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VOL. 87 • NO. 8

YOUR FREE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 17, 2021



DAVE BUSCH PHOTO *The Scoop Today*

Stockton High School senior Mitchel Coffey looks to make a pass during the Feb. 6 game against Le-Win High School. Le-Win topped Stockton 47-36.

## Warren boys look to capitalize on experience

By Trenten Scheidegger  
CORRESPONDENT

Head Coach Josh Knuth and the Warren boys basketball team are back and they are ready to continue building off the success they established last season. The team is coming off a year where they finished 17-9 in the regular season and took third place in the Northwest Upstate Illini-West Conference with a league record of 6-6.

Knuth, who is in his third season as the team's head coach, believes that experience could be both a team strength and a weakness. In the starting rotation, the Warriors have solid experience as the team returns four starters on the varsity level. However, Knuth said the team lacks experience coming off the bench and he believes that is where the team will need to improve in their rotations.

If returning starters Hunter Kopp, Brayden Bohnsack, Matthew Riedl and Masyn Neff can become leaders and set an example for newcomers off the bench, the Warriors will certainly be a team to watch. The team also returns a number of other players with some varsity experience in Skylar Neff, Ayden Mahoney, Christian Eaton, Michael Neff and Alex Marsden.

Losing Ethan Williams to graduation last year will surely be tough to replace, as Williams was one of the team's leading scorers. However, Riedl, a senior, was the team's top scorer last year, averaging just over 12 points-per-game. Not far behind him was Bohnsack, a junior who put up just over 9 points-per-game himself during his sophomore campaign.

**See WARREN, Page 7**

## Core of upperclassmen look to lead Stockton boys

By Trenten Scheidegger  
CORRESPONDENT

The Stockton boys basketball team and head coach John Hammann are ecstatic to be back on the basketball court in 2021.

Hammann, who also works as the school's athletic director, knows all too well the struggles the past year has brought to student-athletes and youth sports around the country. Following the Illinois High School

Athletics Association's announcement for a modified 2021 season, Hammann and his squad were more than ready to seize the opportunity ahead of them.

The Stockton Blackhawks are coming off a season where the team finished an 11-15 overall record and took sixth place in the Northwest Upstate Illini-West Conference with a 4-8 record in league play. They were

able to pick up a nice postseason victory over Annawan just before their season came to an end and the sports world was brought to a halt.

Despite losing a senior leader like Drew McGovern, the Blackhawks have varsity experience that should serve them well. Much like the Lady Blackhawks, the Stockton boys'

**See UPPERCLASSMEN, Page 6**

## Stockton girls basketball off to a good start

By Trenten Scheidegger  
CORRESPONDENT

The Stockton girls' basketball team is coming off a 2019-'20 season where the team finished with an overall record of 25-7 and placed second in the Northwest Upstate Illini-West Conference. Although the team returned a number of contributors from last season, there is a new leader at the helm as former head coach Tim Timpe resigned just a month ago. This time around, Robyn Schulz will be the head coach of the Lady Blackhawks.

Schulz is in an odd situation for a first year head coach. With limited interaction time, limited practices and meetings, and very little time to implement a new system, Schulz certainly has his hands full.

"As with all other teams, we have not had much gym time to practice, so we are a little rusty, but that will take care of itself as the season goes on," Schulz said.

Fortunately, Schulz has a roster of experienced varsity players who know how to get it done on the court. Tiana Timpe, a senior team captain, has been the team's leading scorer for the past

two seasons averaging just over 17 points-per-game in 2018-'19, and just under 17 points-per-game in 2019-'20. Behind her, the Lady Blackhawks return Kenze Haas and Kiersten Winters.

**See BASKETBALL, Page 6**

## 2021 provides opportunity for Warren girls

By Trenten Scheidegger  
CORRESPONDENT

2021 is a year that many people are hoping brings change and positivity. The Warren girls' basketball team is hoping for much the same after coming off last year's 4-24 overall record and last place finish in the Northwest Upstate Illini-West Conference with an 0-10 record in league play.

There is no reason for the Lady Warriors to hang their head on that, however. The modified 2021 basketball season, recently approved by the Illinois High School Athletics Association, features none of the pressures of a conference championship, or even a postseason. This could be the perfect opportunity for the Warriors to enjoy doing what they love and find happiness together on the court.

Not only will the Warriors have a new look on how they play and attack teams on the court, but they will have a new face on the bench as well, with new head coach Rob Culbertson.

With no pressure in his first season, Culbertson does not have to perform an immediate turnaround for the Warriors. He can implement his system over time and allow things to play out on the court.

The good news is that Culbertson's debut squad has a number of

**See GIRLS, Page 6**



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# Nature foundation raises money to study bald eagle population

The Eagle Nature Foundation in Apple River is sponsoring a 50/50 raffle with tickets available for \$5 each.

The raffle is open to the general public for anyone who wishes to donate to the organization. A winner will be drawn during the foundation's March 27 annual meeting. The winner does not have to be present to win.

Money raised through the raffle will help foundation members study bald eagles to determine why more immature eagles haven't been seen during the winter season.

"During ENF's 2021 annual Midwinter Bald Eagle Count, one dam on the Mississippi River had 250 adult eagles with no immatures," according to a foundation news release. "This follows a gradual decline in the number and

percentage of immatures that have been recorded by this annual count over the past 10 years.

"Are the eggs not hatching, or are the young birds starving, or being killed by something else, such as a disease, or by poisons found in the environment? The reason for this decline has to be determined while the adults are still able to reproduce."

The foundation also is raising money through a raffle of donated items. Tickets cost \$2 each. To get information about the raffle items, call 815-594-2306.

To purchase raffle tickets, send a check to: Eagle Nature Foundation, 300 E. Hickory St., Apple River, IL 61001.

For more information, contact foundation Executive Director Terrence N. Ingram, at 815-594-2306.

## Birth

### Emmerson Jo Meinsma

Emmerson Jo Meinsma is the new daughter of Bryce and Lindsey Meinsma of Lanark, Illinois, born on Feb. 9, 2021, at FHN Memorial Hospital in Freeport, Illinois. Emmerson joins a brother, Reed, 2. Grandparents are Darryl and Lori Appel of Thomson, Vickie Meinsma of Lanark and Randy Meinsma of Elizabeth.



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## Chesney takes on spokesperson role

State Rep. Andrew Chesney, R-Freeport, center, recently was named minority spokesperson of the House Cities and Villages Committee for the 102<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly. Chesney has served on the committee for the past two years. "Government closest to the people is usually most responsive to the people," Chesney said in a news release. "I know from personal experience how many hours these local officials put in to serve their constituents, and they deserve to be heard on issues that come before the Illinois House."

## Agronomy sessions go virtual

The University of Illinois Extension will continue the Northwest Illinois Agronomy Summit by shifting to a virtual platform this year.

"This live series will consist of weekly sessions to provide valuable updates for Midwestern row crop producers while allowing them the opportunity to ask questions and have a dialogue with the experts," according to an Extension news release.

The theme for this year's summit is updates in nutrient and pest management, bringing in specialists from the University of Illinois and the University of Wisconsin-Madison to discuss production strategies including pest management, cover crop management, grain safety and more.

The educational sessions will take place throughout February and March from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. on their scheduled days.

On Feb. 23, the summit will feature a session about corn rootworm management with Nick Seiter, research assistant professor and faculty Extension specialist at the University of Illinois.

Ag officials reported an uptick in corn rootworm activity and damage in northwestern Illinois in 2020.

For a complete summit agenda, go online to <https://extension.illinois.edu/jsw>. Registration may be completed online or by calling the University of Illinois Extension at 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 Phillip Alberti, crop science educator with University of Illinois Extension in the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences at [pAlberti@illinois.edu](mailto:pAlberti@illinois.edu).

## FHN receives honor for workforce efforts

FHN has received the 2020 Business Leadership Award from the Illinois Workforce Partnership.

The IWP honors 66 companies of all sizes in the state each year for excellence in workforce services and economic development. Each of the 22 workforce development boards in Illinois selects a winner for the three categories of awards presented by the IWP. This category recognizes a private-sector company that has demonstrated leadership in the areas of workforce services and economic development and has made significant contributions to its local workforce area.

The Workforce Connection in FHN's service area (Boone, Stephenson and Winnebago counties) selected FHN for the award because of its excellence in addressing workforce needs, especially during (and because of) a pandemic, using its incumbent worker training and developing an apprenticeship model.

This is the third time FHN has been recognized by the state of Illinois for its creativity in workforce development. Previous honors included the CNA to RN Scholarship Program and FHN's role in the development of the Northwest Illinois Workforce Collaborative.



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# Obituaries

## MANFRED J. DOMBERGER SR.

Manfred J. Domberger Sr., 82, of Kent, Illinois, passed away on Wednesday Feb. 3, 2021, at home surrounded by his family. He was born in Germany on June 11, 1938, to Maria and Joseph Domberger. His father passed away in World War II. Manfred, his mother and stepfather, Arnold Finks, came to the United States in 1951.

On March 29, 1958, in Stockton, Illinois, he married the love of his life, Donna Nowak, and they were married for 62 years. Manfred worked at Newell Window Furnishings as a tool

and die maker for more than 40 years. He was also a member of the Kent Fire Department for 24 years, and St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Kent.

Survivors include his wife, Donna; his daughter, Vicki (Roger) Kloeping; son, Manfred Jr. (Earlene) Domberger; grandchildren, Amy (Jeremy) Rolling, Katie (Doug Hastings) Stager and Jennifer Duarte; great-grandchildren, Justin, Jaydon, Brianna, Danica and Lukas; brother, Sigurd (Tracy) Finks; niece, Kelsey (Brandon) Stenglein; nephew, Brian Finks; cousins, Anton and Resi Hintermeier and Guenther and Rita Hintermeier of Germany; and

special dog, Amber.

He was preceded in death by his parents; stepfather, Arnold; brother, Arnie; and infant son.

Arrangements have been made with Offenheiser Swartz funeral home. Funeral services were held Saturday Feb. 6, 2021, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Kent, with the Rev. Scott Wilson officiating. Burial will be in Loran.

A memorial will be established in his name.

The family would like to give a big thank you to daughter Vicki, Dave Abel, Tri-State Home and Hospice for all their care and support.

## HELEN R. FINN

Nurse, World War II veteran and cherished aunt, Helen Rita Finn, 99, passed away Friday, Feb. 12, 2021, at Presence St. Joseph Center in Freeport, Illinois. Helen was born in Pleasant Valley, Illinois, to Steve and Ella (Carroll) Finn, the fifth of six children. She attended Neutral Ridge and Holy Cross schools, graduating from Stockton High in 1939. Starting her nursing training at St. Francis Hospital in Freeport, she graduated in June 1942 and was employed at St. Clare Hospital in Monroe, Wisconsin.

During World War II, she enlisted in the Army in May 1944, where she was commissioned second lieutenant. In July 1944, Lt. Finn sailed for England and was stationed in an Army hospital in London. She spoke of returning to the United States on the Queen Mary. Helen was very proud of her service to our country.

Later, she moved to the Milwaukee area, where she continued nursing until her retirement. Helen was one of the first to become a nurse anesthetist in Wisconsin, an opportunity to advance



in her field.

Helen often came home when not working to help her elderly parents and interact with her many nieces and nephews. We could always count on her to correct us!

Upon retiring, she moved to Rockford, Illinois, for many years before making her way to Oakley Courts in Freeport in May 2010. This was her home until February 2020 when health issues necessitated the move to Presence St. Joseph's.

She enjoyed traveling, reading, crossword puzzles, an occasional brandy old-fashioned sweet or later in life, a sugar-free iced coffee. Helen followed the Milwaukee Bucks and the Chicago Bulls, along with many family sporting events.

Helen descended from a long line of "feisty" Irish women and she was often described the same way by those who

knew her and loved her.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her siblings and their spouses, Mildred (Stanley) Powers, Carl (Annalou) Finn, Joseph (Mildred) Finn, Dorothy (Kenneth) Raih and Eugene (June) Finn; and a nephew, Robert J. Finn.

She is survived by 18 nieces and nephews and their families, Jerry (Valerie) Powers, Arlene Pasek, Joanne Scotch, Julene Finn-Askins, William (Maggie) Finn, Thomas (Brenda) Finn, Carole Richter, Dr. Tom (Mollie) Raih, Gregory (Mollie) Raih, Daniel (Jean) Raih, Deanna (Tom Ewing) Raih, Natalie (Chris) Hack, Kristine Finn, Scott Finn, Timothy (Lauren) Finn, Van Patrick (Laura) Finn, Kathleen (Randall) Kruse, Colleen (Karl) Finn-Henze and Robert Finn's widow, Nancy Finn.

A visitation and funeral service were held Tuesday, Feb. 16, 2021, at Holy Cross Catholic Church in Stockton. Interment will take place at Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery in Stockton. A memorial fund has been established. Condolences may be shared at [www.hermannfuneralhome.com](http://www.hermannfuneralhome.com).

## WAYNE SIMMONS

Wayne "Buck" Simmons of Stockton passed away Sunday, Feb. 7, 2021. He was born Aug. 5, 1941, to the late Carson and Ardash (Vanderheyden) Simmons. He was a 1959 graduate of Stockton High School.

Buck worked as a mechanic for Jim Baber and Kappes Standard. He married Pat Schiess on Oct. 14, 1961, and they started farming in 1962. Farming was Buck's passion and he and Pat worked side by side daily and were still actively farming. They milked for 35 years, earning several awards. In the past years, they continued to grain farm. In their free time they both enjoyed



playing slots at local casinos or a trip to Vegas.

He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Pat; his children, Brad Simmons of Lena, Illinois, Wendy (Al) Nowvioc of

Kent, Illinois, and Brian (Vicky) Simmons of Walkerton, Indiana; his grandchildren, Amber Nowvioc,

Adam Nowvioc, Benjamin (Ruth) Chacko and Joseph Chacko; and his great-grandchildren, Maddalyn Nowvioc, Ashton Nowvioc and Amori Chacko. He was preceded in death by his parents and his sister, Carol Althof.

A visitation and funeral service were held Feb. 12, 2021, at Hermann Funeral Home in Stockton. Interment will take place at Ladies Union Cemetery in Stockton. A memorial fund has been established. Condolences may be shared at [www.hermannfuneralhome.com](http://www.hermannfuneralhome.com).

## LUCILLE LEE

Lucille "Lucy" E. (Seefeldt) Lee, age 88, of Freeport, Illinois, passed away peacefully on Sunday, Feb. 7, 2021, with the family by her side. She was born Dec. 26, 1932, to William and Hedwig (Drews) Mann. She married John "Jack" Seefeldt on Dec. 8, 1949; he preceded her in death in 1982. She married Ben Lee on June 4, 1983.

Lucy was a full-time mother raising her five children and a part-time seamstress. She enjoyed fishing, baking — especially pies — and spending time with her children and grandchildren. She was known as "Grandma Lucy" to many. Lucy was a member of St. John's United Church of Christ in Freeport. She was the past president of the Ladies Elks and Scottish Rites Women's Club and past queen of the Stephenson County Antique Engine Club.

She is survived by her husband, Ben Lee of Freeport; children, Janice (Ron) Beckett of Roscoe, Illinois, Roger Seefeldt of Freeport, Richard Seefeldt of Ridott, Illinois, Mary Seefeldt of Freeport and Jeff (Jodi) Seefeldt of



Pearl City, Illinois; grandchildren, Laura (Mike) Vernam and Ian, Sadie, Maggie and Emmitt Seefeldt-Swanson; one great-grandchild, Jacob Hudler; and

Ben's family.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Jack Seefeldt; son, Ray, in infancy; two brothers, Ralph Mann and Donald Mann; and a granddaughter, Molly Seefeldt-Swanson.

A visitation and funeral services were held Saturday Feb. 13, 2021, at the Leamon Funeral Home in Lena. The Rev. Randy Nicholas officiated the services.

Burial will be in Rock Lily Cemetery in Winslow, Illinois.

A memorial has been established in her memory.

Condolences may be sent to the family at [www.leamonfh.com](http://www.leamonfh.com).

Obituaries continued on page 8

Gianna Willson says . . .

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# VIEWPOINT

## Slices of life

# You've got this — one step at a time

We all have something that seems just out of reach, just beyond our grasp. Whatever it is — you've got this.

To the 4-year-old who just wants to ride a bike like her 6-year-old sister, but despite being in training with dad running behind for the last two weeks (every night after work), the training wheels remain and this situation is getting old — even for a 4-year old.

Stick the course. You're almost there. You've got this.

To the 12-year-old who just moved into a new town with a new school, who feels like he knows no one (because he doesn't) and a new school at age 12 can be a tough circumstance to find yourself in — even if you are popular, which it's hard to be when you know no one and have no friends. When your plight feels insurmountable please understand that it isn't.

Reach out to others. If someone smiles at you, smile back. You've got this.

To the 17-year-old who longs for a date to prom, but feels too awkward or afraid to ask the girl or guy of their dreams because they seem cooler and smarter and more well-adjusted than you could ever hope to be. Don't be deceived by appearances. Ask anyway. If you don't, you may always regret your hesitance.

No matter the answer, take



By **JILL PERTLER**  
Contributor

control over your own situation. Go ahead, you've got this.

To the young parents who take turns changing diapers on two babies under 2 years old after each spending 10-plus hours Monday through Friday at their individual careers who cringe because supper still hasn't hit the table and there is laundry to fold and neither of you is sure who is more overwhelmed and a part of you both longs for the simpler days when it wasn't so busy and so complicated and so exhausting. (Although you'd never say this out loud.) Your situation may seem permanent and daunting, but it is both and neither at the same time.

Give yourself a break. Give each other a break. Clean laundry is overrated, happy babies are not. You've got this.

To the 50-year-old who is tired. Tired of the career that seemed so inviting 25 years ago. To the concept of a mortgage that never seems to get paid off. To the idea

See **SLICES**, Page 9



# Progressive and conservative legislators unite to protect against exploitative loans

By Rep. Will Guzzardi, D-Chicago, and Rep. Andrew Chesney, R-Freeport

We are two legislators who don't agree on a lot.

One of us is a Chicago Democrat who co-chairs the Illinois House Progressive Caucus. The other is a Northwest Illinois Republican who is a firebrand for conservative causes.

Despite these obvious ideological differences, this summer we joined forces on an issue that matters deeply to both of us: curbing excessive interest rates on payday loans.

A payday loan is a short-term loan that is supposed to be meant to keep a family afloat until the next paycheck comes in. It is intended to be a tool of last resort for people whose backs are against the wall.

The payday lending industry knows members of its customer base are desperate, and they have been insufficiently prevented



Andrew Chesney



Will Guzzardi

from taking advantage of that desperation. Payday loans could be issued at annualized interest rates over 400%.

Title loans are no better — and maybe even worse. With similarly staggering interest rates, these products are secured by the title on one's car. Failure to pay usually results in forfeiture of one's vehicle.

Most of the big players in payday and title lending are big out-of-state chains that come into our communities, extract money from our most vulnerable

neighbors and give little back in return. They take advantage of desperation, knowing that the high default rate on their loans puts their customer base in cascading financial peril while they continue to profit.

Since last summer, we worked with a group of advocacy organizations to tackle this issue. The Heartland Alliance, the Woodstock Institute and other groups provided meaningful assistance to us in crafting a proposal to cap interest rates on these products at 36%. That is still awfully high — double what you might pay on even credit card debt — but it begins to protect those who are being exploited by shady out-of-state lenders.

While significant ideological rifts exist on major tenets of the economic justice pillar of the Black Caucus agenda passed in January, this short-term lending

See **LEGISLATORS**, Page 8

## THE SCOOP TODAY SHOPPER'S GUIDE

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# IRS guards against fraud as tax season begins

Officials at the Internal Revenue Service's Criminal Investigation Division Chicago field office are reminding taxpayers today to file accurate tax returns and choose a tax preparer wisely. Tax season started nationwide Feb. 12 when the agency began accepting and processing 2020 tax year returns.

U.S. persons are subject to tax on worldwide income from all sources, according to an IRS news release.

"Most taxpayers meet this obligation by reporting all taxable income and paying taxes according to the law," the release said.

However, those who willfully hide income and are found to be committing fraud could be subject to penalties including payment of taxes owed plus interest, fines and jail time.

"Most individuals file truthful tax returns voluntarily and pay their share of taxes," said Tamera Cantu, acting special agent in charge at the IRS Criminal Investigation Chicago Field Office. "IRS special agents are experts at their jobs and are doing their part to ensure honest individuals do not have to pick up the tab of those who blatantly ignore their responsibility of filing taxes, or those filing fraudulent returns."

Tax return preparers are vital to the U.S. tax system. As of tax year 2018, 55 percent of taxpayers used a paid

preparer.

"Although most preparers provide honest and professional services, there is a small number of dishonest preparers who set up shop during filing season to steal money, personal and financial information from clients," the release said.

Taxpayers should keep in mind these tips when choosing a tax preparer:

- Look for a preparer who is available year-round in case questions arise after the filing season.

- Ask if the preparer has an IRS Preparer Tax Identification Number (PTIN), which is required for paid preparers.

- Inquire about the preparer's credentials and check their qualifications.

- Ask about service fees. Avoid preparers who base fees on a percentage of their client's refund or claim to offer a bigger refund than their competition.

- Never sign a blank or incomplete return. Review your return before signing it. Refunds should go directly to the taxpayer, not the preparer.

For more tips on choosing a tax professional or to file a complaint against a preparer, visit IRS.gov.

Taxpayers who suspect tax violations by a person or business may report them to the IRS using Form 3949A, Information Referral.



DAVE BUSCH PHOTO The Scoop Today/Shopper's Guide

## Warren beats Pearl City

Warren High School senior Matthew Riedl (No. 10) works to the basket amid several Pearl City defenders during the Feb. 6 game. The Warren boys delivered a convincing 51-21 win.

## Sports roundup

### High school basketball

A roundup of high school basketball scores and notes received by The Scoop Today/Shopper's Guide (all scores are from varsity games unless noted):

#### Boys

- Feb. 8, Orangeville 39, Dakota 42
- Feb. 8, junior varsity, Orangeville 35, Dakota 49

- Feb. 10, Le-Win 35, Dekalb 48
- Feb. 12, Orangeville 37, Dakota 39
- Feb. 12, junior varsity, Orangeville 18, Dakota 34

#### Girls

- Feb. 8, River Ridge Scales Mound 40, Pecatonica 42
- The RRSW Wildcats were lead by sophomore Sydney Driscoll with 12

- points.
- Feb. 9, River Ridge Scales Mound 52, West Carroll 48

Sophomores Sydney Driscoll and Mickayla Bass each had 11 points for RRSW while junior Amber Hupperich made 4 of 5 free throws and scored eight points. West Carroll was lead by senior Madison Haynes, who

See **ROUNDUP**, Page 8

## Youth art contest invites entries

Registration is open now for a youth art contest sponsored by the Monroe Arts Center and the Monroe Woman's Club.

The contest is open to all area students with three age divisions: junior (kindergarten through fifth grade), intermediate (sixth through eighth grades) and senior (ninth through 12<sup>th</sup> grades).

There are three categories of art that will be accepted — fiber art, sculpture and drawing and painting.

Starting Feb. 16, students may register to receive a free Art Start

Kit to help them get started on a project for the contest. To register, go online to [monroeartscenter.com/communityevents](http://monroeartscenter.com/communityevents) or call 608-325-5700.

Contest submissions are due March 16.

Devon Calvert, an elementary art teacher, will serve as the contest judge. Calvert recently was elected to the National Art Education Association Board of Directors.

Winners will be announced April 7, with the winning entries displayed at the Monroe Arts Center.

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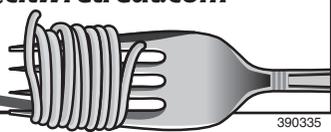


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DAVE BUSCH PHOTO *The Scoop Today*

Le-Win senior Evan England (No. 1) looks to make a move during the game against Stockton.

## • **Upperclassmen** (Continued from front page)

team carries a strong roster of upperclassmen, including four seniors and five juniors.

Led by senior guard Mitchel Coffey, who is headed to Clarke University for both basketball and golf, and three other seniors in Josh Reynolds, Bryce Smith and Devin Wickler, Stockton's senior class has a lot of experience on the court together. A strong junior class featuring 6'2" Caleb Mammoser and 6'4" Drew Mensendike provide quality size around Coffey, who stands over 6'4". Together, the trio gives Hammann a

versatile rotation of sizable guys who can handle the ball up top and can work down in the post.

Stockton kicked off their season with a nonconference matchup against a familiar opponent in the Lena-Winslow Panthers on Feb. 6. Le-Win, who has been one of the better teams in the area throughout the past couple years, would be a good litmus test for Hammann and his team. The first quarter looked to be back and forth, but Stockton was unable to stop the Panthers from scoring outside the three-point line,

which allowed Le-Win to take a 12-8 lead into the second quarter. The Panthers outscored Stockton in the second quarter 11-7 and the Blackhawks found themselves in a 23-15 hole going into halftime.

Stockton would come out strong in the third quarter, however. Thanks to a strong six-point quarter from Coffey and a three-pointer from Reynolds, the Blackhawks were able to outscore the Panthers 11-9. They were unable to pull off the comeback in the fourth quarter, however, as Stockton lost the season opener by a score of 47-36.

Still, it was a solid opening performance from Hammann's squad as they stayed competitive.

Coffey led the team with 15 points and Mammoser was the next leading scorer with seven. Mensendike finished the game with six points and the Blackhawks were able to leave the court feeling pretty well for where they stand after game one.

Hammann and the Blackhawks will look to improve on their mistakes and get back to work Feb. 19, when they face off with another nonconference opponent in the Polo Marcos.

## • **Basketball** (Continued from front page)

Haas, a 6-foot junior forward, provides the team with size down low to complement Timpe's outside shooting. Haas averages over seven points-per-game on her career but is off to her best start yet as she averages over 13 points-per-game in the early season. Winters, a 5'9" senior, makes the Blackhawks one of the taller girls teams in the area, and gives the team an advantage not only in height, but in leadership as well.

Together, the trio provides Schulz with a strong group of sizable upperclassmen who have plenty of experience in the win column.

"Our strength is experience, with three returning starters and some very talented newcomers," Schulz said.

The Blackhawks also return five other varsity letter winners from the past season.

The transition is off to a great start, as the Stockton girls have won their first three games to kick off their 2021 season. The modified season opened with an impressive win over the Pearl City Wolves, by a score of 52-22. Timpe was quickly back to where she left off last season, dropping 20 points in the season opener. Haas had 11 points of

her own as the duo led the way to a big win in the season debut.

The Blackhawks had a much tougher matchup in their next two games, as they faced off with East Dubuque twice in a row. The first game, on Feb. 9, went in favor of Stockton by a score of 48-38. Timpe and Haas led the way again as the duo combined for 37 points.

By Feb. 11, when the Blackhawks and Warriors faced off for the second time, Stockton had them all figured out. The Blackhawks jumped out to a 17-7 lead in the first quarter and did not look back as they went on to win 45-24. Timpe finished with 16 points and Bryn Haas was right behind her with 12.

"With no postseason this year or the ability to win a conference championship where none exists, my hope is to win every game, as it is every year," Schulz said. "However, the additional goal is to make it as fun and enjoyable season as possible for the players, in the short time that we have for a season."

You can catch the Stockton girls out in one of their upcoming games, Wednesday, Feb. 17, or Friday, Feb. 19, both against the River Ridge-Scales Mound squad, live on the NFHS Network.

## • **Girls** (Continued from front page)

returning starters and a number of underclassmen getting experience.

Leading the team is guard Sydni Sigafus, who is returning for her senior season with the Warriors. Alongside her is fellow senior Emilie Slichenmyer, who has grown quite familiar with being on the court with Sigafus. Together, the duo provides Culbertson with senior leaders he can count on to help shape the future of this team.

That future includes sophomore Elaina Martin, who returns after becoming a starter her freshman year. Beneath her are two freshmen who Culbertson said are players to watch in Adalynn Bohnsack and Lauren Williams.

It has been a rough start for the Lady Warriors as they could not have been set up to face a much tougher opponent in their season debut. The Galena Pirates finished their 2019-'20 season with a record of 25-7 and finished first in the conference with a 9-1 record in league play. The Pirates picked up right where they left off last season and dominated the first two games as Warren went on to fall 75-20 and 41-17. That Pirates team is arguably the toughest competition the Lady Warriors will face all season, however, and gives them a good idea on what they need to improve on if they want to work their way into the win column.

Still, Culbertson and the Warriors are happy to be playing the game they love. "It feels great to be back in sports," Culbertson said. "I think it gives a boost to the mood of all the student-athletes."

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# Briefs

## Women's group sets Feb. 17 meeting

The Concerned Women of America, Stockton Group, will meet at 2 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 17, at Calvary Church in Stockton.

The CWA is a group of concerned Christian women who meet to be informed, to pray and to act. The non-denominational group is pro-family, pro-life, pro-religious freedom, pro-national sovereignty, and against sexual exploitation.

Any women who are interested are welcome to join the group. For more information or to request a ride to the meeting, call Carol Rowe at 815-947-2122 or Pam Hess at 815-947-9154.

## Farm Service Agency meeting goes virtual

A virtual meeting of the Farm Service Agency's Jo Daviess county committee will be held Wednesday, March 3.

The regular session portion of the meeting is normally open for in-person viewing at the county office, but because of COVID-19, access to the office is limited.

County FSA officials will enable a virtual viewing via a computer or other smart device for interested producers. To access the virtual viewing, contact the Jo Daviess County FSA office at 815-815-3418, extension 2.

## FEMA funding boosts vaccination efforts

Officials at the Federal Emergency Management Agency and Illinois Emergency Management Agency announced recently that more than \$22.8 million in federal funding has been made available to IEMA for COVID-19 vaccination costs.

This funding is an advance payment to IEMA for eligible reimbursable costs associated with the rapid distribution and administration of COVID-19 vaccines. The grant will help fund mobile vaccination assistance teams and facilities, including costs for medical and non-medical staff to support these efforts.

"Expediting funds to support our states' vaccination efforts is a priority for FEMA and the federal government," said Kevin M. Sligh, acting regional administrator of FEMA Region 5. "This grant will be used to expand

access to the COVID-19 vaccination to more communities across the state of Illinois, helping ensure every Illinoisan who wants a vaccine, can get one."

"These additional resources will allow our state to supplement the efforts of local health departments to accelerate vaccination efforts with a keen focus on equitability and accessibility," said IEMA Director Alicia Tate-Nadeau. "We appreciate the cooperation and collaboration of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and we look forward to assisting our partners at the Illinois Department of Public Health to distribute a safe and effective vaccine."

FEMA provides funding at a 100 percent federal share of eligible reimbursable expenses for this project.

To learn more, go online to [www.fema.gov/public-assistance-local-state-tribal-and-non-profit](http://www.fema.gov/public-assistance-local-state-tribal-and-non-profit).

## • Warren (Continued from front page)

Together, the duo can light it up on the offensive side of the court.

Kopp, a senior, put up nearly 5 points-per-game in his junior campaign, and if he can build off of that even slightly, the Warriors will have a solid trio of scorers leading the way for them on offense.

Bohnsack is not just an offensive threat, however. His rebounding skills help keep a number of plays alive for the Warriors as he racked

up 88 offensive rebounds for his team last year. If Bohnsack can continue his impressive rebounding numbers and find a way to hit open teammates, Knuth will have the assets he needs to run it back for another successful season.

Following their season opener against the River Ridge Wildcats, the Warriors continue their campaign with back-to-back matchups against the Durand Bulldogs this week.

There won't be a conference championship or postseason tournament, which allows Knuth and his players to go out there and simply have fun.

"It feels great to be playing again," Knuth said. "I am just so grateful our kids get an opportunity to compete." Knuth said his squad is ready to seize the moment.

"We will enjoy and make the most of the opportunity," he said.



PHOTO SUBMITTED *The Scoop Today*

## Stockton students say it with flowers

The Stockton High School freshman class held a flower fundraiser in which students could purchase carnations for each other before the Valentine's Day weekend. Students helping with the sale included, from left, Gracie Raab, Gabbi VenHuizen and Neveah Peterson. The freshmen sold 360 flowers during the first-ever flower fundraiser.

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# Obituary

## JANICE NADEAN SISLER (LISK)

Janice Nadean Sisler (Lisk), 77 of Freeport, Illinois, passed away Saturday, Jan. 30, 2021, at her home. She was born Aug. 9, 1943, in Mount Carroll, Illinois, the daughter of Merle and Virginia (Adams) Sisler.

Janice is survived by her daughter, Tonya Lisk of Amarillo, Texas; sisters, Merlene Erb of Lena, Illinois, and Shirley Busch of Peoria, Arizona; five grandchildren, six

great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

Janice worked at Dollar General in Freeport, Newell Co. in Freeport and Circle Lounge in Freeport. Janice went to Lena-Winslow school. She grew up in Eleroy, Illinois, and they moved to Lena and then to Freeport. Janice was preceded in death by her parents and her son, Timothy Sisler.

Janice wished to donate her body to medical research. There will be no visitation or funeral services.

## • Legislators (Continued from page 4)

reform was one proposal that attracted broad bipartisan support from both the very conservative like me (Andrew) and the very progressive like me (Will). The reform measure passed, and it is currently awaiting the governor's signature.

We think, no matter where you are

on the ideological spectrum, you can agree that 400% annualized interest is outrageous. The hardships placed on vulnerable Illinoisans by these leaders of last resort is wrong. Whether you are a progressive or conservative, or simply care about the well-being of your fellow Illinoisans, we believe this measure will make our state a

better, fairer and more decent place.

*State Rep. Andrew Chesney, R-Freeport, represents the 89<sup>th</sup> District, which includes all of Jo Daviess and Stephenson counties. State Rep. Will Guzzardi, D-Chicago, represents the 39<sup>th</sup> District in the city of Chicago.*

## • Roundup (Continued from page 5)

scored 19 points, and sophomore Tori Moshure, who added 13 points.  
• Feb. 9, junior varsity, River Ridge Scales Mound 40, West Carroll 29

• Feb. 9, Orangeville 39, Dakota

27  
• Feb. 9, Le-Win 43, Oregon 25  
Le-Win senior Sadie Mowery had 15 points. Senior Ashlyn Almasy had 10 rebounds, while freshman Molly Amend had six. Senior Cheyenne Mapes had eight points and five

steals.  
• Feb. 11, Stockton 45, East Dubuque, 24  
Tiana Timpe scored 16 points for the Blackhawks while Brynn Haas chipped in 12.

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To be considered for the national leadership position, farmers must complete the required application and "agreement to serve" statement and return them to the Illinois Soybean Association office by Monday, March 1. Contact Dustin Scott, ISA director of operations, at 309-808-3603 or scottdd@ilsoy.org to receive a copy of the application and agreement to serve.

In addition, the Illinois Soybean Board is also seeking candidates for ISB at-large directors. These individuals will be nominated by

the majority of the Illinois Soybean Board sitting in a quorum at meeting to be determined. After that, two of the nominated individuals will be elected by a majority of soybean producers in attendance at the Illinois Soybean Board Meeting in July.

ISB members serve a term of three years and are eligible for up to three consecutive terms.

Any interested producer must notify the board of their desire to become a candidate for an at-large position by sending a letter of interest to Illinois Soybean Association, Attn: Director of Operations, 1605 Commerce Parkway, Bloomington, Illinois, 61704. This letter of interest must be postmarked no later than Monday, Feb. 22. Letters of interest may also be sent via email to scottdd@ilsoy.org. The same deadline applies.

# • Slices (Continued from page 4)

of a marriage that's grown cliché and nearly stale. To the perception of youth, which is becoming more distant each day. To the dismay at the thought of lost time and lost opportunities.

Please know you've done well. You've created more good than you know. Grab onto what you have and don't let go. Make your future the best it can be. You've got this.

To the 90-year-old who is unsure. Unsure if you are ready to keep living a good life or ready to give thanks for a good life well lived. Unsure if you are ready to move on to new things or to simply move on.

Do not let age define you; only you get to define you and only you know what is right for your tomorrow. And whatever you decide you want and whatever that may bring: You've got this. (You always have.)

Life gives us challenges at every stage and it may seem tempting (easy even) to hit the eject button and escape from the toughest route. But our challenges define us. They help us grow. So let's bring this full circle.

To the 9-month-old baby, new and unfamiliar with life's challenges: You haven't yet mastered the art of walking. But you try. You fall down. And you try again, and again. You might hit your head on the coffee table. You might cry. But at the first chance, you will pull yourself up. You are determined. You aren't thwarted by disappointment or lack of muscle control. You just keep trying because you know in your heart one day you will walk.

You know something that perhaps the rest of us don't. Maybe it's something the rest of us have forgotten during the process of

growing up.

Babies know, they understand, that in order to walk you first have to fall down — many, many times. They know, inherently, that adversity is a part of life. That even when things seem hard or even insurmountable, we've got this.

Each of us has got this. We have the power within to get this. We just have to stand up again and try to master the act of walking — one foot in front of the other.

To all of you who are struggling — and in some ways we all are: You've got this. We've all got this. Together. One step at a time.

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

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# Common birth defect requires multidisciplinary treatment

Cleft lip and cleft palates, collectively referred to as orofacial clefts, are common birth defects, occurring in one to two of every 1,000 births.

As the body forms during pregnancy, cells from each side of the head grow toward the center where they join together to make the face. Therefore, we all start out with orofacial clefts. Normally, between weeks four and seven of gestation, the upper lip fuses. Between weeks six and nine, the palate fuses.

Cleft lips and/or cleft palates occur when a baby's lips and/or palate do not form properly or fuse completely before birth. Cleft lips can range from a small slit to a large defect that extends into the nose. They can occur on one or both sides



By **DR. STEPHEN PETRAS**  
Illinois Licensed  
General Dentist

of the upper lip and, very rarely, in the middle. They can occur with or without a cleft palate.

Cleft palates also vary from occurring in only part of the palate to involvement in both the hard and soft palate and may be accompanied by additional defects in the inner ear. Cleft palate can occur alone or in conjunction with a cleft lip. A submucous cleft palate, which is an opening underneath the tissues that cover the palate, is difficult to

detect and may not be discovered unless it causes difficulty in feeding or speech.

The roof of your mouth, or palate, is made up of a bony or hard palate in the front and a soft palate in the back, which contains muscles and tissues. The hard palate supports the teeth, and the soft palate assists in swallowing, breathing and speech.

Complications from orofacial clefts will vary depending on the extent of the defect or defects, but usually include feeding difficulties, ear infections and hearing loss, speech and language issues, dental problems and growth and development issues.

Although a cleft lip may occasionally be detected on an ultrasound, most orofacial clefts are diagnosed during the initial newborn exam. This initial diagnosis will be followed up by a comprehensive evaluation of the extent of your child's condition. The

next step will be the development of a comprehensive, individualized treatment plan, with input from members of a multidisciplinary team which will include some or all of the following: oral surgery; ear, nose and throat; orthodontics; speech and hearing therapists; geneticists; psychologists; lactation specialists; and social services.

While surgery to correct a cleft lip generally takes place around three months, surgery to repair a cleft palate is usually performed between 10 and 12 months. Some procedures may be required prior to these surgeries to optimize results. Larger defects may also require bone grafting between 7 and 9 years of age. Orthognathic surgery to realign the jaw and more extensive plastic surgeries on the nose will not take place until the child has finished growing.

Ongoing research and effective intervention with a multi-

disciplinary team has and continues to improve the outcome for children with orofacial clefts.

Smile Train is an international organization that is focused on serving the many children around the world who are living with untreated clefts.

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

## Extension project gets kids cooking

March is National Nutrition Month, and the University of Illinois Extension and 4-H is offering an opportunity to enhance youth cooking skills.

"When it comes to nutrition and health, there is no one-size-fits-all approach," according to an Extension news release. "We are putting together educational cooking kits designed to inspire the inner chef, help youth gain confidence while working in the kitchen and educate youth about healthful eating plans."

The project is ideal for families to work on together or for youth with cooking experience.

Young participants will learn to make either hummus or a chickpea salad wrap and how to individualize the recipes to fit their family's needs.

The cost is \$5 per educational kit. It includes the March "I Made That!" booklet, a sensory evaluation, recipes and a reusable plate.

Kits will be available for pickup the second week in March at the Extension office in Jo Daviess, Stephenson or Winnebago counties.

To reserve a cooking kit, call 815-235-4125 or go online to [go.illinois.edu/jswIMadeThat](http://go.illinois.edu/jswIMadeThat).

## LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT STEPHENSON COUNTY - 15 North Galena Avenue, FREEPORT, ILLINOIS ESTATE OF Zacharias Thottuvelil, DECEASED.

21 P 9

Notice is given to creditors of the death of the above named decedent. Letters of office were issued to Minu Vyas, 1729 Woodside Court, Freeport, Illinois 61032, as Independent Administrator, whose attorney of record is Jessica Duhig, Handler Thayer, LLP, 191 North Wacker Drive, Suite 2300, Chicago, Illinois 60606.

The estate will be administered without court supervision, unless under section 5/28-4 of the Probate Act III. Compiled (Stat. 1992, Ch. 755, par. 5/28-4) any interested person terminates independent administration at any time by mailing or delivering a petition to terminate to the clerk.

Claims against the estate may be filed with the clerk or with the representative, or both, on or before August 10, 2021, or, if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by section 5/18-3 of the Probate Act, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed.

E-filing is now mandatory for documents in civil cases with limited exemptions. To e-file, you must first create an account with an e-filing service pro-

vider. Visit <http://efile.illinois-courts.gov/service-providers.htm> to learn more and to select a service provider. If you need additional help or have trouble e-filing, visit <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/FAQ/gethelp.asp>.

Jessica Duhig  
Handler Thayer, LLP (45414)  
191 North Wacker Drive,  
Suite 2300  
Chicago, Illinois 60606  
(312)641-2100  
13164032

(Published in  
The Shopper's Guide  
Feb. 10, 17 & 24, 2021)

389844

### VILLAGE OF LENA NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING 201 Dodds Dr. Sullivan's Foods VARIANCE FOR BUILDING SETBACK REQUIREMENTS

The Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, March 3, 2021 at 6:00pm at the Village Hall, 122 E. Main St., Lena, IL 61048.

The public hearing shall be for the purpose to consider granting a variance to Sullivan's Food to install ground mounted solar panels verses roof mounted solar panels.

Interested persons may appear and be heard regarding the proposed ground mounted solar panels. The Village Board may subsequently consider the merits granting the variance at its Monday, March 8, 2021 Village Board Meeting.

(Published in  
The Shopper's Guide  
Feb. 17, 2021)

389999

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## Part Time Help Wanted

## Help Wanted

The Village of Warren is currently looking for a **Part Time Public Works employee**. The candidate will be performing multiple duties in the Street Department, Sewer Department, and the Water Department. Construction, maintenance, repairing of the streets and alleys, sanitation, storm water systems, snowplowing, and grounds keeping are some of the duties. Must have knowledge of operating and maintaining equipment and have good public relations. Minimum of a high school diploma or GED required. CDL with air brake endorsement is a plus but not required.

Send resume with references to the Village of Warren, P.O. Box 581, Warren, IL 61087 or drop off at the Village Hall, 113 Cole Street, Warren, IL 61087. Applications are also available at the Village Hall between the hours of 7 a.m. - Noon and 12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m., Monday-Friday and at villageofwarren.com. Deadline to apply is February 22. The Village of Warren is an E/O/E.

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## real estate

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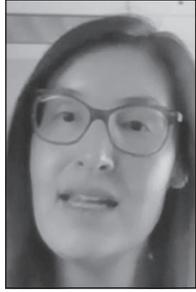
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# Committee questions IDES director, staff over unemployment handling

By Sarah Mansur  
 CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS  
 Representatives of the Illinois Department of Employment Security on Feb. 10 testified before the Senate Labor Committee about fraudulent claims, continued delays in responding to unemployment applicants and a multibillion-dollar deficit in the fund that pays out benefits.  
 Acting Illinois Department of Employment Security Director Kristin Richards and members of the department's staff fielded questions about the backlog that indi-

viduals face when they contact the agency with questions about their claims.  
 While the agency has seen fewer traditional unemployment claims, it has continued to see individuals file roughly 700,000 to 800,000 claims per month since August through the pandemic unemployment programs created through the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act and other federal programs. Those include the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program, the Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation pro-

gram and the Extended Benefits program  
 IDES has put in place a callback system to reduce wait times for callers and a web form online for people to submit questions, but Richards said individuals still wait between one to two weeks for a callback from the agency, depending on the subject of the call.  
 "But I need to stress that if an individual has, for example, reached out to us about the status of their adjudication or appeal it could take four to six weeks because it's working its way through the process and we need to connect with the right professional to help them. We realize that is less than ideal for individuals dying for an answer from IDES," she said.  
 Richards said IDES is working to address those delays by training contractual staff members and adding full-time employees to the agency. The agency has roughly 1,200 employees, Richards said, including about 750 contractual staff.  
 She said the agency has stopped slightly more than 1 million identity theft claims, including through the traditional unemployment system and the PUA system, but the agency doesn't know the specific amount of money that has been paid out in fraudulent claims.  
 Some of the new unemployment programs created during the pandemic, especially the PUA program, left unemployment systems vulnerable, Richards said.



Kristin Richards

"That new program had no employer wage base to balance off of. There was no second step, as a check and balance. Until wage verification documents were required, we saw that imposters were getting in," she said.

### Overpayment of benefits

Richards also announced during the virtual committee meeting that the department will begin to send out waivers this week to individuals who had received an overpayment of benefits under the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, a federally funded program providing unemployment benefits to gig workers and others not traditionally eligible for them.  
 By law, claimants who were overpaid benefits must repay the money they were not due under unemployment laws. The waiver authority provided in federal law allows the state to waive the repayment in certain circumstances if the overpayment was not the fault of the claimant.

The overpayment waivers are available through the federal Continued Assistance for Unemployed Workers Act, or CAA, which was signed into law in December.  
 "If the waiver request is successful, we need to return those dollars that were recuperated to the claimant," she said, adding the department has not yet developed a mechanism to return the money.  
 She said the agency is working on creating a questionnaire and request form for those eligible for a waiver, and the agency would consider those requests on a case-by-case basis.

IDES Manager of Unemployment Insurance Programs Justin

Brissette said overpayment is not uncommon, but the number of new claims has made it more prevalent.  
 Richards said one of the issues that resulted in some overpayments was individuals inadvertently providing wrong wage information, such as listing their net income rather than gross income.

### Trust fund

The committee also discussed the deficit in the Illinois Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund — which funds unemployment payments — and is projected to have a negative balance possibly exceeding \$8 billion in the next two years, according to a presentation from the department.  
 Sen. Jason Barickman, R-Bloomington, raised questions about the impact of fraudulent claims on the trust fund's deficit.  
 "We all will have to work on a solution to the trust fund. I think everyone recognizes that," Barickman said. "There was a tremendous presentation today on the amount of fraud that exists. There was a tremendous presentation on the negative balance that is going to exist in the trust fund and I have no data in front of me on how to tie those two together. Shouldn't we have that data, as lawmakers, so that we can understand what the financial impact has been on our trust fund?"

In response, Richards said she did not have that information but would work on getting it to lawmakers. Pressed further, Richards said she couldn't provide a timeframe on when that information would be provided.  
 "I hear you loud and clear," she said. "We need to come up with the numbers and provide that to the committee."

Capitol News Illinois is a non-profit, nonpartisan news service covering state government.



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