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It’s hard to believe that five months ago the student body was buckling down for a new batch of classes.

Now, we find ourselves taking finals and heading home for a well-deserved holiday break.

The fall semester was filled with exciting festivities, shocking surprises and a presidential election that will go down in history.

So, as we say goodbye to the fall semester of 2012, let us take a look back on some of the most memorable events.

Homecoming weekend is always a lively time on campus for students, faculty and the community.

But this year’s homecoming was one of the best, as countless students came out for the Homecoming Parade and Reggie’s Tailgate.

“Homecoming weekend is my favorite weekend of the year because of the overload of school spirit. This year, my friends and I dressed in red and hung out with people from morning until night. It really felt great to be a Redbird that day,” junior Christie Giudice said.

This semester was particularly special because of the presidential election.

Students on campus got involved in the race by campaigning on campus and supporting their candidate of choice.

The Student Government Association held a watch party on the night of the election and witnessed the students' avid involvement.

"I feel that this year's outpouring of support for the candidates and all around civic engagement was incredible. We knew that this was a very special year, and we wanted to make sure that the students had the ability to voice their opinions not only at the ISU level, but also on a state and federal level," Andrew Manno, President of SGA, said.

A large number of students voted on campus and re-elected President Barack Obama.

"We did a massive push to get students registered to vote and felt that our job did not stop there. We had to provide the foundation for students to vote, in educating them about the candidates. I believe this year was a major success, and we felt proud to be a part of something special," Manno added.

When it comes to sports, ISU teams were quite successful this semester. The ISU football team has won a number of important games, beating Western and Indiana State, to finish with a record of 9-4.

The basketball team has also flourished throughout the semester, beating UAB and Delaware State.

But what some would argue is the most important event of this semester is Al Bowman's

decision to retire as president of Illinois State.

The announcement came as a shock to many students, faculty and staff members. In fact, a number of students described Bowman's resignation email as one of the most heartfelt and emotional emails they have ever read.

"With President Bowman leaving, there definitely will be a piece of ISU missing. Working in the Office of Admissions, we see President Bowman from time to time, and he always makes a point to say, 'Hi,' to everyone he sees. He's a genuine, well-loved president, who has left his mark on ISU forever," Amanda Ferreri, admissions ambassador, said.

ISU certainly will never be the same without Bowman, but thankfully, the student body has an abundance of beloved memories to look back on.