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VOL. 89 • NO. 2 YOUR **FREE** HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER WEDNESDAY, JAN. 4, 2023

PantherHawks place third at Abe's Rumble

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT

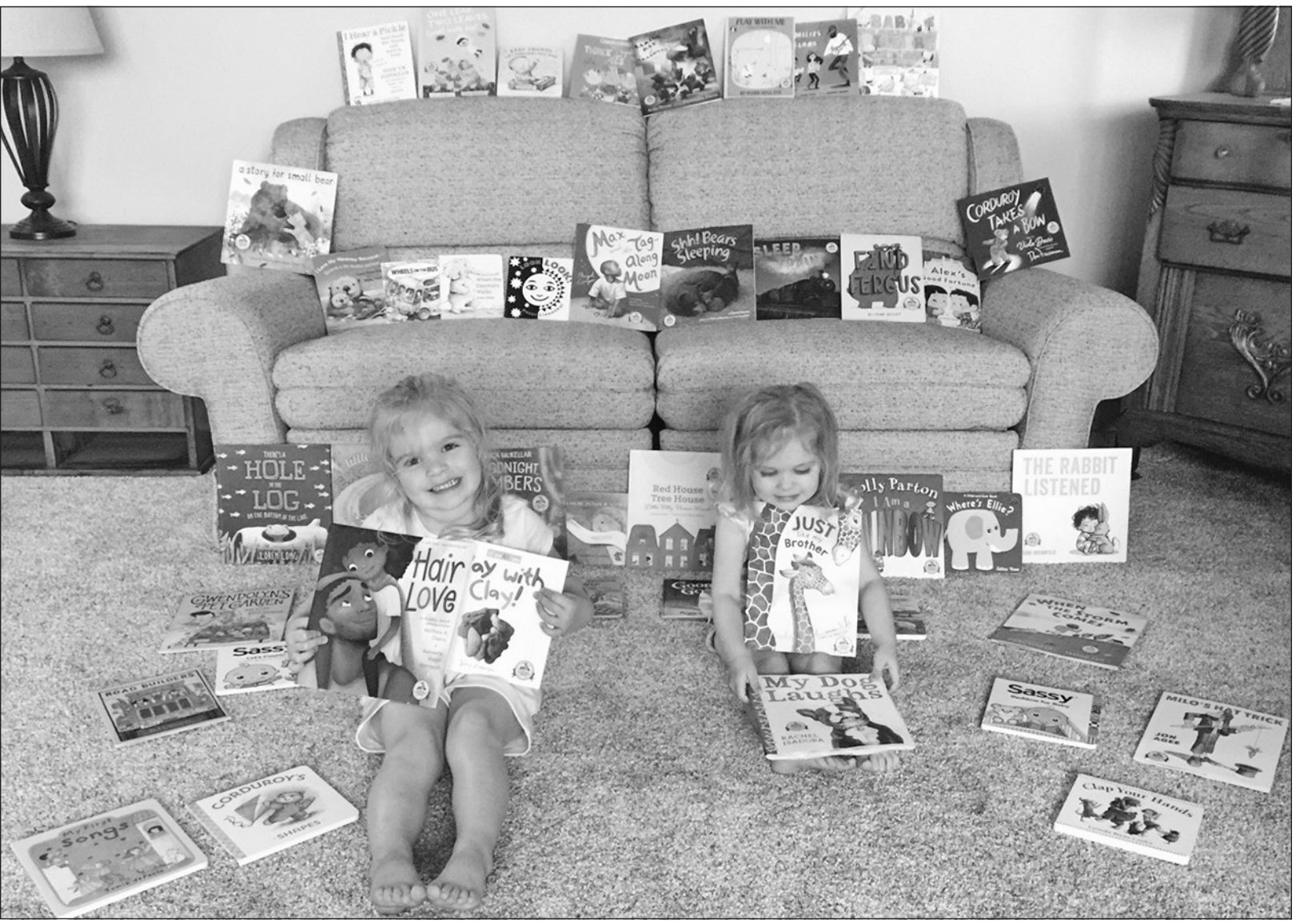
The Lena-Winslow-Stockton PantherHawks competed in Abe's Rumble on Thursday, Dec. 29 and Friday, Dec. 30. Abe's Rumble is a Class 1A meet that features 60 different teams. The rumble returned to Springfield, Illinois for the sixth time.

Day one of the tournament had the PantherHawks sitting in a good position as they won their pool with wins over Chicago Hope, Pontiac, Quincy Notre Dame, and Hoopeston. In their 54-6 win over Chicago Hope, the PantherHawks picked up seven wins by pinfall. David Prater (113), Arrison Bauer (120), Jared Dvorak (160), Eli Larson (170), Jace Phillips, and Mike Haas (220) each earned fall victories. Phillips picked up a pair of pinfall victories at 182 and 195. Jack Mensendike (138) earned an 8-6 victory by decision, while Garrett Luke (152) picked up an 18-1 technical fall victory.

After winning their pool, the PantherHawks were set to face off with Anna Jonesboro in the first round. Le-Win-Stockton would earn another nine victories by pinfall as they picked up the 60-22 victory over Anna Jonesboro. Karl Hubb (145), Carson McPeek (160), Jeremiah Luke (182), and Henry Engel (285) were among the nine PantherHawks to get pinfall victories. Mensendike, Larson, Phillips, Haas, and Bauer also went on to pick up another pinfall victory.

Le-Win-Stockton would go on to beat Seneca 54-16 in the round of 16, and Auburn 45-30 in the quarterfinals. After losing 48-13 to the eventual champions, Coal City, the PantherHawks were sent to the match that would decide who took home third place. Le-Win-Stockton would go on to beat Tremont 43-36 in an exciting dual as they earned the third-place finish.

The PantherHawks will compete in the Northeast 1A tournament on Saturday, Jan. 7.



SUBMITTED PHOTO *Rock Valley Publishing*

Supporting the community

The Dolly Parton Imagination Library in Jo Daviess County is a program of the United Way of Northwest Illinois and is supported by Apple River State Bank. The Bank has been a Champion Sponsor of the program since its inception in 2016. More than 44,000 books have been sent to enrolled children in Jo Daviess County. For information on the program visit www.uwni.org.

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Obituaries

DUANE REITZ

Duane "Wimpy" Reitz passed away at UW Madison on Dec. 27, 2022, after a short illness. He was born on Feb. 27, 1939, Son of Harold, and Lois (Straitt) Reitz.

He spent four years serving our Country in the U.S. Air Force. Duane retired from Kelly Springfield after 37 years of service. He enjoyed duck hunting, fishing, and boating as well as gardening and taking care of his yard. He married Carolyn Nardin in 1962 at The Little Brown Church.

Duane is survived by his wife Carolyn; his daughter Dena (Robert) Porter; grandson Tommy Porter; sister Dalynda (Wayne) Krug; brothers- Dennis (Martha) Reitz, David (Cheryl) Reitz; sister-in-law Carla Palmer; brother-in-law George Nardin; and many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents; grandparents; and brother Daryl Reitz.

Per his wishes there will be no services. A celebration of life may be held at a later date. Cremation rites to be accorded. Condolences may be sent to the family at www.leamonfh.com.

ELIZABETH H. WHITE

Elizabeth H. White, 84, of Rural Lena, Illinois, passed away on Wednesday, Dec. 28, 2022, after a 21-year battle with Parkinson's Disease, at SSM Hospital in Monroe, Wisconsin with her family by her side. She was born in San Antonio, Texas on Dec. 3, 1938, to Pedro R. Hinojosa and Elena (Moreno) Hinojosa, the seventh child of a family of 14 children.

She was a member of St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Lena, Illinois, and a member of the Lena Parkinson's Support Group. Elizabeth was previously married to Ramiro Martinez; he preceded her in death on July 13, 1990. She married David L. White on July 2, 1992.

She is preceded in death by her daughter, Marcia Martinez-Riley, her parents, seven brothers and three sisters. Elizabeth is survived by her husband, David L. White of Lena, Illinois, one son; Ramiro Martinez, Jr. of Rock Falls, Illinois, two stepsons; Bryan (Kathy) White of Oquawka, Illinois and Chris White of Lena, Illinois, one daughter; Rebecca (Martinez) McCue of Jacksonville, Illinois, on step-daughter; Heidi Edler of Lena, Illinois, two brothers; Daniel (Deanna) Hinojosa and Elias Hinojosa, two sisters; Rebecca Huron and Mary (Ralph) Lucio, all of San Antonio, Texas, six grandchildren; Melcon De Jesus Jr., Rachel Martinez, Brian Martinez, Antonyo Riley, Tony Riley Jr., and Elizabeth (Liza) Riley, and several great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

Last rites were given at SSM Hospital in Monroe, Wisconsin, and her body has been donated to medical science, Anatomical Gift Association of Illinois.

In lieu of flowers, Elizabeth requested that any gifts be donated in her memory to The Michael J. Fox Foundation. Any questions about the foundation or to donate, please contact The Michael J. Fox Foundation at PO Box 5014, Hagerstown, MD 21741-5014, by phone at 800-708-7644, or online at www.michaeljfox.org. Condolences may be sent to the family at www.leamonfh.com.

ROBERT C. VANDERHEYDEN

Robert C. Vanderheyden, age 87, passed away Tuesday, Dec. 27, 2022, at FHN Memorial Hospital. He was born at home in Stockton on Oct. 24, 1935, to the late Lloyd and Myrtle (Carpenter) Vanderheyden. Robert married Jane Andrews on Aug. 25, 1956, at Wesley United Methodist Church in Stockton.

Robert was a 1953 graduate of Stockton High School. He was a member of Wesley United Methodist Church in Stockton. Robert proudly served in the United States Navy. During school he had worked at the Stockton Bowling Alley, setting pins by hand. Robert also worked for Atwoods, Kraft, Burgess Battery and retired after 27 years as a computer programmer for Newell.

After retirement, he drove the bus for the Stockton School District. When his children were young, he served as Cub Master and little league coach. Robert enjoyed bowling on the Vanderheyden Furniture Team and golfing. He loved sports and was a huge Stockton Blackhawk fan. Most of all, Robert loved spending time with his family, especially his grandchildren.

He is survived by his wife, Jane Vanderheyden of

Stockton; his daughter, Julie (Eric) Junkel of Mt. Prospect, IL; his sons, Richard (Glenda Shulka) of Wonder Lake, IL and Ronald (Helene Trebian) of Stockton; his grandchildren, Adam Vanderheyden, Emma Vanderheyden, Lorelei Junkel, Erin Vanderheyden, and Hayley Junkel; his sister, Linda (Steve) Thayer of Rockford; and his brother, Jack (Laurrel) Vanderheyden of Stockton. He was preceded in death by his parents; his sisters, June Finn and Sharon Broshous; his brothers, Kenneth, Malcolm, Roger, William and Duane; and his daughters-in-law, Lisa Vanderheyden and Ellen Vanderheyden.

A funeral service was held on Friday, Dec. 30, 2022, at 10:30 a.m. at Wesley United Methodist Church in Stockton. There was a visitation on Thursday, Dec. 29, 2022, from 3:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. 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.

ILA J. WEDIGE

Ila J. Wedige, age 87, of Lena passed away on Friday, Dec. 30, 2022, surrounded by her family at SSM Monroe Hospital in Monroe. She was born on May 15, 1935, to William and Mary (Norman) Ebbings in Keithsburg, Illinois. She married Jerome "Jerry" Wedige on Nov. 6, 1954, at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Rockford, Illinois.

Ila worked as a customer service representative at Micro-Switch Honeywell until she retired after 29 years. Ila and Jerry were active in the Lena Knights of Columbus. She loved reading, embroidery, crochet, and dancing with her husband Jerry. In her later years she enjoyed calling people to catch up with them.

Ila is survived by her four children- Michelle (Larry) Clark of Cedarville, Illinois, Kevin (Karen) Wedige of Jacksonville, Florida, John Wedige of Argyle, Wisconsin, Paul (Sherry) Wedige of Lena, Illinois; 7 grandchildren; 11 great grandchildren; one brother-Mark Ebbings of Stockton, Illinois; one sister-Mary (Richard) Petty of

Machesney Park, Illinois; one brother-in-law- Melvin (Carmen) Wedige of San Antonio, Texas; one sister-in-law- Yvonne Ebbings; and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband Jerry in 2008; grandson Mason Wedige in 2010; one sister- Jo (Leo) Ferguson; three brothers- Steve Ebbings, Thad (Betty) Ebbings, and Greg (Jackie) Ebbings.

A visitation was held on Wednesday, Jan. 4, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Leamon Funeral Home in Lena. Funeral Services will take place on Thursday, Jan. 5, at 11 a.m. St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Lena. Father Snieg will be officiating the service. Burial will take place at St Joseph's Catholic Cemetery in Lena, IL. A memorial has been established in her memory. Condolences can be sent to the family at www.leamonfh.com.

NINA MAE (HALL) SHEETZ

Nina Mae (Hall) Sheetz, age 98, of Stockton passed away peacefully on Dec. 30, 2022, surrounded by her family at Oakley Courts Assisted Living in Freeport where she had resided since 2015. There will be no funeral service at this time, but a celebration of life will be held late spring 2023. Cremation rites have been accorded.

Increase in Illinois minimum wage goes into effect

The Illinois minimum wage increased another dollar on Jan. 1, making the new required minimum wage $13 an hour. Minimum wage workers are encouraged to keep a close eye on their paychecks in the new year as any time worked in 2023 must reflect the new $13 an hour minimum wage.

There have been five increases in the state minimum wage since Gov. JB Pritzker signed legislation in 2019 that establishes a schedule of wage increases, putting Illinois on the path to a $15 an hour minimum wage by 2025. Prior to the first of these minimum wage increases in 2020, the last time workers in Illinois received an increase in the minimum wage was more than a decade ago in 2010.

"Illinois workers deserve a minimum wage that keeps up with the rising costs of living," said Pritzker. "That's why, during my first year as governor, we raised the minimum wage with a gradual ramp to $15 an hour. Minimum wage workers will get a raise and businesses will continue receiving tax credits for providing their workforce with a living wage."

The minimum wage for workers who regularly earn tips also increased to $7.80 an hour on Jan. 1; these workers must still earn the minimum wage after receiving tips, or the employer is required to make up the difference. Workers under 18 who work fewer than 650 hours a year will earn a minimum wage of $10.50 per hour.

All employers in Illinois are required to post the "Your Rights Under Illinois Employment Laws" poster in the workplace where notices to employees are regularly posted. "Minimum wage laws improve the standard of living for all workers of our state," said Jane R. Flanagan, director at the Illinois Department of Labor. "Employers and employees should be aware of the increase to the minimum wage in Illinois."

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Church news

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

All are invited to worship at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 118 E. Mason St. Lena, IL. on Sunday, Jan. 8 at 9:30 a.m. for Third Sunday of Advent. The reading will be from Matthew 3:13-17.

On Tuesday, Jan. 10 Bible Study group will meet at 11 a.m. On Wednesday, Jan. 11 Peace Corps Quilting Group will meet from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. No quilting experience necessary and all are welcome to attend.

Please contact the church office at 815-369-5552 with any questions.

St. John's Lutheran Church

Join St. John's Lutheran Church in Pearl City every Sunday, at 9 a.m. for Worship, Sunday School and Communion. Worship is led by Pastor Shellie Knight. Join the fun for monthly dominoes and card games, Men's Breakfast, and Women's gatherings.

St. John's Lutheran Church is located at 229 S First St., Pearl City, IL.

Stockton Concerned Women for America

The Concerned Women for America (CWA) Stockton Group will meet on Wednesday, Jan. 11 at 2 p.m. at Calvary Church in Stockton. The CWA is a group of concerned Christian women who meet to be informed, to pray and act. Any interested woman is welcome to join. Please contact Carol Rowe at 815-947-2122 or Pam Hess at 815-291-6241 with any questions or if transportation assistance is required.

A Prayer Drive is also held on the first Monday of each month starting at 1 p.m. in Stockton. Those interested meet at the village parking lot by the ambulance building on Queen Street and carpool around town, covering the town in roughly 60 minutes. The next drive will be held on Feb. 6.

News briefs

The Clothes Closet

The Clothes Closet will be open Saturday, Jan 7 from 9 a.m. to noon for free shopping. The Clothes Closet is located at Yellow Creek Church of the Brethren 12602 W. Dublin Rd. Pearl City, IL Call Pastor Boughton at 815-238-1137 for information additional information.

American Legion Auxiliary

The American Legion Auxiliary will hold the annual Pie Baking Contest on Saturday, Jan. 21, 2023, and the annual Soup Tasting on Sunday, Jan. 22, 2023.

Fruit pies should be delivered to the American Legion Home in Lena between 10a.m. and 12 p.m on Saturday, Jan 21. Pies will be judged, and cash prizes will be awarded.

The Annual Soup Tasting will be held from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and will feature over fifteen different soups and dessert for $8.00 for adults and $3.00 for children under 10.

Please call 233-9078 or 369-4684 with any questions.

UW-Whitewater announces Dean's List

The following students were named to the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Dean's List for the 2022 fall semester. These students have demonstrated their academic abilities by receiving a grade point average of 3.4 or above in a single semester.

Gabi Brinkmeier (Lena)
Macie Kaney (Pearl City)
Simon Rillie (Stockton)
Nevaeh Roberts (Lena)

Northern Illinois 4-H Summer Camp

Registration for 4-H Camp 2023 is open. 4-H Camp is set for June 11 through 15, 2023, at Rock River Christian Camp, Polo, IL.

4-H Camp is a five-day, four-night residential camping experience that is conducted cooperatively by University of Illinois Extension staff in Boone, Carroll, DeKalb, Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, Whiteside and Winnebago Counties and the professional staff at RRCC.

During camp week, youth will engage in a variety of activities designed to challenge, educate, and entertain. Two or three free-choice periods will be offered daily, including hiking, shooting sports, arts and crafts, crate stacking, team-building challenges, zip-lining, swimming, and more. Evening activities will be provided by the 4-H camp counselors and include campfires, a games night, and a dance.

4-H Camp is open to all children, ages 8-14 by June 11, 2023. 4-H membership is not required. The cost is $300 for 4-H members and $320 for non-4-H members until March 1. After that date, the price goes up $50. All camp fees must be paid in full by May 15, 2023. Download a camper application online at: http://web.extension.illinois.edu/bdo/northern-illinois-4-h-camp or you can register online at: http://go.illinois.edu/4HSummerCamp.

Master Gardener Training offered in Stephenson County

The University of Illinois Extension is pleased to announce that Master Gardener Training will be held in Stephenson County starting in February. Interested people can register now for the training by calling the office at 815-235-4125 or on the web at go.illinois.edu/jsw.

The training consists of eight sessions (and two optional field trips) conducted on select Tuesday evenings, starting on Feb. 28 and continuing through June 6. To allow participants more flexibility during this training, there will be a flipped classroom style of training. Each week, participants will be given a reading assignment and videos related to the topic to complete before the meeting. Then participants will meet at the U of I Extension office in Stephenson County with Extension staff and Educators on select Tuesday evenings from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. for discussion, review, and follow-up.

Coursework covers botany, soils and fertility, woody ornamentals/pruning, organic gardening, vegetables, houseplants, fruits, insect identification and control, turf management, composting, U of I resources, and more. Once training is complete, participants join the existing Master Gardener volunteers in service to our community, fulfilling the Master Gardner mission of "Helping others learn to grow." As volunteers, Master Gardeners make a difference in the community, answering homeowners' questions, teaching gardening lessons for children, planning, and presenting at educational workshops, creating display gardens, and working with local organizations.

Pre-registration is required to attend Master Gardener Training. The fee for the 2023 Master Gardener training will be determined based on the manual format chosen. Printed manuals cost $165 and digital manuals cost $145. Manuals and USB drives for digital manuals will be available on the first meeting.

Guidelines for writing, submitting a letter to the editor

Rock Valley Publishing encourages readers to reach out to the community by writing a letter to the editor.

Letters are limited to 500 words. Authors must include their first and last name, the city or village in which they reside, and a phone number and email address where they can be reached in case of questions.

Send letters to: scoopshopper@rvpublishing.com

Letter-writers will be limited to one letter per month except for locally elected officials, or individuals specifically associated with local village governments or entities such as school districts, park districts or library districts.

No letters directed to a third party will be accepted for publication.

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OPINION

Slices of life

Hiding behind the monogram

By **JILL PERTLER**
Columnist

They sat indiscriminately on the clearance rack marked down like a thousand percent from their initial price. Hand towels. Not your everyday, ordinary, run-of-the-mill hand towels. These happened to be emblazoned with the letter "P" as in the first letter of my last name. I contemplated my good fortune for a millisecond before tossing a pair in my cart.

A couple bucks later, I returned home with monogrammed towels.

Monogrammed towels! I figured I'd finally hit the big time. Never mind they cost like a dollar apiece. It's not everyday you find yourself confronted with the possibility of a monogram. A monogram practically sings your name—at least the first letter of it. Monograms are snazzy and jazzy and they look like they were made just for you—or for someone who shares your initials. I hung them in the bathroom and waited for company to come over.

Meanwhile, I took the old, worn and tattered towels that had previously hung in the bathroom and tossed them in the back of a cupboard. No need for friends, family or visiting strangers to witness our tatters.

I took another proud look at my new monograms and the metaphor hit me: People are like towels. (Which I realize is actually a simile, but bear with me here.)

We display our monograms for the world to see and hide the tatters in places where they aren't as likely to be noticed. Whether it's a monogram on a towel, a logo on a purse, a label on the back of jeans or a brand name on the back of a vehicle, we work hard to show only our best side when the world's camera comes in for our close-up.

Consider social media. When's the last time someone posted "At a youth sporting event. My kid struck out twice—so far," or, "Report cards came home today. Billy got three D's. At least it's better than last semester." How about, "TV dinners

See HIDING, Page 11

In my opinion

Advice to Illinois college students: Study abroad

By John T. Shaw

I have some simple—and unsolicited—advice for Illinois college and university students: Do everything possible to study abroad while you are an undergraduate.

I offer this advice based on personal experience and academic research.

John T. Shaw

I attended Knox College and spent one semester of my junior year on a London-Florence program that Knox sponsored with several other Midwestern schools. This was my first trip overseas and it not only provided a primer on two remarkable countries, it also allowed me to live and study with students from around the United States who I would never have encountered on the Galesburg campus of Knox.

We spent the first eight weeks in London studying English history, with unforgettable visits to the Houses of Parliament, Hampton Court, and the Tower of London. Our evenings were devoted to attending plays and concerts. This was followed by eight weeks in Florence, Italy, delving into Italian history and learning about the architectural and artistic splendor of not only Florence but Siena, Padua, and Pisa as well.

This was an enriching time for me that sparked a lifelong love of travel and an enduring interest in international affairs.

My wife attended Clark University in Massachusetts and spent her entire junior year abroad thanks to its exchange program with the University of Sussex in Brighton, England. There she and a handful of other "Clarkies" were fully immersed in an English university, living and studying with British students. Not only did her passion for British history, literature, and theater blossom during the year, but she was also able to spend school vacations traveling around the United Kingdom and Europe. She made two lifelong British friends that year and now, decades later, speaks to them regularly. My wife counts that year in Sussex as one of her life's best decisions.

Our experiences are not unique.

The State Department makes a powerful case for study abroad programs. "By studying abroad, you will experience new perspectives, learn how to navigate different cultures, work with diverse peers, and communicate in other languages," the department says on its website. "Whether you are a future innovator, entrepreneur, engineer, scientist, doctor, journalist, teacher or diplomat, these are the skills that will prepare you to solve the world's toughest challenges, make

See ADVICE, Page 6

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• Piece Corps Quilters –
Wednesdays at 8:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

GRACE BIBLE CHURCH OF WOODBINE
1904 S. Vel Tera Road, Elizabeth, IL 61028
Pastor Michael Burdett (815) 858-3843
• ***Sunday Worship – 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.***
• ***Sunday School – 9:30 a.m.***
• Prayer meeting – Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.
Sunday services broadcasted at 11:30 a.m. on Radio WCCI 100.3 FM

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC CHURCH
223 E. Front Avenue, Stockton, IL 61085
Father Mike Morrissey (815) 947-2545
• ***Saturday Evening Mass – 4:30 p.m.***
• ***Sunday Mass – 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.***
• Reconciliation Saturday – 3:30 - 4:15 p.m.
• Parish Hall for Rent – Seats 200

LENA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
118 West Mason Street, Lena, IL 61048
Pastor Keri Rainsberger (815) 369-5291
• ***Sunday Worship – 9:00 a.m.***
• ***Sunday School – 10:30 a.m.***
• ***Daily Dial-A-Devotion 815-369-4411***

MARTINTOWN COMMUNITY CHURCH
W8996 Lena St., Martintown, WI 53522
(1 mile north of Winslow, IL)
Pastor Kevin Cernek • 608-558-0974
• ***Sunday Worship – 8 & 10:30 a.m.***
Worship inside or watch from the parking lot on the jumbotron
• ***Sunday School for all ages – 9:30 a.m.***
• ***Sunday Youth - 6 p.m.***
• ***Tuesday Bible Study - 10:30 a.m.***
• ***Thursday Prayer & Bible Study - 6 p.m.***

McCONNELL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
211 Hulbert Rd. P.O. Box 97,
McConnell, IL 61050
http://www.gbgm-umc.org/mcconnellumc
Email: info@McConnellUMC.org
"Like" us on Facebook
Pastor Rev. Doug Carroll (815) 541-3159
• ***Sunday Worship – 9:30 a.m.***
• ***KidZone: 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.***
1st & 3rd Thursday - monthly
**** We are handicapped accessible***

SALEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
8491 West Salem Road, Lena, IL 61048
(Turn on Salem Road at Eleroy Rest Stop)
(815) 369-4511
Pastor Christopher Ham
• ***Sunday Worship – 10:00 a.m.***

SCHAPVILLE ZION PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
635 East Schapville Road, Elizabeth, IL 61028
Pastor Dottie Morizzo
(815) 845-2272
Cell (815) 238-0670
www.schapvillezion.org
• ***Sunday Worship Service – 10:00 a.m.***
• ***Sunday School – 10:00 a.m.***
• Bible Study Classes Available

SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS LUTHERAN CHURCH
536 E. Schapville Road,
Scales Mound, IL 61054
Church number (815) 845-2061
Rev. James Mehltretter
Website: www.shepherdofhill.com
• ***Sunday Worship – 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.***
• ***Sunday School (Sept. – May) – 8:45 a.m.***
• Holy Communion is celebrated weekly.

ST. ANN CATHOLIC CHURCH
608 East Railroad, Warren, IL 61087
Father Skrobutt (815) 745-2312
• ***Sunday Mass – 8:00 a.m.***
• Reconciliation Sunday – 7:30 - 7:50 a.m.

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod
625 Country Lane Drive, Lena, IL 61048
Rev. Rick Bader (815) 369-4035
• ***Saturday Evening Worship – 5:30 p.m.***
• ***Sunday Worship – 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.***
• Blast Program at 9:00 a.m.
• High School & Adult Sunday School at 9:15 a.m.

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
Evangelical Lutheran Church of America
229 S. First St., Pearl City, IL 61062
www.stjohnspearlcity.org
815-443-2215
• ***Sunday Morning Worship – 9:00 a.m.***
• Christian Education for all Ages - 10:15 a.m.
Handicapped Accessible

ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
8315 S. Massbach Road, Elizabeth, IL 61028
Pastor David Russell
Church: 815-589-3367
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ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH
105 West Webster, Apple River, IL 61001
Father Skrobutt (815) 745-2312
• ***Saturday Mass – 6:00 p.m.***
• Reconciliation Saturday – 5:30 – 5:50 p.m.

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH
410 West Lena Street, Lena, IL 61048
Father Skrobutt (815) 369-2810
• ***Saturday Mass – 4:00 p.m.***
• ***Sunday Mass – 10:00 a.m.***
• Reconciliation Saturday – 3:30 – 3:50 p.m.

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH - KENT
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• ***Holy Communion every Sunday***
• Women Meet at 9 a.m. on the 2nd Sunday
• Chair Lift to Sanctuary

WARREN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Corner of Water & Jefferson St., Warren, IL
Pastor Roger Bronkema (815) 291-6261
email: rbronkema18@gmail.com
• ***Sunday Worship – 9:30 a.m.***
• Adult Sunday School before Worship
• Children Sunday School - During the service
Communion Every First Sunday
**** Handicapped Accessible***

WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Corner of Hudson & Benton St.,
Stockton, IL 61085
Pastor Doug Carroll (815) 541-3159
• ***Sunday Worship – 11 a.m.***
• Adult Bible Studies Available
• Communion Every 1st Sunday
• First Sunday potluck following church services.
Find us on website StocktonWUMC.org or Facebook-Stockton Wesley United Methodist Church
**** Handicapped Accessible***

WILLOW UNITED METHODIST
6522 S. Willow Road, Stockton, IL 61085
Pastor Cheryl Carroll (815) 541-7020
• ***Weekly Sunday Worship – 9:30 a.m. with community fellowship following***
• ***Sunday School – 11 a.m.***
www.willowfolkfestival.com

WINSLOW GRACE BIBLE CHURCH
197 Carver Street, Winslow, IL 61089
Pastor Robert Patin (815) 230-1862
608-669-5770
• ***Sunday Worship – 10:45 a.m.***
• ***Sunday School – 9:45 a.m.***

YELLOW CREEK CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
12602 W. Dublin Road, Pearl City, IL
Pastor Ellis Boughton • 815-864-2049
Email: ellis.boughton@live.com
• ***Sunday Services – 10:00 a.m.***
• ***Sunday School – 9:15 a.m.***
(when available)

ZION COMMUNITY CHURCH
10100 W. Sabin Church Rd.,
Pearl City, IL 61062
Pastor Wayne Fischer • 815-266-6260
Pastor Chip Sohl • 815-541-1425
• ***Sunday Worship Service – 9:00 a.m.***
• ***Children's Church - during church service***
• ***Prayer Shawl Knitting Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.***
• ***Bible Study Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.***

Please call 815-369-4112 or 815-947-3353 if you wish to have your church listed on the church page.

OPINION

IFB president: Bipartisanship, environmental efforts among top priorities heading into new year

By Richard Guebert Jr.
ILLINOIS FARM BUREAU PRESIDENT

As we head into the new year, I am excited for efforts to make 2023 the "Year of the Farmer."

Illinois Farm Families, a coalition comprised of the Illinois Farm Bureau and Illinois Beef, Corn, Pork, Soybean and Midwest Dairy Associations, is also launching a major campaign to build trust in family farmers. One major message we want to amplify is that 96% of Illinois farms are family-owned. In the coming months, our members will start to see such messages shared with a broader audience, including Super Bowl commercials and other activities throughout the year.

I recognize that there is much work to be done. Our farmers and leaders are building support from both sides of the political aisle amid a tumultuous political landscape. Farmers are working tirelessly to assure American families that agriculture is stronger than ever.

Being bipartisan has served Farm Bureau well. ACTIVATOR, IFB's political action committee, helps us elect candidates who work for our best interests in Washington and Springfield. It also helps us build strong relationships with legislators, who in turn help us achieve our legislative priorities. We endorse local candidates regardless of political party, and 93% of ACTIVATOR-endorsed candidates have been elected over the past four-year election cycle.

In the coming months, Congress will begin drafting the 2023 Farm Bill, which will guide U.S. agriculture and food policy over the next five years. For decades, agriculture policy has remained one of the few areas of true bipartisanship in Springfield and Washington, D.C. It is critical that we as farmers continue to develop strong relationships with our state and federal elected officials as they lay the groundwork for the next farm bill, advocate for international trade agreements and promote biofuels in our energy policy.

In December, IFB launched its first documentary, "Sustaining Our Future: A Farm Family Story." The documentary utilizes an empathetic and creative storytelling approach to share the story of a multi-generational farming family at the forefront of Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction efforts.

It also includes the IFB environmental team and agriculture researchers from the University of Illinois. The documentary can be viewed on the Illinois Farm Bureau YouTube page.

As we look ahead in the new year to continue sharing our messages, whether it be farm bill priorities, bipartisanship or environmental efforts, we cannot ignore the changing demographics among our members. There are more IFB members who are older than 90 years old than younger than 35. Additionally, the number of American farms is expected to decline by 42% by 2040.

It is hard to believe that it has been nine years since I was first elected as IFB president. It has been an incredible honor to serve Illinois farmers and our members. I am proud of our work this past year, but our job is not done yet. We have a lot more to accomplish in the coming months. With these educational efforts, new membership programming and bipartisan acts, I know we can make 2023 a great year for farmers and agriculture.

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

Chesney statement on unconstitutional SAFE-T Act ruling

Illinois State Representative Andrew Chesney (R-Freeport) issued the following statement after a Kankakee County judge declared the provision ending cash bail in the Democrat's SAFE-T Act unconstitutional:

"From day one I have fought the Democrat-pushed and hastily crafted SAFE-T Act that would put families, victims and law enforcement in danger. Democrats refused to listen to legal professionals and law enforcement; instead they used their supermajority status to steamroll the legislation through the process resulting in the unconstitutional ruling.

This all could have been avoided if the Democrats had simply held real bipartisan working groups and hearings that took into consideration the testimony of law enforcement, states attorneys, victim advocates and others. Let's see if the lesson is learned."

Senator Stewart: Circuit Court ruling against SAFE-T Act not surprising

A Dec. 28 ruling by a Kankakee County Circuit Judge declaring the pretrial release portion of the SAFE-T Act unconstitutional is not surprising, according to State Senator Brian Stewart (R-Freeport), who has never supported the controversial law or the way it was forced through the Senate in late-night lame-duck session on Jan. 13, 2021.

"Despite being heavily opposed, the controversial no cash bail provision was set to become law on Jan. 1, 2023," Stewart said. "To address all the controversy and the tremendous public outcry against this new law, the Senate passed House Bill 1095 on Dec. 1, but I could not support those changes either because at the end of the day, the SAFE-T Act would still have made the public less safe than they are today."

Stewart says the changes to the SAFE-T Act – approved by the General Assembly Dec. 1 and signed into law by the Governor Dec. 6 – do not fully address the front-line concerns of public safety personnel tasked with protecting Illinoisans. State's attorneys and law enforcement personnel from across Illinois have talked for months about how their work – and the ultimate safety of their communities – will be threatened when some provisions of the state's controversial overhaul of its criminal justice system take effect next year.

Stewart also notes that despite the recent changes, the SAFE-T Act will also still increase costs on police departments and local governments, meaning that many communities would likely see cuts to their local police departments, higher property taxes, or a combination of the two.

•Advice (Continued from page 4)

you more competitive in the job market and transform you into a responsible engaged citizen."

In a typical year, more than 300,000 America students study, intern, or volunteer abroad for academic credit on programs ranging from two weeks to a full academic year. Studies reveal that about 80 percent of college freshman say they would like to study abroad but only about 10 percent actually do so before they graduate.

Paul Simon was a passionate advocate for international travel and education, especially for students who used the experience to learn another language. In his book, "The Tongue Tied American," Simon argued that learning a foreign language enlarges our world and makes us better citizens.

Two Illinois lawmakers, U.S. Senator Richard Durbin and U.S. Rep. Cheri Bustos, recently joined colleagues on both sides of the political aisle to reintroduce the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Program Act in the U.S. Congress.

The legislation has a number of goals. It seeks to boost the number of undergraduate students studying abroad annually to one million students within 10 years; increase the number of minority students, first generation college students, community college students, and students with disabilities who study abroad; grow the number of students who study in nontraditional destinations, with an emphasis on economically developing nations; and encourage colleges and universities to place a greater emphasis on study abroad programs.

The bill includes competitive grants for colleges and universities to help them expand access to study abroad programs. It also allows grants to be used to help offset individual student costs related to study abroad—which can be a barrier.

According to CollegeVine, 50 Illinois colleges and universities offer study abroad programs, providing important opportunities for their students.

I encourage students to study overseas, make new friends, see the world—and then return home and make Illinois better.

John Shaw is the director of the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. Shaw's monthly column explores how Illinois can work toward better politics and smarter government.

Online Only Auction
Huge BB Gun & Vintage Toy Sale
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Pick up will be at: 5816 US Highway 20 West, Freeport IL 61032
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Items in auction: This auction has a Ford F250 along with several collections of BB Guns, Vintage Toy Trucks & Toys, Salt & Pepper Shakers, Barbies, Dolls, G.I. Joe Dolls, Structo Trucks, Hubley Toys, Princess Diana Dolls and Clothes, Vintage Baby Doll Toys, Children's Chairs, Dishes & Household items, Longaberger Baskets and much more.

Visit our website https://advancedauction.com for more information and to be able to register and bid on this auction. A **15%** Buyers Premium will be charged.
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Hornets crowned Mike Alexander Christmas Classic Champions

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT

After suffering their first loss of the season in a Dec. 8 match-up against Pecatonica, the Scales Mound Hornets have built up another six-game winning streak. This recent winning streak comes with a holiday tournament championship as the Hornets were crowned Mike Alexander Christmas Classic Champs.

On Tuesday, Dec. 27 the Hornets held a record of 10-1 and were riding a three-game winning streak. They were set to face off with the Dakota Indians, who came into the game with a record of 6-6. Scales Mound jumped out to a quick lead as they outscored the Indians 20-6 in the first. Scales Mound matched their efforts in the first with another 20 points in the second.

This one was nearly out of reach by halftime as the Hornets held a 40-17 lead. Scales Mound was led by big offensive performances from Thomas Hereau and Charlie Wiegel on their way to a 64-36 victory on the road. Hereau led the team with 15 points, while Wiegel was right behind him with 14. The duo helped the Hornets earn their eleventh win of the season with a victory on the road.

Two days later, the Hornets were set to face off with the Benton Zephyrs in the semifinals of the Mike Alexander Christmas Classic. The Zephyrs brought a 5-1 record into the matchup.

Once again, the Hornets were boosted by a big first half. Another big performance from Hereau helped Scales Mound take a 33-18 lead into halftime break. Benton was much improved in the second half. After putting up just 18 in the first, Benton posted 35 second half points as they tried to comeback. Scales Mound held on, however, for a 66-53 victory.

Hereau led the team in scoring with a 21-point performance. Jacob Deurr had a solid showing as well with 15 points in the victory. The win over Benton propelled the Hornets into the Christmas Classic Championship, where they would face off with the Southwestern Wildcats. At 5-2, the Wildcats would be an exciting opponent for the championship game.

It was Southwestern who held the early momentum. At the end of the first half, Scales Mound found themselves trailing by a score of 34-28. The Hornets knew their defense would have to be much better in the second half if they wanted to pull off the comeback. They came through, holding the Wildcats to just 23 points in the second half. That was just enough to keep the Hornets' hopes alive as they managed to tie the game at 57-57. This exciting championship game required some extra basketball to decide a winner. In fact, it would require two extra periods as one overtime wasn't enough. Tied at 61-61, the Hornets and Wildcats were sent into another overtime period.

That's where the Hornets were able to expand their lead just enough to win as they outscored the Wildcats 8-4 in double overtime. This time it was Deurr who led the team in scoring as he finished with 20 points on the day. Hereau was next up for Scales Mound with 19 points, and Wiegel had 13 as they picked duplicate the 69-65 victory.

At 13-1, the Hornets will be back on the road on Thursday, Jan. 5 when they travel to face off with the Galena Pirates. Galena is currently 8-5 on the season.

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Stockton basketball wrap

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT

Both the Stockton boys' and girls' varsity basketball squads have had their fair share of struggles in their 2022-2023 basketball seasons. The Lady Blackhawks got off to an 0-10 start on the season. Their first win didn't come until Tuesday, Dec. 13 when the Stockton girls played host to the Dakota Indians. Currently, the Dakota Indians hold an overall record of 4-13. One of those 13 losses came from the Blackhawks, however.

The Lady Blackhawks were boosted by an impressive first quarter in which they outscored Dakota 12-8. The second quarter went even more in favor of the Blackhawks as they managed to get out to a 21-12 lead at the halftime break. Stockton was led by an exceptional performance from Katelyn Winters, who led the team with 17 points. Morgan Blair was the next leading scorer as she finished with 12 points, including a pair of three-pointers. Olivia Keefer added six points as the Blackhawks held on for a 44-35 victory. Obviously, it was a special one for the Blackhawks as they picked up their first victory of the season.

The Stockton girls were hoping to build some momentum off their first win when they got back on the court just two days later. Stockton was on their home court on Thursday, Dec. 15 to play host to the Milledgeville Missiles. The Missiles have had their own struggles on the year as they currently sit at just 1-9 overall. The first quarter featured a tight matchup as both teams went into the second quarter tied at 12-12. The second quarter is where the Blackhawks were able to get out to a sizeable lead. Stockton outscored the Missiles 16-6 in the second, helping them take a 28-18 lead into the halftime break.

Coming out of the break, the Blackhawks were riding their wave of confidence as they continued to dominate. Stockton outscored Milledgeville 11-5 in the third quarter, expanding their lead to 39-23. The Milledgeville offense would return to life in the fourth, but it was too little, too late as the Blackhawks held on for the 51-36 victory.

Whitney Sullivan led the Blackhawks in scoring with 17 points on 67 percent shooting. Blair was next up with 15 points, and Winters finished the game with nine. Since then, the Blackhawks have gone on another three-game losing streak. They will be back on their home court on Wednesday, Jan. 4 to play host to the Warren Warriors.

Stockton boys basketball

The Stockton boys recently suffered a four-game losing streak of their own. Stockton's last win came on Dec. 17 when they beat River Ridge 38-31. Most recently, the Blackhawks were able to compete in the Warkins Tournament.

On Thursday, Dec. 29, the Stockton boys were set to face off with a tough opponent in the Lena-Winslow Panthers, in Erie, Illinois. The Blackhawks found themselves trailing big in the first quarter. Le-Win jumped out to a 14-8 lead, early on. A majority of Stockton's points in the first came from the free throw line as Colby Tucker and Ryley Schultz each hit a pair of free throws.

In the second quarter, the Blackhawks caught fire from deep. Bennett Graves and Tucker each sunk a pair of three-pointers in the quarter as the Blackhawks put up fourteen points as a team. It was enough to cut into the Le-Win lead as the Blackhawks went into halftime trailing 26-22.

Stockton found themselves outscored once again in the third quarter. Both Spencer Luke and Alex Altfillisch hit three-pointers, but Le-Win would take a 36-31 lead into the final quarter. Stockton gave their best efforts at a comeback in the fourth. Luke sunk another three-pointer, while the team also sunk four free throws. They outscored Le-Win 11-8 in the quarter, but eventually fell by a score of 44-42. Tucker led the team in scoring with 11 points, while Graves and Schultz each finished with eight. Luke was the team's next leading scorer with seven.

The next day, the Blackhawks were back in Erie to face off with the Stark County Rebels. The Blackhawks tried to keep pace in the first quarter as Altfillisch and Schultz combined to go four for four at the charity stripe. Still, Stark County would take a 10-8 lead into the second.

Stockton would turn the tables in the second quarter as they outscored the Rebels 14-11. Schultz hit a pair of three-

See WRAP, Page 16

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Jo Daviess County Farm Service Agency announces County Committee Election results

Jo Daviess County U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) Acting County Executive Director (CED) Sue Kruse announced that County Committee elections are over, and the ballots have been counted.

Tim Brinkmeier of Warren, IL was elected to represent local administrative area (LAA) #2. Amy Beyer of Warren, IL received the second most votes to be named 1st Alternate. Garrett Toay of Stockton, IL receiving the third most votes to be named as 2nd Alternate.

County Committee members will take office in January 2023 and will be joining the existing committee members Ann Heller of Galena, IL and Dean Groezinger of Elizabeth, IL. Every FSA office is required to have a County Committee, and they are made up of local farmers who

For more information, visit the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov/elections or contact the Jo Daviess County FSA office at 815-858-3418 ext. 102..

Pension debt grows to $139.7 billion

All five pension funds saw losses in FY 2022

By Peter Hancock
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Illinois' unfunded pension liability grew by $9.8 billion, or 7.5 percent, in the fiscal year that ended June 30, due in large part to market losses in a volatile economy.

The Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability reported Dec. 8 that the total unfunded liability in the state's five pension funds reached a total of $139.7 billion, leaving them with a funded ratio of just 44.1 percent.

Those numbers are based on an annual report from the state actuary, who reviews the preliminary financial data submitted by each of the five funds.

The funded ratio reflects the difference in the market value of the funds' assets and the amount of money the funds would need to immediately pay all members the full amounts of benefits they are owed for the rest of time.

Although that's an important measure of the systems' long-term financial health, it does not reflect their current ability to pay out benefits that are owed. All five of the pension funds continue to pay out benefits to eligible retirees on a timely basis.

All told, the five pension funds had combined liabilities of $248.8 billion June 30 and total assets of $109.1 billion.

Of the five funds, the Illinois Teachers Retirement System, which is the state's largest pension fund, showed the strongest performance, losing only 1.2 percent of its market value. In a statement Wednesday, TRS said the median rate of return among large pension systems during the year was -7.6 percent.

The State University Retirement System lost 1.4 percent of its value. The State Employee Retirement System, Judicial Retirement System and General Assembly Retirement System all saw market value losses greater than 6 percent.

Pension systems generally receive funding from three sources—employee contributions; employer contributions; and returns on investments. The large unfunded liability in Illinois' pension funds is the result of the state failing for decades to make adequate contributions as the employer.

In 1994, then-Gov. Jim Edgar, a Republican, pushed through legislation whereby the state would gradually increase its contributions over the next 50 years until the funding ratio would reach 90 percent by 2045, a plan commonly referred to as the "Edgar Ramp."

But the state has not always met its targets under that plan. In 2005, lawmakers passed a bill allowing reduced contributions, known as "pension holidays," in times of budgetary pressure. As a result, contributions in 2006 and 2007 were roughly $1 billion lower than the amounts required under the Edgar Ramp.

The financial crisis in 2007-2008 that led to the Great Recession also resulted in significant losses for the pension funds.

Since taking office in 2019, Democratic Gov. JB Pritzker has included full funding at the statutorily required levels in each of his budgets, and over the past two fiscal years authorized an additional $500 million above what was required by law, bringing the total amount paid in to just under $11 billion, including $9.9 billion from the General Revenue Fund.

Under the 1995 law, each of the funds is required to submit a certification prior to Nov. 1 stating how much the state needs to contribute the following fiscal year.

According to those reports, COGFA said, preliminary estimates show the required contributions for the upcoming fiscal year will total $10.9 billion, including $9.8 billion from general revenues. Even that, however, would be far short of what it would take to cover the actual costs that the funds will accrue during the year.

The "actuarially determined contributions" for the five funds—the amount the state would be obligated to pay, even if the systems were 100-percent funded—would be $15.4 billion.

Around the Northern Hills

By **ANNETTE EGGERS**
Jo Daviess County Farm Bureau

We all know how important agriculture is to our county. But did you know some of the statistics that go to support that? According to the Census of Agriculture, Jo Daviess County has 935 farms with an average farm size of 291 acres. Some of the statistics that stand out that help make Jo Daviess County unique are listed below. Here are a few of the categories that Jo Daviess County ranks high in the state:

1st in the state for production of forages
2nd for production of oats
4th in the numbers of acres of corn for silage
2nd in the total number of cattle and calves
11th in the total number of sheep and lambs
1st in duck production
16th in the number of horses and ponies

IAA Foundation Scholarships available

Agriculture students and Illinois Farm Bureau members, spouses and children are eligible to apply for 100 different scholarships offered by the IAA Foundation. In total, there are $201,501 in funds for the 2023-24 school year. All applicants must be current high school seniors, or students already enrolled at an accredited college or university. Scholarships are awarded based on academic performance, leadership experiences, involvement in activities and community service. A full listing of the available scholarships and eligibility guidelines are available on the Foundation website, www.iaafoundation.org. Applications must be completed online by Feb. 15, 2023.

Rodney Knittel to visit Jo Daviess County

Mark your calendars! Do you have questions on trucking issues on your farm? We have Rodney Knittel, Assistant Director of Transportation at Illinois Farm Bureau, coming to Jo Daviess County on March 15, 2023. Watch for the full details coming soon.

Farm Fun Fact

Elevators in the Statue of Liberty use a soybean-based hydraulic fluid.

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Illinois Extension to offer livestock production series

Join University of Illinois Extension for the first topic in the "Livestock Production and Principles for Beginners Webinar Series." Katie Bell, Local Foods Systems and Small Farms Extension Educator, will discuss "Getting Started with Swine" on Thursday, Jan. 26 at 6 p.m. This program is offered as a Zoom webinar and is at no cost to participants. Pre-registration is required by Wednesday, Jan. 25, 2023, to receive the Zoom link. To register or for more information on the program please visit us online at go.illinois.edu/jsw or call our office at 815-235-4125.

This presentation will be a basic overview for those considering getting started in swine. During the session, Katie will review the basics of swine care including feed management, infrastructure and housing, and manure management. She will also talk about breed selection, giving an overview of breeds and why it is important to review your production goals when considering breed selection. Lastly, marketing considerations will be covered. Resources and laws and products to sell will be discussed when talking about marketing considerations.

Other topics in the series include Grazing with Doug Gucker on Thursday, Feb. 23, Meat Goat Production with Sarah Farley on Thursday, March 16, and Farm Scale Manure Management with Jay Solomon on Thursday, April 13. All of these will begin at 6 p.m. and will be offered as a Zoom webinar. Please call the office at 815-235-4125 with any questions.

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EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

• Hiding

(Continued from page 4)

again tonight," or, "Please excuse the lack of beach photos. We can't afford a vacation this year."

Posts like these aren't going to happen because these examples simply aren't monogram material. They're probably all real and all accurate, but they are not our choice for sharing in public because we consider them our tatters. We don't want people to see our worst; we want them to be aware of our monograms.

In all honesty, life is messy and flawed. There's just no need for anyone to know about it.

If you visit, and you use my bathroom, you might note I have monogrammed towels and you might surmise that I have money to purchase monogrammed towels. From there you might jump to the conclusion that I have an orderly and well-organized household where the laundry is never piled high, no one ever gets angry, homework is done on time every time without any reminders from parents and the towels remain perfectly folded on the rack monogram side out never becoming soiled or tattered.

And if you thought that, you would be wrong. Despite the monograms bought on clearance, I have my share of tatters—and piles of laundry. And it is OK. Even during the best times, life is not meant to be perfect. I've discovered over the years that good can be great and so-so might be the best you're going to get, depending on the day. But even when it's two steps forward, one step back, you are making the effort and that counts for something – whether you are monogrammed, tattered or, like most of us, somewhere in between.

And when you have friends and family who love you, tatters and all, it begins to make sense and you understand there's no need to hide behind a monogram. Not really. Even though I still do sometimes.

But I'm working on it.

Jill Pertler is an award-winning syndicated columnist, published playwright and author. She invites readers follow her column on the Slices of Life page on Facebook.

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LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, STEPHENSON COUNTY, ILLINOIS,
FIFTH THIRD BANK, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.,
Plaintiff,
v.
LAURA L. KAUFFMAN, AKA LAURA KAUFFMAN; ILLINOIS HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS,
Defendants,
Case No. 2022FC62

The requisite affidavit for publication having been filed, notice is hereby given you, Laura L. Kauffman, AKA Laura Kauffman, Unknown Owners and Non-Record Claimants, that the said suit has been commenced in the Circuit Court of the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit, Stephenson County, Illinois by the said plaintiff against you and other defendants, praying for the foreclosure of a certain Mortgage conveying the premises described as follows, to-wit:

Lots 7 and 8 in Block 15 in the Town of Dakota; situated in the Village of Dakota, County of Stephenson and the State of Illinois.

201 East Main Street, Dakota, IL 61018

14-09-36-203-001

Now, therefore, unless you, Laura L. Kauffman, AKA Laura Kauffman, Unknown Owners and Non-Record Claimants, and the said above named defendants, file your answer to the complaint in said suit or otherwise make your appearance therein, in the office of the Clerk of the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit, Stephenson County, Illinois, on or before February 12, 2023, default may be entered against you at any time after that day and a Judgment entered in accordance with the prayer of said Complaint.

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 provider. Visit http://efile.illinoiscourts.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 or contact the Clerk of this Court.

Alan S. Kaufman
(6289893)
MANLEY DEAS KOCHALSKI LLC
Attorneys for Plaintiff
One East Wacker, Suite 1250, Chicago, IL 60601
Phone: 312-651-6700;
Fax: 614-220-5613
Email: sef-askaufman@manleydeas.com
One of Plaintiff's Attorneys
File Number: 22-028657
I3209703

(Published in
The Shopper's Guide
Dec. 21 & 28, 2022
& Jan. 4, 2023)

430546

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT STEPHENSON COUNTY - FREEPORT, ILLINOIS
Fifth Third Bank, National Association
PLAINTIFF
vs.
Joseph Freeman, Jr.; et. al.
DEFENDANTS
No. 2022FC45

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on 10/25/2022, the Sheriff of Stephenson County, Illinois will on February 16, 2023 at the hour of 9:30 AM at Stephenson County Courthouse 15 North Galena Avenue 1st Floor, West door of courthouse Freeport, IL 61032, or in a place otherwise designated at the time of sale, County of Stephenson and State of Illinois, sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash, as set forth below, the following described real estate:

LOT 2 IN BLOCK 3 OF WESTWOOD HILLS SECOND SUBDIVISION IN THE EAST HALF OF THE NORTH EAST QUARTER OF SECTION 35, TOWNSHIP 27 NORTH RANGE 7 EAST OF THE FOURTH PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF, RECORDED IN THE RECORDER'S OFFICE OF STEPHENSON COUNTY, ILLINOIS, IN BOOK "F" OF PLATS, AT PAGE 52; SITUATED IN STEPHENSON COUNTY IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS.

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

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

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

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

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

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

For information: Examine the court file or contact Plaintiff's attorney: Codilis & Associates, P.C., 15W030 North Frontage Road, Suite 100, Burr Ridge, IL 60527, (630) 794-9876. Please refer to file number 14-22-05176.
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(Published in
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U.S. dairy industry poised to grow

By Daniel Grant
FARMWEEK

Milk demand is projected to grow by 21 percent globally between 2020 and 2030, according to Matt Daley, president of GEA Farm Technologies. And he believes much of that demand could be met by U.S. dairy farmers.

"With more people, more dairy is consumed," Daley said this month at the Agricultural Bankers Conference in Omaha, Nebraska. "What's amazing is we're doing it with fewer cows.

"A dairy cow in the U.S. produces two to three times more milk because there's more sunshine and greater access to grains (than other parts of the world)." The world population reached an estimated 8 billion people as of Nov. 15, a new milestone in human development. The rising population and a growing middle class in some areas likely will drive increased demand for dairy products.

But with tighter environmental regulations in Europe, dairy output could actually decrease in that part of the world. Daley believes dairy expansion is also unlikely in New Zealand. "Who's slated around the world to produce more milk? It's us in the U.S.," he said.

Technology and automation will be critical for U.S. farmers to continue to boost milk output with fewer cows. GEA manufactures about 25 percent of robotic milking technology in North America, according to Daley. "As long as we can expand processing capabilities, we'll produce more milk, because the world needs it," he said. "As labor continues to get tighter, more automation will come."

GEA is quoting plans for new dairy plants in Nebraska, Kentucky and Georgia and three new whey distilleries are going up in the U.S.

DEA is also building more concentration facilities, which separate the milk and can lower shipping costs by 70 percent.

A strong appetite for dairy is also driving local demand, which bodes well for small dairies looking for niche markets. "The last four or five years, we've never put in so many small cheese plants," Daley said. "The craft cheese industry is booming. A lot of dairy farmers are making their own cheese and selling it locally."

If you've never heard of DEA Farm Technologies, chances are you've eaten food produced with its technology or at a plant it built. DEA is one of the world's largest system suppliers for the food, beverage and pharmaceutical sectors.

"We do food on a small and massive scale," Daley said. "Every third chicken nugget in the world is produced with GEA technology. If you eat cheese, GEA technology likely sliced it and put it in the package." About a quarter of processed milk in the world comes from GEA or is processed with its equipment.

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From Lena's Kitchen

The not so skinny cook

The New Year has started, and we ushered it in with pretty warm weather for January. We survived the winter blast of Christmas, and now we can enjoy a milder start to this year. Perhaps that means 2023 will be a gentler and kinder year than last year. This week we have some soup recipes because I know we are going to get some cold weather again. For those people who aren't into soup, there is a good casserole, and for dessert we have an old-fashioned cake.

Crispy Brie Stuffed Mushrooms

Appetizers that are easy to make and that can be made ahead of time are ones that rank at the top of my list. This stuffed mushroom recipe uses brie cheese to add to the flavors. Enjoy this great appetizer at your next get together.

2 lbs. fresh mushrooms, stemmed
6 T. salted butter, melted
8 oz. brie cheese, cut into bite-size chunks
2/3 C. panko breadcrumbs
½ C. fresh parsley, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
½ t. salt
Pepper to taste.

Preheat the oven to 375. Arrange the mushrooms cap-side up on a rimmed baking sheet. Brush with 1 T. melted butter. Flip the mushrooms cape side down and stuff a piece of brie inside each one. Mix the panko, parsley, garlic, salt, and pepper in a medium bowl. Mix in remaining tablespoons of melted butter. Spoon a little of the mixture on each mushroom. Bake until the mushrooms are softened around the edges, the cheese is melted, and the tops are golden, 20 to 25 minutes. Serve straight out of the oven or a room temperature later.

Veggie Chopped Salad

If you have had enough rich food from holiday celebrations, this veggie salad will help you get back on track to healthier eating. It has just enough of the good stuff to make veggies attractive. This salad is a great side for any meal.

3 C. finely chopped fresh broccoli
3 C. finely chopped cauliflower
3 C. finely chopped celery
2 C. frozen peas, thawed
6 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled
1 1/3 C. mayonnaise
¼ C. sugar
2 T. grated Parmesan cheese
1 T. cider vinegar
¼ t. salt
¾ C. salted peanuts

In a large bowl, combine the broccoli, cauliflower, celery, peas, and bacon. In a small bowl, mix mayo, sugar, cheese, vinegar, and salt until blended. Add to salad and toss to coat. Just before serving, stir in peanuts. Refrigerate leftovers.

Bean Counter Chowder

If you are looking for a meatless meal, this chowder will be a hearty main course. It is great on a cold day when you need something to warm everyone up. For those people who need meat, add chopped ham, and use chicken broth.

½ C. chopped onion
1 T. canola oil
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 medium tomato, chopped
2 cans (14.6 oz.) vegetable broth
1¾ C. water
½ t. dried basil
½ t. celery seed
½ t. oregano
¼ t. pepper
3 cans (15.5 oz. each) great northern beans, rinsed and drained
1 C. uncooked elbow macaroni
1 T. minced parsley

In a large saucepan, sauté onion in oil until tender. Add garlic; cook 1 minute longer. Add the tomato; simmer for 5 minutes. Add the broth, water, and seasonings. Bring to a boil; cook for 5 minutes and add beans and macaroni; return to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer; uncover and cook until macaroni is tender, about 15 minutes. Sprinkle with parsley.

Creamy Vegetable Chowder

If you are starting the New Year trying to eat more vegetables, this soup will be one to add to your list. It is heartier than a plain vegetable broth soup and makes a large pot. Try it with some good bread.

¾ lb. sliced bacon, chopped
2 large onions
2 celery ribs
2 medium carrots
2 celery ribs
2 medium parsnips
2 small turnips
¾ C. flour
½ t. salt
½ t. cayenne pepper
2 cartons (32 oz. each) chicken broth
1 medium sweet potato, peeled and chopped
3 small red potatoes, chopped
2 bay leaves
1 T. Worcestershire sauce
¼ t. hot pepper sauce
1 C. half-and-half cream
½ C. minced fresh parsley

In a Dutch oven, cook bacon over medium heat until crisp. Remove to paper towels; drain, reserving 3 T. drippings. Chop the onions, carrots, celery, parsnips, and turnips; add to the pan. Cook and stir for 6 to 8 minutes or until fragrant. Sprinkle vegetables with flour, salt and cayenne; stir until blended. Gradually add the broth and bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Stir in the sweet potatoes, bay leaves, Worcestershire sauce and pepper sauce. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes or until potatoes are tender. Stir in cream and parsley, heat through. Discard the bay leaves. Serve with bread.

Eight-Layer Casserole

If you are tired of soup, this one-dish casserole is a great way to sneak a vegetable into a noodle dish that even kids will like.

1 lb. frozen home-style egg noodles
2 lbs. ground beef
2 cans (15 oz. each) tomato sauce
1 T. dried minced onion
2 t. sugar
2 t. Italian seasoning
2 t. dried basil
2 t. dried parsley flakes
1½ t. garlic powder
1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened
1 C. sour cream
½ C. 2% milk
2 pkgs. (10 oz. each) frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry
1 C. shredded Monterey Jack cheese
1 C. shredded Cheddar cheese
Fresh parsley for garnish

Preheat oven to 350. Cook noodles according to package directions. In a large skillet, cook beef over medium heat until no longer pin; crumble meat; drain. Add the tomato sauce, onion, sugar, and seasonings. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10 minutes. In a small bowl, combine the cream cheese, sour cream, and milk.

Place half of the noodles in a greased 9 x 13 baking dish. Top with 3 C. meat mixture. Layer with cream cheese mixture, spinach, and remaining meat mixture and noodles. Sprinkle with cheeses (dish will be full). Bake, uncovered, until bubbly, 40 to 45 minutes. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving. Garnish with fresh parsley.

Snowflake Cake

Since we are in January and will probably have more snow, what can be better than a cake that makes us think of snow? I don't often put this kind of recipe into the column because it is one like my mother and grandmother used to make; it takes time and a little effort. This cake is an old fashioned one because it uses 7-minute frosting. My grandmother used to put hickory nuts in the cake and sprinkle them with the coconut. My mother used pecans because hickory nuts are hard to find unless you have a loved one who finds the nuts and picks them out. It truly is a labor of love, so make sure your family and friends know how much effort you have put into this special dessert for them.

2 eggs plus 4 egg yolks, room temperature
1½ C. sugar
1 C. 2% milk
½ C. butter, cubed1 ½ C. flour
1 T. baking powder
1 t. vanilla
½ C. chopped pecans (optional)

See KITCHEN, Page 15

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IN*CI*DENTAL*LY

The Flip Side

By
DR. STEPHEN PETRAS
Illinois Licensed General Dentist

In many of my columns, I talk about the side effects of a lack of saliva. Today I want to address the flip side or the effects of too much saliva. Hypersalivation refers to the increased production of saliva. Drooling (sialorrhoea) on the other hand, refers to excessive saliva accumulation accompanied by the unintentional loss of saliva from the mouth. Drooling is normal during the first two years of life because babies still haven't developed full control of the muscles around their mouths. Drooling also increases during teething.

There are a number of health conditions that can lead to excess saliva production and/or decreased saliva clearance which can result in drooling. These can include allergies, sinus congestion, respiratory infections, sore throats, tonsilitis, chronic acid reflux (GERD), and morning sickness in pregnancy. Sometimes, drooling is a symptom of medical or neurological conditions, such as Cerebral Palsy, Down Syndrome, stroke, Bell's Palsy, Parkinson's disease, Multiple Sclerosis, and Lou Gehrig's disease. Loss of vertical dimension (overclosure) due to worn, and abraded teeth or deteriorated and/or ill-fitting dentures can cause drooling. Obstructive sleep apnea, which causes your airway to become repeatedly blocked during sleep, and central sleep apnea, when the brain isn't sending the right signals that you need to breathe, can lead to excess saliva production and drooling.

Drooling can be caused by certain medications. It may also occur because of underdeveloped muscles around your mouth. Therefore, if you experience the sudden development of excessive saliva and drooling, it is imperative that make an appointment with your physician so he/she can determine the cause of your condition and recommend the appropriate diagnostic testing, medical referrals, interventions, and treatment.

Treatment for drooling ranges drastically depending on the underlying cause and the extent of physiological and/or neurological disease or damage. While people with tonsilitis may find it difficult to swallow, once the infection is treated and normal swallowing returns, the drooling should subside. However, people with neurological diseases or stroke often develop ongoing pain or difficulty swallowing or lose their ability to swallow at all. This puts them at an increased risk of aspirating saliva, foods, or fluids into their lungs, causing pneumonia. Treatment may involve any or all of the following: speech therapy to help develop more effective lip closure, tongue placement and swallowing when eating or drinking, medications to decrease saliva production, physical therapy to strengthen the oral muscles, Botox injections, and surgery.

Chronic drooling may lead to the development of painful, cracked sores at the corners of your mouth (angular cheilitis) and skin breakdown around the chin. When loss of vertical dimension is the underlying cause, restoring vertical dimension will eliminate this issue. Some instances of drooling may require simple interventions such as changing your sleep position. While sleeping on your back decreases drooling, it is the worst position if hypersalivation triggered by GERD is the cause of your drooling. GERD is when weakened muscles in the lower end of the esophagus (Lower esophageal sphincter) allow stomach acid to escape and flow into the esophagus (it can also flow into the throat, mouth, sinuses, and lungs). This acid reflux will not only damage your teeth but may function as a trigger for hypersalivation(waterbrash). When you are upright gravity helps these acids return to the stomach, so symptoms are worse at night or when lying down. Lying flat on your back allows those acidic secretions to pool and cause damage. For people with GERD, it is best to sleep on your left side (which naturally puts your stomach lower than your esophagus), with the head of the bed slightly elevated. In contrast, sleeping on your right side puts your stomach above your esophagus. Other steps to reduce acid reflux include eating earlier in the evening and avoiding alcohol, acidic foods, fatty and/or heavy meals, and nighttime snacking. If you have a lot of body fat that is pushing on your stomach and increasing the incidence of acid reflux, your doctor can offer a referral to a registered dietitian to help you lose weight. You will also be advised to quit smoking and avoid non-steroidal anti-inflammatories drugs (NSAIDs) as these can increase symptoms of GERD. Your doctor may prescribe medication to treat GERD or substitute medications that you currently take if they are causing hypersalivation. Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) or an oral appliance prescribed to treat sleep apnea may not only restore healthy breathing but decrease the hypersalivation associated with it.

While some people are embarrassed or afraid to admit that they drool, this is valuable information that should be reported in your health history. Your oral health and overall health are interconnected, and this assists your healthcare team in the early diagnosis and treatment of systemic disease.

• Kitchen

(Continued from page 13)

Frosting:

1¾ C. sugar
½ C. water
4 egg whites
½ t. cream of tartar
1 t. vanilla
2 C. sweetened shredded coconut

In a large bowl, beat the eggs, egg yolks and sugar until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes. In a small saucepan, beat milk and butter until butter melts. Combine flour and baking powder in a separate bowl. Add the flour to the egg mixture alternately with milk mixture. Beat until well mixed. Add vanilla and mix. Fold in nuts if desired. Pour into 3 greased and floured 9-inch round baking pans. Bake at 350 until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, 15 to 18 minutes. Cool in pans 10 minutes before removing to wire racks to cool completely.

Frosting: in a saucepan, combine sugar and water. Bring to a boil; cook over high heat until a thermometer reads 244, firm ball stage. Meanwhile beat egg whites and cream of tartar in a bowl on high speed until foamy. Slowly pour the hot sugar syrup over the egg whites while beating continuously. Continue beating on high until stiff glossy peaks form, about 7 minutes. Add vanilla; beat until frosting cools slightly and reaches desired spreading consistency. Place 1 cake on a serving plate or cake stand; spread with ¾ C. frosting. Sprinkle with ¼ C. coconut. Repeat layers. Top with remaining cake layer. Frost top and sides of cakes with remaining frosting; sprinkle with remaining coconut. You have the most beautiful snowflake cake to serve to family and friends.

Final Thoughts

Have you noticed the new addition to the Visitors Corner on Highway 73? We have a new sign that is attractive and informative. The sign is the result of a collaboration between the Lena Business and Professional Association (LBPA) and the Lena Economic Development Corporation. It has been a one-year project from its conception and to its finish. You can see the time and temperature and will feature events that will promote Lena. Right now, the sign reflects those people and businesses who made this sign possible. If you have a nonprofit event that you want featured, visit the LPBA website. There are some rules and regulations that are in place, but it is a great way for our community organizations to tell us what is going on and what we should be supporting. Thank you to all the parties involved in this project. It makes a great addition to our little town.

School is back in session, winter sports have returned, and Christmas 2022 has been put away. We now set in for a long haul of winter. Sometimes the best times in winter are when we make something good to eat. If you have some good recipes for winter cooking, you can contact us in person, by mail at From Lena's Kitchens, Shopper's Guide at 240 W. Main St. or email us at scoopshopper@rvpublishing.com.

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REAL ESTATE NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
STEPHENSON COUNTY - FREEPORT, ILLINOIS
Fifth Third Bank, National Association
PLAINTIFF
vs.
Joseph Freeman, Jr.; et. al.
DEFENDANTS
No. 2022FC45
NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE
PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on 10/25/2022, the Sheriff of Stephenson County, Illinois will on February 16, 2023 at the hour of 9:30 AM at Stephenson County Courthouse 15 North Galena Avenue 1st Floor, West door of courthouse Freeport, IL 61032, or in a place otherwise designated at the time of sale, County of Stephenson and State of Illinois, sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash, as set forth below, the following described real estate:
PIN 89-18-13-35-229-013
Improved with Residential
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Freeport, IL 61032
Sale terms: 10% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the auction; The balance, including the Judicial sale fee for Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund, which is calculated at the rate of $1 for each $1,000 or fraction thereof of the amount paid by the purchaser not to exceed $300, in certified funds, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.
If the property is a condominium and the foreclosure takes place after 1/1/2007, purchasers other than the mortgagees will be required to pay any assessment and legal fees due under The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4).
If the property is located in a common interest community, purchasers other than mortgagees will be required to pay any assessment and legal fees due under the Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1).
If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney.
Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser shall receive a Certificate of Sale, which will entitle the purchaser to a Deed to the real estate after Confirmation of the sale. The successful purchaser has the sole responsibility/expense of evicting any tenants or other individuals presently in possession of the subject premises.
The property will NOT be open for inspection and Plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the Court file to verify all information.
IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW.
For information: Examine the court file or contact Plaintiff's attorney: Codilis & Associates, P.C., 15W030 North Frontage Road, Suite 100, Burr Ridge, IL 60527, (630) 794-9876. Please refer to file number 14-22-05176.
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(Published in The Shopper's Guide Jan. 4, 11, & 18, 2023)
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Law enforcement officials push for ban on high-power, high-capacity weapons

By Peter Hancock
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Some of the state's leading law enforcement officials last week urged lawmakers to pass a statewide ban on high-power, high-capacity weapons, which they say are growing in prevalence in Illinois.

"What the public asks members of the law enforcement community to do each and every day is stunning, knowing full well that the cars we're approaching, the houses we're entering, have some of the most lethal weapons you've ever seen, ever. And they keep getting worse," Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart told the House Judiciary-Criminal Committee during a third hearing on proposed legislation.

The committee is considering House Bill 5855, a proposal by Rep. Bob Morgan, D-Deerfield. It would ban the possession and sale of a long list of firearms that would be defined as "assault weapons" as well as high-capacity magazines and devices that make a semi-automatic gun fire like a fully automatic weapon.

It would also delete a provision in current law that allows people between the ages of 18 and 21 to obtain a Firearm Owner's Identification, or FOID card, with the consent of their parent or guardian, effectively establishing a firm minimum age of 21. It would also require hunters younger than 21 to be under the supervision of an adult with a valid FOID card.

The bill was prompted in large part by a mass shooting at a Fourth of July parade in Highland Park earlier this year that left seven people dead and dozens more injured. The alleged gunman in that shooting used a Smith and Wesson M&P 15 semi-automatic rifle and three magazines containing 30 rounds of ammunition each.

"These weapons have entered our schools, our places of worship, our theaters, our parades and our peaceful community spaces with one objective: to create mass carnage," said Elena Gottreich, Chicago's deputy mayor for public safety. "Assault weapons are designed to inflict maximum tissue damage in the shortest amount of time."

Angel Novalez, chief of constitutional policing and reform for the Chicago Police Department, said that so far this year, his department has taken 1,156 assault-style weapons off the street, nearly a 13-percent increase over 2021. Since 2004, he said, the department has recovered more than 18,000 such weapons.

"We are up against an ever-growing threat and it's making protecting our neighborhoods more difficult and dangerous for all our police officers," he said. "It's making residents feel more unsafe. They're living in the crosshairs of needless violence every day."

So far, the proposed legislation has received broad support from gun safety advocacy organizations as well as elected public officials, including Secretary of State Jesse White. But it faces strong opposition from gun rights organizations, including the National Rifle Association and the Illinois State Rifle Association, which argued the bill would likely be ruled unconstitutional.

"I'm here to tell you that the gun owners are tired of being blamed for every madman, every criminal, and every other depraved act that 2.5 million gun owners didn't do," former NRA lobbyist Todd Vandermyde said recently. "And we're not here to negotiate. I'm here to tell you that if House Bill 5855 or anything remotely like it passes, we will see you in court."

Valinda Rowe, a spokeswoman for the gun rights advocacy group Illinois Carry, also said the law, if enacted, would be challenged in court and likely overturned, and she urged lawmakers to focus on the root causes of violent crime.

"The focus to address the problems that have been brought up today—and they are horrendous problems, there's no doubt—but the focus going forward … must be on the violent criminals and on the mentally ill who pose a danger to themselves and others, not on law abiding citizens and lawfully owned and possessed purchased firearms," she said.

But the committee also heard from survivors and witnesses of other notorious mass shootings.

Po Murray, president of the Newtown Action Alliance, said her children were attending Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut in 2012 when a gunman armed with an AR-15-style rifle and high-capacity magazines killed 20 children and six educators.

"Our town became unrecognizable," she said. "We were shocked by what happened in our community. But instantly we knew that if our town could turn into a war zone due to an AR-15 that it could happen anywhere. Therefore, we sprung into action to send a strong message to all Americans that no one is safe as long as Americans can legally obtain assault weapons and high-capacity magazines."

Aalayah Eastmond said she was a student at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., when a gunman there opened fire and killed 17 people.

"Illinois has led the country in enacting some of the strongest policy solutions to prevent gun violence," she said. "However, in the wake of the Highland Park shooting where a perpetrator armed with an AR-15-style weapon and high-capacity magazines was able to murder seven people and injure 48 more, I along with several others here today are urging this body to yet again prioritize public health and safety by passing House Bill 5855."

Last week's hearing was the third such hearing the committee has held since the bill was introduced Dec. 1, and committee Chairman Justin Slaughter, D-Chicago, said there will be further hearings when lawmakers return to Springfield in January. The committee could take action on the bill during an upcoming lame duck session scheduled to begin Jan. 4.

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• Wrap

(Continued from page 8)

pointers to help Stockton grab their first lead as they went into halftime up 22-21. Stockton was unable to keep the momentum going in the third as Stark County jumped right back in the lead. Tucker would sink a three-pointer on his way to four third quarter points, but the Blackhawks would go into the fourth trailing 38-31.

Once again, Stockton would give their best efforts at a comeback as they made it a game again. With 16 fourth quarter points, the Blackhawks gave themselves an opportunity to win. Tucker had six points in the quarter, while Altfillisch sunk a three and Schultz added three points of his own. It wasn't enough, however, as the Rebels held on for a 50-47 victory.

Tucker led the team in scoring with 12, while Schultz finished with 11, and Altfillisch had nine. Dustin Oppold was the next leading scorer with eight.

The Blackhawks will be back in action on Wednesday, Dec. 11 when they face off with East Dubuque in tournament play.