is likely that you will also feel quite irritable, have feelings of guilt and hopelessness, poor appetite or have trouble concentrating.

Negative thoughts and feelings about the holiday season are also linked to the cause of seasonal depression. Stressing over the holidays is well known for its contribution to the consistent low mood that some may experience this time of year. While it is unclear if these negative thoughts are the cause or effect of this mood disorder, they provide a good starting point when looking for treatment.

When treating seasonal depression, there are four main categories of treatment options; light therapy, psychotherapy, antidepressant medication and vitamin D. Light therapy and vitamin D are typically used to treat winter-pattern depression, while medication and psychotherapy are used to treat depression in general. There are no summer-pattern specific treatment options.

It is important that we know and understand the reality of depression and know what to do in real life situations. Know the signs and symptoms and don't hesitate to seek help. If you or a loved one is struggling with depression, you can call the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline or chat at 988lifeline.org.



Gingerbread contest finalists.

## Stuco news: Holiday cheer

By **Annabelle F.**  
Stuco President

Hello Tigers and Happy Holidays!

Student Council is getting into the holiday spirit with some fun spirit days and activities. On December 12th, the dress up day was all out Christmas. We loved seeing everyone's fun Christmas hats and outfits!

In addition, in honor of National Gingerbread Day, student council hosted a gingerbread house decorating contest where all students had the opportunity to bring in their house for a chance to win a prize. After a school-wide vote, Ella Basham was crowned our winner!

Next up, December 13th was National Hot Chocolate Day. To get into the cozy mood, the spirit day was Pajama Day and Hot Chocolate was passed out during lunch.

Following on December 14th, students celebrated another day of the spirit week with ugly sweaters.

The following day, December 15th, Student Council celebrated National Cupcake Day. Students received cupcakes to celebrate the holiday.

Additionally, on the 14th, student council hosted an orange and black spirit day to support the boys basketball team and their home game against Lewistown.

During the following week, leading up to break, student council kicked it off with Twin Day, we loved seeing everyone's duos!

Finally, the last day before finals to celebrate the holidays one last time, the theme of the day was candy cane/red and white.

Student Council hopes all these activities put students and staff into a cheerful mood. We hope everyone has a great break and happy holidays!

## Editorial: Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down

By Staff

As each year comes and goes, it's normal to reflect on the ups and downs of the year. As 2023 is nearing the end, the Tiger Times staff has decided to reflect and review on the highs and lows of 2023 as a school and as a community.

### Thumbs Up

#### The Fall Musical

The fall musical, "The Drowsy Chaperone," was for sure a weekend to remember. The IBHS Drama Club put on an amazing performance of this show and received high praise for it. After the show was over, we heard several comments from all kinds of audience members that this was the best performance we have ever put on at our school. The audience loved the show, especially the character Aldolpho, and many came back to see it a second or even third time. Overall, this show has not only seen high praise, but also beautifully displayed the growth our drama club has seen over the years.

-Celine L.

#### Wrestling Success

This past year has been extremely successful for the Illini Bluffs high school wrestling program. Not only did the school have one state finalist, but two. Junior Hunter Robbins and Senior Paul Ishikawa made the IHSA state finals for wrestling making school history. This is the first time through Illini Bluffs wrestling to have two people in the finals. This rarely happens even with other schools. Out of 3,977 schools with 14 weight classes and 28 athletes representing their school in the state finals, 2 of those were making their big appearance for Illini Bluffs. This brings support and attention to our community while making school history. The wrestlers brought support from all over the state while representing the tiger community.

-Hunter R.

#### IBHS Mental Health Day

Illini Bluffs High School held its annual mental health day on Sep. 15. Students were able to catch a break from classes with many different activities. They could make bracelets, play games, tie-dye and karaoke. This day was a thumbs up because it gave students a way to catch a break from stressful classes and enjoy doing activities with their friends.

-Lalaina Z.

#### New SRO

Deputy Martinez, our new school resource officer, has been an amazing addition this year. The students have really embraced him. He's always taking the time to chat with students, whether it's during lunch or passing periods, creating a safer and friendlier environment. Martinez's professionalism and playful nature make him loved by both students and staff, making our school a fun and welcoming place. He's definitely one of the best things to happen this year!

-Zoe C.

#### The Community Garden

Towards the end of April 2023, Mr. Teels Industrial Technology students came together to start building the garden, which was all constructed from scratch. Over the summer, Interact club came together to plant the first crop in the raised beds. This is a thumbs up because not only does it put back into the community, but it benefits everyone.

-Kyra P.

### Thumbs Down

#### The passing of Mrs. Eeten

The Illini Bluffs community lost a big supporter this year with the passing of Sharon Eeten. Mrs. Eeten was known for always supporting the Illini Bluffs School District and was a big part of the sports booster club. She always had a big smile whenever you saw her. She will be deeply missed by everyone.

-Wyatt H.

#### The bus driver shortage

School bus driver shortages are a national problem, and IB is no exception. Bus routes have had to be merged, field trips limited and athletic events modified. Ever changing routes also cause confusion for parents, students and bus drivers alike. This unfortunate situation is a big thumbs down overall.

-Quentin K.

# Holiday activities in the Peoria area

**By Katie A.**  
Sophomore Reporter

With most holidays comes the memories of laughter, family traditions from days gone by, and loads of planning. Christmas is no exception with a bonus of cold, snowy weather. Unless you're in Illinois, then it's sort of cold and partially warm.

Regardless of the weather, Christmas is a time of joy, a time to celebrate with family and friends. During this special holiday season, it is easy to get caught up in all of the glitz and glamor, causing a lack of spending time with the family.

It doesn't take much to create memories with loved ones. A few dollars and a fraction of time can make an impact built to last the decades. This Christmas, be sure to spend time with those close to you. While looking for suggestions for new (or traditional) activities, be sure to check out some of the local options.

### Visit Alpha Park.

Staying close to home, take a peaceful drive through Alpha Park to admire the dazzling Christmas trees decorated by families, friends and businesses. Following the cruise through the park, lace up and ice skate on the perpetual rink.

The rink is open through Dec. 17, Sunday through Friday 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday noon to 8, at five dollars an hour. The Best Brew Espresso and Coffee trailer is there, along with Mrs. Clause's snack shack, destined to lift holiday spirits.

### Get your bake on.

Skating isn't for everyone, but cookies are a universal delight. Grab some good friends, a bag of Betty Crocker cookies and a jar of Pillsbury icing. Decorate some holiday cookies, cover them in sprinkles or mini M&M's. This simple activity never fails to bring warmth and the smell of Christmas.

### Don your ugliest sweater.

Ugly Sweaters are a fan-favorite tradition of the season. Contrary to popular belief, creating ugly sweaters are much simpler than they might

seem. Step one: obtain the sweater or sweatshirt.

Step 2: let imaginations run wild (use pom poms, glue and glitter etc...). Step 3: make memories. Step 4: model sweater. Host an Ugly Christmas Sweater party and enjoy some quality laughter with friends.

### Go see the lights.

If there wasn't anything on this list so far to make this Christmas special, Lake Shore Lights are just the fix. Located in Edelstein, (just 20 minutes north of Peoria) two 50-minute light shows will revive attendees' inner youth with playful colors and dancing lights. This show includes more than 40 thousand lights! While you enjoy the light show, the host family gives viewers the opportunity to donate to a noble cause, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Enjoy the show and bless a family struggling with a heartbreaking diagnosis.

Make this year special--fill your busy calendar with fun activities to spice up this Christmas season.



## Dalette's famous lemon cookies

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

Every holiday season, my mom makes this simple, yet delicious batch of lemon cookies. It's a family tradition for chaos to ensue the week before Christmas as we make our best attempt to get all of the holiday baking out of the way. These lemon cookies are a personal favorite of all the recipes we try, and I'd love to share them with you.

### Ingredients:

- 1 lemon cake mix
- 1 large egg
- 2 cups cool whip
- 1 cup powdered sugar

### Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Mix the lemon cake mix, egg, and cool whip together in a bowl until combined.

Roll the dough into evenly sized-balls.

Roll the dough into the powdered sugar.

Bake for 7-9 minutes.

This recipe, however simple, brings so much joy to my family during the holidays. I hope that you and your families can share that joy too.

## Deck the halls... in February?

**By Lauren B.**  
Sophomore Reporter

Everyone knows the feeling of putting on your Halloween costume and walking down the roads to trick-or-treat. From door to door, you receive plenty of candy when all of the sudden... Christmas decorations are thrown in your face. If you think that's bad, just wait until Valentine's Day, when the same house STILL has the same Christmas decorations on its front yard.

When is the perfect time to put up decorations for Christmas? For most people, there isn't any real answer, as long as it's after Thanksgiving, but I believe there is one perfect time to put up the lights and tree. The first weekend of December is the perfect time to set up for Christmas.

This is the perfect time because Thanksgiving has already passed, but it's not too late to get into the festive holiday spirit. Setting up can be a struggle, so a weekend specially designated to making your house look festive can help make the holidays feel less chaotic.

Now that we've covered the basics of when to set up, the real, and more important question still remains. When should you take the decorations down? No one really celebrates Christmas in July, so why leave your decorations up until then? December 30th is the perfect day because you can tear down your Christmas decorations and put up your new years eve decorations at the same time. If you don't decorate for new years, consider leaving your festive decorations up until January.

When it comes to decorating, every household has its own system. Some may decorate November first and some, like my family, choose to wait until a week before. As long as you don't leave your decorations up all year round, it's safe to say you're doing just fine.

## Happy Birthday!

- Dec. 5- Ella D.
- Dec. 7- Brooke B.
- Dec 8.- Quentin K.
- Dec. 11- Izzy L.
- Dec. 13- Shelby S.
- Dec. 16- Alexis R.
- Dec. 18- Will E., Hudson S., Mr. Waters
- Dec. 22- Warner E.
- Dec. 29- Neveah H.



# Top five presents the girls want this holiday season

By **Adrienne G.**  
Senior Reporter

With Christmas coming right around the corner, high school girls are notoriously hard to shop for this day in age. Trends change by the day, so you never know what the high school girls in your life truly want this Christmas season. Have no fear: Here's a list to get you started with your gift giving:

## Ugg slippers

This holiday season everyone wants to be comfortable, but you still have to be in style. Uggs have made a huge comeback over the past year but the Tazz slippers are the main show. They are on the pricier side of slippers coming out as \$130 but they are cool and comfy so who wouldn't pay that?



## Dyson Airwrap

Dysons are hair dryers that can give the perfect blow out if done right. There are multiple different types of Dysons, but the airwrap is the popular one at the moment. The Airwrap comes as a full set with multiple different barrels--in addition to a regular blow dryer clip--to help you get your curls the exact size you want. It comes to a total price of \$599 but during the holiday seasons you can get some good deals on them.



## Drunk Elephant

Drunk elephant skincare is a viral sensation this season. Their bronzing and blush drops have been selling out like there is nothing with everyone wanting them. They are selling from between 20 to 40 dollars depending on the product you're looking for and if you're not sure about it just look it up in tiktok.



## Bubble

Though highschoolers may not be as needy with this product if you're wanting it, it's a tough thing to find. Bubble is skincare with their bright colored packaging also going crazy on social media. They have just about all the skin products you need and are affordable for everyone.



## Perfume

Everyone always wants to smell good but the main fragrance selling out this christmas season are Chanel No 5., Valentino fragrances and the Marc Jacobs Daisy collection. These all smell amazing, but it really just depends on the type of fragrances you like.



# Spread the holiday cheer with heartfelt DIY gifts

By **Zoe C.**  
Senior Reporter

The holiday season is all about spreading joy and showing our loved ones how much we care. One of the best ways to do that is by giving DIY gifts that are made with love and creativity. In this article, we'll explore three amazing DIY gift ideas that are sure to bring a smile to anyone's face.

## Homemade Candle:

There's something truly magical about the warm glow of a candle, especially when it's made by hand. To create your own homemade candle, start by choosing a ceramic, tin, or glass container, you can even get creative and use a thrifted teacup or a mason jar. Next, gather your materials, including wax, a wick, and scented wax cubes or essential oils. Melt the wax using a homemade double boiler, add your chosen scent, pour it into the container, and let it set with the wick. This recipe results in a beautiful, personalized candle that will fill their home with warmth and fragrance.

## Personalized Mix-Tape:

Music has a way of evoking emotions and memories. Show your loved ones how much they mean to you by creating a personalized mix-tape. Choose 5-8 songs that remind you of them and burn them onto a CD. You can also decorate a paper or crystal CD holder to make it extra special. This heartfelt gift will let them know just how much they are cherished and appreciated.

## Hot Cocoa Mix Ornament:

Warm up someone's winter with a delightful DIY hot cocoa mix ornament. All you need is a clear ornament and some hot chocolate mix. Fill the ornament halfway with the mix, and then get creative with toppings like mini marshmallows, chocolate shavings, sprinkles, peppermint and more. Seal it up, and don't forget to write a sweet message on the ornament. This tasty treat will bring comfort and joy during the cold holiday season.

DIY gifts hold a special place in our hearts because they are a reflection of our thoughtfulness and creativity. They show that we've put time and effort into creating something unique and meaningful. Homemade gifts also allow us to tailor our presents to the recipient's preferences, making them even more personal and special. Plus, they often come with heartwarming stories and memories that can be shared for years to come.

# Die Hard: It's a Christmas movie

By **Will G.**  
Junior Reporter

The holiday season always brings out the best of cinema: "Elf," "The Santa Clause," "Home Alone" (first is the best) and "Polar Express," amongst others. One movie that is frequently overlooked, though, is "Die Hard," the 1988 classic starring Bruce Willis, Alan Rickman and Bonnie Bedelia. Although it's listed as an action film, it's a holiday film to me and many more.

This Christmas classic follows NYPD detective John McClane (Willis) going to California to help and try to save his marriage with Holly Gennaro McClane (Bedelia). At the Christmas party thrown by Holly's work, a group of terrorists--led by Hans Gruber (Rickman)--take over. McClane has to then fight his way through using all sorts of tricks and some help from a skeptical LAPD officer Al Powell (Reginald VelJohnson).

Though "Die Hard" may not seem like a holiday movie because of the killings, the weapons and the vulgar language--keys for any action film--at its core, it's a holiday film.

The movie takes place on December 24th and has many holiday songs playing in the background throughout. But even more than the soundtrack, it's story of coming together and saving a loved one. McClane goes all the way from New York City to Los Angeles California to save his marriage. Determination for good from a bottom of someone's heart? It might as well be "The Santa Clause."

In this movie, John McClane is also helped by a stranger whom he barely knows. Another movie with this type of kindness from a stranger? "Elf."

"Die Hard" has many holiday jokes thrown all around, too. At one point, A terrorist falls a stairway with a santa hat on, a reference to Santa coming down the chimney.

Despite its action exterior, "Die Hard" is a movie about Christmas magic and determination. So don't get stuck watching "Elf" or "Christmas Vacation:" go and watch "Die Hard," a real holiday movie.



# Best video games of 2023

By Dylan W.  
Senior Reporter

In 2022 the gaming industry had a revenue of 56 billion dollars which was 30 billion more than the movie industry. It's no doubt that video games are popular and in 2023 we saw the release of many great new games. Here is a list of some of the best games of 2023 that won awards in the 2023 Game Awards live stream and one of my personal choices.

## Baldur's Gate 3

"Baldur's Gate 3" is an RPG that turns the popular tabletop game "D&D" into a video game. It easily takes the place of the best game of 2023. The developers of the game clearly put a lot of effort and care into making the game both high quality and fun. In the 2023 game awards, "Baldur's Gate 3" won Game of the Year which was voted on by the public. It didn't win just that either. It also won the Players Voice award, Community Choice award, Multiplayer Game award, and Role Playing Game award.

## Legends of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom

"Tears of the Kingdom" came in 2023 as a sequel to its predecessor "Legends of Zelda: Breath of the Wild." This game had a high bar to pass as "Breath of the Wild" was a huge success, but it's safe to say that "Tears of the Kingdom" succeeded. Many agree that "Tears of the Kingdom" improved on the flaws of "Breath of the Wild" and it was even a nominee for Game of the Year in the game awards. It might not have gotten that award but it did win Best Action/Adventure Game.

## Pikmin 4

"Pikmin 4" was a highly anticipated game. It had been many years since "Pikmin 3" was released and "Pikmin" fans were ready for a new one. "Pikmin 4" is a real-time strategy game where you have to control the little Pikmin creatures to have them help find your missing ship parts. In the 2023 game awards, "Pikmin 4" won Best Strategy Game which was definitely deserved.

## Street Fighter 6

The release of "Street Fighter 6" was a great success for the fighting game genre. It was seen as a vast improvement compared to its predecessors with its great character customization and story campaign. It's seen as one of the best beginner-friendly fighting games which is great since the fighting game genre can be hard to get into. These feats allowed "Street Fighter 6" to win Best Fighting Game in the 2023 game awards.

## Lethal Company

For my personal choice, I chose the small indie game, "Lethal Company." Released in October, this co-op horror game has already sold more than 5 million copies. What's best of all is that it was all made by just one person. Games like "Lethal Company" are great to see in the gaming industry since it shows that anyone can compete with larger gaming companies that make games like "Baldur's Gate."

# One-on-One: Is Taylor Swift over-hyped?

By Kyra P. & Ms. Sewell  
Senior Reporter, Advisor



Taylor Swift is undeniably one of the most recognized artists in the music industry. However, is she the best? This is an extremely controversial question, with only one reasonable answer. No.

She rose to fame at a very young age, and with her rapid descent to stardom, it led to high expectations and an overwhelming level of attention. With her music getting more popular, the genre slowly turned from country to pop. Taylor's willingness to shift genres so easily is due to chasing trends rather than doing what she wants and staying true to her musical identity.

Swift has also been involved in many public feuds and other controversies that often grab the attention of her fans and headlines. These conflicts contribute to her fame, which is one of the reasons she is so popular. Her overhype includes how she's marketed, her involvement in drama and her continuous presence in news stories and football stadiums.

-Kyra P.

As someone who is not a self-proclaimed Swiftie. I have to disagree with Kyra. I think Taylor Swift has earned her hype fair and square.

Over the summer, several of my friends shared videos of their time at the Eras tour, and I was blown away. I'm a frequent concert-goer, and the level of showmanship I saw at the Eras tour was beyond anything I've ever seen before. I found myself growing obsessed with her costume changes, set changes, and impressive dance numbers, despite not being a real fan of her music.

Her story is also especially inspiring. After losing the rights to her own music, music she wrote and sung, it seemed like her career was over. It takes pure genius to come up with something as evasive as re-recording every song she's ever released—and it takes talent to make the re-release dates holidays heralded by fans.

-Ms. Sewell

# Staff Picks: Best Holiday Movie

By Staff

There are no shortage of holiday movies to binge this time of year, but which one is the best? The staff of the Tiger Times weighs in.



## The Polar Express - Lalaina Z.

The best holiday movie is "Polar Express" because I like the message of the movie, and the movie has a little bit of a creep factor. Overall the best movie and no one can change my mind.

## The Nightmare Before Xmas - Lauren B.

My favorite holiday movie is "The Nightmare Before Christmas." I know it's a Halloween movie, but I watch it during Christmas too. Mainly because Jack Skellington is super hot, but also because it has a good plot.



## Christmas Vacation - Zoe C.



"National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation" is my favorite Christmas movie! It has a brilliant cast and a hilarious script. We can laugh at the Griswold's disastrous family celebration knowing it's not our own, and this movie is a running gag and is great for the whole family. Family Vacation has a huge heart and still leaves room for relatability and Hollywood shmaltz. I definitely recommend this movie if you are looking for an easy, witty and heartwarming watch.

## The Santa Clause - Hunter R.

"The Santa Clause" is a really nostalgic and mood-setting movie. There are multiple of these movies and each one can hold its own. It is an overall great holiday movie and can put just about anyone in the Christmas mood.



## The Grinch - Katie A.

"The Grinch" featuring Jim Carrey is the best holiday movie. This movie is a staple of the Christmas spirit. I love watching this movie, and every year I find a different part to laugh at. "The Grinch" is a classic that cannot be beaten.

## Home Alone- Dylan W.

While I haven't really watched any holiday movies for a long time, I remember watching "Home Alone" on repeat when I was younger. There's something about the movie that makes it more fun to watch than others.



## Opinion: 13-0 and no play off?

By Will G.

Junior Sports Reporter

Every year D1 colleges and universities across the country compete for a chance to make it to the college football playoffs. Out of all those schools, only four teams actually make it. This year, the Florida State University Semionals went 13-0 and were Atlantic Coast Conference champions but didn't make the playoffs because of one play that injured their starting quarterback.

The FSU Semionals lost their starting quarterback Jordan Travis in a game against North Alabama on Nov. 18 2023 in which the Semionals won 58-13. Travis would sadly break his leg on a rushing attempt when the defender would cleanly bring him down but land on his leg. Many people presumed that FSU would still make the playoffs because of their dominance on the season and show they could win games without their star quarterback. FSU had the 14th ranked defense in the nation as well as the 45th ranked offense. Jordan Travis contributed with 2,756 pass yards, 20 touchdown passes to 2 interceptions, a 63.9% completion rate, and 154.5 passer rating according to the official NCAA website.

A committee of members--retired players, coaches, athletic directors and administrators--determines who gets in and who doesn't. They meet together and pick the supposedly top 4 teams in the country. The meeting and seeding for the playoffs happened on December 3rd, 2023. The final 4 consist of #1 Michigan, #2 Washington, #3 Texas and the surprier #4 Alabama.

In years past, Alabama has been a clear favorite to make the playoffs, but this year the Crimson Tide finished with

a 12-1 record and snuck in with the 4th seed. Alabama's record is up there with Michigan's 13-0, Washington's 13-0, and Texas's 12-1 records. Yes, Alabama still had an amazing season but sent off their quarterback from last season Bryce Young to the NFL. The Tide also lost to Texas on Sep. 9 2023.

When Sunday, Dec. 3 came around and FSU was not a part of the playoffs, media outlets all over the country tweeted and other former players in the NFL and some other sport stars took to social media to spread their frustration with the committee's decision. Jalen Ramsey, a former cornerback for the Semionals and now cornerback on the NFL Miami Dolphins had this to say about FSU being left out: "If you don't want to put an FSU team who earned it in because of an injury, it's [bogus]." A sense of favoritism for the Southeastern Conference is believed to be the reason

why FSU was left out.

Many people, including myself, speculate that FSU didn't make the CFP playoffs because of what happened last year with TCU. TCU went 13-2 and got the 3rd seed in the 2022 CFP, inturn facing the Michigan Wolverines the 2nd seed in the Fiesta Bowl. TCU beat Michigan 51-45 in the semifinal game and moved on to the National Championship against the reigning defending champs the Georgia Bulldogs.

TCU was then dominated in the National Championship game with a beating 65-7.

The CFP committee made a horrible mistake with leaving out FSU. FSU showed all season why they are a top five team in the country for college football but also showed they can win with their quarterback. FSU's defense proved it all season, holding many of

their opponents to under thirty points in games. If the committee didn't want another TCU, then they are limiting the players options for every aspect of the game. It is not fair that FSU didn't even get a chance to play and or prove why they are a top five team in the country.

A compromise has been made by the committee but will come into effect next year. A twelve team playoff bracket, again voted in by the committee, will bring more opportunities for teams that may not be the most dominant.

The twelve team playoff will allow teams like FSU who have a season ending injury at the end of the year or teams that went 11-2 or 10-3 a shot to compete with the other undefeated or one loss teams. I feel like the twelve team playoff is a plea deal for the fans because of the negative feedback that came with this year's four team playoff. Yes, though there will be some great chances for other teams to make the playoffs and some teams get that chance, I think an eight team playoff would be better.

The competitiveness of the four team playoff has been ecstatic over the years. If a team were to lose about two or three games then they were almost certainly out of the playoffs. With a twelve team playoff teams can lose about three to four and still make it.

An eight team playoff would still have some type of competitiveness, with most teams needing to only lose about two or three. I feel a lack of competitiveness will come with a twelve team playoff, but an eight team playoff will still have that college football feel where that you just can't find in the NFL.



## Macomb Holiday Tournament Preview

By Wyatt H.

Senior Sports Reporter

The Macomb-Western Holiday Tournament is a prestigious event that is looked forward to every year by avid basketball players and fans alike. This tournament features some of the toughest competition the state has to offer in the central Illinois area. Even with the tough competition, it has been rewarding in recent history for our boys basketball team with finishes in 3rd place in 2017 and a 2nd place finish last year.

Being one of the best tournaments in the area, it is bound to have great competition. This is one of the main reasons Head Coach Clay Vass selected this tournament, and this year will be no exception.

The Tigers were seeded number 2 this year and will play Liberty Community High School in the first round. The Liberty Eagles have a record of 2-6 meaning the Tigers should be able to get the win, but they should not overlook them. As long as the Tigers play good defense and take what is given on offense, everything should go to plan.

The second round, given that we won the first round, would be a matchup between either West Hancock or Canton. Predicting that West Hancock would win, it could be a tough matchup for IB. This is due to the fact that West Hancock has already defeated the Tigers once this year. Now, this was very early in the season, and the Tigers have had some time to fix the problems. All things considered, this game could and should be in the winning favor for the Tigers.

Assuming that everything is still going according to plan, the Tigers should be in the semi-finals. This would more than likely bring a rematch against Rockridge. The Tigers have already won once this season against them and will be looking to win again. Though this can/probably will be difficult due to the fact that it's hard to win twice against the same team due to them knowing how you play. As long as they played how they played the first time, with intense defense and selfless offense, everything should go accordingly.

The championship game, or redemption game due to IB losing in it last year, will more than likely feature a Sectional Championship rematch between Illini Bluffs and Camp Point Central. This will be the first time playing them since the sectional and will be a highly looked forward to game, as it will consist of two of the top teams in the 1a class of Illinois. With most of their team returning this year the game plan should be very similar to last year, with the recurring theme of good defense and unselfish scoring, so the Tigers have a chance of taking the whole tournament.

As long as the Tigers keep high aspirations going into this tournament and work as hard as they can, they should be able to achieve their goals.

## Congrats IBHS Cheer on 6th place at Peoria!



Photo taken from @ibhscheer

Best of luck at ICCA State!  
-Cheer Friends & Family

## Illini Bluffs Inquiries

By Lauren C. and Delaney O.  
Senior Reporters

*"How can you tell the difference between romantic and platonic feelings?"*

*Dear lookin'-for-love,*

*When it comes to telling the difference between whether someone feels platonically or romantically towards you, look for subtle cues. Platonic feelings may lead to you being called "bud" or "bro". You want to look for the little things to see if you're in the friend zone. Look closely at someone's body language. When they talk, are they mostly looking at you, do they smile a little when you're around? If so they may feel romantically towards you. If they put in effort to talk to or be around you, remember little details, and have inside jokes with you, they also may have budding romantic feelings. Platonic feelings might be present if they talk about other people they are interested in, or if they flirt around a lot. Ask yourself if they are putting in effort or is it just basic human decency? If you can't figure it out, it never hurts to ask them. If they say no, they might be scared that you don't like them back, or they just don't like you like that.*

*You can either laugh it off and tell them good because you're out of their league anyway (deflection humor) or commit and say that's too bad because you think you've been starting to like them (with a smile to show that you are mature and can take rejection). If they say yes, congrats! Ask them on a date and get to know them better. I hope this helps.*

*-Lauren*

*"I need some advice on relationship troubles. I have liked this person for a while and I have been their friend for a good couple of years now. I want to be more than friends but I don't know how to tell them or if I even should because I don't want to ruin our friendship. Please help!"*

*Dear fearful friend,*

*All relationships can be delicate, so it is important to take time to consider decisions thoroughly before acting on them. The first thing to consider in this situation is if you've ever hinted at your feelings to this person. If they have responded in an overly friendly way or even told you they were not interested before, it is in your best interests to respect their wishes. Trying to pursue a friend who does not have any romantic interests in you could make things awkward and even uncomfortable. However, if you have given no indication of romantic feelings towards this person, do not let the fear of rejection overcome the possibility of what could be. If you two have been compatible enough to be friends for a couple of years, then being compatible in a relationship is definitely not out of the question. In my opinion, you should tell your friend how you feel face to face or in a direct message to them. Be transparent and put yourself out there. Although it may seem scary in the moment, in a couple of years it will not matter. As John Mayer once said, "It's better to say too much than never say what you need to say again."*

*-Delaney*

## Staff Profile: The Marvelous Mr. Stremmel

By Nikki O.  
Contributor

As a student at Illini Bluffs High School, it is impossible to avoid the tall science teacher with long, dark, and curly hair, Mr. Stremmel. It is almost definite that you will be in one of his classes whether that be Physical Science, Chemistry, Advanced Chemistry, or Physics.

If not, you may be familiar with the science wizz through theater since he works the lights and sound for plays. Although everyone is aware of Mr. Stremmel, many aren't about his past and the lessons it taught.

Mr. Stremmel has always been a local since he grew up in Canton. He graduated from Canton High School and continued his education at Lincoln College for its musical program. Mr. Stremmel listed that he was involved in a choir, guys' choir, show choir band, and jazz band.

He laughed when he said, "Basically, I should have a Music Minor probably based on all the classes I took, they're all on music theory."

Believe it or not, music was just the beginning and the spark of this journey. Stremmel then explained how the jazz band director at Lincoln was interested in recording music and started a Sound Engineering class for it. There was something alluring about sound waves that captured Stremmel's attention. When speaking of the class, he excitedly elaborated that he enjoyed editing and slicing sounds using an older method.

After earning his Two-Year Associate Degree, he went to Columbia College in Chicago and studied Audio Engineering for two years. This introduced him to the whole world of physics. Through the classes of recording sounds, Mr. Stremmel started to logically think about his career path.

"Why go through becoming a professional at this one job just to turn around and teach it? Why don't I just go right to teaching?"

Stremmel thought that it'd be more practical if he'd just skip the whole step of becoming a professional and just go straight to teaching. Eventually, he narrowed it down to two subjects, math and science.

Stremmel thought that math was boring and that "science is basically a lot of math but you're using it towards something, [making it] more interesting." Looking back on it now, Stremmel knowingly grinned as he said, "I think it should have been obvious at the time, it's like I'm taking all these classes that I'm finding really interesting about like acoustics and sound waves."

After narrowing down to this path, Stremmel decided to go to Illinois Southern University to pursue becoming a teacher in Physics and Chemistry. To this day, during his 22nd year of teaching, Mr. Stremmel is still taking classes to earn his Chemistry Teaching Degree.

As a senior at Illini Bluffs, I know how unnerving and pressuring it can be to choose what to do after high school. However, listening to Mr. Stremmel's story and advice has relieved me of the stress of making this big decision. Stremmel wants students to know that it's okay if they don't immediately know what path to take after high school. He encourages students to change their minds a couple of times so they can find what's right for them, even if it may not earn them a degree or be time-consuming.

Stremmel believes that as long as students are trying their best and being clever about it, everything will work out for them in the long run. Maybe it is a good thing that students can't avoid him, he has an important lesson to teach.



Stremmel (left) with costumed skeleton (right).

# December Crossword

Answers posted at [ibhstigertimes.com](http://ibhstigertimes.com)

## Tiger Times Staff

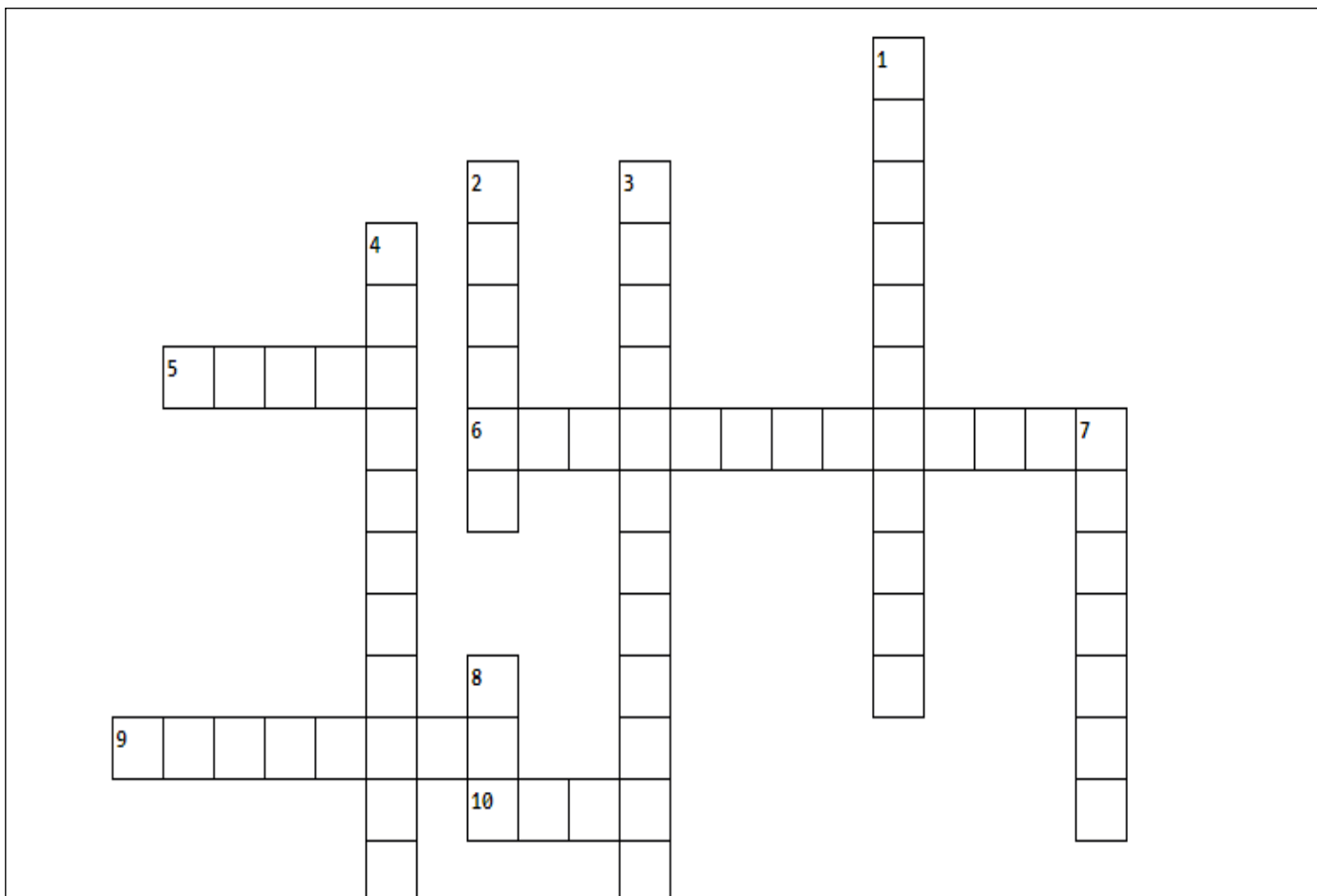
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### Across

- 5. This character made his way through the "candy cane forest" on his way to New York.
- 6. This character plans to install a pool with his Christmas bonus.
- 9. This non-traditional Christmas movie warns not to feed your pet after midnight and avoid water.
- 10. This shoe from the early 00's is making a Christmas come back.

### Down

- 1. The number one video game of the year.
- 2. Is this holiday hater eating just because he's bored?
- 3. In this animated film, a young boy embarks on a magical adventure to the North Pole, via a train by this name.
- 4. This "Shake it Off" singer may or may not deserve the hype.
- 7. Technically, it's a Christmas movie.

## Artist of the month: Will C.

