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# Shopper's Guide

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YOUR FREE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2020



COURTESY PHOTOS Shopper's Guide

Master Gardener John Miller teaches participants in early March how to create a mini-succulent garden using a recycled Keurig cup.



## Youth experience learning through 4-H Super Saturday programs

University of Illinois-Extension hosted its annual 4-H Super Saturday on March 7 at Highland Community College in Freeport.

Super Saturday is a 2.5-hour event designed to give area youth ages 5 to 18 a chance to explore the many project areas available through the 4-H program. This event is open to all area youth, regardless of 4-H membership.

Youth between the ages of 8-18 attended and experienced three hands-on workshops where they could name their own disease, learn about showing livestock with an emphasis on rabbits, plant a mini-succulent garden, try their hand at being an EMT, learn how to decorate cupcakes, mix cloud slime and much more.

Youth between the ages of 5-7 were invited to participate in the 4-H Cloverbud Super Saturday at the same time and location.

The younger youth explored their own project areas such as tie-dying a tablecloth, making an Easter treat and gardening.

For more information, contact the University of Illinois Extension-Stephenson County at 815-235-4125.

(Left center) Adam Boyer, 4-H Aerospace & Electricity Superintendent, leads a session on building robots using a soda can in early March.

(Left bottom) Aaron Flynn, student pharmacist at the University of Illinois-Chicago, in early March helps participants with math equations involved in pharmaceutical properties.

# Brewing up a partnership

### Lena companies team up to make hand sanitizer to help in battle against COVID-19

Two Lena businesses are working to help their community during the COVID-19 slowdown, teaming up to produce locally sourced hand sanitizer.

Adkins Energy and Lena Brewing Company debuted the product last Friday with a social distancing-compliant event at the brewing company's taproom on West Wagner Road and sold the hand sanitizer over the weekend.

Lena Brewing Company, which has been making craft beer in Lena since 2015, is using Adkins Energy's 190-proof ethanol to produce a special run of FDA-grade hand sanitizer to help local first responders and residents avoid the COVID-19 novel coronavirus.

Adkins Energy has produced fuel-grade ethanol and biodiesel from locally grown corn for more than 15 years.

Although precautions around the COVID-19 pandemic have necessitated a slowdown, the plant has continued production, according to a new release.

"We're focused on our main products, but we have been looking for a way to help out with hand sanitizer since the FDA changed its rules to allow ethanol plants and distilleries to make it," Adkins General Manager Ray Baker said in the release Friday.

"We're proud to have two Lena-based companies working together to help the people in our community stay safe and healthy," Baker added. "Everyone on our team is excited to be a part of this project that benefits our family, friends and neighbors."

Lena Brewing Company President Ross Vehmeier, whose business also has been impacted by the statewide stay-at-home order, has reconfigured part of the company's production line. The company continues to brew its beers on a limited scale.

"This is an opportunity not just to keep people working, but to make something that will hopefully help people in our community stay healthy," Vehmeier said in the news release. "With Adkins' help, we're able to provide hand sanitizer free to first responders and at about our cost for everyone else."

The partnership will make hand sanitizer available through taproom sales only to start.

"We're at the very beginning of this project, and we're working to make sure people in our community can get this local, low-cost hand sanitizer," Baker said.

See PARTNERSHIP, Page 7



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# Online webinars focus on being healthier at home

Staying healthy can be a challenge, especially as more of our time is spent at home. Learn health strategies for enriching your wellness journey over the next two months that can change your life.

Free online webinars offered by University of Illinois Extension nutrition and wellness educators begin at 1 p.m. Wednesdays through May 20.

Register online at [go.illinois.edu/HealthAtHome](http://go.illinois.edu/HealthAtHome).

- April 15: Emotional Eating: Understanding How Stress Impacts Hunger and Appetite

Have you ever found yourself searching for something to eat when you are not truly hungry? We eat for a number of reasons; maybe we're looking for comfort, feeling stressed and overwhelmed with life or simply

bored.

Increase your awareness of how emotions and stress affects eating habits, increase your ability to identify emotional triggers leading to emotional eating and learn helpful practices to reach your wellness goals.

- April 22: The Science Behind Popular Eating Trends

What is all the hype around Keto? What about Whole 30, Paleo or Intermittent Fasting?

Join us to explore these eating styles and learn the pros and cons of current diet trends. Plus, explore the eating plans that are evidence-based such as Mediterranean, DASH and the USDA MyPlate.

- April 29: Every Step Counts: Getting the Most Out of Activity Trackers

## Illinois SNAP recipients begin receiving maximum benefit amounts

The Illinois Department of Human Services announced that more than 450,000 Illinois households will receive additional Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

All who are eligible for the additional benefits should receive them by April 20.

The additional funds are intended to help Illinoisans obtain food and support for their families during the COVID-19 pandemic. The maximum SNAP benefit amounts will be implemented for April and May.

"No Illinoisan should ever have to worry about where their next meal is coming from, especially during an

ongoing public health emergency," said Gov. JB Pritzker. "Expanding the amount of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits people receive will help families stay safe and healthy in the coming months."

Increased benefits will be automatically loaded onto SNAP recipients' Link cards, and there is no need for anyone to re-apply, visit an office, or call. All new applications authorized in April will also receive the maximum allotment for their household size.

"We're exploring every avenue

See **BENEFITS**, Page 8

Every step counts. Activity trackers give you an accurate count for steps, heart rate and sleep. They are also fun; they get you off the couch and moving. One could say they are a wearable piece of accountability.

Learn about different types of activity trackers, take a talk test and set goals for yourself. Get tips to get the most out of your activity tracker.

- May 6: Take Your Kitchen Appliances Out for a Spin

Are your counters full of appliances? Did you get an electric pressure cooker as a gift and not sure what to do with it? Do not let it sit on your counter collecting dust.

Join us to learn how to use slow

cookers, spiralizers, heavy-duty blenders, air fryers and the newest type of electric pressure cookers. We will share tips and tricks, recipes and food safety information, all to make your life easier and your meal plans varied.

- May 13: Diabetes: Practicing Self-Care During Difficult Times

Managing stress during difficult times is challenging for everyone. However, if you or a loved one has diabetes, it is even more important to be intentional about managing stress.

Making healthy food choices, getting adequate physical activity and understanding how stress affects diabetes are steps you can take to get

through those difficult times.

- May 20: Cooking For One

Set the table and light a candle for yourself. Single-person households are on the rise and forecast to grow over the next 15 years. The fastest growth in single-person households is citizens between 35 and 55 years of age.

Cooking for one can be creative and rewarding with or without leftovers. Indulge, choose what you like to cook and get the good smells going in your kitchen.

Join us and learn some new ways to plan, shop, prepare and enjoy meals on the smaller side. Liven up your menus.

## Versiti creates special hotline, electronic form to enable recovered COVID-19 patients to donate convalescent plasma

Versiti blood centers, among the first in the U.S. to begin collecting convalescent plasma, is actively seeking recovered COVID-19 patients to donate convalescent plasma.

The plasma would be used by Versiti's hospital partners to treat the most severely affected coronavirus patients. Potential donors are asked to call a special hotline that has been created: 866-702-HOPE (866-702-4673) or visit [versiti.org/covid19plasma](http://versiti.org/covid19plasma).

"The recovered donors must be proven to have had a COVID-19 diagnosis through a positive lab test result by a physician or laboratory,"

said Versiti Senior Medical Director Dan A. Waxman, M.D. "That individual must then be symptom free for 28 days, or if symptom free for 14-27 days, they must provide results of a negative test."

This blood-related treatment — approved by the FDA as an Emergency Investigational New Drug (EIND) — could offer hope to the thousands of patients who continue to be diagnosed.

"One plasma donation can be divided to treat multiple patients," said Dr. Waxman. "And one patient may require more than one plasma transfusion."

The plasma treatment would

transfer the antibodies that the recovered patient created, into critically ill patients currently receiving care.

The plasma donations, which take 30-40 minutes, will be collected by appointment from qualified donors at Versiti donor centers.

The donation process is the same as with other plasma donations, and will be performed using an apheresis machine, which separates the blood components.

Though blood group AB is the universal plasma donor, any blood type donor who has recovered from the virus is eligible to donate as part of the program.

## Driver services extended again, Secretary of State Jesse White says

Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White on April 10 announced his office filed emergency rules extending expiration dates for driver's licenses, identification (ID) cards, vehicle registrations and other transactions and document filings for at least 90 days after Driver Services facilities reopen.

The previous extension was for 30 days.

"Extending expiration dates by at least 90 days after Driver Services facilities reopen is the right thing to do," White said. "It will ensure driver's licenses, ID cards and vehicle registrations remain valid during this pandemic and will help alleviate the rush of customers vis-

iting facilities once they reopen."

After Gov. Pritzker's stay-at-home order, White closed Driver Services facilities to the public through April 30. While facilities are closed to the public, White is encouraging residents to go to [cyberdriveillinois.com](http://cyberdriveillinois.com) to take advantage of many online services — such as renewing vehicle registration stickers — from the comfort of their own home.

People who conduct online transactions will further help to reduce the number of face-to-face transactions that will occur at Driver Services facilities once they reopen.

Some of these online services include:

- Renewing a vehicle registration;
- Applying for a vehicle title and registration;
- Obtaining a duplicate driver's license or ID card;
- Obtaining a driving record abstract;
- Renewing a standard driver's license with the Safe Driver Renewal program.

"My commitment is to do everything we can to help protect the health and safety of our residents, while still providing services to the people of Illinois," White said. "This will, and must, continue to be the guiding principle of our decision making."

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## CORONAVIRUS 2020

# Rural hospitals brace for surge

*IHA official says they're ready, but more financial assistance is necessary*

By PETER HANCOCK  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Although the COVID-19 outbreak in Illinois had been mainly concentrated around the Chicago area, public health officials are bracing for a surge of cases in rural areas of downstate Illinois, including areas that already have shortages of hospital beds, health care providers and equipment.

"So, we're keeping a close eye on that," Illinois Department of Public Health Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike said last week. "As we look right now, I think our hot spot is more northern Illinois ... but we're keeping an eye on all the beds, the ICUs, the ventilators and the availability of those, and we potentially, we'll have to do some moving of things, but we are also looking at what the needs will be there."

Despite health care shortages in some areas, Danny Chun, a spokesman for the Illinois Health and Hospital Association, said that most rural hospitals in Illinois should be well prepared for the surge, at least in terms of strategy.

"They are very prepared," he said, citing two major trends in health care: industry consolidation over the past five to 10 years into health care "systems" that have the ability to share resources and regional planning.

## HCC Foundation extends scholarship deadline for 2020-21 school year

The Highland Community College Foundation has extended the deadline for its scholarship applications for the 2020-21 school year. The deadline for the majority of scholarships is June 1.

Highland awarded \$482,262 scholarships to more than 200 students for 2019. Highland-bound student scholarships are available for traditional and non-traditional students in more than 17 areas of study, including undeclared majors.

Pat Dunn, Director of Operations for the Highland Foundation, emphasizes that scholarships aren't just for academic achievement.

"Highland has over 350 scholarships based on where you live, fields of study, special interest, financial need and academic performance, so there is something for almost everyone," Dunn said. "The Foundation is always happy to help students find the specific opportunities to apply for."

Applicants can view the list of scholarships by accessing [highland.edu/scholarships](http://highland.edu/scholarships). For more information on Highland Foundation scholarships email [foundation@highland.edu](mailto:foundation@highland.edu) or call 815-599-3413.

"A lot of small and rural hospitals, critical access hospitals, are now part of large systems, like OSF, HSHS, Carle, Southern Illinois Health," Chun said. "Then there's an existing structure within the state of Illinois — they're called Regional Health Care Coalitions," he added. "There are 11 coalitions throughout the state covering every area of the state, including southern and central Illinois, where all the health care providers in that region get together in terms of emergency planning, pandemic planning, emergency exercises. That's been in place for years."

According to IDPH, each of those 11 regions has one main hospital designated as the coordinating center. For example, the Carle Foundation Hospital in Urbana serves as the coordinating center in the Champaign region, which covers 18 counties in east-central Illinois.

Anita Guffey, who serves as the emergency management coordinator and readiness and response coordinator for that region, was unavailable for an interview. But she issued a statement through a spokesperson saying the planning process for COVID-19 is not significantly different from the planning they go through for other emergencies.

"In this region we need to be prepared for tornadoes, blizzards and even earthquake risk, in addition to pandemic planning," she said. "Every incident is different, but we work on this at all times so when the time comes, we're already familiar with each other."

The one thing rural hospitals have not been prepared for, however, is the financial pressure resulting from dealing with the pandemic.

Chun said hospitals throughout the state postponed most outpatient and elective surgeries, a significant amount of their annual revenue, in order to free up space and medical staff for treating COVID-19 patients. They also are "ramping up" for the pandemic, he added.

"We are urging the state to take all the steps that they can to increase cash flow to hospitals, because as you

know, they're facing a double whammy," he said. "...On the one hand, they're losing money because they're not doing elective surgeries and procedures, and then money's going out the door because of the preparations for the virus."

Chun noted that in March, the state comptroller's office used inter-fund borrowing to increase its Medicaid payments to state hospitals, paying down about \$200 million in past-due bills.

But the comptroller's office has already indicated that there likely will be additional payment delays in the coming months — the tax filing deadline was pushed back to July 15,

## Retired teachers to mentor students virtually

Members of the Illinois Retired Teachers Association — a statewide association of retired educators, their families and supporters — are volunteering during this COVID-19 pandemic to assist students tackling the unprecedented challenge of finishing the school year at home.

"We want to help students learn," said John Flaherty, a former high school and special education teacher and current president of the Illinois Retired Teachers Association. "Our members are ready to help students build their learning skills and tutor in highly advanced subject areas like chemistry and mathematics."

"For elementary students, self-

paced and self-directed learning is a foreign concept. A teacher-mentor will help students take their own initiative and focus their learning at their own pace."

Parents desiring to match their student with a retired teacher may sign up on the Association's website, [www.irtaonline.org](http://www.irtaonline.org).

Mentors are on a first come, first serve basis. Mentors will meet with students in virtual environments. Mentorships will last from now until the end of the school year or June 1. Mentorships are at the sole discretion of the teacher-mentors.

"A retired Illinois public school teacher's depth of knowledge is so great, it may be just what parents

need to energize their children into at-home students," Association Executive Director Jim Bachman said. "Retiree mentors can specifically target aspects of learning that need the most attention, whether it's mathematics, science, history, writing or reading."

"Younger students may simply need help reading a story; other students will need advanced tutoring. If we retirees can find a way to help, we will," Flaherty added.

IRTA encourages former teachers, spouses and supporters of teachers to join the Association. Learn more, join or renew your IRTA membership today at <https://www.irtaonline.org>.

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# FROM LENA'S KITCHEN



The not so skinny cook

I guess we are in Week 2 if you started with April 1 (some of us started March 16, so it is longer), and they are talking about extending into May.

If you are like me, you are still cleaning and cooking. Easter has come and gone. I remember when I was a teenager I spent Easter in bed with Scarlatina. I was in my room quarantined for a week. Right now that doesn't seem so bad!

Back to Easter thoughts —I have recipes for Easter leftovers. I think there will still be some ham sales in the grocery stores. There is a great appetizer and some yummy desserts.

This cheesy hot dip is made with cooked, diced ham. You can use that leftover ham for the tasty appetizer. If you freeze your cubed ham in a plastic zip lock in 2- or 3-cup increments, you can make all kinds of dishes with the leftovers.

## Chipotle Ham 'N' Cheese Dip

- 2 pkg. (8 oz. each) cream cheese, cubed
- 1 can (12 oz.) evaporated milk
- 2 C. shredded Gouda cheese
- 1 C. shredded cheddar cheese
- 2 T. chopped chipotle pepper in adobo sauce
- 1 t. cumin
- 2 C. diced, cooked ham
- Vegetables and tortilla chips

In a 3-quart slow cooker, combine the first six ingredients. Cover and cook on low for 40 minutes. Stir in ham; cook for 20 minutes longer until heated through. Serve warm with vegetables and chips.

## Dilled Three-Bean Salad

This tasty salad goes great with ham. It is also a good one for summer. If you want, you could use frozen green beans. Just cook them to crisp tender and drain. I think you also could substitute pinto or garbanzo beans for the black-eyed peas

- 4 C. sliced fresh green beans (1 inch pieces)
- ¼ C. white vinegar
- 3 T. sugar
- ¾ t. salt
- ¼ t. black pepper
- 1/8 t. crushed red pepper flakes
- 3 T. oil
- 1 can (16 oz.) light red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 can (16 oz.) black-eyed peas,

- rinsed and drained
- ¾ C. diced red pepper
- ¾ C. diced yellow pepper
- ¼ C. chopped fresh dill

Bring a large pot of water to a boil over medium-high heat; add green beans. When water returns to a boil, drain green beans and transfer to ice water to stop the cooking process. Drain well and pat dry with paper towels.

In a large bowl, whisk together vinegar, sugar, salt, pepper and red pepper flakes; slowly whisk in oil. Add green beans, kidney beans, black-eyed peas, bell peppers and dill, stirring to coat. Cover and refrigerate until chilled before serving, about 3 hours.

Even if I am a week late, I have two ham recipes for you to try. The first is in a slow cooker. You just put the rub on, add the rest of the cola, turn it on and walk away. You can make this a day ahead of time and slice when you use it.

## Slow Cooker Ham

- ½ C. packed brown sugar
- 1 t. ground mustard
- 1 t. prepared horseradish
- 2 T. plus ¼ C. cola, divided
- 1 fully cooked boneless ham, but in half (5 to 6 lbs.)

In a small bowl, combine the brown sugar, ground mustard, horseradish and 2 T. cola. Rub over the ham. Transfer to a slow cooker (at least 5 quarts); add remaining ¼ cup of cola to slow cooker. Cover and cook on low until a thermometer reads 140; cook 5 to 6 hours on low.

This next ham recipe uses a spiral-sliced ham. If spiral hams are cooked right, they are delicious. You have to be careful not to overcook them because they can get dry fast. You roast it low and slow. Enjoy the glaze that makes it special. A meat thermometer is important when cooking large cuts of meat, so if you don't have one, it is a great investment.

## Maple-Glazed Ham

- 1 spiral-sliced, fully cooked bone-in ham (7 to 9 lbs.)

### Glaze:

- ½ C. packed brown sugar
- ½ C. maple syrup
- 2 T. prepared mustard
- ½ t. ground cinnamon
- ½ t. ground nutmeg

Preheat oven to 300. Place ham on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. Cover and bake until a thermometer reads 130, 1½ to 2 hours.

In a large saucepan, combine glaze ingredients. Bring to a boil; cook and stir until slightly thickened, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove the ham from the oven. Pour glaze over ham; bake ham, uncovered, until a thermometer reads 140, 15 to 30 minutes.

This next recipe uses some of that leftover ham. It is easy to prepare and very tasty. You have a complete meal because the meat and vegetables are in the casserole. Enjoy this tasty leftover treat.

## Creamy Noodle Casserole

- 1 pkg. (12 oz.) egg noodles
- 1 pkg. (16 oz.) frozen broccoli cuts
- 3 C. cubed, cooked ham
- 1 C. shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 C. shredded Parmesan cheese

- 1/3 C. butter, cubed
- ½ C. half-and-half cream
- ¼ t. garlic powder
- Salt and pepper

In a Dutch oven, cook the egg noodles in boiling water for 5 minutes. Add the broccoli and cubed ham; cook until the noodles are tender, 5 to 10 minutes longer. Drain and return to the pan. Stir in the remaining ingredients. Cook and stir gently over low heat until the butter is melted and the mixture is heated through.

## Slab Lemon Meringue Pie

If you like lemon meringue pie, you will like this recipe. It takes a little time to prepare it, but it is well worth the extra work. Be sure to have your eggs room temperature, especially the whites. If the whites are not room temperature, they will not whip easily. This dessert would be great for an ending to a family dinner. You can make it a day ahead of time.

### Crust:

- 2 C. flour
- ½ C. powdered sugar
- 1 C. butter, softened

### Filling:

- 2 C. sugar
- ½ C. cornstarch
- ½ t. salt
- 2 C. cold water
- 8 egg yolks
- 1 T. lemon zest
- ¾ C. fresh lemon juice
- 6 T. butter
- ½ t. vanilla

### Topping:

- 1 2/3 C. sugar
- 6 egg whites

Preheat oven to 350. Line a 9-inch square baking pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan. Lightly spray parchment with baking spray with flour.

**Crust:** In a small bowl, whisk together flour and powdered sugar. Stirring butter until mixture is crumbly, press into bottom and ½ inch up the sides of prepared pan. Bake until lightly browned, 12 to 15 minutes. Let cool completely.

**Filling:** In a large saucepan, whisk together sugar, cornstarch, and salt; gradually whisk in 2 cups cold water until smooth. Bring to a boil over medium high heat, whisking frequently; boil, whisking constantly, for 1 minute. Remove from heat.

In a medium bowl, whisk together egg yolks. Slowly add 1 cup hot sugar mixture to egg yolks, whisking constantly. Whisk egg mixture into remaining hot sugar mixture in saucepan. Cook over medium heat, whisking constantly, until mixture is thickened, 2 to 3 minutes. Whisk in lemon zest and juice, butter and vanilla; cook, whisking constantly, until mixture is thick and smooth, 1 to 2 minutes.

Spread mixture onto prepared crust. Cover with plastic wrap, pressing directly on surface of filling to prevent a skin from forming. Refrigerate until cold and firm, at least 4 hours.

**Topping:** In the top of a double boiler, cook sugar and egg whites over simmering water, whisking constantly, until mixture registers 140 on a candy thermometer, 3 to 4 minutes.

Transfer mixture to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment and beat at high speed until

thick, white and fluffy, about 10 minutes. Spread meringue onto cold lemon mixture.

Preheat oven to broil. Broil pie for 1 to 2 minutes to brown meringue. Serve immediately. Cover and refrigerate for up to two days.

## Easy Ultimate Carrot Cake

If you want an easy spring dessert, this carrot cake recipe is for you. You start with a box cake mix and add all sorts of goodies. I have made it into cupcakes instead of cakes and that works well also.

1 box Betty Crocker Super Moist carrot cake mix

- ½ C. orange juice or water
- ½ C. oil

1 can (8 oz.) crushed pineapple in juice, undrained

- 1 t. orange peel
- 1 t. vanilla

- 4 eggs
- ½ C. chopped nuts
- ½ C. coconut
- ½ C. chopped raisings

1 container Betty Crocker Rich and Creamy cream cheese frosting

Preheat oven to 350. Grease two 9-inch round cake pans or 9-by-13 pan and lightly flour, or spray with baking spray with flour.

In a large bowl, beat cake mix, orange juice, oil, pineapple, orange peel, vanilla and eggs on low speed 30 seconds. Beat on medium speed for 2 minutes. Stir in nuts, coconut and raisins. Pour into pans.

Bake round pans 30 to 35 minutes; bake 9-by-13 pan 37 to 43 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 10 minutes. Run knife around side of round pans to loosen cakes; remove rounds from pans to cooling racks. Cool completely, about 1 hour.

Place one cake layer, rounded side down, on cake stand. Spread with about 1/3 C. of frosting. Place other layer, rounded side up, on top. Frost side and top of cake with remaining frosting or frost top of 9-by-13 cake. Store in refrigerator.

## Final thoughts

We had beautiful weather last week until the end of the week, then the wind and some snow returned. Sort of like a lot of our dispositions.

I am lucky to have people who grocery shop for me, and I order out to help our local restaurants. I try to sit each afternoon in the sun soaking up the Vitamin D. Many people are out walking, so I do get to see and sometimes talk to people from afar.

My basement was my project this last week. I had started it and was able to finish up. It doesn't look like the same place! I do have a shelf of treasurers. I know that they probably will go to the Dumpster when I am no longer living in this house. You know there are some things that are hard to part with that mean something only to you.

Have a good week, stay the course and keep the faith.

If you have found any spring recipes you think we would like, contact us in person, by mail at From Lena's Kitchens, Shopper's Guide at 213 S. Center St., or email to scoopshopper@rvpublishing.com.

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# ON THE RECORD

## Obituaries

### CAROL M. SEFFROOD

Carol M. Seffrood, age 76 of Warren IL, passed away April 7, 2020 in Monroe, WI at the home of her daughter.

She was born Oct. 27, 1943 at the family home in Apple River IL., the daughter of Cyrus and Eva (Conley) Seffrood. Carol married James Paulson on Nov. 4, 1961 and had three children. They later divorced but remained friends. She was a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Warren. Carol worked at numerous jobs, but spent many years at Micro Switch of which she retired from. She was a gifted quilter and had numerous hobbies throughout the years. She has also had many canine companions of which she cared for like family.

She is survived by her three children - Dean (Angie) Paulson of Beloit, WI, Donna (Terry) Rutsch of Monroe, WI, and David Paulson of



Cassville, WI, seven grandchildren, two great grandchildren, sister Shirley Miller of Warren, IL, and numerous nieces and nephews of whom were all special to her.

Carol was preceded in death by her parents; four brothers- John, Pete, Francis and Jerry Seffrood; two sisters Catherine Diestelmeier and Charlotte Minke.

Private graveside services at the West Wiotia Lutheran cemetery will be held with Vicar Michelle Knight officiating.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

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

### JEWEL D. MCNETT

Jewel D. McNett, age 57 of Benton, WI, peacefully passed away at home on Wednesday, April 8, 2020. She was born on Sept. 21, 1962; the daughter of the late Delvin and Doris (Disrud) McNett. She had previously been married to Timothy McAuliffe and together they had a son, Chase Christopher McAuliffe. She later married Timothy A. Ditsworth on Nov. 10, 2001, they have been together for 30 years.

She was a massage therapist who worked out of her home as well as at Lands' End in Platteville, WI. In more recent years she spent her time providing supportive care for friends and family. Jewel enjoyed working with photos, creating albums and memory boards. She also enjoyed journaling, home improvement projects, making crafts and collecting various trinkets. When she was able, she loved tending to her big garden, especially her pea pods and lilies. Most of all she loved her family, visiting, weekly phone calls and spending time with her great nieces and nephews. She had a warm heart and a kind soul along with a sassiness that no one could match. She was dearly loved and will be sorely missed.

She is survived by her husband Tim Ditsworth of Benton, WI; sisters, Joyce (Jack) Becke of Freeport, Janice (John) Bauch of Freeport, Jeanne (Ralph) Stietz of Gratiot, WI, and Joleen (Butch) Thommen of Warren, IL; brothers, Richard (Kathy) McNett of Lena, IL, Ronald McNett of Freeport, and James (Tammy Ihous) McNett of Shullsburg, WI; step-son, Greg Ditsworth; father-in-law, Glenn Ditsworth of Freeport;



sisters-in-law, Debbie (Kevin) Fleischer of Freeport and Sandy (Joe) Lacy of Belleville, WI; numerous nieces and nephews; and several honorary sons & daughters that were friends of Chases who have kept close since his passing. She is preceded in death by her parents; son, Chase Christopher McAuliffe; sister, Jackie Hermann; brothers, Roger, Rodney "Pete," and Jerry; and mother-in-law, Ruth Ditsworth.

Due to social distancing, private family services will be held and she will be laid to rest next to her son in St. Joseph's Catholic Cemetery in Gratiot, WI. A memorial service will take place at a later date. A memorial fund has been established in her name. Condolences may be shared at [www.hermannfuneralhome.com](http://www.hermannfuneralhome.com).

### EARL J. "TIP" TIPTON

Earl J. "Tip" Tipton, age 89, of Stockton, IL passed away Thursday, April 09, 2020 at home. He was born Aug. 9, 1930 the son of the late Arthur N. and Louisa M. (Streicher) Tipton. Tip married Darlene O'Neill on June 26, 1954. Darlene passed away June 23, 2017.



Tip grew up on a farm and drove truck most of his life, mainly for LCL and Jewel Rentar. He was a member of the Stockton American Legion and Teamsters. Tip enjoyed Nascar, boating, snowmobiling, spending time with his family, especially his grandchildren and vacationing in his free time. He was also an animal lover.

Tip is survived by his sons, Jamie (Nan) of Rosendale, WI and Joey (Janet) of Galena, IL; daughters, Kelly (Kevin) Stewart of Stockton and Karla (special friend Chris) White of Stockton, IL; 13 grandchildren; Joshua, Cassie, Jesse & Caitlyn Tipton; Annessa Tipton & Amanda Vargas; Alex, Andrew & Aspyn Stewart; and Christian, Noah, Kanzas & Kyah White; and eight great grandchildren; and his sister, Clara Endress. He was preceded in death by his parents; wife; infant son, Timothy; sister, Florence Wickler; and brothers, Harry, Carson and infant Clyde.

A private family graveside will be held. A memorial fund has been established. Condolences may be shared at [www.hermannfuneralhome.com](http://www.hermannfuneralhome.com).

### KENNETH LAVERNE MUSSER

Kenneth LaVerne Musser, 91, of Pearl City passed away April 9, 2020 in his home with his family by his side. He was born May 19, 1928 to Edgar (Dick) and Juanita (Thomason) Musser of Pearl City, IL.

Kenneth graduated from Pearl City High School in 1946. He was drafted into the army in January, 1951. He served in the Korean War until January, 1953 when he was honorably discharged. Kenneth married Donna (Johnson) on Oct. 4, 1953 at where is now Zion Community Church in Pearl City.

He was a life-time member of the Pearl City American Legion Post 1014 serving numerous leadership roles, including several terms as treasurer, Post 1014 Commander and the 13th District Commander in 1985-1986. He was an active member of the Korean War Veterans Association. He was a member of the board and president for over 3 decades with Loran Mutual Insurance Company. Kenneth was the Loran Township Supervisor of Assessments for many years. He was a long-time member of Zion Community Church in Pearl City. Kenneth farmed in Pearl City his entire life. He continued to be a faithful famer even after moving to town. He loved Farm All tractors, watching wrestling and going for a Sunday drive. He never met a desert he didn't like! You could always find him reading or playing cards, if



he wasn't in the fields. He enjoyed watching his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren play sports and show at the local fairs. One of Kenneth's greatest honors

was attending an Honor Flight in May 2017 with his daughter Barb. His infectious grin will be missed.

He is preceded in death by his parents, brother Terry Musser and son-in-law Edward Curry. He is survived by his wife; son: James (Denise) Musser; daughters: Barbara Curry and Leslie Musser. He is survived by his grandchildren: Joel, Darin (Shannon), Brett (Aubrey), Courtney, Brock (Kim) Musser, Kerstin Curry, Morgan (Keagan) Blasing, and Grant Curry. He is also survived by his great grandchildren: Drake, Brea, Charlotte, Gemma, Shea, Sawyer, Levi Musser and Brixin Blasing.

Private family services will be held. Interment will take place at Oakland Cemetery and Mausoleum in Freeport. A memorial fund has been established. The family would like to give a special thank you to FHN Hospice for their care. Condolences may be shared with Kenneth's family at [www.hermannfuneralhome.com](http://www.hermannfuneralhome.com).

See more obituaries on page 8

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# Aides caring for vulnerable seniors amid coronavirus still on the job despite lack of masks, protective gear, social distancing

By Alejandro Cancino  
BETTER GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

As the nation scrambles to keep its doctors and nurses supplied with safety gear during the deadly novel coronavirus outbreak, an army of low-wage Illinois home care workers on the front lines remain largely on their own.

Workers such as 57-year-old Karen Williams, whose resourceful son tracked down a few masks for her to wear each day as she takes two buses from Englewood to Bronzeville to care for elderly clients for whom she prepares meals, dispenses medication and helps with bathing.

"What I've been doing is reusing them. Maybe every two or three days I change them," said Williams, who never considered staying home.

"I am always there when she is sick," she told the Better Government Association while she was visiting one client. "When she gets sick, I get sick, and vice versa ... Because the client comes first, I am going to try to come as long as I can."

Williams is among more than 40,000 workers in Illinois' Community Care Program, which allows more than 100,000 seniors to stay out of nursing facilities by providing aides who visit the seniors in their homes.

The aides and clients are some of the most susceptible people to the pandemic, yet across Illinois many remain in close quarters, and lack protective equipment, such as masks and gloves.

As of April 7, the Illinois Department on Aging, which oversees the

program, confirmed 5 deaths among 22 cases of Chicago-area seniors in the program who had tested positive for the virus, said the department's spokesman Michael Dropka.

The private companies that employ the workers under a state contract are not required to report COVID-19 cases to the Department on Aging, Dropka said. The department knows some workers have tested positive, but cannot say how many.

Dropka, the labor union that represents these front-line caregivers, and the company executives who employ them said they are aware of the dangers inherent in allowing these two high-risk groups—elderly residents and caregivers—to mingle without proper protective gear.

He said the department has requested masks and other protective gear from state and federal emergency management officials. Company officials said they too are struggling to find enough gear to protect their workers.

Although home health-care aides are on the front lines of the coronavirus crisis in Illinois, they are not licensed or certified as health care workers. As the state gains access to gloves and masks, such workers do not qualify as "priority health care providers," a category that is given priority access to protective equipment.

"The work that they are doing is extremely risky," said Beth Menz, home care director for the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Healthcare Illinois Indiana. "They are in the homes of seniors,

bathing them, dressing them, preparing food for them. So there is fear in their minds that not only are they at risk, but could potentially put their families and their loved ones, who can also be in vulnerable categories, at risk."

These workers have largely been left to fend for themselves during the crisis, according to interviews with the workers, seniors in the program and the union representing workers. In some cases, they've been provided no more than phone calls from employers asking them to check their temperature and reminding them to protect themselves by frequently washing their hands.

Reginald Griffin, 76, said he found five masks at his neighborhood hardware store on the city's North Side.

"All I could buy as a customer," he said. "So I have to be careful to keep them clean until I am able to get more."

Griffin takes the bus each day to care for an 83-year-old man with diabetes, emphysema, and other chronic conditions that make it difficult for him to care for himself. He too never considered missing a day.

"I might think that way just like any other person in the front lines, but I have to do what I have to do," Griffin said. "I have to think positively and do things so I won't get it."

Griffin was lucky enough to find protective gear on his own. Many don't.

### She's my lifeline

One 75-year-old woman told the BGA she is letting her home care

worker dip into her personal stash of protective gloves.

"She's my lifeline," said Davetta Brooks, who suffers from several conditions, including an autoimmune disease, and relies on a wheelchair.

Nationwide, there are 12 million vulnerable Americans who rely on home-based services and are balancing social distancing with their need for help. Many of the seniors suffer from chronic health conditions, such as diabetes and hypertension, and low immune systems that experts have warned put them at an increased risk of developing a severe form of pneumonia if infected with COVID-19. The deadly virus has a higher fatality rate for those older than 60, and even higher for those older than 85.

### Black Americans at high rate of testing positive, dying from COVID-19

Another national concern is the high rate of black Americans testing positive and dying from COVID-19, a trend Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot says is prevalent in the city where 72 percent of the virus-related fatalities are black.

In the Chicago area, the majority of seniors in the community care program are black, as well as the majority of caregivers, according to records and interviews. Nearly half of the caregivers are also older than 55.

Dropka, the spokesman for the aging department, said the state is working to secure additional supplies of personal protective equipment, including requesting supplies from FEMA.

He said the department also is in daily communication with provider agencies and has taken guidance from the Illinois Department of Pub-

lic Health "regarding the screening tool and processes we use—so that both our in-home workers and the older adults they care for are safe when they do their work. The agencies in our network use this as part of any protocol where face-to-face contact with an older and more vulnerable adult occurs."

"We are doing everything we can," Dropka said.

Companies employing the workers also said they are scrambling to secure personal protective equipment due to the nationwide supply shortage and have asked the state for help. Some are providing gloves, which they've always offered to their workforce, but also are in need of masks and gowns.

A policy memo posted online by Addus HomeCare, one of the state's largest providers of home care services, shows workers are being directed to use gloves, wash their hands regularly before and after direct contact with a client and encouraged to stay at home if they feel sick. If workers believe they may have been exposed, they are required to report to a supervisor.

If workers call in sick, they are asked five questions: Have they traveled internationally in the past 14 days; have they had signs of a respiratory infection such as fever, cough and/or sore throat; has anyone they live with had those symptoms; have they had contact with anyone who has been diagnosed or screened for COVID-19, and have they traveled to other states with widespread community transmission of the disease. Workers who fail the screening are instructed to cease patient visits.

See AIDES, Page 12



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(Continued from front page)

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## Lena church offers readings, prayers online

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, located at 118 E. Mason St. in Lena, has canceled all services in April.

However, despite not meeting for worship at church, the joy of Easter comes to residents' homes.

That's because all readings and prayers for Sundays are available on the church's website at <http://goodshepherdlena.org/> and Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/GSLCLenaIL>.

## Pearl City Education Foundation offers upperclassman scholarships

The Pearl City Education Foundation recently announced the availability of \$12,000 to fund scholarships for upperclassmen for college or trade school students during the 2020-2021 school year.

This program is for those Pearl City graduates who have successfully completed their first year of college.

Application forms are available at the State Bank of Pearl City, the Pearl City Public Library or on the school website [www.pcwolves.net](http://www.pcwolves.net) (see the guidance counselor's site for the pdf Upperclassman Scholarship Application).

The deadline for mailing complet-

ed applications with required attachments is June 30.

Mail to Pearl City Education Foundation, Upperclassman Scholarships, P.O. Box 278, Pearl City, IL 61062.

Since its 2010 inception, the Pearl City Upperclassman program has awarded more than 100 scholarships with more than \$45,000 having been distributed. This program is designed to be perpetual.

The foundation welcomes donations for its scholarship programs, as well as its program for classroom/teachers grants. These donations are tax deductible as PCEF has a 501(c)(3) tax status.



COURTESY PHOTO Shopper's Guide

## McCormick Place conversion

Major General Robert F. Whittle, Jr., commander and district engineer of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Great Lakes and Ohio River Division, speaks during a news conference Friday in Chicago to address the state's efforts to combat the outbreak of the novel coronavirus disease, COVID-19, in Illinois. The news event was held in McCormick Place, which is being converted into a 3,000-bed medical facility to hold overflow patients in Chicago.

## College news

### Kaitlyn Guenzler inducted into Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi

Kaitlyn Guenzler of Davis, Illinois, was recently initiated into The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation's oldest and most selective all-discipline collegiate honor society. Guenzler was initiated at Grand Valley State University.

Guenzler is among approximately 30,000 students, faculty, professional staff and alumni to be initiated into Phi Kappa Phi each year. Membership is by invitation only and requires nomination and approval by a chapter. Only the top 10 percent of seniors and 7.5 percent of juniors are eligible for mem-

bership. Graduate students in the top 10 percent of the number of candidates for graduate degrees may also qualify, as do faculty, professional staff and alumni who have achieved scholarly distinction.

Phi Kappa Phi was founded in 1897 under the leadership of undergraduate student Marcus L. Urann who had a desire to create a different kind of honor society: one that recognized excellence in all academic disciplines. Today, the Society has chapters on more than 300 campuses in the United States and the Philippines. Its mission is "To recognize and promote academic excellence in all fields of higher education and to engage the community of scholars in service to others."

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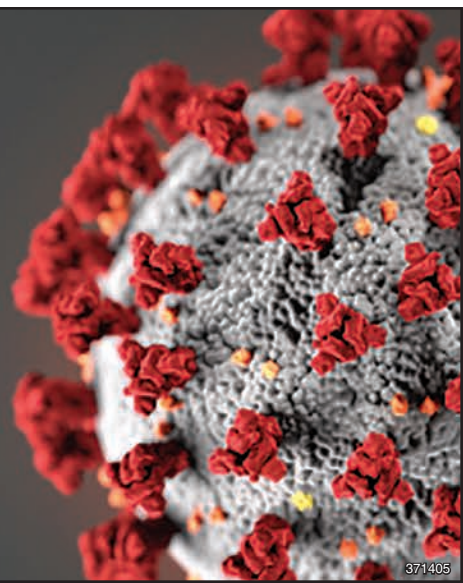
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# 200,000 more Illinoisans file unemployment claims

By Peter Hancock  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS  
More than half a million Illinois workers filed first-time unemployment claims in the first four weeks since the COVID-19 outbreak first hit the labor market.

Economists at the University of Illinois are forecasting a major economic downturn that could last months, or even years, depending on the local severity of the pandemic.

The unemployment claims account for nearly 8 percent of the state's civilian labor force, and they are only part of the estimated 17 million workers nationwide who have lost their jobs during that month.

The Illinois Department of Em-

ployment Security said last Thursday that during the week that ended April 2, 201,041 Illinoisans filed initial claims, surpassing the previous record of 178,421 that was set one week earlier.

The most recent estimates from the Washington-based Economic Policy Institute, dated April 1, suggest that as many as 779,000 people in Illinois could be out of work by July, which would boost the state's unemployment rate to 15.6 percent.

That would be higher than the historic record rate of 13.1 percent set in February 1983, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In February, just before the COVID-19 outbreak hit, Illinois actu-

ally recorded a record low unemployment rate of 3.4 percent.

On the same day the new numbers came out, the Institute of Government and Public Affairs at the University of Illinois issued a report suggesting the economic downturn could have a devastating impact on the state's economy, and on state revenues in Illinois, depending on how severe the outbreak is and how long it takes the state's economy to recover.

Economically, the researchers said, a low-severity pandemic likely would push growth in gross domestic product this year to 0 percent. That would sink to about -3 percent growth under a moderately severe pandemic and -6 percent under a severe pandemic.

All of those scenarios assume the economy would recover quickly once the pandemic ends and that GDP growth would return to its normal rate of about 2 percent by 2023.

State revenues also are expected to take a major hit, but the extent of the losses would depend on the severity of the economic downturn and how long it takes the economy to recover.

Under the most optimistic scenario – a low-severity pandemic followed by a quick recovery – the state could expect to see a decline of about \$4.3 billion across calendar years 2020 and 2021.

Under a worst-case scenario – a severe pandemic followed by a slow, protracted recovery – the researchers

estimate the state could see a loss of revenue totaling \$28.4 billion through calendar year 2023.

"It is important to recognize the high level of uncertainty about the crisis' economic effects," the researchers cautioned. "The uncertainty stems from a lack of clarity about the epidemiological and health consequences of the virus, as well as from uncertainty about government monetary and fiscal policies to combat the economic consequences of the health crisis."

The researchers also noted that the full impact on the state and its economy could be lessened, depending on the kind of economic recovery measures are enacted at the federal level.

The Scoop Today & The Shopper's Guide

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### Misc. For Sale

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# •Aides (Continued from page 6)

But that's just one protocol of more than 100 companies that provide home-based and community-based services to seniors.

Theresa Collins, president of the Illinois Association of Community Care Program Homecare Providers, said in an email that "each provider agency has developed their own plan of action based on the unique needs of their staff and participants."

Providers, she added, are screening workers and the seniors they serve for coronavirus symptoms. If

they fail the screening, they are asked to self-quarantine for 14 days.

Addus HomeCare, for example, asks clients the same five screening questions it asks employees when they call out sick. If the client fails the screening, the worker is required to notify their supervisor. If a client is quarantined or tests positive, the company would suspend services to the client and contact the state.

### PPE availability

Darby Anderson, chief strategy

officer at Addus HomeCare, said he is receptive to clients and workers who are worried and anxious for more protective equipment.

"The problem is simply the availability of PPE. We cannot secure enough," Anderson said.

The company is pushing for its workers to be considered "priority health care providers," in hopes that the designation would ensure their access to gloves, masks and gowns.

Anderson said that designation becomes even more necessary if home

care workers are asked to care for seniors as hospital beds fill up. Already, he said, the question has come up in at least two states. But before that happens, he said, there needs to be a protocol in place to protect the workers. And that starts with protective equipment.

"We don't want to say no, but we have to have the right PPE," Anderson said. He said other issues to iron out would include whether \$13-per-hour workers should receive hazard pay, and whether they should be provided hotel rooms to isolate themselves from their families during the outbreak.

Some seniors are already going without services, either because they've paused them amid the COVID-19 crisis or because they haven't been able to secure an aide.

Carolyn Crane, 68, said she was in the process of getting a new aide when the pandemic hit and now has been without one for more than six weeks.

"It's really bad right now for me, personally," said Crane, who has diabetes, high blood pressure and a compromised immune system.

Crane said she was paying a neighbor to fetch her groceries and sometimes paying for food to be delivered, but the increased costs cut a hole in her budget. She finally got a respite when the Illinois Institute of Technology moved its classes online, freeing her grandson to help her out.

He's staying with her and helping her with groceries and daily tasks, though she'd prefer to have a professional help her instead.

Debra Miller, 68, said the issues for seniors go beyond whether home care aides have proper equipment. In Chicago, there are thousands of seniors living in apartment buildings where they might be exposed to the virus inside elevators, when they pick up their mail or when they throw out their trash.

At an online press conference last week, Miller and other seniors who are members of Jane Addams Senior Caucus, a grassroots organization that advocates for seniors living in low-income housing, called on city officials to enact new guidelines to protect seniors. Among them: Requiring better cleaning regimens in communal spaces, providing protective equipment to staff; and stationing trained healthcare professionals to monitor temperatures of workers and guests entering apartment buildings.

Miller said she's frustrated by some elected officials who only talk about protecting seniors, the most vulnerable population.

"I know that by now," she said. "Tell me what you are doing besides."

This story was produced by the Better Government Association, a nonprofit news organization based in Chicago.

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