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VOL. 87 • NO. 46

YOUR FREE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 10, 2021



MAUREEN BARDUSK PHOTO *Shopper's Guide*

Winter wonderland

Julie Bruser celebrates winter on the ski trails at Valley of Eden. The Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation (JDCF) is hosting **Uncorked: Pull a Cork for the Valley of Eden** in order to raise funds for the equipment needed to groom ski and snowshoe

trails, as well as help with other family-oriented recreational activities at the Valley of Eden Bird Sanctuary in Stockton. The event will be held December 4. See story on page 2 for details.

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SSM Health Monroe Clinic Medical Group prepared to administer Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccinations

SSM Health Monroe Clinic Medical Group is preparing to administer their first pediatric doses of Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine to children ages 5-11, now that the CDC has given their authorization and Wisconsin DHS has endorsed its clinical guidance. Parents can begin scheduling vaccine appointments now.

SSM Health is offering a mass pediatric vaccination clinic for ages 5-18 in Monroe on Saturday, Nov.13 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Appointments are required. Appointments can now be scheduled through MyChart. For families without access to MyChart, vaccination appointments are also available

by calling 608-324-1815. This line is available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

For more information about COVID-19 vaccines or how to schedule a vaccine appointment for any eligible individual, community members can visit monroeclinic.org/coronavirus.

Incidentally: Wisdom Teeth



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

Wisdom teeth, otherwise known as the third and final set of adult molars, generally emerge between the ages of 17 – 25. These teeth erupt later than any other teeth because the face and chewing muscles require time to grow enough to accommodate them. However, even with this prolonged wait, it is not unusual for this third set of molars to develop and erupt abnormally.

The jaws of early humans were broader and wisdom teeth, which were essential to provide the powerful pressures necessary to tear and grind raw meat, had plenty of room to emerge and line up with the other molars. In

fact, these early wisdom teeth were the largest of the molars. As humankind continued to evolve our jaws and dental arches became shorter, our faces more retracted and our growth slowed as our lifespans increased. Therefore, even with their biologically dictated delayed emergence, there is often simply not enough space in the arch to

accommodate this third set of molars.

Without adequate space, wisdom teeth cannot develop normally. They may be so crowded in the jaw they are only able to partially emerge (partially impacted) or be completely trapped and not capable of erupting at all (fully impacted.) In either situation, these molars can grow at a variety of angles, even perpendicular or lying down with the crown pointing to the second molar. Pressure from these developing molars can cause damage and further crowding to surrounding teeth. Food and bacteria often get trapped around the edges

and between or under the gums of a partially impacted wisdom tooth. This not only increases the incidence of decay but can lead to a painful periodontal infection called pericoronitis. Impacted wisdom teeth can form a cyst on or near them. This can damage the roots of nearby teeth and the jawbone.

Six-month checkups and regularly updated x-rays allow your dentist to monitor third molar development and indications of impacted wisdom teeth before symptoms and damage can occur. Depending on the severity of the impaction, your dentist may refer you to an oral surgeon.

Timber Lake Playhouse Features Music this November

Timber Lake Playhouse, the premier professional summer theatre of northwest Illinois, will feature two nationally touring acts in concert this November.

Nov. 13 is Boy Band Night which will feature the music of 90's Boy Bands, playing homage to the many iconic groups we know today. The Boy Band Night brings live tribute to pop sensations like The Backstreet Boys, *NSYNC, New Kids On The Block, Boys II Men, One Direction, and many more. Top-tier musicians bring a musical and visual experience of all of your favorite songs accompanied by signature choreography from iconic music videos.

Take a trip to 1964 with BritBeat's tribute to The Beatles. Go back in time with a fantastic journey through the days of Beatlemania with BritBeat's multimedia concert journey through Beatles music history. See why this nationally acclaimed Beatles show is captivating audiences and generating rave reviews from critics and Beatles' fans from around the world. Step into a time machine and experience a remarkable and propelling recreation of the Fab Four in concert during the fabulous 1960s. With magnificent attention to detail, six dazzling costume changes, exquisite musicianship, powerful vocals, and a spectacular, stunning, and immersive multimedia backdrop, the experience will be an engaging and electrifying trip through the iconic music catalog of the band of the century. BritBeat, A Beatles Tribute, comes to TLP on Nov. 20 at 7 p.m.

TLP'S World Premiere Musical, What a Wonderful World, comes to the stage on Dec. 2 for a two week run. This never-before-seen jukebox musical is the magical tale of how the new Santa and Mrs. Claus met and fell in love during the late 1950's. This new take on an old classic will be both hilarious and heartwarming, as two beloved characters struggle with the "changing of the guard" from one Santa to the next. This must-see-event of the holidays will be the first time Timber Lake Playhouse world premieres a new musical. Watch for all of the World Premiere events this December.

All concerts are in the TLP theatre and begin at 7 p.m. with tickets priced at \$25 (\$20 for TLP Subscribers). Musicals begin at 7:30 p.m. with matinees at 2:00 p.m. Ticket prices range from \$20 to \$30. Tickets for all Timber Lake Playhouse events are available online at www.timberlakeplayhouse.org or by calling the Box Office at 815-244-2035. The Box Office is open every day from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. and until intermission on show days.

Wine-themed fundraiser and fine wine sale set for Dec. 4 at Woodbine Bend

The Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation (JDCF) is hosting Uncorked: Pull a Cork for the Valley of Eden on Dec. 4 from 2 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Funds will be raised for the equipment needed to groom ski and snowshoe trails, as well as help with other family-oriented recreational activities at the Valley of Eden Bird Sanctuary in Stockton, IL. The 400+ acre preserve

is one of the few places in Jo Daviess County to offer the use of groomed ski trails to the public for free.

The event will feature a premium wine pull as well as wine tasting and wine sales from small, family owned wineries around the world. All wines are priced below retail with further discounts for by-the-case orders. For those unable to attend in person,

wine pull and raffle tickets can be purchased at www.biddingowl.com/JoDaviessConservationFoun.

Wine orders can also be placed online. Wine purchased will be available at the JDCF office in Elizabeth beginning Wednesday Dec. 15 during regular office hours.

In a wine pull, attendees purchase corks to be redeemed at the end of the event

by pulling mystery bottles of wine from brightly color gift bags. All wines will have a value of at least \$15 with two trophy wines being valued at over \$100. There will also be a gift basket raffle of high-end packages and prizes valued at a minimum of \$50 each. A cash bar and light appetizers will also be available. Woodbine Bend is located at 3500 E Center Rd, Stockton, IL.

Illinois 4-H youth put their dairy knowledge to the test

It may be a contest, but the true benefit of the Illinois 4-H State Dairy Judging Contest is that it teaches youth what it takes to raise profitable dairy production herds. Illinois 4-H youth put their dairy knowledge to the

test as part of the 2021 Illinois State 4-H Dairy Judging Contest at the Illinois State Fair in August.

"It is important for young dairy breeders to understand how the knowledge they test for really translates into

livestock and herd health," says Dan Jennings, University of Illinois Extension 4-H youth development specialist. "The knowledge they gain can really translate into future profitable of dairy herds."

Youth 14 years and older competed as part of the Senior Division with youth under 13 competing in the Junior Division. In the Senior Division, top rankings went to Nevin Erbsen, Carroll County, first; Delana Erbsen, Carroll County, second; Shana Lueking, Clinton County, third; Jacob Raber, Livingston County, fourth; Gage Wendling, Effingham County, fifth; Magen Busker, Stephenson County, sixth; Ella Gunderson, Carroll County, seventh; Amanda Niemann, Montgomery County, eighth; Ben Bremmer, Stephenson County, ninth; AJ Lenkaitis, Saline County, tenth.

In the Junior Division, top rankings went to Drew Lueking, Clinton County, first; Ethan Marcoot, Bond County, second; Abby Yoder, Rock Island County, third; Alaina Dinderman, Stephenson County, fourth; Kendall O'Connor, McLean County, fifth; Peyton Olbrich, McHenry County, sixth; Bria Olbrich, McHenry County, seventh; Kelly O'Connor, McLean County, eighth; Elena Olbrich, McHenry County, ninth; August Michels, Richland County, tenth.

Delana Erbsen of Carroll County, Nevin Erbsen of Carroll County, and Jacob Raber of Livingston County went on to represent Illinois 4-H at the National 4-H Dairy Judging Contest as part of the World Dairy Expo event in Madison, WI.

The Illinois 4-H Foundation provides support for this program.

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ATTENTION ALL PALISADES CHAPTER #604 NARFE MEMBERS

Our Chapter is dissolving due to dwindling membership, a shortage of officers, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Please join us for our FINAL "End-of-an-Era" Farewell 12-noon luncheon meeting at Manny's in Savanna on Thursday, November 18. A special meal will be prepared. RSVP required NLT Monday, November 15 by calling Chapter President Jorene Willis Lieb at 815-541-4105.

407368



Thank You

I would like to thank everyone for the many ways that you helped make my 90th birthday so special. All of the cards, phone calls and visits were greatly appreciated and meant so much to me.

Deloris Wampfler

407156

Free after school program for children 'How to Catch a Turkey'

The University of Illinois-Extension's Stephenson County 4-H has teamed up with the Children's Hands-on Museum (CHOM) of Northwest Illinois to offer an after school program for all children ages 5-12. The next program date is Nov. 18, 2021 from 4 p.m - 5 p.m. at the CHOM, located at 1233 W. Galena Ave. Freeport, IL.

The theme for November is "How to Catch a Turkey." Just in time for the big Thanksgiving Day feast, we will be offering a STEM activity where kids will create a turkey and then have to think, plot and design a way to catch the turkey using common household items. There will be a story and time for

painting as well. This is a free event. Pre-registration is required to hold your spot and space is limited to 25 kids. Please contact the CHOM at: 815-616-5632 to sign up. Masks are required inside the museum.

If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate, please contact the event coordinator. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time to meet your needs. University of Illinois, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Local Extension Councils cooperating. University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

Obituaries

GERALD "SPARKY" STAMM, 84

Gerald "Sparky" Stamm, 84, passed away peacefully Saturday, Oct. 30, 2021, at his home in Orangeville with his family at his side. Gerald was born on May 27, 1937 to Glen and Flo (Adams) Stamm in Dakota, IL. He married Verna Stich on April 12, 1963, at the Lena United Methodist Church. Gerald served our nations country in the Army from 1959-1962. After he got out of the Army, he worked at Stich Sand and Gravel of Lena, the RS and D Ready Mix. He started farming in 1967. Gerald enjoyed life on the farm, spending time with his family, grandchildren, playing cards and visiting with his friends to discuss the daily events.

Gerald is survived by his wife- Verna of Orangeville,



three children- Lisa (Neal) Boeke of Juda, WI, David (Jodee) Stamm of McConnell, and Lori (Brian) Rote of McConnell; seven grandchildren- Amber (Kyle) Tews of Orfordville, WI, Andy (Hillary) Boeke of Juda, WI, Heather (Jim) Reilly of Brodhead, WI, Austin (Alli) Stamm of Orangeville, Carley Rote of Orangeville, Crystal (fiancée Mitchel Stites) Rote of Rock City, IL, and Carson Rote of McConnell; six great grandchildren, and one on the way; brother- Larry (Peggy) Stamm of Freeport, Ron (Pat) Stamm of Kent, IL, and Marlen Stamm of Winslow; sister- Marlene Stamm of Aurora, CO; many

nieces and nephews and Special friend Joe Smeck.

Preceded in death by his-parents and sister-Joanne Seffrood.

Funeral Service will be Monday, Nov. 8, 2021, 11 a.m. at the United Methodist Church in McConnell, IL, with a visitation from 10 a.m. until time of service.

Visitation will be held on Sunday, Nov. 7, 2021, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Leamon Funeral Home, Lena, IL.

Ernie Stabenow will officiate the service. Interment will take place at Cedarville Cemetery. A memorial has been established in his name.

Gerald's family wants to thank SSM Hospice and his care givers- Alyssa, Sue and Heather for their excellent care and kindness.

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

RICHARD W. KONIECZNY, 86

Richard W. Konieczny, 86, of Lena passed away on Thursday, Nov. 4, 2021. He was born on April 3, 1935 in Chicago, IL to Walter and Stephanie (Kolodziejki) Konieczny. He married Janet Keen on Sept. 24, 1955 at St. Stanislaus Catholic Church in Chicago, IL. Richard was a beloved father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, brother and will be deeply missed.

Richard is survived by his son- Thomas (Debra) Konieczny of Scottsdale, AZ; 3 grandchildren- Kari Beth (Ali) Hamidi of Orange



County, CA, Katie Lauren (Blake) Crawford of Orange County, CA, and Allyson Rose Konieczny of Scottsdale, AZ; great-grandchildren- Shaheen, Ariana, and Maya Hamidi and Kayla Crawford; brother Fred Konieczny; brother-in-law Edward Keen and sister-in-laws Waunita Keen and Christine Keen.

He is preceded in death by his parents, wife Janet in

2013, sons- David in infancy and Donald in 2016; sister Ina (Frank) Paglini; sister-in-law Dorothy Konieczny, and brother-in-law Kenneth Keen.

Funeral Service will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 9, 2021 at the Leamon Funeral Home in Lena, IL. Visitation will be from noon until time of service on Tuesday, Nov. 9, 2021.

Pastor Keri Rainsberger will be officiating the service.

Burial will take place at Lena Burial Park in Lena, IL. A memorial has been established in his memory. Condolences may be sent to the family at www.leamonfh.com

vices will be held at this time.

Cremation rites have been accorded.

A memorial has been established in his memory.

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

VIRGINIA SHUMAKER, 90

Virginia Shumaker, age 90, died peacefully on Friday, Nov. 5, at Provena St. Joseph Center in Freeport after a long, heart-breaking period of physical and mental decline inflicted on her by dementia. She was born on October 1, 1931, in Cedarville, IL to Warner and Rose (Cooper) Cummins. She attended the Orangeville Schools. Virginia started her work life doing dishes at a cafe in Orangeville and as a phone operator. She also worked at Burgess Battery and Micro Switch and in her retirement worked in the deli at Noller's Supermarket. In her second retirement after Noller's she worked seasonally at Swiss Colony in Monroe, where she discovered the chocolate Chris Mouse which all her kids and grandkids received as Christmas presents. She married Robert Shumaker on July 3, 1952, at the Orangeville Methodist Parsonage and he passed away in 1971. She Married James Kempel on July 26, 1975, at St Paul's Lutheran Church in Kent IL. They divorced in 1995.

Virginia enjoyed spending time with family and friends, going out to eat was one of her favorite things. She loved playing cards with her grand-



children and when her memory became worse, and they caught her "cheating" she would laugh along with them.

She would never turn down an offer for an occasional trip to Dubuque for a little gambling. She was an avid reader and when her eyesight started to fail, she started listening to books on tape and would spend many afternoons "reading" this way. The pandemic was not kind to her, and she did not understand window visits at all and would become irritated when her visitors wouldn't come in. She will be remembered fondly for the birthday breakfasts, family picnics, and other family gatherings that she loved.

Virginia is survived by her three daughters- Judy (Ed) Booth of Forreston ; Coleen (Dana) Rakowska of Freeport and Michelle (Brent) Musser of Freeport; sister Glenda Fetter of Freeport; two daughters-in-law Mary Arand of Rockford and Patricia Shumaker of Orangeville; 9 grandchildren- Tammy (Don) Brandt, Jason Grenoble, Rick (Sarah) Shumaker,

Kristina Shumaker, Kendra (Dave) Damaschke, Robert (Kelsey Hobson) Shumaker, Carly Peters, Amanda (Randy) Reed, Jessica (Justin Moore) Musser, and Cassie (Andy) Lampe; 13 great-grandchildren; brother-in-law Leroy Wilson and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her mother, father, her husband Robert Shumaker; son Ronald Shumaker; three brothers Harry, Wilbur, and George Cummins; six sisters Barbara Richards, Cindy Leshtikow, Lois Cummins, Madge Wilson, Viola Germain, and Sharon Cummins; two brothers-in-law Bob Lestikow and Gary Fetter; and grandson Steven Grenoble.

Funeral Services will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, Nov. 12 at Leamon Funeral Home in Lena.

Visitation will be held from 4:00 - 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 11 at Leamon Funeral Home in Lena.

Officiating will be Pastor Keri Rainsberger.

Burial will be at Chapel Hill Memorial Gardens

Memorial has been established in her name.

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

News briefs

American Legion

The Lena American Legion Auxiliary will be serving cinnamon rolls and coffee on Veterans Day Thursday Nov. 11 from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. at the Lena American Legion home.

Salem United Church of Christ

Reverend Paul Uzel will present the sermon during the 10:00 a.m. worship service at Salem United Church of Christ, 8491 W. Salem Road, Lena on Sunday, Nov. 14, 2021. Veterans will be recognized and thanked for their service. Salem is participating

in the Lena Lions Club collection of warm items which includes hats, gloves, mittens, and scarves for veterans. There will be a collection box in the Narthex. The Breakfast Bunch will meet at the Beltline Café, 325 W. South Street in Freeport, on Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021 at 8:00 a.m.

Historical Museum's Holiday Craft and Gift Show

This holiday arts and crafts show will be held in the historic Taylor Mansion Museum

and will feature the area's best arts and crafts including gift ideas and holiday decor. Over 20 artists and craftspeople will be represented. Also available will be new and out-of-print books on local subjects, small antiques, pretzel gift items, and Rawleigh products. The show will be held at 1440 S. Carroll Ave in Freeport, IL on Friday, Nov. 19 at 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 20 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Sunday, Nov. 21 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is free.

ROBERT DESMOND, 79

Robert Desmond, 79, passed away surrounded by his daughters at home on Thursday, Nov. 4, 2021, in Lena Illinois.



He was born on Sept. 6, 1942, to Robert and Audrey (Monns) Hayes in Chicago Illinois. He married Carol (Livingston) on Sept. 28, 1963, in Oak Park Illinois. He enjoyed a wonderful career managing a warehouse for Sears Roebuck and Company. He loved taking long rides in the country, going to the casino, car shows, and especially spending time with his daughters.

He is survived by his two daughters; Karen Desmond and Sharon (Rich) Huffman; Brother Dennis Desmond; brother-in-law's George (Mary Ann) Livingston, Jack Livingston, Tom (Gail) Livingston; sister-in-law Pattie Gallo; beloved friend Donna Miller; numerous nieces, nephews.

by his parents; wife Carol in April of 2021; brother-in-law's Norm Powell, Pat Gallo; sisters-in-law's Darlene Livingston, and Marlene Livingston; and beloved friend Keith Miller.

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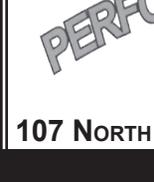
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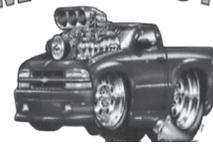



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Panthers avenge late season loss against Cardinals

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT

The Lena-Winslow Panthers came into the 2021 postseason with a chip on their shoulders. After suffering a comeback loss to the Forreton Cardinals in the final week of the regular season, Lena-Winslow came into the playoffs looking to make a statement. The loss to the Cardinals did not appear to put a damper on the Panthers' confidence. If anything, it may have boosted their attitude. After all, there is something to be said about winning when it matters most.

Le-Win really bounced back from their week nine loss with an impressive showing from senior running back, Marey Roby, in round one. Roby's three scores helped to lead the way to a 54-7 victory over Aurora Christian. That story was much of the same in round two as Panthers Head Coach, Ric Arand, put the ball in the versatile running back's hands again.

It was Roby who put the

Panthers on the board first with a short touchdown run at the three minute mark of the first quarter. Roby also plunged in for the two-point conversion, putting Le-Win up 8-0.

The Panthers had the running game working on all cylinders on November 6. Le-Win combined for 344 yards as Arand chose to run the ball over fifty times. Relying on their physical attack, the Panthers were able to wear out the Forreton defense rather quickly.

It was Roby who handled a majority of those carries as he tallied his second score of the game when he broke free for a forty yard touchdown run in the second quarter. Jake Zeal capped off the drive with a successful two-point conversion, giving the Panthers a 16-0 lead.

After getting a defensive stop, the Panthers were hoping to go up by three scores before the halftime break. Roby made sure of that as he trucked into the endzone from ten yards out. His third score of the first half,

Roby tallied another hat trick as he put the Panthers up 24-0.

With just under two minutes before half, Forreton found themselves with a similar opportunity to end the first half the same way they ended it in their regular season matchup. If the Cardinals could have put a score on the board, they would have set themselves up for another comeback opportunity in the second half. This playoff game was very different, however, as the Panther defense had different plans. Le-Win managed to get another stop as they shutout the Cardinals in the first half and took the 24-0 lead into the break.

With the three score-lead, Arand only doubled down on the running game. The Panthers went to work on the clock and continued to wear down the Cardinal defense.

The Panthers would only extend their lead in the third quarter when quarterback Luke Benson plunged into the endzone from one yard out on a quarterback sneak. Their fourth touchdown of the game coming by way of the ground game had Le-Win up 30-0 with less than two quarters to play.

They were not finished, however, as Roby went on to tally his fourth touchdown of the game. This time, off a twenty-three yard run, Roby put the Panthers up 38-0 at the six minute mark of the third quarter.

The Panthers were able to rely on the clock for the remainder of the game. The Cardinals would tally a garbage time touchdown, but that was all, as the Panthers went on to win 38-8. Roby was the story of the game again as he finished with four touchdowns and 166 yards on seventeen carries. Gage Dunker was the next leading rusher with fifty-nine yards on eleven attempts. Ethan Fye was productive, as well, as he finished with forty-four yards on eight attempts. Benson had just one rushing yard on

the day, but it was an important yard, as it came on a short touchdown run.

Arand spoke about his team's ability to prepare for a Fulton team they had lost to only a couple of weeks prior. "I think it was an easy game for our kids to prepare for just because there was a lot of motivation coming off the loss from two weeks ago. I think that helped our focus all week long. We had a good week of practice and I thought we were as prepared for this game as any game we have ever played. That is a credit to our kids because they did all the right things, all week long." Arand said

The Panthers have continued to spread it around in the backfield, but it has been Roby who makes the difference. Through the first two rounds of play, Roby has totaled 335 yards and a whopping seven touchdowns. Arand shared his thoughts on Roby breaking out in the playoffs, saying "To Marey's credit, I think a lot of people expected a lot out of him. They just assumed he would bounce right back from the broken leg from not even a year ago. Unfair enough to him, it takes a little longer to get things back and operating right. Over the last two-three weeks, he has really gotten back into playing like he is capable of playing. He has gotten that burst back and we have given him the ball a lot more. [Roby] is one of those guys, the more he touches it, the better he is going to be. We know moving forward that we are going to go as he goes. Not that we don't have other guys capable, but Roby is, obviously, a game breaker and can score from anywhere on the field."

The Panthers will face off with the seven seed in Fulton for round three. The Panthers defeated Fulton 54-7 back in week seven of the regular season. It is sort of the opposite of the situation the Panthers just

found themselves in, hoping for a win over a team that had recently defeated them. Arand stressed the importance of not counting Fulton out just because of their previous matchup. "For our team, it seems like it has been so long since we played them." Arand said, explaining "Obviously, they have gotten better, they haven't lost since then, and, probably, have gained a lot of confidence. I don't think that's going to be the same team we saw seven weeks ago. I guess that is my

job to get that point across to our kids, which is easier said than done at times. That is the focus this week, to get ready for them, and don't take them lightly." Still, Arand is confident his guys will be ready for a quarterfinal game when, if you win you play or if you lose you go home. So, easy motivation."

Only time will tell, but the Panthers are taking it one game at a time with their eyes on the prize.

Church news

St. John's Lutheran Church

St. John's Lutheran Church in Pearl City will be offering worship on Sunday, Nov. 14 at 9 a.m. The service will be led by Pastor Shellie Knight and the Joy Choir will be singing. After worship, Confirmation and Sunday School will meet as well as the Stewardship and Outreach Committees.

The November Grace Meal will be held on Sunday, Nov. 21 at 11:30 a.m. until 12:15 p.m. with all meals at curb-side pick-up. The menu will be turkey, dressing, sandwiches, sweet potatoes, cranberries and dessert. All reservations must be made to the church office by 5 p.m. on Friday,

Nov. 19 by phone at 815-443-2215 or email at prshadmin@gmail.com. The meal is supported by a grant from the Freeport Community Foundation.

The Women's Gathering will hold Bible Study on Tuesday, Nov. 16 at 9:45 a.m. in Luther Hall. The morning will begin with fellowship and conclude with making Christmas ornaments.

St. John's Lutheran Church is located at 229 S First St., Pearl City, IL. Worship Services are currently in-person and livestreamed on Facebook Live which can be found at www.StJohnsPearlCity.org.

Good Shepard Lutheran Church

All are invited on Nov. 14, 2021 to Good Shepherd, 118 E. Mason St. in Lena, IL, for Sunday worship service at 9:30 a.m. You may join the service in-person or via Facebook Live streaming. The reading will be from Mark 13:1-8. Choir practice will be at 11 a.m., and chime choir practice will be at 5 p.m.

The state and CDC guidelines will be followed for indoor gathering. For the safety of everyone it is encourage people to wear masks and practice social distancing inside the building.

On Tuesday, Nov. 16, Bible Study group will meet at 10 a.m. The reading is from

Genesis and all are welcome to join. The Peace Corps Quilting group will meet from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 17. All are welcome to join and no quilting experience necessary. Come and tie the quilts and make difference in the world.

All the services will be recorded and will be available on the church's Facebook page and website. Please visit our website <http://good-shepherdlena.org/> and Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/GSLCLenaIL> for information. If you have any questions, please contact the church office at 815-369-5552.



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For complete listing, go onto auctionzip.com
For further information, call Kris at 815-544-0249.

Highland Community College Music Department holds instrumental fall concert

The Highland Community College Concert Band and Orchestra will hold their fall concert at 7 p.m. Friday, Nov. 12 in the Fine Arts Theatre in the Ferguson Fine Arts Center, 2998 W. Pearl City Rd., Freeport, IL.

"The Ensemble is excited to be back on stage and to create more musical moments for our audience," said Scott Stich, Concert Band conductor. "We have missed performing for our audience. We hope that the variety of our music speaks to everyone who comes to hear us."

Stich said "Sedona", by Steven Reineke, captures the natural landscape of mountains and wide-open spaces.

"Overcoming" by Thompson Brandt is an original piece about the American social situation during the pandemic. This is the premiere performance of this piece.

"R E S T" by Frank Ticheli commemorates the life of Ticheli's father, drawing on the comfort and quiet from this piece of work. "Molly On The Shore" by Percy Aldridge Grainger is a staple of the band world that gives the audience energy and excitement.

"Black Granite" by James L. Hosay is a march

dedicated to the memory of the men and women who died in the Vietnam war. The "Black Granite" symbolizes the Vietnam veterans memorial in Washington D.C.

Under the direction of Brandon Lamm, the orchestra will be playing the following song selections: "Finlandia" by Sibelius; "Bacchanale" from Samson and Delilah by Saint-Saens; "Adagietto" from Mahler's 5th Symphony, and "Plunk Plank Plunk" by Leroy Anderson.

Tickets are \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors, and \$5 for students. The box office will not be open for ticket sales on the evening of performances. Please call 815-599-3718 for phone orders. Online ticket sales the week of the event will be issued as e-tickets. The e-ticket will be sent in an email which must be printed for entry. In-person tickets sales will still be open 1-5 p.m. Monday through Friday. To order online, visit highland.edu/boxoffice.

Masks are required in all Highland buildings. Due to COVID-19, performance information is subject to change.

Zach Williams coming to Coronado PAC on March 5

Multi GRAMMY® Award winner Zach Williams and special guest Anne Wilson announced plans for a thirty-five show tour, including a stop at the Coronado Performing Arts Center on Saturday, Mar. 5 at 7 p.m. Tickets and VIP packages will go on sale Friday, Nov. 5 at 11 a.m. on Ticketmaster.com, in-person at the Coronado PAC box office and by phone at 815-968-5222. Fans and AE Insiders can take advantage of a 20% discount on tickets when they

purchase by Nov. 14 and use the code INSIDER.

"One of the best parts of my job is getting to travel around the country - worshipping with a new room full of people each and every night." Said Zach Williams. "I can't remember a time in my lifetime when it was more needed than right now. This spring, I am honored to be able to hit the road with my good friend Anne Wilson and bring a great show, a great message, and a great lineup to

so many cities around the States."

"We are excited to have our sponsors Food for the Hungry, Altrua HealthShare and KLOVE & Air1 Radio be part of these nights with Zach and Anne." Said Curtis Pinkerton, Director of Marketing for Awakening Events. "Through the support of all these great partners and the support of the ticket buyers we're able to have a lasting impact in these communities long after the show is over."

State adopts federal guidance recommending Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for children ages 5 to 11

By Jerry Nowicki
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

One day after the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended that children between the ages of 5 and 11 receive the COVID-19 vaccine manufactured by Pfizer and BioNTech, the Illinois Department of Public Health adopted the same recommendations Nov. 3.

That vaccine had previously been approved for people 12 years of age and older. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration authorized its emergency use for 5- to 11-year-olds in late October, and the CDC made the recommendation official Nov. 2.

IDPH Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike said in a news release medical experts have reviewed

data from clinical trials that included more than 3,000 children, leading to the CDC recommendation. Those trials showed the vaccine to be more than 90 percent effective in preventing COVID-19 in children in the age group.

Children in the trials saw the same side effects as adolescents and adults but to a lesser extent, according to IDPH. The side effects included injection site pain, redness and swelling, fatigue, headache, muscle or joint pain, chills, and fever. They generally lasted one to two days.

State officials have urged parents with questions or who are wishing to vaccinate their children to call their pediatrician's office to learn more.

Pediatric COVID-19 vacci-

nations will also be available at local health departments, many pharmacies, Federally Qualified Health Centers, and from other providers who offer the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, according to a news release.

That includes about 2,200 pediatric providers in Illinois who have already enrolled in the state immunization registry and can administer COVID-19 vaccines. IDPH said more than 1,200 youth vaccination events have been held or are scheduled, and the department continues to work with schools to schedule more.

While children don't often get severe COVID-19, Ezike said, it is still possible, and infected children play a major role in disease spread.

"We need as many people

as possible, including children, to be vaccinated to stop the spread of the virus and end this pandemic," she said in the news release.

Recently, Gov. JB Pritzker said the state expects to receive 306,000 doses, with another 73,000 going to the city of Chicago and 100,000 doses to pharmacies.

In a news conference before the approval, Pritzker and Ezike said it is premature to talk about mandating the vaccine for children in order for them to attend school. Such a decision would have to wait at least for full CDC and FDA approval, not just emergency use authorization.

Pritzker also said that decision would be up to the General Assembly.

Della Crain named NACC Honorable Mention

The Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference has announced that Rockford University senior outside hitter Della Crain has been voted NACC Honorable Mention by the conference's 14 head coaches. This marks the second straight season that Crain has been named NACC Honorable Mention. Crain also becomes the first RU women's volleyball player to receive postseason recognition from the NACC in consecutive seasons since Angela Snow (2006/2007).

Della Crain was the top offensive threat for the Regents and one of the top attackers in the NACC this past season. Crain finished the regular season tied for third in the NACC in kills (330), seventh in kills per set (3.24) and solo blocks (17) and thirteenth in total blocks (62), all of which also led the team. Additionally, she concluded the year with career-highs in hitting percentage (.212), service aces (27), digs (68) and block assists (45). Crain finishes her four-year career as a Regent with 884 kills (2.75 kills/set), 52 service aces, 210 digs and 121 total blocks.

Latest school report card shows impact of COVID-19 on learning

2020-2021 Pre-K-12 enrollment fell 3.6 percent from previous year

By Peter Hancock
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in significant drops in enrollment, academic performance and the likelihood of graduating high school on time, according to the latest school report card released recently by the Illinois State Board of Education.

The report card is an annual report that tracks how the state, and each school and district, are progressing on a wide range of educational goals.

But the report also showed that more Illinois students than ever are preparing for college and careers by taking dual credit, Advanced Placement and career and technical education, or CTE courses, while schools themselves are doing a better job of retaining veteran teachers.

"We have witnessed both tragedy and heroism in our schools over the past year," State Superintendent of Education Dr. Carmen I. Ayala said in a statement. "Students and educators have lost so much and lived and learned through unthinkable obstacles, but loss is not the whole story. Illinois' schools also stepped up the rigor of high school course work, ensured students still graduated and earned

early college credit along the way."

According to the report, which covers the 2020-2021 academic year, total enrollment in Pre-K-12 schools fell

3.6 percent from the prior year, or by about 70,000 students, to just under 1.89 million. State officials said recent trends

See IMPACT, Page 16

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2021CH23

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(Published in The Shopper's Guide Nov. 10, 17 & 24, 2021) 407323

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CONCERNING THE INTENT OF THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS OF THE STOCKTON PARK DISTRICT, JO DAVIESS COUNTY, ILLINOIS TO SELL \$20,000 GENERAL OBLIGATION LIMITED PARK BONDS

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Stockton Park District, Jo Daviess County, Illinois (the "District"), will hold a public hearing on the 17th day of November, 2021, at 6:30 o'clock P.M. The hearing will be held at the Park House, 600 North Pearl Street, Stockton, Illinois. The purpose of the hearing will be to receive public comments on the proposal to sell bonds of the District in the amount of \$20,000 for the payment of land condemned or purchased for parks, for the building, maintaining, improving and protecting of the same and the existing land and facilities of the District and for the payment of the expenses incident thereto.

By order of the President of the Board of Park Commissioners of the Stockton Park District, Jo Daviess County, Illinois.

DATED the 3rd day of November, 2021.

Calvin Klopf Secretary, Board of Park Commissioners, Stockton Park District, Jo Daviess County, Illinois

(Published in The Scoop Today Nov. 10, 2021)

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In my opinion

Task force could produce lifeline for local journalism in Illinois

By State Sen. Steve Stadelman

Democracy dies in darkness. Those words underscore the masthead of the *Washington Post* every day.

Sadly, the light journalism brings to many communities in Illinois and across the country is dimming. In the past 15 years or so, more than 2,000 newspapers around the country have closed, especially in rural areas.

That means no reporters covering local city council or school board meetings. If people don't get the

information they need to know what's going on in their town, they can't make educated decisions when they vote or hold their public officials accountable.

Journalists play an important watchdog role in our system. As a television news anchor and reporter in Rockford for nearly 25 years and a state senator for eight years, I've seen journalism from both sides. You could say a new Illinois law, which establishes the Local Journalism Task Force, is the result of my two careers intersecting.

The legislation I introduced and passed this year calls on the task force to assess the state of local journalism and issue public policy recommendations.

I think there needs to be a serious, open and frank discussion on the future of local news and how its future will affect government. As people rely less on traditional news organizations, we've seen a rise in media outlets that push a political agenda.

Social media, meanwhile, is far too often the source of false and even dangerous

information. Professional news organizations are able to counteract that, helping readers and viewers know the difference.

Dwindling access to local news isn't just a rural issue as many corporate owners of bigger-city newspapers cut staff and close bureaus to save money. While a large city still has many media outlets, we know that in our increasingly diverse society, some voices are not being heard.

There's also an economic argument to be made. Newspapers have historically connected local businesses with readers. Without that connection, the local economy and businesses are hurt.

Members of the Local Journalism Task Force include news organizations that represent working journalists, academic institutions that teach journalism or have conducted studies and research into the issue along with state lawmakers and governor's staff.

Potential solutions considered in other states

include creating a fund to bring news and information to underserved communities, providing tax incentives to persuade media outlets to close local news gaps and more money for public broadcasting.

Or there may be no role for state government as the private sector develops new business models.

Nonprofit news websites buoyed by philanthropic foundations have sprung up around the country. So too have partnerships with nonprofit groups that allow traditional news organizations to dig deeper and undertake investigations.

A recent article in the *Atlantic* points out that equal to its watchdog role is the value of local news in establishing a community's sense of self through stories on church picnics, restaurant openings and closings, school football games and fights to save a historic building or raise money for a cancer victim:

"When that tissue disintegrates, something vital

See OPINION, Page 15

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FROM LENA'S KITCHEN



The not so skinny cook

Halloween is over. Our killer frost finally came, and things are looking really like fall. Leaves are piling up even though there are a lot of leaves still on trees. This week we begin to think about cooking for Thanksgiving. Hopefully this will put you in the mood for some good eats.

Pigs in a Blanket Bake

Are you looking for an easy breakfast casserole? This one uses frozen pancakes instead of bread. The buttermilk

cakes give the egg dish a great flavor.

2 boxes (16.4 oz.) frozen buttermilk pancakes (12 count)

4 eggs
1½ C. half-and-half
1 pkg. (14 oz.) cocktail size smoked link sausages, chopped

1 C. shredded sharp cheddar cheese

1 C. butter maple flavored syrup

Preheat oven to 350. Lightly grease a 9 x 13 glass baking dish with shortening or cooking spray. Remove pancakes from boxes; unwrap and carefully separate. Set aside to partially thaw.

In a large bowl, beat eggs and half-and-half with whisk. Coarsely chop pancakes. Add pancake pieces and chopped sausage to egg mixture; toss to coat. Let stand 5 minutes. Pour mixture into baking dish. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake

uncovered 40 minutes or until edges are set and light golden brown. Let stand 10 minutes. Cut into squares; serve with syrup.

Creamed Corn Casserole

If you are looking for a great side for Thanksgiving, this corn casserole will go great with turkey and all the trimmings. You can make it the day before and have it oven ready.

2 pkg. (16 oz. each) frozen whole kernel corn

2 C. chopped red sweet peppers

1 C. chopped onion
1 T. butter
¼ t. pepper

1 can cream of celery soup
8 oz. tub of cream cheese spread with garden vegetables
¼ C. milk

Preheat the oven to 375. Lightly coat a 2-qt. casserole

with cooking spray; set aside. Place corn in a colander and thaw by running under cool water; drain and set aside. In a large saucepan, cook sweet pepper and onion in 1 T. butter until tender. Stir in corn and ¼ t. pepper and turn off heat. In a medium bowl whisk together soup, cream cheese spread and milk. Stir soup mixture into corn mixture. Transfer to casserole dish. Bake covered in a 375 oven for 50 to 55 minutes or until heated through, stirring once at 25 minutes.

Greens and Olive Salad with Raspberry Dressing

Enjoy this refreshing salad for lunch or as a side. You can buy raspberries at most grocery stores any time of the year. You could substitute another berry if you wish.

Dressing
1 C. fresh raspberries
1 T. Dijon mustard
1 T. cider vinegar
3 T. extra virgin olive oil
¼ t. salt

Salad
1 small head of Bibb (Boston) lettuce, chopped
1 small head of romaine lettuce, cut into 1 inch pieces
1 C. chopped celery
½ t. salt
1 C. pitted mixed olives, coarsely chopped
½ C. toasted almonds, coarsely chopped
¾ C. fresh raspberries
½ C. crumbled feta cheese

Dressing: combine raspberries, mustard, vinegar, olive oil, and salt in blender. Puree on high for about 1 minute, scraping down the sides halfway through, until emulsified. Set aside.

Salad: in a large bowl, toss together lettuce, romaine, celery and salt. Begin by

adding half the dressing and tossing well to coat. Taste salad to determine if it needs more dressing. Depending on the size of your lettuce, you may not need to use all of the dressing. Evenly divide between four bowls; top with olives, almonds, and raspberries. Finish with feta; serve any extra dressing on the side.

Chicken Stroganoff

Beef stroganoff is a popular dinner entrée, but this recipe uses chicken as the protein. Recently I learned that stroganoff has origins in the Russian court and was mentioned as early as 1861. That means it has been made for a whole lot of years!. The switch from beef to chicken has a modern touch.

6 C. egg noodles (12 oz.)
1¼ t. salt, divided
6 T. unsalted butter, divided
3 T. flour, divided
1 t. dry mustard
1 t. paprika
1 t. pepper, divided
1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken thighs, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces
12 oz. mushrooms, trimmed and sliced thin

1 onion, chopped finely
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 T. tomato paste
2 t. minced fresh thyme or ¼ t. dried
1¼ C. chicken broth
2 T. dry sherry
1/3 C. sour cream, plus extra for serving
2 T. minced fresh parsley

Bring 4 qts. of water to a boil in a large pot. Add noodles and 1 T. salt and cook, stirring often, until al dente. Drain noodles; return them to the pot and toss with 2 T. butter. Cover to keep warm.

Combine 2 T. flour, mustard, paprika, ¼ t. salt, and ½ t. pepper, in a large bowl. Add chicken and toss to thor-

oughly coat. Melt 2 T. butter in a 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add chicken and spread into single layer, breaking up any clumps. Cook, without stirring, until browned on bottom, about 4 minutes longer. Transfer chicken to large plate. Melt remaining 2 T. butter in empty skillet over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms, onion, remaining ½ t. salt, and remaining ½ t. pepper and cook until any liquid has evaporated and vegetables just begin to brown, 7 to 9 minutes. Stir in garlic, tomato paste, thyme, and remaining 1 T. flour and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in broth and sherry and bring to simmer, scraping up any browned bits. Add chicken and any accumulated pieces and cook until warmed through and sauce thickens slightly, about 1 minute.

Off heat, stir in sour cream until thoroughly combined. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer noodles to shallow bowls and spoon stroganoff over top. Sprinkle with parsley and paprika. Serve with extra sour cream.

Slow Cooker Roast Beef

One of my very good friends told me she had found the very best beef recipe she ever had made. She shared it with us. I think one of the secrets is the searing of the roast on all sides. Esther Kayser, who was my landlady for many years, was a wonderful cook. She taught me the searing trick over 30 years ago. She always seared all her roasts and her Swiss steak. I believe that it is the best way to prepare meat for the slow

See KITCHEN, Page 13

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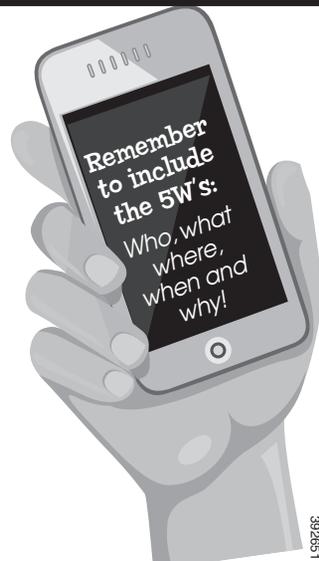
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•Kitchen (Continued from page 12)

cooker or the oven. Try this really good beef roast recipe.

5 to 6 lb. sirloin tip roast
Salt and pepper
4 stalks of celery
4 C. carrots
1 large onion
6 cloves garlic
4 C. beef broth
¾ C. Guinness beer
¾ C. red wine
3 T. tomato paste
3 to 4 sprigs fresh thyme
2 large bay leaves
1 T. Worcestershire sauce
¼ C. flour
2 to 4 T. olive oil
8 medium potatoes
Chop celery, carrots, onion, potatoes, and garlic into pieces. Salt and pepper the roast on all sides; put olive oil in a large skillet and heat oil. Sear the roast on all sides; put into a large slow cooker. If no oil is left in the pan, add 1 T. oil and 1 T. butter; heat until melted. Add the flour to the skillet and cook until browned. Using a whisk, deglaze the pan with some of the red wine, then add tomato paste to the skillet; after scraping all the good brown bits from the pan, add the remaining wine, beer, Worcestershire sauce, and beef broth. Whisk to ensure there are no lumps. Put onions, garlic, celery, carrots, potatoes, thyme and bay leaves on top of roast. Pour broth over roast and vegetables. Cover and cook until tender, approximately 5 hours on high or 8 hours on low.

Remove roast and vegetables and place on a large serving plate; cover to keep warm. Serve with gravy.

Pumpkin Pie Layer Cake

If you are a pumpkin lover and want to have something different than pumpkin pie or bars, you will like this beautiful cake. It will be a great Thanksgiving dessert.

Filling

1 C. milk
1 C. canned pure pumpkin puree
½ C. sugar
2 T. cornstarch
2 egg yolks
½ t. pumpkin pie spice
Pinch of salt

Cake

2 sticks unsalted butter, plus more for the pans
2¼ C. cake flour, plus more for the pans
2 t. baking powder
½ t. pumpkin pie spice
½ t. salt
1½ C. sugar
4 eggs
2 t. vanilla
¾ C. milk
Whipped Topping
2 C. cold heavy cream
½ C. powdered sugar
2 t. vanilla
Pumpkin pie spice for sprinkling

Make the pumpkin filling: combine the milk, pumpkin, sugar, cornstarch, egg yolks, vanilla, pie spice and salt in a medium saucepan. Cook over medium heat, whisking occasionally until bubbles start to form around the edges, about 5 more minutes. Continue cooking, whisking to a pudding like consistency, about 5 more minutes. Transfer to a heat-proof bowl; press plastic wrap directly on the surface and refrigerate until cooled, 1½ to 2 hours.

Preheat the oven to 325. Butter two 9-inch round cake pans; line the bottoms with parchment paper and butter the paper, lightly dust the bottoms with flour, tapping out the excess. Combine the flour, baking powder, pie spice and salt in a large bowl and whisk to combine. Beat the butter and sugar in a large mixing bowl at medium-high speed until light and fluffy about 3 minutes. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, then beat in the vanilla.

Add the flour mixture in three batches, alternating with the milk in two batches; beat until just combined. Divide batter between two pans. Bake until light golden brown on top and the center springs back when gently pressed, 30 to 35 minutes. Transfer to a rack and let cool 10 minutes in the pans, then remove the cakes to racks to cool completely. Remove and discard the parchment.

Put 1 cake layer on a cake stand or platter. Spread the pumpkin filling on top, leaving a ½-inch border. Top with the second cake layer. Make the

whipped cream. Combine the heavy cream, powdered sugar, milk powder and vanilla in a large metal bowl. Beat with a mixer on medium-high speed until medium peaks form, 3 to 4 minutes. Spread the whipped cream all over the cake and refrigerate until ready to serve, at least 20 minutes. Sprinkle with pumpkin pie spice before serving.

Final Thoughts

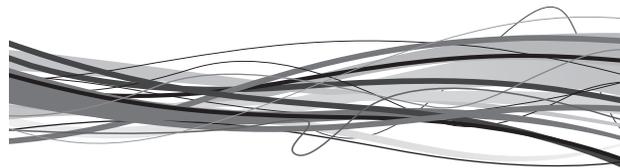
Halloween was a wild night on Mason and Oak Street. We had hundreds of little people, a few bigger people, and even

dogs dressed up. The costumed treaters were all just as my grandma used to say, "Cuter than a bug's ear." They also were very polite. We on Mason and Oak Streets were grateful to the Village of Lena and the Police Department for blocking the street. The children were safe, and it made all of us who live on these streets happy to watch them cross the streets without worry. Thank you again, Village and Police. I finally got my summer furniture put in the basement. I have two elves who showed up to tote and haul. I feel relieved that job

is done. Now I have to wait for my lawn company to get things cleaned up. I really will be ready for winter. We continue to look for holiday recipes for both Thanksgiving and Christmas. We are in the market for recipes that use cranberries, apples or pumpkins. We are also in the market for some seasonal side dishes and some soup recipes that use fall veggies. If you would like to share, contact us in person or by mail at From Lena's Kitchens, Shopper's Guide at 240 W. Main St. or email us at scoopshopper@rv-publishing.com.

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Rural Development wants rural areas disaster-ready

By Kay Shipman
FARMWEEK
When a tornado, flood or other disaster strikes, rural officials might not know Rural Development can help. Molly Hammond, acting state director for Illinois Rural Development, points out they don't have to wait for a disaster. In fact, it's better if they don't. "There's programs to prepare. They can find ways to prepare for disaster, like an early warning siren, if they need a new one," Hammond told FarmWeek.

A recently released USDA resource guide compiles Rural Development programs and assistance in one place. "This guide is there to help them know what to look for," Hammond said of the Disaster Resiliency and Recovery Resources guide.

The guide outlines 40-some Rural Development programs and services for rural residents, businesses and communities to support disaster planning and recovery.

Hammond explained the guide's information grid gives an at-a-glance way to learn who is eligible to apply for different programs that are grouped by categories of assistance. Those categories are: economic development planning and housing, education and training, infrastructure and equipment, and industry and entrepreneurship support

and business development. The guide "breaks down categories to help applicants narrow it down," she added. Applicants are not limited to local units of governments, but include nonprofit organizations and cooperatives, such as electric and agriculture cooperatives; hospitals, libraries, faith-based organizations, community colleges, universities and eligible education institutions.

The resource guide also features examples of how USDA programs were used to support recovery efforts. Hammond said Illinois received \$1.7 million in assistance when 27 counties were designated federal disaster areas in 2019. Another time, five communities received \$618,000 for help with community water systems after a disaster.

Beyond Rural Development, the guide summarizes

technical assistance available from federal agency partners, such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, that work with USDA to support rural communities in disaster planning and recovery.

Hammond said work on the new national resource guide stemmed from former state Rural Development Director Colleen Callahan's time in Washington, D.C., working on the 2012 drought. At that time, officials developed a national recovery website to compile federal assistance and information and align resources.

This story was distributed through a cooperative project between Illinois Farm Bureau and the Illinois Press Association. For more food and farming news, visit FarmWeekNow.com.

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Opinion

(Continued from page 10)

rots away. As local news crumbles, so does our tether to one another."

People want to know what's going on in the towns and neighborhoods where they live, work and raise families. Their access to news and local information shouldn't depend on their ZIP code.

Sen. Steve Stadelman, D-Loves Park, has represented the Rockford area in the Illinois Senate since 2013.



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36.4 acres, more or less, of farm ground commonly referred to as the "landfill farm ground" located in part of the NE 114 of Section 18, Township 27 North, Range 5 East of the 4th P.M., Jo Daviess County, IL, located in the general vicinity of the Stockton landfill near the former railroad tracks in Wards Grove Township.

Bids for the lease of said property are hereby invited and will be received by the village Clerk, Stefanie Hatley, in person at the Village Hall, 155 W. Front Ave., Stockton, IL or by mail at P.O. Box 186, Stockton, IL 61085.

Bids shall bear the legend "Bid-Lease of Farm Ground" and the name and address of bidder. Bids will be accepted until the close of business on December 10, 2021. Bids should be accompanied by a check for 10% of the lease amount bid for 1 year and be made payable to the Village of Stockton.

Said lease shall be for the three (3) year term beginning March 1, 2022 and ending February 28, 2025. The cash farm lease shall provide half of the annual amount of the rent to be paid on March 1st of each year of the lease term and the balance to be paid by December 1st of each year of the lease term.

All bids received will be opened and read during the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees at the Village Hall on Tuesday, December 14, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

A lease may be awarded to the highest bidder whose bid is found to be in the best interest of the Village of Stockton. The Trustees reserve the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any informalities or irregularities in the bidding. The Trustees further reserve the right to review and study any and all bids and to make a lease award within 30 days after the bids have been opened and read. The checks of unsuccessful bidders shall be returned by mail.

Additional information concerning terms and conditions may be obtained by contacting the Village Clerk at 815-947-2515.

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Orangeville United Methodist Church to offer free carry-out Thanksgiving dinner

On Thursday, Nov. 25, there will be a community wide Thanksgiving dinner carry-out offered to the public from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Orangeville United Methodist Church located at 111 S. East St. Although not required, it is recommended to call ahead and place your order. The carry out meals are free and open to all.

To place and order, or if you or someone you know cannot attend, but would like a dinner delivered to your home, please contact the Orangeville United Methodist Church 815-789-3170.

• Impact (Continued from page 9)

would have predicted a 1.1 percent decline, meaning the additional 2.5 percent can be attributed to the pandemic.

The biggest enrollment declines were in Pre-K and kindergarten, with pre-K enrollment dropping 17 percent and kindergarten enrollment dropping 8 percent.

The report also shows a disturbing increase in chronic absenteeism since the pandemic began. More than one in five students, or 22.8 percent, missed 10 percent or more of all school days in the year. That's up from 13.4 percent in 2019, the most recent full pre-pandemic year.

The increase in absenteeism was especially notable among English learners, Black and Hispanic students.

Officials cautioned, however, that the 2021 figures might not be reliable because of the number of students who were engaged in remote learning, where taking accurate attendance counts can be more challenging.

"We know from national studies from the (U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) that school districts serving primarily Black and Hispanic students provided the least access to in-person learning last year," Brenda Dixon, ISBE's research and evaluation officer, said during a briefing on the report. "We suspect that less access to in-person learning contributed to lower engagement among Black and Hispanic students."

The report card also showed declines in student performance on standardized tests, although those numbers are still preliminary because schools were given the option of administering those tests this fall due to the number of buildings that were still not fully open in the spring. Full results will be published next spring.

All students in grades 3-8 take what's called the Illinois Assessment of Readiness, or IAR, which covers English language arts and math proficiency. High school students are tested in 11th grade by taking the SAT exam.

The preliminary results showed fewer students meeting grade-level standards compared to 2019, especially among younger students who may have struggled more to engage in remote learning, Dixon said.

The number of students meeting grade-level standards dropped 17.8 percent in math and 16.6 percent in English language arts, with the biggest declines seen among English language learners and low-income students.

The rate of ninth-grade

students who were on track to graduate dropped 5.1 percent from 2019, reflecting an increase in students receiving failing grades, ISBE said. Students are identified as on track if they have earned at least five full-year course credits and have received no more than one semester of an "F" grade in a core subject.

Agency officials said ninth-grade students who are on track are almost four times more likely to graduate than those who are not on track, and one of the most effective ways to increase graduation rates is through active, early intervention by identifying ninth-graders who are at risk and providing them with tutoring, additional instruction and other individualized services.

"The Illinois State Board of Education is encouraging schools to watch this cohort closely and to utilize federal pandemic relief funds for research-based interventions, especially for current ninth- and 10th-graders who are not on track for graduation," Ayala said during the brief-

ing. "We are also launching a \$25 million high-impact tutoring program early this coming year to provide these types of individualized services to students across the education continuum."

Ayala also noted that Illinois has received nearly \$8 billion in federal pandemic relief funding to address the gaps that resulted from remote learning. Ninety percent of that money was paid directly to school districts that will decide locally how to spend it, but ISBE has earmarked the remaining 10 percent for things like bolstering special education services, closing the digital divide, and mental health services for students and educators.

One area of academic performance that did improve was in college and career preparation. The report card showed the number of students taking courses for both high school and college credit grew 12 percent from the prior year, to 72,490. Advanced Placement enrollment grew 1.6 percent, to 129,574, and CTE enrollment inched up a fraction of a percentage point to 287,191.

Officials attributed that to increased funding in recent years for programs that cover the cost of taking AP exams for low-income students as well as for CTE education overall.

The state's overall teacher retention rate—the three-year average of the percentage of full-time teachers returning to the same school from the previous year—also rose more than a percentage point, to 87.1 percent, although retention rate was lower among Black teachers.

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Highland honors Veterans with ceremony and recognition

Highland Community College will honor and recognize veterans during a flag ceremony with NJROTC from Freeport High School at 12:30 p.m. at the flagpole in front of the Marvin-Burt Liberal Arts Center Building M at 2998 W. Pearl City Rd., Freeport, IL, and during the playing of the national anthem at the Highland Men's Basketball opener on Thursday, Nov. 11.

The Highland Cougar

Men's Basketball team will play the Duhawks from Loras College at 7 p.m. in the Larry F. Kahl Gymnasium at the Sports Complex/YMCA. Veterans will have to show identification for free admission to the basketball game. Veterans will receive a special gift at the basketball game.

For more information on Highland Community College and other events, visit highland.edu.

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