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VOL. 87 • NO. 3

YOUR FREE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 13, 2021

Red Cross makes plea for blood, plasma donations

Recovered COVID patients could help those currently suffering

American Red Cross officials are urging people — especially those who have recovered from COVID-19 — to give blood and plasma during January, which is National Blood Donor Month.

“Blood and plasma donors who have recovered from COVID-19 may have the power to help critically ill patients currently battling the virus,” Dr. Erin Goodhue, Red Cross medical director of clinical services, said in a news release. “With hospital distributions for convalescent plasma increasing about 250% since October, these generous donations are vital in helping to save lives throughout the winter — a time that is often challenging to collect enough blood products for those in need.”

Individuals who have recovered from COVID-19 may have antibodies in their plasma that could provide a patient’s immune system the boost it needs to beat the virus, the release said.

There are two ways COVID-19 survivors can help — through a convalescent plasma donation or by giving whole blood. Plasma from

See DONATIONS, Page 4

Cookie sales in full swing

Don’t worry if your holiday cookie supply is finally diminished. Northern Illinois Girl Scouts are taking cookie orders through Jan. 30.

Girls can accept orders safely in-person or through Digital Cookie 7.0, which allows them to take electronic orders for cookies.

Customers may order and pay for cookies online and have the option to have the cookies shipped directly to them (shipping charges apply), have a Girl Scout offer contactless delivery of cookies to their door or donate cookies (with no additional handling fees).

The cookies cost \$5 per package, with more than a half-dozen varieties available, including the popular thin mint, shortbread and peanut butter cookies.

Don’t know a Girl Scout? People may go online to girlscoutsni.org/buycookies to be connected to a local Girl Scout/cookie entrepreneur.

“During Girl Scout cookie season, each local Girl Scout sets out to sell



GIRL SCOUTS OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS *The Scoop Today*

Local Girl Scouts are taking orders for cookies through the end of January. In addition to in-person orders, customers may place orders online.

delectable cookies while also building entrepreneurial and business skills imperative for leadership and future success,” according to a news release. “All the net revenue raised

— 100 percent of it — stays within our northern Illinois area.”

For more information, go online to girlscoutsni.org or call 844-476-4463.

Small business grant program ends

Less than 20 percent of applicants received money

By Sarah Mansur
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

The grant program for small businesses owners in Illinois who suffered losses during the pandemic has run out of money.

Illinois’ Business Interruption Grant program was the largest state program of its kind, but only about 20 percent, or 8,974 applicants, received a grant.

The Illinois General Assembly created the program using federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act, or CARES Act, money. The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity helped administer the program, and awarded more than \$275 million since the first round of grants were issued in August.

DCEO Director Erin Guthrie said this particular set of federal dollars

has been exhausted, but the department continues to look for ways to help businesses statewide.

“We know that businesses are hurting and we wish that Congress would provide more relief,” Guthrie said in an interview Friday. “This virus has shut down so much of our economy, and that is a struggle for every person and business across our state. The other thing I would say is, we’re constantly working with our federal counterparts, with other sources in ways that we can creatively provide relief to those businesses.”

She said government money is still available for business owners through the second round of the federal Paycheck Protection Program, which awards forgivable loans, as well as existing state loan programs dedicated to small businesses, such as Advantage Illinois.

More than a third of BIG funds went to businesses downstate, 40 percent of grants were made to minority-owned businesses statewide

See PROGRAM, Page 4



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Girl Scout cookie favorites are on sale now.



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FROM LENA'S KITCHEN



The not so skinny cook

We got through the big snow. The trees have been beautiful with the frost on them. I am hoping for some thawing so my driveway gets better. I guess we are in the middle of January, so this kind of weather is to be expected. This week's recipes will be great for some winter cooking.

Roasted Broccoli with Sharp Cheddar Crumbs

Try this appetizer if you like broccoli and a great Dijon dip. The cheddar crumbs can be used as toppings for salads or other roasted vegetables.

4 oz. sharp cheddar, grated
2 large heads broccoli cut into florets

2 T. olive oil
Salt and red pepper flakes
¼ C. mayonnaise
1½ T. Dijon mustard
1½ t. honey

Heat oven to 375. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper. Scatter

cheddar evenly on sheet and bake until melted and color has darkened slightly, about five minutes (keep a close eye on the cheese because it can burn quickly). Let cool. Break cheddar into crumbs. Set aside.

On a second sheet, toss broccoli with oil, ½ t. salt and a pinch of pepper flakes and roast until tender and charred in parts, about 15 to 20 minutes.

Make honey mustard dip: In bowl, mix mayo and mustard; add honey and a pinch of salt and pepper. Top broccoli with cheddar crumbs and serve with the honey mustard dip.

Winter Fruit Salad with Lemon Poppy Seed Dressing

This salad makes use of several fruits that are not common in a leafy salad. The tangy pear, crisp apple, and sweet cranberries along with the crunchy nuts make for a great winter salad.

½ C. sugar
½ C. lemon juice
2 t. diced onion
1 t. Dijon mustard
½ t. salt
2/3 C. canola oil
1 T. poppy seeds
1 head romaine lettuce, torn into bite-sized pieces (about 10 cups)
1 C. shredded Swiss cheese
1 C. chopped cashews
1 pear, cored and sliced
1 apple, cored and sliced
¼ c. cranberries

Blend together sugar, lemon juice, onion, mustard and salt in a blender or food processor. With machine running, add oil in a slow steady stream until mixture is thick and smooth. Add poppy seeds and blend a few seconds more to combine.

Toss together romaine, cheese, cashews, pear, apple and cranberries in a large serving bowl. Just before serving, pour dressing over salad and toss to coat.

Winter's Day Soup

You probably have all the ingredients for this soup in your pantry or refrigerator. It makes a nice pot that will feed your family on a cold winter's night

1 C. celery, chopped
1 C. carrots, chopped
½ C. onions chopped
3 medium potatoes, cubed
½ C. butter
½ C. flour
4 C. milk
3 C. grated Cheddar cheese
2 C. ham, diced
Salt and pepper to taste

Cook vegetables in 3 cups water until tender. In a saucepan, melt butter and stir in flour. Add milk to flour mixture and heat over medium heat until boiling. Boil only one minute. Stir in cheese, then add salt, pepper and ham. Add mixture to cooked vegetables, including the water that vegetables were cooked in. Heat all together but do not boil.

Chicken, Wild Rice and Mushroom Casserole

This casserole is easy to put together because you use rotisserie chicken. You can use any sweet onion if Vidalia onions are not available. You can freeze this casserole if you wrap it up securely. You can keep it for four weeks in the freezer. Do not add the cracker crumbs until you are ready to bake.

2 C. chicken broth
2 T. unsalted butter, divided
1 pkg. (6 oz.) wild rice
1 C. chopped Vidalia onion
1 pkg. (8 oz.) sliced mushrooms
½ C. chopped carrot
½ C. chopped celery
3 cloves garlic, minced
3 C. shredded rotisserie chicken
1 can cream of mushroom soup
1 can cream of chicken soup
½ t. black pepper
25 buttery round crackers, crushed (Ritz)

Spray an 8-by-13 baking dish with cooking spray. In a medium saucepan, bring broth and 1 T. butter to a boil over medium high heat. Stir in rice. Reduce heat to low. Cover and cook until tender, 40 to 50 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside.

Preheat oven to 350. In a large skillet, melt remaining T. butter over medium-high heat. Add onion; cook, stirring occasionally, until translucent, four to five minutes. Add mushrooms, carrot and celery. Cook until vegetables are softened, three to four minutes. Add garlic; cook for one

minute. Remove from heat.

In a large bowl, place vegetable mixture. Stir in rice, chicken, soups and pepper until combined. Spoon mixture into prepared pan. Top evenly with crackers. Bake until browned and bubbly, 20 to 25 minutes. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving.

Buttermilk Spice Layer Cake

Are you looking for a nice winter dessert that is really striking as you serve it? The recipe calls for 1/8 of a teaspoon of cloves and nutmeg. I did see a 1/8 of a teaspoon in one of my cooking magazines that one could order. I investigated (via Google) about how to measure 1/8 if you didn't have a measuring spoon. The answer was pretty simple — a pinch is the same as 1/8 of a teaspoon. So if you would like a beautiful cake on a cake stand, this cake fills the bill; it is topped off by an orange cream cheese frosting

1¼ C. unsalted butter, softened
1 C. sugar
½ C. firmly packed light brown sugar
5 large eggs
½ C. unsulphured molasses
1 t. vanilla
3¾ C. flour
2 t. baking powder
1 t. baking soda
1¼ t. ground ginger
1½ t. cinnamon

See KITCHEN, Page 6

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Extension offers online series for corn and soybean producers

The University of Illinois Extension will offer the Northwest Illinois Agronomy Summit on a virtual platform this year. The live series will consist of weekly sessions providing updates for Midwestern corn and soybean producers while allowing them to ask questions and talk with experts.

"As we often try to do, there is a little bit of everything presented here, including research updates, producer recommendations and best management practices," Philip Alberti, Extension commercial

agriculture educator, said in a news release. "The theme for this year's summit is updates in nutrient and pest management and we are really excited to bring in both specialists from the University of Illinois and University of Wisconsin-Madison to discuss production strategies including pest management, cover crop management ... grain safety and more."

All sessions will be hosted from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. on their scheduled dates.

The schedule includes:

- Feb. 16, "Climate Change and Impacts in Northwest Illinois," featuring Trent Ford, Illinois state climatologist

- Feb. 23, "Corn Rootworm Management," featuring Nick Seiter, research assistant professor and faculty Extension specialist, University of Illinois

- Feb. 25, "Cover Crops in Northern Illinois/Southern Wisconsin and Combine Cleaning to Reduce Weed Seed Movement," featuring Dan Smith, UW-Madison southwest outreach specialist

- March 2, "Updates in Disease Management," featuring Nathan Kleczewski, research assistant professor and faculty Extension specialist, University of Illinois

- March 4, "Grain Bin Entry," featuring Salah Issa, assistant professor of industrial safety and health, University of Illinois

- March 9, "Will the Novel Soybean Herbicide Tolerance Traits Solve my Pigweed and Ragweed Problem?" featuring Rodrigo Werle, UW Madison cropping systems weed scientist and Extension specialist

cialist

- March 11, "The Importance of Scouting to Mitigate Risk for Fungicide Resistance Development," featuring Chelsea Harbach, Extension educator, University of Illinois Extension

To register for program, go online to <https://extension.illinois.edu/jsw> or call 815-235-4125.

The cost of the program is \$5 per session, or access to all sessions for \$20. Pre-registration is required.

For more information, contact Alberti at palberti@illinois.edu.

Follow dentist recommendations to avoid dry socket

When you have to have a tooth extracted it is normal to experience some discomfort. However, if you suddenly experience increasing pain in the first few days after surgery, it is important that you notify your dentist so he/she can evaluate whether you have developed a condition known as dry socket.

The socket is the hole in your bone that remains after a tooth has been extracted. In the normal healing process, your body forms a blood clot in the socket to protect the bone and nerves. Granulation tissue then forms to protect the clot. While healing of the extraction site occurs between seven and 10 days, new bone formation will take about eight weeks. However, if a blood clot fails to develop, dissolves too quickly or becomes dislodged, it



By
DR. STEPHEN PETRAS
Illinois Licensed
General Dentist

can lead to painful inflammation of the bone that can leave you vulnerable to infection and delayed or prolonged healing.

There are a number of risk factors for developing dry socket, as well as a number of proactive steps that you can take both before and after surgery to avoid this painful complication.

Since chemicals in tobacco can not only prevent or slow healing and may

contaminate the wound, it is important to avoid smoking or any tobacco use before surgery and for three days after. You should also be aware that sucking on a cigarette can dislodge the blood clot. Birth control pills with high estrogen levels also can interfere with the healing process.

Always update your medical history so your dentist is aware of any medications that will affect clot formation, if you have had a dry socket in the past or if you are immunocompromised, as these will necessitate additional preventative precautions. Any concurrent oral infections will also require preventative actions.

Post-operative instructions will be individualized to any unique needs, but general steps to avoid dry socket

include:

- Leave the gauze that your dentist has placed over the surgical site for several hours to allow the blood clot to form.

- For the first 24 hours, limit activities and rest with your head slightly elevated.

- Do not rinse your mouth, but drink lots of water. Avoid alcohol, carbonated and hot beverages and do not drink/suck with a straw for a week.

- Do not explore the extraction site with your tongue.

- Eat only soft food and avoid chewing on the side of your mouth where the tooth was extracted.

- If the extraction was in the upper jaw, avoid blowing your nose.

- To decrease pain and swelling, put

cold compresses on your cheek. After the first 24 hours, use warm compresses. • You can now brush your teeth but avoid the extraction site. Rinse gently with warm salt water several times a day.

- Avoid crunchy foods, popcorn, seeds or anything that can get lodged in the socket or disturb the clot.

Contact your dentist if bleeding continues for more than 24 hours or you develop any signs of infection such as continued swelling past the first few days, a bad taste in your mouth, sudden increase in pain, fever or pus.

Dr. Stephen Petras is an Illinois-licensed general dentist at the Stockton Dental Center.

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• Program (Continued from front page)

and more than 80 percent were made to businesses with \$1 million or less in annual revenues, according to a DCEO press release.

"(Gov. JB Pritzker's) decision to respond quickly to the virus, and also support, economically, our workers and our businesses has been key in getting this all done. That's the big picture. It's really coming down from the top. It's really coming from his vision and carrying it out in an equitable way," Guthrie said.

Although the supply of funds could not match the demand, Guthrie said the agency continued to solicit for new applications because "we knew that we would continue to get those smallest, very smallest businesses to apply who were in the hardest hit industries, and that's exactly what happened."

The average grant size was \$30,000, and grants ranged from \$5,000 to \$150,000.

Robert Gomez, owner of Subterranean music venue in Chicago, received funding through the BIG Grant program in mid-November after shuttering his doors in March.

Gomez said Subterranean was in a dire situation before it received a \$30,000 program grant, as he weighed the possibilities of refinancing his home, or tapping into his kids' college funds.

Subterranean, which is in its 27th year, received federal PPP money but Gomez said he hasn't touched the funds because his workers are not on

his payroll, which is a requirement for loan forgiveness eligibility.

"We've had to rely on donations from individuals, and a gift certificate program that we put in place where people can redeem it later," he said.

"It's like, no, we can't go down like this. You work so hard to build something for almost 30 years, and then get wiped out because of the pandemic. It's so hard to wrap my mind around that. But our only alternative, my only alternative, was to fight, to get creative, to push," Gomez said.

Having spent his BIG funds, Gomez said he plans to apply for grant money that was allocated for venue operators in the second round of federal COVID-19 stimulus funding, which was passed by Congress in December.

"Thankfully, there seems to be a federal program that is specific for venues that would be the lifeline we need. But without the BIG grant, we wouldn't have been able to sustain ourselves without some major financial overhaul," Gomez said.

Nearly half of all BIG funds, or more than \$133 million, went to restaurants and bars, according to the DCEO release.

A recent survey from the National Restaurant Association, along with the Illinois Restaurant Association, found 58 percent of Illinois operators say it is unlikely their restaurant will be open in six months without additional relief packages from the federal government.

Pritzker's executive order that imposed an indoor dining ban on bars and restaurants, effective Nov. 18, has been especially painful for the industry.

Pat Doerr, managing director of the Hospitality Business Association of Chicago, said the fact that the agency awarded some grants to restaurants that never stopped serving customers indoors, in violation of the program's eligibility rules, is one of his top grievances.

For example, Fireside Grille in Sugar Grove has continued to operate indoor dining after the governor issued his executive order but was issued a \$150,000 grant.

Owners of Fireside Grille did not respond to requests for comment.

A DCEO spokesperson said the department hasn't received a formal complaint about Fireside Grille, adding that DCEO will be reaching out to this business owner to inquire.

Guthrie said the majority of grant recipients have followed the rules.

"If they aren't, we really try to work with grantees to get them back in compliance. And then the very last line of defense would be to potentially claw back funds," she said.

Guthrie said the department hasn't clawed back any grant funds so far but one grant recipient that was not in compliance voluntarily returned their funds.

Doerr said the agency also failed to communicate an applicant's realistic chance of getting money.

"They massively oversold the program," he said. "The ship went down, and only one in five businesses got a lifeboat. Everybody's happy for the one in five small businesses who made it in the lifeboat."

Matt Strauss applied for BIG funds to help his Chicago restaurant — Table, Donkey and Stick — and Danke, a Chicago sandwich shop, where he is

a managing member, but was denied funds for both businesses.

He said his businesses have remained afloat with PPP funds, and expects they will receive a second round of federal PPP money in the coming weeks.

"The bottom line is (DCEO) should have taken applications, determined eligibility, and then distributed funds across the pool — the full universe of eligible applicants. It's the only way to do it equitably," he said.

"Obviously, everyone wants free money. And I wouldn't say no, but I just know that there are thousands and thousands of businesses that are owned by people who have less than I have, and are probably going to struggle significantly because they didn't get any funding."

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• Donations (Continued from front page)

whole blood donations that test positive for COVID-19 antibodies may be used to help COVID-19 patients.

To protect the health and safety of Red Cross staff and donors,

individuals who do not feel well or who believe they may be ill with COVID-19 should postpone their donation. In addition, safety precautions such as temperature checks, social distancing and face

covering requirements are in place at each Red Cross drive or donation center.

Two area blood drives are coming up this week:

- 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 14, at the Stagecoach Events Center, 446 E. Hickory St. in Apple River
- 1 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 15, at the Lena American Legion Hall, 316 Main St. in Lena

Potential donors may schedule an appointment by going online to RedCrossBlood.org, using the Red Cross blood donor app, calling 800-733-2767 or activating the blood scheduling skill for Amazon Alexa.

In addition, those who come to donate blood or platelets in January will automatically be entered to win two tickets to next year's Super Bowl LVI in Los Angeles. Those who come to give by Jan. 20 will also be automatically entered to win the "Big Game at Home package," which includes a 65-inch television and a \$500 gift card.

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OPINION

Slices of life

Finding the meaning of life on aisle 10

Today a strange man approached me. Well, he wasn't actually strange as in green ears and three arms; he was just strange to me. In other words, I didn't know the guy.

But there he was, walking straight in my direction, giving obvious eye contact, in aisle 12 at the grocery store — like we were old buds. He was an elderly gentleman, perhaps old enough to be my father, so I wasn't too threatened. Just surprised. And perhaps curious. It felt odd.

I looked to my left and to my right. Was he really approaching me or was there another person who served as the object of his purposeful gait toward my social-distanced, face-covered self?

No one was near me (or him). No one else could be the source of his attention. I stood, feeling a bit trapped, on aisle 12 pretending to examine the ingredients on the label of a pickle jar.

There was no escape path. I waited for the ball (or in this case, the pickle) to drop.

"Excuse me," he said. At least he was a polite sort.

I looked up from my jar. He was shorter than I'd thought. And thinner. Definitely old enough to be my dad, in fact he sort of resembled him. Somehow I found that comforting.

"I'm wondering if you could help me," he continued. "Do you know where I can find the salt? We are out of salt and my wife wants me to bring some home and I'll be darned if I can find it anywhere." At those last words he threw his hands in the air to emphasize his plight.

I breathed a sigh (of relief). Salt. This guy needed salt. It was a simple request. In fact, while standing near the pickles we were only two aisles over from spices on aisle 10.

I not only provided directions, but I walked with him to make sure he chose the iodized version. Labels can be so tricky these days — as can goiters.

This isn't the first time I've been approached at the store for insight or information — and I even make it a point not to wear blue or red to any store for fear of being mistaken for an employee. I guess I just have that look about me.

I like to think of it as a look of intelligence, but knowing where the iodized salt is doesn't exactly require intelligence so much as it requires familiarity. I am familiar with various grocery aisles.

I guess it shows.

I'm not sure if this something to be proud of. Let me restate that: I am sure this is definitely not something to be proud of. But it comes with experience. And life. And love.

And those are all things one should definitely be proud of.

Experience: I know aisle 12 from



By
**JILL
PERTLER**
Contributor

aisle 10 like the back of my hand because I've had my family's back for years and years. I anticipate their food consumption needs and fulfill them. Over and over again. It's actually one of the more appreciated jobs a mom can complete — filling the freezer with edibles. Corn dogs and sliders are valued more than glass cleaner or light bulbs.

Life. Let's contemplate that huge subject. Life has taught me to attempt to understand the needs of others. An elderly man approaching me at the grocery store is not an intrusion or irritation. It is simply an elderly man needing advice. Life should dictate that anyone in my situation give him the 30 seconds required to provide the help he needs. This should be done without angst. Someday we will all be older, and in need of salt.

Finally let's tackle the subject of love. It's the biggest one of all. If you can't operate under the guise of experience or life, please do so under the umbrella of love. It is the greatest gift we can give anyone — spouse, best friend, child, stranger or anyone in between. If someone random reaches out to you for whatever reason and you answer in the name of love, you have the experience required to have this thing called life figured out.

It is all about human connections and relationships and giving people what they need when they do or don't ask for it. Especially during a pandemic. Especially and definitely when it involves salt (the iodized kind) on aisle 10.

Jill Pertler is an award-winning syndicated columnist, published playwright and author. Don't miss a slice; follow the Slices of Life page on Facebook.

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Illinois GOP wields little power these days

Written in quill pen (not literally; it was 1965), my master's thesis was about "Leaderless Politics: The Illinois Republican Party." Not much has changed.

That was an era when party organization mattered. My thesis was that when Republicans lost control of the governorship, the party became leaderless. Not much has changed.

Back then, political patronage provided party leaders with influence over elections. My research showed that under GOP Gov. Bill Stratton (1953-'60), 83 of the state's 102 Republican county chairmen held state jobs. Guess who ran the party? Without a governor and jobs, the party was rudderless.

First, TV in the 1960s and now billionaire self-funders and donors have replaced political party organizations as the primary conduits to the voters. Patronage



By
**JIM
NOWLAN**

is mostly gone, by Supreme Court dictum.

Political parties have traditionally had three basic functions:

- Set forth a platform of values and policies for voters to consider;
- Recruit attractive candidates; and

• Work to nominate the candidates in the primary and then get them elected, so they can implement the platform inside government.

The Illinois Republican Party does little of this anymore.

The role of party platforms has been underappreciated. Party leaders used to wrestle over platform planks at their conventions. The platforms, by a kind of osmosis and over time, provided helpful cues for voters. That is, the GOP favors small business, while the Dems are for the working stiffs. Most of that

See GOP, Page 6

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•GOP (Continued from page 5)

is gone today, and voters are adrift, captivated yet confused by a Tower of Babel issuing relentlessly from the internet.

The Illinois state GOP is a paper tiger. It has neither money nor clout over county parties. The county parties are mostly toothless as well. There are exceptions. For example, county GOP chairs Jan Weber in Henry and Aren Hansen in Grundy have in recent years almost singlehandedly turned local offices from Dem to GOP. Mary Brookhart in McDonough County also has a strong county party; her team knows how to get out the vote.

The Illinois GOP is at present recruiting a new statewide party chair. Different from a number of states that have large, professional staff and paid

chairs, the Illinois party has but one staffer (very sharp Derek Murphy) and a volunteer chair. With megabucks ex-Gov. Bruce Rauner gone, the state party has barely two nickels to rub together.

The struggle for party control, as if it mattered, is apparently between a Trump-thumping faction and an "establishment" faction, neither with a clear platform.

The old adage that "all politics is local" is no longer true. Successful local candidates in small town and rural Illinois tend to feel they must pay more than lip service to the Trump brand of nativist populism.

This effectively leaves lifestyle tolerant, pro-choice, balanced budget, free market, business-friendly folks like

me outside the party, or so I feel.

What does the future hold for the Illinois GOP? I expect to see Trump 2024 signs soon replacing the thousands of the 2020 versions on lawns and farmyards across mid-America; however, insiders I talk with predict the Trump brand will fade rather quickly, as he likely becomes ensnared in nasty tax and legal problems.

Over the past half century, Republican leaders have also seen their base slip away, literally. Since about 1970, two million or so whites have departed the state in net terms, replaced largely by Latinos and, to a lesser extent, Asian-Americans.

When I was a state legislator in 1970, 12 percent of Illinois residents

were of a minority group; today, it is 36 percent. From 1977 to 2003, the Illinois GOP enjoyed a 26-year, unbroken string of Republican governors. In contrast, this year Joe Biden clobbered Trump in Illinois 57-40 percent, in what pundits call a firmly Blue state.

The big prize in 2022 will be the governor's mansion, not that anyone lives there anymore. Gov. JB Pritzker is considered vulnerable, following his botched, disastrous campaign for increased taxes on high earners, and because of the unenviable role he has in trying to corral COVID-19.

In a district on the edges of metropolitan Chicago, GOP Congressman Adam Kinzinger has been critical of Trump while supportive of his policies. He appears to be

positioning himself for a run for higher office – governor, close observers report.

I also find state Sens. Jason Barickman of Bloomington and Sue Rezin of Morris attractive. Both are smart and capable, and might have some appeal in the suburbs. But they and other aspirants from the political ranks must nowadays almost expect outsider megabucks sorts to crash into the GOP's party.

The race will be wide open, and the leaderless state GOP will be but a bystander.

Jim Nowlan is a former state lawmaker, newspaper publisher and senior fellow at the University of Illinois Institute of Government and Public Affairs.

•Kitchen (Continued from page 2)

½ t. salt
1/8 t. ground cloves
1/8 t. ground nutmeg
1¼ C. whole buttermilk

Preheat oven to 350. Spray three 9-inch round cake pans with cooking spray with flour. In a large bowl, beat butter and sugars with a mixer at medium speed until fluffy, four to five minutes, stopping to scrape the sides of the bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add molasses and vanilla, beating well. In another large bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, ginger, cinnamon, salt, cloves and nutmeg. Gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with buttermilk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until

combined after each addition. Divide batter among prepared pans.

Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 25 to 28 minutes. Let cool in pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks. Spread frosting between layers and on top and sides of cake. Garnish with cranberries and rosemary sprigs.

Orange Cream Cheese Frosting

2 pkg. (8 oz. each) cream cheese, softened
¾ C. unsalted butter, softened
6 C. powdered sugar
2 t. vanilla
1 T. orange zest

In a large mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and butter with a mixer at medium speed until smooth and creamy; stop and scrape sides of bowl several times. Gradually add powdered sugar, beating until smooth, stopping to scrape bowl. Beat in vanilla and zest. Use immediately.

Caramel Pecan Treasures

This cookie is a combination of a shortbread, caramel filling and melted chocolate. The top is sprinkled with chopped pecans. These will melt in your mouth. You must use butter and not margarine for these cookies.

1 C. butter, softened
¾ C. packed brown sugar

1 t. vanilla
1¾ C. flour
½ t. baking powder
30 caramels, halved and flattened
2 C. semisweet chocolate chips
1 T. shortening
½ C. finely chopped pecans

In a mixing bowl, cream the butter and brown sugar. Beat in vanilla. Combine the flour and baking powder; gradually add to the creamed mixture. Roll into 1-inch balls. Place 2 inches apart on baking sheets; flatten slightly. Bake at 325 for 12 to 15 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to wire racks to cool.

Place one caramel on each cooled cookie. Melt the chocolate chips and shortening and drizzle over the

cooled cookies. Sprinkle with the pecans. Let stand until firm.

Final thoughts

We are heading into the middle of January; time does fly. I will be taking a break for at least two weeks because I am having some eye surgery. I hope you have a great end of the month; hopefully there will be some Super Bowl recipes when I return. Stay healthy and safe.

If you have found any winter soup and sandwich recipes you think we would like, contact us in person, by mail at From Lena's Kitchens, Shopper's Guide, 240 W. Main St., Lena, IL 61048 or email us at scoopshopper@rvpublishing.com.

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USDA makes fifth round of food purchases

The USDA will purchase an additional \$1.5 billion worth of food for nationwide distribution through the Farmers to Families Food Box Program, officials announced recently. In total, USDA has distributed more than 132 million food boxes in support of American farmers and families affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"This new round of Farmers to Families Food Boxes will go a long way in helping American families access nutritious and healthy meals as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic," USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue said in a news release.

The additional funding for the program was included in the COVID-19 relief package as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act passed Dec. 21. In this fifth round of purchases, USDA will again purchase combination boxes to ensure that recipient organizations have access to fresh produce, dairy products, fluid milk and meat products. In addition, seafood products will be included in this round.

Agribusiness goes against the grain in 2020

Many boons found among changes forced by pandemic

By Christopher Heimerman
FOR THE ILLINOIS PRESS ASSOCIATION
Apple orchard and pumpkin patch operators can pick out a number of surprise benefits from doing business during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During a Thursday afternoon session at the virtual Illinois Specialty Crop Conference, operators of two of the state's biggest such companies went over unforeseen boons — from a more productive relationship with government officials to more fruitful use of social media.

The biggest surprise, perhaps? Sales went up year-over-year, according to Chris Eckert, president of Eckert's Country Store and Farms in Belleville.

"With everything we've learned, I expect (profits) to be even better this year, or at least to stay at those numbers," he said. "I certainly don't expect them to go back to where they were in 2019."

'Suddenly, we're on the front line'

Eckert and Randy Graham, chairman of the Illinois Specialty Growers Association and co-owner of Curtis Orchard & Pumpkin Patch in Champaign, helped form and lead a working group that wrote COVID-19 operating guidelines and protocols, as they pertain to agritourism, then presented them to legislators and the Illinois Department of Public Health.

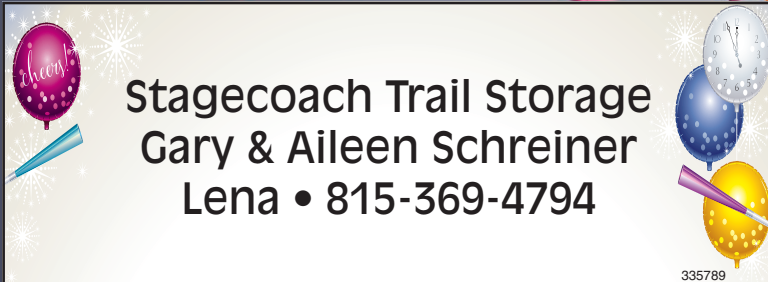
Eckert said it was refreshing to have not just a seat at the table, but officials' undivided attention.

"They'd never really listened to us like this," Eckert said. "I think it's very easy for the governor, the administration or the public health department to make rules without thinking about us. Suddenly, we're on the front line of what seems like a war. Twelve months ago, we didn't necessarily think of ourselves as essential workers."

Graham said working with the group to write the guidelines opened his eyes to the wide range of ideas, opinions and gripes.

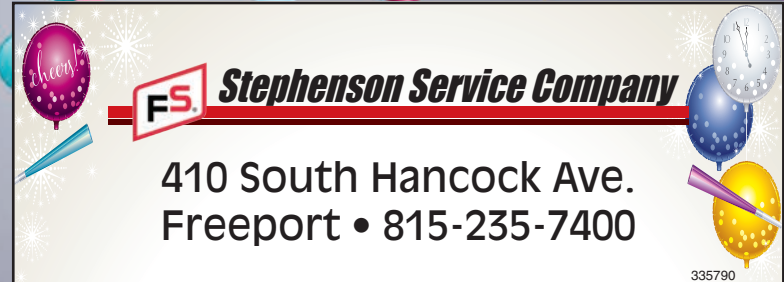
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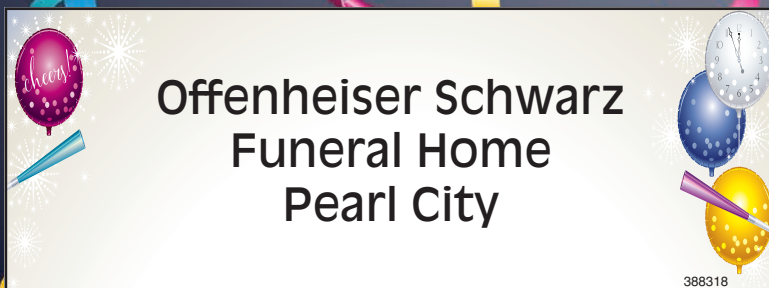
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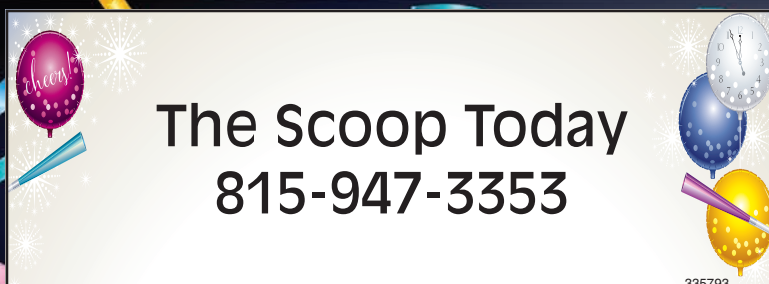
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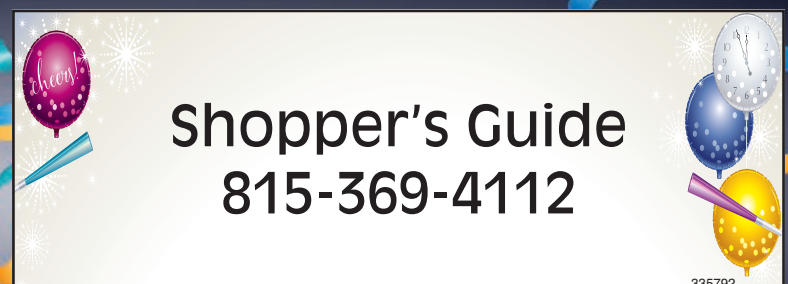
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SUBMITTED PHOTO The Scoop Today

Stockton Heritage Museum Board President Ann Coppernoll accepts a donation from Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1304 Quartermaster Don Bradley. The funding will be used to establish a veterans page on the museum's new website, which is in the works.

VFW donation boosts museum's online efforts

Members of Liberty Memorial Post 1304 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars recently made a donation of \$1,000 to the Stockton Heritage Museum.

"This contribution will support the ongoing development of the veterans page, which is a part of the Stockton Heritage Museum website," according to a museum press release. "The Stockton Heritage Museum Board of Directors is sincerely grateful for the support of the VFW."

Museum organizers are planning to launch a new website soon. Stockton VFW Post 1304 was chartered in March 1983 and meets at 7 p.m. the second Monday of the month at the Stockton Park House. The VFW mailing address is P.O. Box 75, Stockton, IL 61085. Membership is open to any veteran who has served.

For more information about the museum, go online to facebook.com/stocktonheritemuseum.



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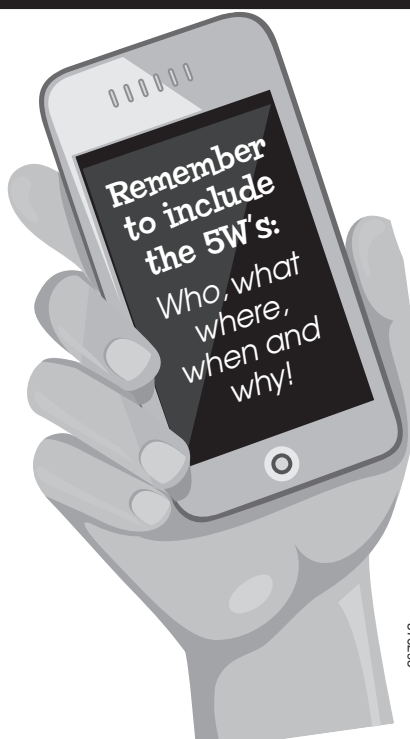
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Observers highlight bird count results

Members of the Eagle Nature Foundation and the Jo Daviess County Conservation Foundation tallied more than 4,900 birds during the recent Christmas Bird Count.

The National Audubon Society Jo Daviess County Christmas Bird Count was conducted Dec. 15. It has been an annual event since 1965.

The 20 bird counters in 12 teams noted 4,921 birds of 48 species, according to a news release. The counters spent 33 hours observing and drove more than 320 miles during the effort.

Longtime count compiler Terrence Ingram noted some highlights of the 2020 observations:

• Rare and unusual birds seen for the time of the year included blue-winged teal, Carolina wren, yellow-rumped warbler and chipping sparrow.

• Species seen in many previous years, but not seen during this year's count included red-headed woodpecker, mallard, great blue heron, sharp-shinned hawk, screech owl, great-horned owl, barred owl, belted kingfisher, yellow-bellied sapsucker, Northern shrike and robin.

• Birds seen in high numbers for their species include: pileated woodpecker, nine; dark-eyed junco 1,908; and Eurasian tree sparrow, 41.

• Some birds were seen in reduced numbers this year, including: 15 Canada geese, compared to as many as 435 in 2013; 23 wild turkeys, compared as many as 334 in 2002; two snow buntings, compared to 142 in 2010; and two purple finches, compared to 83 in 2019.

• Other species seen include: North-

ern harrier, two; Cooper's hawk, one; bald eagle, 40; red-tailed Hawk, 27; rough-legged hawk, seven; rock pigeons, 99; Eurasian collared doves, eight; mourning doves, 201; red-bellied woodpecker, 31; downy woodpecker, 49; hairy woodpecker, 10; American kestrel, seven; blue jay, 96; American crow, 364; horned lark, 252; black-capped chickadee, 97; tufted titmouse, 21; red-breasted nuthatch, three; white-breasted nuthatch, 31; brown creeper, one; golden-crowned kinglet, one; Eastern bluebird, 18; American tree sparrow, 325; white-crowned sparrow, three; white-throated sparrow, eight; Northern cardinal, 168; Eastern meadowlark, six; house finch, 145; pine siskin, 18; American goldfinch, 191, and house sparrow, 461.

Bipartisan Illinois politicians condemn rioters, Trump

By Jerry Nowicki

CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Hours after rioters seeking to block the certification of President-elect Joe Biden's November election victory first began storming the U.S. Capitol Jan. 6, Gov. JB Pritzker called on Congress to impeach and remove sitting President Donald Trump.

U.S. Rep. Adam Kinzinger, R-Channahon, called the scene a "coup attempt."

"The current president incited this coup and encouraged it and did little to protect the Capitol and the Constitution," Kinzinger said in a video posted on his Twitter account. "He is no longer the leader of our party. Our party must reject these treasonous acts."

Pritzker, in a statement, said, "Two weeks is too long for Donald Trump to remain in office, where he can con-

tinue to incite more untold violence."

"Because of these events incited by the president, I had to ask the Illinois State Police and other law enforcement resources, engaged in important life-saving missions, to redeploy to heighten their presence at government buildings and the Capitol in Springfield," Pritzker added.

A small group of 75 to 100 protesters demonstrated peaceably Jan. 6 outside of the Illinois State Capitol, a far cry from the events in Washington, D.C.

"As the heart of our democracy was under siege and blood was literally being spilled in our most sacred halls, Donald Trump was praising the attackers. There are real questions about what efforts the president made to protect our Congress or what obstructions he committed that has prevented the ending of the siege," Pritzker said in the statement.

Trump, in a video statement released Jan. 6, urged the rioters to go home while still maintaining the election was "stolen" by Democrats. Trump has filed several lawsuits alleging voter fraud, repeatedly being rejected by judges for lack of evidence.

Trump also praised the rioters in the video statement, calling them "very special" and telling them he loved them.

On Twitter, the social media platform began removing some of the president's tweets after he criticized Vice President Mike Pence for not being more proactive in blocking the results of the November election. Twitter placed a 12-hour block on his account the evening of Jan. 6, noting it would continue until certain tweets deemed a threat to public safety were removed.

Several Republican members of Congress planned to object to Biden's certification Jan. 6 before it was waylaid by the rioters.

However, Congress certified the Electoral College votes for President-elect Joe Biden early morning on Jan. 7. Trump said there will be an orderly transition of power on Jan. 20.

"There is no doubt in my mind that his efforts to encourage a coup represent high treason to this democracy, our Constitution and all Ameri-

cans," Pritzker said in his statement. "He poses a danger to our nation. He must be impeached and removed from office immediately. And every person in a position of public trust, elected or otherwise, who enabled the systematic dismantling of our democratic norms and failed to speak up or take action bears some responsibility for the culmination of four years of spreading bile."

Legislative Republicans in the state also rebuked the events in Washington.

"The events unfolding at the United States Capitol, and the inflammatory remarks by members of the Republican Party, are a disgrace to the core values and beliefs of our great nation," House Republican Leader Jim Durkin, R-Western Springs, said in a statement. "These actions do not represent our Republican Party, and are against everything we stand for as Americans. I am sickened and deeply saddened by what I have witnessed today. Any public officials who condone these actions have no place in the Republican party or in our democracy."

Dan McConchie, Senate minority leader designate, also issued a statement.

"The horrible violence at our nation's capitol is a disgrace to all Americans," McConchie said. "This violence does not reflect the United States that generations of Americans have fought so hard to build. I stand with members of all parties in condemning these un-American acts of violence and treachery, and will do my part here in Illinois to repair the devastating divide that has been created in our country."

Senate President Don Harmon, D-Oak Park, and House Speaker Michael Madigan, D-Chicago, also issued statements condemning the rioters.

"The peaceful transition of power is a hallmark of our great democracy," Harmon said. "To disrupt that transition is an affront to the very fabric of the United States of America. The U.S. Capitol has stood strong in the face of attacks by confederates and terrorists. We will survive today's sad acts to once again be a beacon of hope, change and equality for the world."

Obituaries

CHARLES D. FOSLER

Charles "Charlie" D. Fosler, 77, of Warren, Illinois, passed away on Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2021, at Meriter Hospital in Madison, Wisconsin, with his family by his side. He was born on April 3, 1943, to Charles and Margaret (Walters) Fosler in Freeport, Illinois. Charlie married Ardith Drew on March 24, 1962, at the Nora Community Church in Nora, Illinois. Charlie managed Spahn and Rose in Warren for 17 years. In 1979 Charlie, along with his partner, brother-in-law and friend, Jeff Fry, established Town and Country Builders. Charlie retired in 2013. Ardith and Charlie enjoyed their Sunday drives to cheese factories. He also served on the JoDavies County Fair Board for more than 35 years. Charlie enjoyed woodworking and making cabinets, picture frames,



coat hangers and many other things. He also liked watching "This Old House" and "Yankee Workshop."

Charlie is survived by his children, Charles (Patti)

Fosler of Gratiot, Wisconsin, and David (Kim) Fosler of Scales Mound, Illinois; grandchildren, Hannah (Mike Sauer) Mulcahy, Brad (Alyson) Fosler, Kevin Fosler, Savannah Babler, Dylan (Mary Lou) Fosler, Connor Fosler and Collin Fosler; eight great-grandchildren; brother and sisters, Tommy (Sally) Fosler, Anita (Jeff) Fry and Roxanne (Dave) Leahy; a brother-in-law,

Allen (Diane) Drew; and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his mother and father-in-law and his wife, Ardith, in 2007.

A visitation was held Saturday, Jan. 9, 2021, at the Bartell-Leamon Funeral Home in Warren.

Cremation rites will be accorded.

Burial and services will be held at a later date. Burial will be at Elmwood Cemetery in Warren.

A memorial has been established in his memory.

The family wishes to extend a special thank you to Dr. Martin Cleary of the Memorial Hospital of Lafayette County for not only being Charlie's physician, but also for being his friend.

Condolences may be sent to the family at www.leadonfh.com.

MARTHA J. KEMPEL

Martha J. Kempel, age 61, of Lena, Illinois, passed away on Sunday, Jan. 3, 2021, at FHN Memorial Hospital in Freeport, Illinois. She was born Jan. 11, 1959, in Springfield, Illinois, to Francis and Mary (Koch) Bangasser. She married Donald Kempel on Nov. 13, 1987, at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Freeport. Martha was a graduate of Aquin High School and Maycrest College. Martha's faith and her family were the two things that mattered most to her. Her three sons, Matthew, Phillip and William, were her world. Don and Martha were married for 33 years, working alongside each other during the challenging farming seasons and while raising their boys. Martha took her responsibility as a farmer's wife and a mother whole-heartedly. At an



early age, Martha's life was enriched with lots of cousins as they shared carefree days on the farm as well as working together on the farm, which carried forward in her life on the farm with Don and the boys.

Martha is survived by her husband, Donald; three sons, Matthew (Emily Engle) Kempel, Phillip Kempel and William (Codi Sandell) Kempel, all of Lena; mother and father-in-law, Margaret and Dean Kempel of Lena; brothers-in-law Gary (Amy) Kempel of Lena, and their children, Samantha and Andrew; Keith (Christy) Kempel

of Lena, and their daughter Emily; sister-in-law, Anne (Jon) Daws of Lena, and their children, Nick and Ariel; and numerous cousins.

Martha was preceded in death by her parents and her brother, Mark Bangasser.

Funeral services will be held at 10 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 12, 2021, at Holy Cross Catholic Church in Stockton, Illinois.

A visitation will be from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Monday, Jan. 11, 2021, at the Leamon Funeral Home in Lena.

Burial will be at St. Joseph Catholic Cemetery in Lena.

Father Michael Morrissey will officiate the services.

A memorial has been established in her memory.

Condolences may be sent to the family at www.leadonfh.com.

GERALD V. KERR

Gerald V. Kerr, age 77, of rural Orangeville, Illinois, passed away after a long battle with cancer on Friday Jan. 1, 2021, at his home surrounded by his family. He was born Nov. 20, 1943, in Freeport, Illinois, the son of Norman and Marie (Voss) Kerr. Gerald married Connie Burkholder on Dec. 30, 1962, at the Church of the Brethren in Lanark, Illinois. He farmed alongside Connie for more than 40 years. In April of 2008, Gerald started working for Studer Super Service, which is now known as Hennessey Implement, in Monroe, Wisconsin, and he retired in April 2018.

Gerald was a member of the Orangeville School Board, Midwest Dairyman Board and the Orangeville Country Swinger Square



Dance Club. He liked antique tractors and anything antique. He was a joker who enjoyed woodworking, golfing in his younger years and attending steam engine shows. For 47 years, Gerald and Connie played cards with the Farmer 500 Card Club.

Gerald is survived by his wife of 58 years, Connie; children, Diane (Ron Kruse) Watson, Cindy Wells, Denise (Scott) Robieson and Jeffrey (Kathleen) Kerr, all of Orangeville, and Tammy (Dennis) Rakowska of McConnell; 11 grandchildren; three great-grand-

children and two more on the way; his mother, Marie Kerr of Freeport; brother and sisters, Eugene (Kay) Kerr, Barbara (Clark) Smith and Juleen (Steven) Fellows; sister-in-law, Betty Carroll; brothers-in-law, Keith (Lillian) Burkholder and Ray Burkholder; and several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his father, Norman; his maternal and paternal grandparents; and his mother and father-in-law, Helen and Ralph Burkholder.

Private family services will be held at the Cramer-Leamon Funeral Home in Orangeville.

Burial will be at Chapel Hill Memorial Gardens in Freeport.

A memorial has been established in his memory.

Condolences may be sent to the family at www.leadonfh.com.

LAVONNE LUCILLE FELTMEYER

Lavonne Lucille Feltmeyer, 94, of Stockton Illinois, passed away on Jan. 8, 2021, at her home.

She was born March 4, 1926, in Massbach, Illinois, the daughter of Josephine and William Teichler.

Lavonne attended Stockton schools and was employed at Burgess Battery. She married Allen Feltmeyer on April 17, 1948. During their courtship they enjoyed attending dances and traveling. They farmed in the Stockton area and raised a family of three children — Tenny (Pat Cook) of Mill City, Oregon; Becky (Cory Banket) of Milwaukee; and Terry (Paula) Feltmeyer of Stockton.

Lavonne was a lifelong member of Stockton Eastern Star and Christ Lutheran Church.

She treasured her family and friends first and foremost.

Lavonne enjoyed gardening, canning, needlepoint, decorating for the holidays (especially Christmas), and cooking/baking. She was known for her fried chicken, chocolate cake and



pies. She was an equal partner in farming with Allen for 41 years.

She is survived by her three children; four grandchildren, Malisa, Charles, Caley and Troy; 10

great-grandchildren; a very special niece, Kathy Durham; her good friend, Barb Randecker; and three sisters-in-law.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her sister, Joyce Fosler; her husband, Allen; five brothers-in-law; one sister-in-law; and good friend, Bess Vanderheyden.

A private family service will be held.

A memorial fund has been established in her name.

The family would like to thank FHN Hospice for their care.

Condolences may be shared at www.hermannfuneralhome.com.

CHARLES STROHECKER

Charles "Buckwheat" Strohecker, 66, of Lanark, Illinois, passed away Jan. 2, 2021, in Stockton, Illinois. He was born March 22, 1954, in Freeport, Illinois, to Richard and Mae (Turney) Strohecker. He married Arleen Kingery (Rife) on March 29, 1980, in Lanark. He was a CNC operator for 35 years and city of Lanark employee.

Survivors include his daughter, Donna Quinn (Strohecker), married to Kenneth Quinn of Lena, Illinois; daughter, Nicole Kingery (Strohecker), married to Jeremy Kingery of Shannon, Illinois; brother, Ron Strohecker, married to Ann Strohecker of Lanark; daughter-in-law, Brittney (Ils) Strohecker of Pearl City, Illinois; sister-in-law, Sheryl Strohecker of Lanark; sister-in-law, Sara White Martin of Mount Morris,



Illinois; many nieces and nephews; 13 grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his father, Richard Strohecker; mother, Mae Strohecker; two brothers, Mike Strohecker and Dan Strohecker; son, Ben Strohecker; and grandson, Casen Strohecker.

A memorial tractor pull with the River Bend Pullers and hosted by Kenny and Ardena Grant will be held in the spring.

Online condolences may be shared at www.schwarzfh.com.

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Obituaries

VERLA P. LOBDELL

Verla P. Lobdell, 86, of Lena, passed away at her home on Jan. 4, 2021, after an extended illness. She is survived by her beloved husband of 67 years, Mervin "Johnny" Lobdell. She was born in rural Pearl City on May 1, 1934, to William and Luella (Edler) Liebergesell. Some of her earliest memories were helping her father on their farm, riding her horses and playing with her dogs. Verla graduated from Lena High School in 1952 and she and Johnny were married in March of 1953.

Verla had many talents, but she was most passionate about her family, her faith and the Lobdell family farm. She loved hosting large family get-togethers, hiking with her grandchildren, reading and singing to them and finding all sorts of interesting projects for them to do with her. She loved her garden and yard and always worked very hard to make everything at the farm and later at their house look nice.

She was a life-long member of



the Lena United Methodist Church, where her greatest love was teaching Sunday School and Bible School. She was a natural teacher and taught Sunday School for more

than 50 years. Verla was always singing and for several years she was the Children's Choir director at church and a member of United Methodist Women. She enjoyed making pies and loved to help with the annual bazaar and roast beef supper.

In her early career, she was a secretary at Freeport Junior High School for one year working with Mr. Byron Cully, whom she always admired as an excellent educator. The rest of her life she was a dedicated dairy farmer with her husband and family. She loved her cows and calves and lived the motto, "If you take care of your cows, they will take care of you." She worked very hard and was so very particular about everything to do with the dairy operation, in turn passing on those lessons to her children and grandchildren.

She is survived by her husband, Mervin "Johnny" Lobdell, her four children, 13 grandchildren, and 11 great-grandchildren; Murry and Julie Lobdell and their family; Andrew, Amy, Aubrey, Avery, and Adrienne Lobdell; Joe Lobdell; Tom, Heidi, Levi and Rylee Lobdell; and Cody, Lana Adelyn, and Camden Haas.

Kayla Lobdell and her family; Wes, Jenn, Louis and Bobby Morovic; Matt Morovic and his children; Izayah, Marley and Emerson; Aaron, Kelsey and Reid McFarlane; and Haley Pentecost. Jay and Karlyn Kempel and their family; Jared and his fiancé Sara, Jason, and Justin Kempel. Kelly and Janet Lobdell and their family; Kade and Kendall Lobdell; nephew Chris Liebergesell of Camden, Tennessee, and son Colt and great niece Kaitlyn Liebergesell. Her family will miss her very much.

Verla was preceded in death by her parents; her brother, Harold Liebergesell; a niece, Lara Liebergesell; and her special cousin, Vieta Scheider.

Verla had wonderful caretakers that the family appreciated so much. Heather S., Lisa, Heather C. and Sue enabled Verla to stay in her home. They all brought her so much joy by singing with her, listening to her stories, reading to her, taking her for walks, fixing her hair and painting her nails, all if which she loved.

The family would like to express sincere thanks to the members of FHN Hospice for their excellent, loving care given to Verla.

A private family service will be held at the Lena United Methodist Church with a celebration of life later this year. Cremation rites have been accorded and burial will be at Greenwood Cemetery. A memorial has been established in her memory for the Lena United Methodist Sunday School program.

Condolences may be sent to the family at www.leamonfh.com.

PAMELA B. COLE

Pamela B. Cole, age 70, of Stockton, Illinois, passed away Sunday, Dec. 27, 2020, at home. She was born May 4, 1950, in Elgin, Illinois, to the late Jack and Grace (Helfvogt) Ladd. Pam married Bob Cole on Aug. 16, 1997, in Stockton.

She had worked at the Arlington International Racetrack, as a pet groomer and as a manager for the Red Knight Pub. Pam had a love

for animals, especially horses. She enjoyed gardening, painting and spending time with her daughters and grandchildren.

Pam is survived by her husband, Bob Cole, of Stockton; her daughters, Mindy Burke of Chicago and Gabbi Cole of Stockton; her grandchildren, Tyler Burke, Sydney Burke and Lyanna Siergiej; and her brother, Michael Ladd, of California. She was preceded in death by her parents.

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Crisis stabilization center opens

Dr. Ravi and Mrs. Minu Vyas Crisis Stabilization Center at the FHN Family Counseling Center in Freeport, a special unit to serve people facing a substance abuse or behavioral health crisis, has opened and is available to serve patients.

Before the Crisis Stabilization Center (CSC) was available, someone experiencing a mental health crisis may have spent many hours, or even days, in the Emergency Department at FHN Memorial Hospital or another hospital until they could be transferred to an inpatient unit or stabilized and released back into the community. According to a news release, the CSC gives people another option to receive coordinated care in a local, relaxing,

See CENTER, Page 15



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LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

STEPHENSON COUNTY - FREEPORT, ILLINOIS

Fifth Third Bank, National
Association

PLAINTIFF

Vs.

City of Freeport; Unknown
Heirs and Legatees of Lois
A. Moore; Unknown Owners
and Nonrecord Claimants;
Kipp Meyers, as Special
Representative for Lois A.
Moore (deceased)

DEFENDANTS

2019CH33

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on 01/28/2020, the Sheriff of Stephenson County, Illinois will on February 18, 2021 at the hour of 1:00 PM at Stephenson County Courthouse 15 North Galena Avenue 1st Floor, West door of courthouse Freeport, IL 61032, or in a place otherwise designated at the time of sale, County of Stephenson and State of Illinois, sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash, as set forth below, the following described real estate:

LOT 7 IN BLOCK 1 IN WEST END ADDITION TO THE TOWN (NOW CITY) OF FREEPORT, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED OCTOBER 2, 1907 BOOK "C" OF PLATS, PAGE 32; SITUATED IN THE CITY OF FREEPORT, COUNTY OF STEPHENSON IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS.

PIN 18-13-36-153-024

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in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.

If the property is a condominium and the foreclosure takes place after 1/1/2007, purchasers other than the mortgagees will be required to pay any assessment and legal fees due under The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4).

If the property is located in a common interest community, purchasers other than mortgagees will be required to pay any assessment and legal fees due under the Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1).

If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney.

Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser shall receive a Certificate of Sale, which will entitle the purchaser to a Deed to the real estate after Confirmation of the sale. The successful purchaser has the sole responsibility/expense of evicting any tenants or other individuals presently in possession of the subject premises.

The property will NOT be open for inspection and Plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the Court file to verify all information.

IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW.

For information: Examine the court file or contact Plaintiff's attorney: Codilis & Associates, P.C., 15W030 North Frontage Road, Suite 100, Burr Ridge, IL 60527, (630) 794-9876. Please refer to file number 14-19-03108.

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(Published in
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Getting farm to table faster

Ag leaders, nonprofits address food insecurity in Illinois

By Christopher Heimerman
FOR ILLINOIS PRESS ASSOCIATION

It takes a lot of moving parts to connect fresh produce with the communities that need it most.

You need farmers growing quality food. Funding to pay them. Food banks, pantries and food marts in place to store and distribute. And don't overlook one of the biggest roadblocks: transportation to get the food from farm to kitchen table.

"Transportation is a critical, critical issue, in terms of time and cost," Steve Miller, an at-large board member of Illinois Specialty Growers Association, said during a Jan. 7 virtual session at the annual Illinois Specialty Crop Conference.

Here's the rub, though: To assure that food is fresh when it arrives, the fewer literal moving parts, the better.

"If produce comes in from a producer on Thursday or Friday, then sits in a ware-house over the weekend, it doesn't get to the families until Monday or Tuesday," said Dan Kenney, the founder of DeKalb

County Community Gardens, who attended the virtual conference.

In DeKalb, nonprofits have finally cut out the middleman.

Since late spring, Klein's Farms in Elgin has been selling produce directly to non-profits in the county at wholesale prices.

"The quality is night and day," said Joey Moore, who runs the Barb Food Mart that has served the DeKalb School District 428 community since 2012. "When they're out picking produce that morning, it's the highest quality."

She and Kenney took part in a Zoom discussion with the Illinois Press Association on Friday afternoon.

"And there's the nutritional value," Kenney added. "Once you harvest something, it starts losing its nutritional value right away."

Even before Klein's partnered with DCCG and the food mart, DeKalb County was light years ahead of other parts of the state in terms of getting food from farm to table as quickly as possible.

Kenney founded DCCG a couple of months after Barb Food Mart launched in 2012. DCCG has since produced more than 200,000 pounds of food, according to its website. In 2017, it launched its Grow Mobile refrigerated truck program. In January alone, two trucks will make 11 distribution stops around the county.

The end result? Rather than receiving produce that's sat on shelves at food pantries, or been donated by grocers who can no longer sell it, families in need in DeKalb are getting farm-fresh produce.

"The message it sends out to people attending food pantries is that they deserve fresh, high-quality food," said Heather Edwards, DCCG's associate director who has overseen the launch of the Genoa Area Community Food Hub in the northern reaches of the county. "We all deserve that. Nobody should feel that they get a lesser quality than they deserve. It's about their dignity."

•IDES (Continued from page 12)

Illinois. In particular, a federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program which allows certain independent contractors to collect benefits has been ripe for fraud.

Richards and the administration have said the fraud is due to a nationwide scheme enabled by data breaches of private companies that have made individuals' information, such as Social Security numbers, available to scammers. It is not the result of a breach to state unemployment systems.

Rep. Mike Murphy, R-Springfield, called for the department to implement additional anti-fraud measures, such as a flagging system for out-of-state applicants and multiple failed claims, measures which IDES said it already has in place.

"The above-mentioned anti-fraud measures, and many others that are already in place, have the effect of slowing down the process of distributing (unemployment insurance) benefits — and that is an unavoidable and necessary thing," Richards said. "But it demonstrates the cruel irony that IDES is being simultaneously besieged by historic unemployment claims and be-

sieged by a globally orchestrated fraud scheme, and that solutions to these problems work against each other. Legislators are telling us to hurry up and make payments but slow down and put more barriers in place to stop fraud."

Richards said that IDES has been in routine communication with legislators and has done its best to provide timely answers to questions from lawmakers and constituents. But she said additional training and information will be necessary moving forward, citing a "misunderstanding some legislators have of IDES and unemployment insurance."

The lawmakers, however, continue to call for public hearings to discuss the department's pandemic response, rather than being reduced to input only through personal conversations with the administration.

"IDES will work with these legislators to create the first cohort of targeted training for elected state officials," Richards said.

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•Agribusiness

(Continued from page 7)

"There was a lot of give and take, and you'd think it would be a little easier to come to an agreement on some topics, but we discovered a lot of diversity in opinion," he said. "That really helps us view the situation through different eyes."

After the state health department issued its guidelines, businesses were at the mercy of their local health departments.

Things were more strict in Champaign than, say, St. Clair County.

"Very strict, I would say," in Champaign, Graham said.

For instance, those inflatable play areas that keep patrons on-site all day, after they've bought their children an all-day wristband? The Champaign-Urbana Public Health District took the air out of those structures.

But whereas some other health departments around the state required rigorous ticketing and appointment systems for orchards and pumpkin patches, the Champaign department didn't.

"Having the strength of numbers document maybe helped sway them to work a little more with us in some areas," Graham said.

No one likes to stand in line

Eckert braced for blowback when his business instituted a picking appointment system in Belleville.

"It was a challenge," Eckert said. "We had been charging some field admission for years, but we'd never pushed for advance ticketing. We didn't know how much resistance we were going to get."

Eckert's started with 100 patrons per 30-minute timeframe, \$2 to \$5 apiece per slot, to gauge how many people they could safely put on a wagon, and determine how many wagons they could run without issues. They slowly increased the number until they reached 300 per half-hour.

"While there was a lot of fear of it, acceptance was very high," Eckert said. "Don't get me wrong. There's always complaints."

On the flip side, he said he and his staff got more compliments than in years past.

He and Graham said there were fewer cars in the parking lots during typical peak times. But there were cars in the lots all day, and sales went up. With no long lines to stand in, pumpkin sales "skyrocketed," Graham said.

"They were through the roof," Eckert said, admitting he didn't know exactly why.

Gail Devilbiss, an agriculture and natural resources program coordinator with the University of Illinois Extension, pointed out in the session's chat that decorating pumpkins is "a family tradition," and a more cherished one in 2020 "because everyone was home. Same with Christmas trees."

Going against traditional grain

Graham admitted it was tough to make decisions that flew in the face of conventional, perceivably successful practices.

He winced when the decision was made to eliminate that play-all-day wristband.

"Usually the longer they stay on the farm, the more money they'll spend," he said.

This year, the Champaign farm

couldn't use its store as a sort of funnel, and a gateway into the pumpkin patch. But patrons spent more money in the store when they had elbow room, when the store wasn't packed to the gills. The plan going forward is to sell pumpkins at an outdoor structure, as well.

Some forced decisions were not only easier to carry out than expected, but saved a lot of time and resources. For instance, replacing the clunky, foot-pedal hand-washing stations with dozens of hand sanitizer stations cut down on maintenance, while making patrons feel safer.

Eckert said industrywide, apple sales have been declining in recent years. Whereas a grain farmer can change up his planting patterns, apple trees are where they are.

So in an effort to buoy sales and cut down on food waste, Eckert's partnered with grocery chain Schnucks to sell apples wholesale.

"It's the first time we've done wholesale in 30 years, in any meaningful way," he said.

'Video is going to be the real winner'

Graham said he and his staff saw a lot of new faces this past season. The trick now is bringing them back, especially when, as Eckert pointed out, other entertainment options, such as minor-league professional sports, are bound to return this fall.

"Video is going to be the real winner," Eckert said, before laughing a little. "It's something we're not really good at yet."

It takes a real mindset shift to go from traditional marketing like billboards and broadcast advertisements to leveraging social media.

"I used to view social media as the free advertising medium where you'd get a little bonus," he said. "When we started focusing on it I realized if you really want to do it well, you have to invest your promotional dollars into it. It takes a lot of effort to put together videos."

He said social media is the most measurable medium he's worked with, and its immediacy is invaluable when you're dealing with, say, the rapid changes of apple varieties in a season.

"You really see an immediate impact," he said. "If we announce honey-crisp apples are ready, in five minutes, you'll see people walking through the doors."

A major breakthrough for Curtis Orchard & Pumpkin Patch was using more video this past season. For instance, its Cooking with Kids videos, each just a few minutes, were an instant hit.

•Center

(Continued from page 11)

living room-type environment until they can be transferred or until a care plan can be established and the patient is better prepared to go home.

The CSC's open floor plan allows staff to monitor patients in a home-like setting where they are free to read, watch TV, sleep or talk when they are not in individual or group counseling sessions, which are scheduled daily. A multidisciplinary team cares for patients, including a psychiatric provider, psychiatric nurses and mental health therapists, all dedicated to helping them cope.



FILE PHOTO The Scoop Today/Shopper's Guide

Agricultural businesses such as apple orchards and pumpkin patches had to make adjustments to welcome visitors during the 2020 harvest season.

Graham said the kids were a joy to work with – and surprisingly well-behaved. It drove home a reminder that agribusiness is about more than selling apples and pumpkins.

"We're this bastion of nostalgia — the way things used to be," Eckert said.

Emphasis on education and public trust

In the mid-'90s, apple cider got a bad rap when unpasteurized batches caused three e coli outbreaks.

"We'd eroded the public trust, and we needed to get it back," Eckert said. "Being good stewards of the industry is an important part. We have an important role in connecting people with food, and them feeling good about that."

He and Graham agreed that in 2020, families were willing and eager to come to the farm and see how food is grown, and how the products they buy in the store are produced.

"Our guests really felt safe coming to us and seeing where food was produced," Eckert said. "There was some security that came with that."

Organic, locally grown food has been trendy in past years, but 2020 felt different, he said.

"Before, it was more of a luxury, and now I think people see us as critical."

Patients appropriate for this care setting are those experiencing a behavioral health crisis without present aggressions. The patients must be voluntary to access treatment and willing to participate in the treatment program. This is a 24/7 program, with patients spending the night in the care environment.

Due to COVID-19 safety restrictions, no ribbon-cutting or public open house is planned, and no tours are available.

For more information about the crisis center, call 815-599-7800.

REAL ESTATE LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE
15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
STEPHENSON COUNTY - FREEPORT,
ILLINOIS
Fifth Third Bank, National Association
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2019CH33

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Improved with Single Family Home
COMMONLY KNOWN AS: 20 N Sunset Ave Freeport, IL 61032

Sale terms: 10% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the auction; The balance, including the Judicial sale fee for Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund, which is calculated at the rate of \$1 for each \$1,000 or fraction thereof of the amount paid by the purchaser not to exceed \$300, in certified funds, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.

If the property is a condominium and the foreclosure takes place after 1/1/2007, purchasers other than the mortgagees will be required to pay any assessment and legal fees due under The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4).

If the property is located in a common interest community, purchasers other than mortgagees will be required to pay any assessment and legal fees due under the Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1).

If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney.

Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser shall receive a Certificate of Sale, which will entitle the purchaser to a Deed to the real estate after Confirmation of the sale. The successful purchaser has the sole responsibility/expense of evicting any tenants or other individuals presently in possession of the subject premises.

The property will NOT be open for inspection and Plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the Court file to verify all information.

IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW.

For information: Examine the court file or contact Plaintiff's attorney: Codilis & Associates, P.C., 15W030 North Frontage Road, Suite 100, Burr Ridge, IL 60527, (630) 794-9876. Please refer to file number 14-19-03108.

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Thank You

Community Bank's staff greatly appreciates the patience and understanding that our customers have had as safety precautions were implemented to protect everyone during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Warren, a walk-up window has been installed for customer convenience.

*Please be safe
in 2021*



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