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YOUR FREE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 10, 2021



STOCK PHOTO The Scoop Today

**Officials at FHN say precautionary efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19 are starting to pay off, as they didn't see a spike in cases after the holiday season.**

## Precautions pay off in reduced virus spread, FHN experts say

FHN President and CEO Mark Gridley and family medicine physician Rebecca Pedersen thank the region's residents for staying safe through the holidays in the latest FHN COVID-19 update video.

"We thankfully haven't seen an uptick after the holidays," Gridley said, crediting the area's citizens for their patience and for following the recommendations to help stop the spread of COVID-19. "We appreciate the actions everyone has taken for their own health, and the health of others."

Pedersen reports that the precautions people are taking are paying off.

"We've seen families that have had just one person with COVID-19, because the sick person isolated away from the others and everyone was respectful of the precautions and kept their germs to themselves," Pedersen said.

On average, six to 10 percent of COVID-19 patients will have symptoms severe enough to require hospitalization, Pedersen said. She advises those who have been exposed to COVID-19 and are suffering from mild symptoms to contact their health care provider for a possible referral to FHN's Acute Respiratory Clinic.

**See SPREAD, Page 10**

## First-time jobless claims drop sharply

**December 2020 unemployment rate double 2019 rate**

By Peter Hancock  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

First-time unemployment claims in Illinois dropped sharply in the last week of January as most regions in the state slowly began reopening following the latest wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Illinois Department of Employment Security reported Feb.

4 that 40,008 workers filed initial claims for regular unemployment benefits during the week that ended Jan. 30. That was a 58 percent drop from the previous week when 95,481 people filed claims.

Still, that number was more than four times higher than the same week

**See CLAIMS, Page 4**

## River Ridge Wildcats ready to compete

By Trenten Scheidegger  
CORRESPONDENT

Just as many teams around the state are excited to get back on the court, the River Ridge boys' basketball team and their head coach, Shean Albrecht, are feeling just the same.

Despite coming off a season where the Wildcats finished 11-20 overall and 5-7 in conference play, the Wildcats find themselves in a position where they don't really have to worry about the win-loss record and can simply focus on enjoying the moment.

With so many changes, delays and unknowns heading into this 2021 season, perhaps the most challenging thing to do was simply getting back into the motions of playing competitive basketball.

"The challenges have been tough. With rules changing almost daily, it was hard to get any type of routine in with the guys," Albrecht said.

Uncertainty has ruled when it comes to scheduling games and prac-



STOCK PHOTO The Scoop Today

**Area high school athletes are happy to be back on basketball courts in Illinois.**

tices, and to top it off, the Wildcats are playing with low numbers on the varsity level.

"Our biggest weakness is our numbers," Albrecht said. "We have

seven varsity players, so it is hard to get game-type experience in practice to get ready."

With little game type experience, it can be hard to know what to expect when the Wildcats step on the court for the first time this year.

"Then when we get to the game, the guys have to toe that line of playing aggressive and smart at the same time, so we don't get into foul trouble."

With just seven players on the roster, Albrecht's Wildcats could quickly find themselves in a troublesome spot if even one player falls into foul trouble. And foul trouble could prove to be the Wildcats' kryptonite as part of an aggressive conference.

Still, the River Ridge team is just excited that a basketball season is starting.

"Bottom line is I am excited to get back on the court and give the guys a chance to play," Albrecht said.

**See WILDCATS, Page 8**

## River Ridge-Scales Mound ready to make memories on the court

By Trenten Scheidegger  
CORRESPONDENT

High school athletes got some welcome news recently when the Illinois High School Athletic Association approved a modified sports schedule for the rest of the 2020-'21 school year.

That go-ahead was just what River Ridge-Scales Mound girls basketball head coach David Wiegel has been waiting for.

"I was confident throughout most of the school year that we would eventually begin to start practicing and playing contests," Wiegel said. "However, once it got to be 'Martin Luther King weekend and nothing had started up, I was beginning to think that maybe we would have to hold off until spring outdoor sports started up."

Fortunately, the IHSA and school leaders were able to work together to establish a plan for student-athletes to compete in a safe environment.

"In a matter of a week, we had put together health and safety guidelines for safe athletic participation, completed practice and game schedules for grades six through 12, and coordinated game streaming services for all of our contests," Wiegel said.

It was a group effort that took a lot of flexibility and coordination, but Wiegel said he could not be happier with the results.

"I'm very pleased with our coaches' and administrators' dedication to our student-athletes and how they have worked to develop safe and competitive environments for our team," he said. "Lastly, and most im-

portantly, the kids have been great. I'm so happy they will have a chance to compete with their friends and participate in activities. The kids are very excited."

In a season where there will be no post-season tournament, or championships to be crowned at the end, coaches around the area have taken a "just have fun" approach to the season, and the RRSM Wildcats are doing the same, focusing on enjoying the moment and making memories.

"I'm looking forward to getting our seniors on the floor and making some memories together in basketball," Wiegel said. "The fact there is no postseason allows for a more stress-free environment."

**See MEMORIES, Page 8**



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# VIEWPOINT

## In my opinion

### Proposed state teaching mandate misses the mark

On Feb. 16, the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules will consider a rule change drafted by the Illinois State Board of Education to implement "Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning Standards" in Illinois.



Andrew Chesney

These proposed standards go well beyond asking teachers to teach, but rather set a standard for teachers to engage students in leveraging students' political and social activism as a priority over traditional standards of educational priorities. The fear of indoctrination is real among parents opposed to this proposed new standard. But it is not just parents I am hearing from in opposition to this change. Area school superintendents and teachers have also contacted my office to offer their concerns and objections to these changes.

The goal of teachers should be the strong development of students' understanding of major concepts, conceptual frameworks and misconceptions that can influence their learning. They should relate these concepts to life and career applications as often as possible and understand how a student's disabilities influence their patterns of learning.

Rather, these proposed standards aim to indoctrinate students into being critical of "the institutions in which they find themselves" and work to teach them they should push to change these institutions "whenever and wherever

necessary." These new standards propose to ask teachers to identify the "effects of power and privilege" within their student population and work to ensure inequities are addressed first over individual actions observed taken by students.

The standards ask teachers to "consistently solicit students' input on curriculum" and "co-create" with students, while "persistently" taking into account all "student feedback." Teachers should curate the curriculum of their class toward globalism and equity as well as "embrace and encourage progressive viewpoints" with no mention of respecting "conservative viewpoints," even on balance.

ISBE must have many fish in their frying pan these days, what with a global pandemic, remote and in-person learning issues and school sports diminished in a way that is affecting the mental and emotional health of students. Somehow, though, these "Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning Standards" are ISBE's priority? How about getting the kids back in the classrooms safely?

If you believe that this type of social activism does not belong in our schools, I am asking you to contact members of the bipartisan, bicameral JCAR Committee which will be voting on this proposed rule change on Feb. 16 and use your social media network to ask others to do the same. I have posted a graphic with the contact information for JCAR members at my legislative website, repchesney.com.

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



## Slices of life

### Family football trophy honors all-time MVP

We're a big fantasy football family. Have been since we started our own league in 2014. My daughter and I never paid much attention to the NFL prior to this, but when the guys in your life love football, you find it in your heart to love football as well — or at least to participate in the family fantasy football league.

Draft day is in early September. We all gather — in person or virtually — to pick our respective teams. The draft order depends on your performance the year prior. Those who bombed get first choice for draft pick; those who did well go



By JILL PERTLER

Contributor

to the back of the line.

For some, draft choices come naturally; for others, like me, it requires research, guesswork and lots of luck. I also rely heavily on recommendations from drafting pros, who live over at ESPN. I am proud to announce, that after seven

years I can confidently distinguish a running back from a tight end, and know which should be drafted before the other — unless you are talking about a superstar like Kelce or Kittle.

There are a number of rules for draft order, some of them counterintuitive (in my opinion). Any fantasy pro will tell you that first in the draft order are running backs and wide receivers (and maybe the exceptional tight end), but not kickers, defensive teams or even quarterbacks. You wait

**See SLICES OF LIFE, Page 3**

## In my opinion

### Welch has golden opportunity to change House rules for the better

Very seldom does any one individual have the type of golden opportunity that recently elected Illinois House Speaker Chris Welch has been presented.

The story is stale now as to how the longest serving speaker in the history of the United States, Michael Madigan, lost his grip on the gavel here in Illinois. Madigan



Roger Eddy

has been a member of the Illinois House since 1971, and for all but two years since 1983, the 78-year-old was speaker of the Illinois House. In 1995-'96, Republican Lee Daniels managed to wrestle the gavel away.

It was during those two years of GOP control that the House adopted rules that provided the speaker with immeasurable power. In fact, House rules passed during the two years that Madigan was not speaker started the slide to what has become almost one-person rule. It was a slippery slope resulting in democracy being replaced with

autocratic rule.

During the time I was a member of the Illinois House, I watched as these rules stymied attempts by legislators of both parties from moving proposals forward. Currently, House rules provide the speaker with the authority to assign a majority of committee seats to members of the majority party. Committee members then serve at the pleasure of the speaker and can be removed or substituted at any time.

The most critical committee

**See OPINION, Page 3**

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SUPPLEMENTS





SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Scoop Today/Shopper's Guide

**Registered nurse Kelly Johnson recently received her second DAISY Award for going above and beyond in treating her patients through Monroe Clinic Hospice.**

## Nurse receives second DAISY Award

**Johnson serves Monroe Clinic Hospice patients**

Kelly Johnson, a registered nurse at Monroe Clinic Hospice, recently received the DAISY Award based on a nomination from a recent experience with a patient's family.

According to the nomination, "Kelly's actions exemplify the selfless attitude and outstanding compassion that is engrained in the nursing profession. She has gone above and beyond in caring for patients beyond the physical care. She embodies everything the DAISY Award stands for."

Johnson became a hospice nurse on her birthday in 2015 and says it was "the best birthday gift I ever gave myself."

She also was honored with a DAISY Award in 2018.

The DAISY Award is a nationwide program that "celebrates the extraordinary clinical skill and compassionate care delivered by nurses every day," according to a news release.

Monroe Clinic employs more than 300 nurses serving patients throughout southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois.

Members of the community are welcome to nominate an extraordinary nurse for the DAISY Award. Nomination forms are available at any Monroe Clinic location or by going online to [monroeclinic.org/daisy](http://monroeclinic.org/daisy).

## Birth

**Hudson Eugene Stichter**

Hudson Eugene Stichter is the new son to Paige Stichter of Freeport, Illinois, born on Feb. 1, 2021, at FHN Memorial Hospital in Freeport. Hudson joins a brother, Carter, 2. Grandparents are Melissa and Jason Furniss of Freeport and Daniel Stichter of Pearl City. Great-grandparents are Mary and Jim Leverington of Freeport and Linda and Dan Stichter of Pearl City. Great-great-grandparent is Neva Barthel of Freeport.

# Senator Stewart notes committee assignments

State Sen. Brian Stewart, R-Freeport, has been asked to serve as a spokesperson for the Senate Pensions Committee for the 102nd General Assembly.

The 45th District senator also has been named as a member of the following Senate committees: Agriculture, Energy and Public Utilities,

Financial Institutions, Health Care Access and Availability, Judiciary and Veterans Affairs.

The Senate's standing committees analyze legislation dealing with specific subject areas, such as education, agriculture and transportation. Committees screen legislation introduced by all members and usually only

those bills approved by a committee may be considered by the entire Senate, according to a news release.

Stewart also currently serves on the Legislative Ethics Commission, which works with the legislative inspector general in investigating allegations of misconduct by state lawmakers and staff.

Stewart's 45th District includes all or part of Carroll, DeKalb, Jo Daviess, LaSalle, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, Whiteside and Winnebago counties.

Stewart has legislative and constituent services offices in Freeport,

**See STEWART, Page 5**

## • Opinion (Continued from page 2)

a legislator can be assigned to is the Rules Committee. When a bill is filed by a representative, the legislative proposal goes to the Rules Committee for consideration. This committee either assigns the proposal to another standing committee, or it remains in Rules Committee. There is no other real avenue for the bill to move forward. A representative can move to discharge a bill from Rules Committee. However, the vote for the discharge motion to pass requires unanimous consent. That is a high hurdle since the speaker is also a House member and can simply vote "no." Amendments can be filed to each bill as the proposed legislation moves through the process. However, amendments are also initially assigned to the Rules Committee. Because the speaker assigns a majority of

members to the Rules Committee, this allows for absolute control.

So far, Chris Welch has talked like someone who is open to changing some House rules. I hope so. All too often when all is said and done, there is more said than done. This opportunity is critical and too rare for mere lip service.

Changing the rule regarding discharging proposals from Rules Committee would be a good start. I am not suggesting that every bill should be sent to the House floor for consideration. There are thousands of bills filed every year and there is no way all of these proposals could be heard. However, a rule could be adopted allowing for any measure that has enough co-sponsors to be discharged to either the House floor or standing committee. If a majority

of the House members (60) co-sponsored a bill, it would go to the House floor. The proposal would be released to a standing committee if a reasonable number of House members (40) co-sponsored the proposal.

How about a rule change that requires the final version of the Illinois budget to be on display for at least 72 hours? I was a school superintendent for 17 years and our local school district's budget was required to be on display for 30 days. Further, any proposal in a final form should be held for at least 24 hours before a final vote. Amendments that are hundreds of pages long are filed on bills and dumped on the desk (laptop) of lawmakers to vote on without proper time to study the final version. Even worse is that citizens represented by the lawmaker do not

have time to contact their elected officials to weigh in. Unintended consequences could be avoided if more time were taken to study final versions.

These are just two examples of potential changes. There are many more rule changes that would turn Illinois around and restore confidence in our state government. You might want to let Speaker Welch know your thoughts. Contact information is located at [www.ilga.gov](http://www.ilga.gov) under House members. Let's not miss this golden opportunity.

*Roger Eddy is a retired member of the Illinois House and served on the Special Investigative Committee on the impeachment of Rod Blagojevich. He served the 109th District as a Republican from 2003 to 2012.*

## • Slices of Life (Continued from page 2)

on those. It's hard to wait on a quarterback, at least for me, but if you're smart you follow the rules.

My husband had his favorite players each year. Rob Gronkowski was one; Adam Thielen was another. He'd draft them well before they were recommended by the draft pros just because he wanted to make sure they were on his team.

We have a family fantasy trophy; it accompanies bragging rights each year. I won those rights in 2017, my daughter in 2019. Despite his vast football knowledge and keen expertise in draft picks, my husband never won the title; he was typically near the bottom of the pile. He didn't mind. He was always a good sport about it and

was quick to laugh at himself. For him it was about family fun. For him it was always about family. So he didn't mind losing; and we didn't mind beating him.

Until this year.

He started the 2020 season slow and slower. After six weeks he had but one win (against me) and was at the bottom of our family bracket. Odds of him winning the season at that point were slim to none.

But things were about to change. His losing streak moved to the "W" column week seven. He was still helping to manage his lineup at that point and got a couple of unexpected and legitimate wins. He was winning at football, but we saw he was losing

his other battle. And, somehow, collectively, without even discussing it, we decided he would win the trophy this year.

During the last eight weeks of the regular season and two weeks of playoffs, he averaged 90 points per game while his opponents scored an average of just 23 points.

In layman's terms, we threw the games against him because we are family. Because it felt like the right thing to do. Because he always wanted to get his name on the trophy and it was the least we could do to make sure that happened.

The trophy is officially yours for the year, Thom. Your name is inscribed in permanent ink and will stay there

forever, or at least until family fantasy football is a thing of the past, which I don't see happening anytime soon.

This year, you are our champion. And you'll continue to be next year, and the year after that because as far as we are concerned, you are our GOAT (greatest of all time). Always have been, always will be.

And next September, I promise I'll do my best to draft both Thielen and Gronk for my team. You always knew how to pick the good ones.

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

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# Obituaries

## ANNA APPLEBY

Anna Louise (Reusch) Appleby, age 85, of Dubuque, Iowa, formerly of Elizabeth and Stockton, Illinois, passed away peacefully Thursday, Jan. 28, at Unity Point Health Center in Dubuque. To honor Anna's wishes, a private family interment service will be held at a later date at Trinity Lutheran Church in Derinda, Illinois. Cremation rites have been accorded.

Anna was born April 18, 1935, in Derinda, to Carl and Lydia (Fahri-ron) Reusch. She was a longtime member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Derinda. Anna married Glen Appleby on Jan. 17, 1954.

Anna always enjoyed spending time with family and friends. Whether it was in-person visits, calls and letters, or recently through online video sessions, she enjoyed sharing in what was happening.

She enjoyed music, and played the piano throughout her life, and was a church organist for many years. She enjoyed playing hymns, holiday music or big-band tunes, playing often and regularly.

Another interest of Anna's was her Siamese cats. She took great pride in raising and showing cats for years, with a number of grand champions. She sold her kittens individually, or through pet stores, like Fabulous Felines in New York City.

After retiring from the Savanna Army Depot, she was able to spend more time with her horses. Wheth-



er it was caring for them, riding or sharing them with her grandchildren, they were always part of her conversations.

Anna will be missed by her four sons, Roger (Deborah

Nicholson) of Kansas City, Kansas, Rudy (Susan) of Salem, Oregon, Randy of Elizabeth, and Ronny (Janice) of Hazel Green, Wisconsin; five grandchildren, Jolene Appleby, Kimberly Appleby (Michael Simonsmeier), Tim Appleby, Megan Appleby (Spencer Schwartz) and Stephanie Appleby; seven great-grandchildren; and her brother, Raymond Reusch of Spokane, Washington, and his family.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Glen Appleby; her parents, Carl and Lydia Reusch; a brother, Robert Reusch; a sister-in-law, Jacqueline Reusch; and a grandchild, Michele Appleby.

The family would like to thank the caring professionals at Luther Manor Communities and Unity Point Health Center, both in Dubuque, for their compassionate care of Anna during her final years and days.

A memorial fund has been established. Memories and condolences may be shared at [www.hermannfuneralhome.com](http://www.hermannfuneralhome.com).

## THE REV. DONALD C. REUSCH

The Rev. Donald C. Reusch, age 64, of Metropolis, Illinois, died Jan. 14, 2021. Don was born Nov. 12, 1956, in Savanna, Illinois, to Harlan and Rowline (Perry) Reusch. He was baptized Dec. 9, 1956, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Derinda Township, Illinois. Don grew up on his parents' dairy farm in rural Elizabeth, Illinois, where he was an active 4-H member and graduated from Elizabeth High School in 1974.

In 1976, Don received his associate of science degree from Highland Community College in Freeport, Illinois. He went on to earn his bachelor of arts degree from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois,



with honors in 1978. Don received his master of divinity degree from Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa, in 1982. Don served Lutheran parishes in Lily and Butler, South Dakota, and Sioux Falls, South Dakota, before founding a ministry with the MCC Church in Sioux Falls in 1989 (St. Francis & St. Clare MCC), where he served until 2000. From there he helped found the Church of St. Matthew the Martyr,

where he also served.

Don is survived by two brothers, Richard (Twila) Reusch of Elizabeth and Daniel (Dianna) Reusch of Carbondale; a nephew, Chad (Wendy) Reusch of Stockton, Illinois; a niece, Mindy Pratt of Elizabeth; a step niece, Tracly Seger of Belleville, Illinois; a step-nephew, Matthew McCall of Denton, Texas; as well as great nieces and nephews.

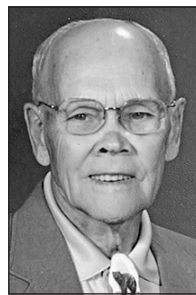
He was preceded in death by his parents, Harlan and Rowline, and an infant nephew, Chet Reusch.

A private graveside service will be held at Derinda Trinity Lutheran Cemetery at a later date. Memorials may be directed to the Heifer Project International.

## ALBERT A. SIMLER

Albert A. Simler, age 92, of Freeport, Illinois, passed away at home on Monday, Feb. 1, 2021. He was born June 4, 1928, the son of the late Conrad and Minnie (Meier) Simler. Albert married Betty Elgin on Nov. 5, 1950, at First Lutheran Church in Freeport.

Albert and Betty farmed all their lives until retiring in 2008. Even after retirement, he enjoyed helping his sons on the farm. He was a member of First Lutheran Church of Freeport and was a lifetime member of the Stephenson County Farm Bureau. He also served on the board of trustees for Freeport Rural Fire for 19 years. He enjoyed woodworking and making frames for the puzzles



he put together. Albert also loved the outdoors, spending time gardening and taking care of the yard. Together, Albert and Betty took many trips. They traveled the world on

bus tours and cruises. He loved spending time with family, especially at the family Christmas gatherings.

He is survived by his wife, Betty, of Freeport; children, David (Kathy) Simler of Freeport, Diane (Daylon) Niemann of Warren, Illinois,

and Darius (Sherry) Simler of Pearl City, Illinois; daughter-in-law, Linda Simler of Lena; 11 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; brother, Harold Simler of Freeport; and sister-in-law, Twila Simler of Pearl City.

He was preceded in death by his parents; son, Duane; grandson, Jered Simler; great-granddaughter, Hanna Westfall; brothers, Stanley and Earl; and sisters-in-law, Nancy Simler and Edith Simler.

A private family service will be held at Walker Mortuary in Freeport. Interment will take place at Chapel Hill Memorial Gardens in Freeport. A memorial fund has been established for First Lutheran Church. Condolences may be shared at [www.walkermortuary.com](http://www.walkermortuary.com).

## • Claims

(Continued from front page)

a year ago, before the pandemic took hold in Illinois.

The four-week rolling average number of new claims also dropped 2 percent, to 81,476. But that was still seven times higher than the comparable period in 2020.

The Illinois job market also outperformed the U.S. labor market during the week. Nationwide, according to

U.S. Department of Labor numbers, first-time jobless claims fell 2.8 percent, to 816,247.

For the week that ended Jan. 23, the number of Illinois workers receiving continuing unemployment benefits fell less than 2 percent, to 322,670. Nationwide, that number fell 2.4 percent, to just over 5 million.

The state's overall unemployment

rate for January won't be released until later this month. In December, that rate climbed seven-tenths of a point, to 7.6 percent, which was more than double what it had been a year earlier.

Also in December, Congress passed the Continued Assistance Act, or CAA, which renewed two federally funded unemployment programs that were set to expire at the end of that month. The act also provides an additional \$300 per week in benefits, half the amount of supplemental benefits that had been included in the original Coronavirus Aide, Relief and Economic Security, or CARES Act. Those supplemental benefits had expired the week of July 25.

The additional \$300 provided under CAA applies between the week ending Jan. 2 and the week ending March 13. IDES began paying the additional \$300 beginning Jan. 4.

Another program the act renewed is the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, or PUA program, which provides benefits to independent contractors, self-employed individuals and others not covered by traditional state unemployment insurance. But state officials throughout the country, including Illinois, had complained that the initial program was fraught with fraud because it did not require applicants to verify their previous employment.

IDES announced Feb. 3 that it was implementing several required changes that program, including a requirement for applicants to ver-

ify their previous employment or self-employment.

In addition, IDES said, people who had exhausted their benefits under that program before Dec. 26 may remain eligible under the extension and will be notified of the additional weeks added to their claim.

The CAA also renewed Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation, or PEUC, which provides an additional 11 weeks of benefits for workers who have exhausted their regular benefits. However, IDES said, the way people transition to that program will vary based on how and when they exhausted their other benefits. The agency said transitions will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

*Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service covering state government.*

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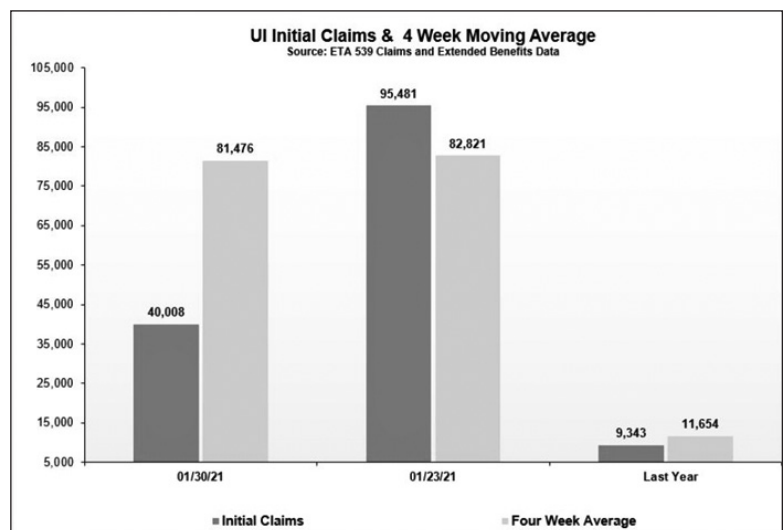
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## USDA looks to increase signup for conservation program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is extending the Conservation Reserve Program general signup period, which had previously been announced as ending on Feb. 12.

"USDA will continue to accept offers as it takes this opportunity for the incoming administration to evaluate ways to increase enrollment," according to a news release. "Under the previous administration, incentives and rental payment rates were reduced, resulting in an enrollment shortfall of over 4 million acres."

The program, administered by USDA's Farm Service Agency, provides annual rental payments for 10 to 15 years for land devoted to conservation purposes, as well as other types of payments.

Before the General CRP signup period ends, producers will have the opportunity to adjust or resubmit their offers to take advantage of planned improvements to the program.

"As one of the largest private-lands conservation programs in the United States, CRP provides both economic and conservation benefits by taking land out of agricultural production," the release said.

All USDA Service Centers are open for business, including those that restrict in-person visits or require appointments. Service Center visitors who want to conduct business with FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service or any other Service Center agency should call ahead and schedule an appointment. Service Centers that are open for appointments will pre-screen visitors based on health concerns or recent travel, and visitors must adhere to social distancing guidelines. Visitors are also required to wear a face covering during their appointment.

To reach the FSA Service Center in Jo Daviess County, call 815-858-3418, extension 2. In Stephenson County, call 815-235-2141, extension 2.

Staff members will continue to work with producers by phone, email and using online tools. For more information, go online to [farmers.gov/coronavirus](https://farmers.gov/coronavirus).

# Lawsuits over indoor dining ban proceed as all regions reopen

By Sarah Mansur  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Although the governor's latest indoor dining ban has been lifted in all areas of the state, some lawsuits brought by restaurants challenging the ban remain active.

Among those are the cases filed by Tom DeVore, a southern Illinois lawyer who represents Sen. Darren Bailey, R-Xenia, and advises hundreds of other business clients who are staying open during the pandemic.

DeVore has argued, on behalf of restaurants, that Gov. JB Pritzker lacks the authority under the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act — the statute through which the governor's lawyers have claimed his authority is derived — to close businesses via emergency order. DeVore instead argues this power belongs to the Illinois Department of Public Health under the Illinois Department of Public Health Act.

Last week, DeVore filed a motion asking a Sangamon County judge to voluntarily dismiss the lawsuits he initiated on behalf of two downstate restaurants against Pritzker and eight local health department officials in COVID-19 mitigation Region 4.

DeVore argues the lawsuits are no longer necessary, citing statements from health department officials from four of the eight health departments that they never enforced the executive orders because they lacked the authority to do so.

According to DeVore, this claim by the health departments should make clear to restaurants across the state that health departments did not possess the authority to shutter businesses based on the governor's executive order.

Health department officials in Clinton, Bond, Washington and Randolph counties, which are within Region 4, claimed in a court filing that the lawsuit against them should be dismissed because the health departments didn't take any action to enforce the ban and therefore did not cause an injury to the restaurants.

They also argue that the health departments did not have authority in the first place to enforce the bans because the executive orders do not identify the IDPH Act as the statute authorizing enforcement. The governor's executive order on Nov. 28 lists the state Emergency Management Agency Act as the only statute authorizing enforcement.

Notably, the health departments' court filing does not address the argument that the Emergency Management Agency Act authorizes local health departments to enforce the governor's executive orders.

It also ignores the municipal and county boards that passed ordinances authorizing local officials to enforce the executive orders. Those ordinances have resulted in fines and food or liquor license suspensions for some restaurants, including some represented by DeVore, that were flouting the indoor dining ban in certain counties,



STOCK PHOTO The Scoop Today/Shopper's Guide

**Even as indoor dining restrictions have been eased in the state, lawsuits continue over the governor's authority to close establishments by emergency order.**

including Sangamon County.

Still, DeVore wrote in his motion in Sangamon County Court that the professed lack of enforcement by county health officials in Region 4 resolves the need for court intervention.

Benjamin Jacobi, one of the lawyers representing the county health departments, did not respond to a request for comment.

Lawyers with the Illinois Attorney General's Office, which represents the governor in court, have not yet filed a response to the health departments' motion.

### FoxFire restaurant

A second active case over the indoor dining ban was brought by owners of FoxFire, a restaurant in Kane County, who are also appealing their case to the Illinois Supreme Court.

FoxFire's initial lawsuit was in response to Pritzker's executive order in October that imposed the ban on indoor dining and bar service following a spike in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations throughout the state.

While a Kane County judge initially granted the restaurant's request for a temporary restraining order allowing FoxFire to ignore the new indoor dining restrictions, an appellate court promptly reversed the judge's decision.

The appellate court rejected the arguments from FoxFire's legal team. It

ruled that Pritzker's executive order did not amount to a "closure" for businesses, therefore Illinois Department of Public Health Act regulations governing business closures did not apply in this case.

Since then, FoxFire's attorneys asked the Illinois Supreme Court to hear the case and overrule the appellate court's decision. The Illinois Supreme Court has not taken any action thus far.

Meanwhile, as FoxFire has remained open throughout the fall and winter in defiance of the governor's orders, its case in Sangamon County continues to proceed.

Kevin Nelson, one of FoxFire's attorneys, has asked Pritzker's administration to provide evidence, also referred to as discovery, related to the administration's decision to shut down indoor dining in Kane County.

For example, FoxFire's request asks for any documentation showing that bars and restaurants in Kane County are the primary source of COVID-19 increases within the county.

The request also asks for documentation showing the connection between the fall season rise in COVID cases and restaurants throughout the state, among other demands.

Pritzker's lawyers have objected to the requests and have not provided any of the documents or information requested.

Last week, Nelson filed a motion

asking the Sangamon County judge to overrule Pritzker's objections and force his agencies to provide the information.

Sangamon County Judge Raylene Grischow is expected to rule on that motion in early March, according to court documents.

Nelson did not respond to requests for comment by deadline.

A spokesperson for the Illinois Attorney General's Office said the governor's lawyers filed a motion "opposing discovery because, as the judge considers our motion to dismiss the remaining claim, there is no need for discovery — particularly when the plaintiffs are seeking information that is publicly available on the Illinois Department of Public Health's website."

*Capitol News Illinois is a nonpartisan, nonpartisan news service covering state government.*

## • Stewart

(Continued from page 3)

Dixon and Springfield. To reach the Freeport office, 50 W. Douglas St., Suite 1001, call 815-284-0045 or email Stewart at [brian@senatorstewart.com](mailto:brian@senatorstewart.com).

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# Extension offers tips for a healthier heart

Officials at the Illinois Extension are highlighting heart-healthy tips in a social media campaign and offering a webinar series during February, which is Heart Month.

The webinar series, "Health at Home: Healthy Eats for a Healthy Beat," will feature four 30-minute classes at 11 a.m. Thursdays, Feb. 18 through March 11.

A 10-minute question-and-answer session will follow each webinar.

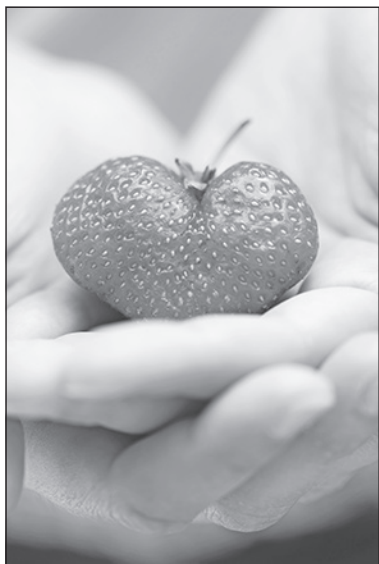
To register, go online to [go.illinois.edu/jsw](http://go.illinois.edu/jsw) or call 815-235-4125.

The Extension's social media campaign will provide practical tips related to increasing knowledge about heart disease and steps to prevent and manage it.

"You can begin by eating healthy and moving more," Diane Reinhold, Extension nutrition and wellness educator, said in a news release. "Eating a healthy diet focused on fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts, lean animal proteins, fish and healthy fats has many health benefits, including reducing cholesterol and blood pressure."

Other suggestions to further reduce risk include limiting refined carbohydrates, processed meats, sodium, added sugar and saturated fats.

"Engaging in at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity a week will also help decrease your risk of developing heart



STOCK PHOTO The Scoop Today/Shopper's Guide

**Experts at the University of Illinois Extension are offering online resources to help improve heart health during February's Heart Month.**

disease," Reinhold said. "Physical activity is truly one of the best things you can do for your health. It strengthens your heart, improves blood flow to the small vessels throughout the body, and increases your healthy HDL cholesterol."

For more about upcoming programming on nutrition and wellness, visit [go.illinois.edu/jsw](http://go.illinois.edu/jsw) or call 815-235-4125.

## Zoom conference focuses on grazing

"Reinvigorating Pastures and Expanding Grazing" is the theme for the 2021 Northwest Illinois Grazing Conference.

The conference, hosted by the University of Illinois Extension, will be held virtually via Zoom over four consecutive Wednesday evenings beginning March 3. All sessions will run from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The fee is \$15 for all four sessions or \$5 per session. Pre-registration is required to receive the Zoom. To register or for more information, go online to [go.illinois.edu/jsw](http://go.illinois.edu/jsw) or call 815-858-2273.

Conference topics and presenters include:

- March 3, Laura Paine of the University of Wisconsin Extension, "Pasture Ecology and Soil Health for Grazers"
- March 10, Teresa Steckler of the University of Illinois Extension, "Be Creative — Identifying Alternative Grazing Opportunities"
- March 17, Travis Meter of the University of Illinois Extension, "Extending the Grazing Season"
- March 24, Gene Schriefer of the UW Extension, "Putting the Grazing Pieces Together"



STOCK PHOTO The Scoop Today/Shopper's Guide

Staying inside will be a good idea this week as arctic temperatures settle in for a stretch. If you have to go out, it's worth the time to be prepared with warm gear and emergency supplies.

## Preparation is key to staying safe during extreme cold

With dangerous cold temperatures settled over the state, safety officials are reminding people to take precautions in order to stay safe.

### Take caution if outdoors

If you must be outside, dress for the weather. Wear loose-fitting layers, a hat, gloves and snow boots. Make sure you have a scarf or some other way to cover your face.

Know the signs of hypothermia, which include excessive shivering, exhaustion, confusion and slurred speech. If you, or anyone around you, begins to show symptoms, call 911 immediately.

Know the signs of frostbite, which include a white or grayish-yellow skin area, skin that feels unusually firm or waxy and numbness. If you detect symptoms, get to a warm area. Do not try to rub the affected area, as it can cause more damage.

### Prepare your home, vehicle

Check the supplies in your home and vehicle emergency kits. If food items or batteries have expired or run low, re-place them.

Test the smoke and carbon monoxide detectors around your home. If you can't re-member the last time you changed the batteries, go ahead and replace them.

Check your furnace to make sure it is working properly. If you rely on heating oil or propane, make sure you have enough to last through the current period of cold temperatures and schedule a delivery before you start to run low.

Do not attempt to use gasoline or propane heaters or a grill to heat your home or garage. Those devices produce carbon monoxide, which can be deadly in enclosed areas.

Prepare your vehicle for the possible effects of the cold weather. Keep the gas tank at least half-full. Pack an emergency kit with items such as food, water, extra blankets and warm clothing, booster cables and a cell phone charger.

Make sure water pipes in unheated areas are properly insulated. If you have faucets served by exposed pipes, let water drip from them or run at a slow trickle to prevent

freezing. Open kitchen and bathroom cabinets to allow heat to get to the pipes.

### Safeguard your pets and livestock

If you have pets, limit their time outdoors. Dogs and cats can get frost-bitten ears, nose and feet if left outside during bitter cold weather. For livestock, make sure they have access to extra food and a water source that will not freeze. Outdoor animals need access to a dry place to seek shelter. Help provide a wind-break for larger animals and an enclosed space for smaller animals to help them retain their body heat.

### Seek warm shelter

For those without access to a heated, safe place to stay, some communities may open warming shelters during periods of extreme cold. To search for warming sites near your area, go online to [keepwarm.illinois.gov](http://keepwarm.illinois.gov).

### Keep updated

To keep up with the latest winter weather, find your local National Weather Service office at <https://www.weather.gov/> and check in regularly for updates

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# Criminal justice bill would overhaul police officer certification

*New standards will determine who can become law enforcement*

By Raymon Troncoso  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

*Editor's note: This story is part of an ongoing "Lame Duck Look Back" series in which Capitol News Illinois is following up on the major bills that passed both chambers of the General Assembly in the Jan. 8-13 lame duck session. This is one of several stories examining the criminal justice reform backed by the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus.*

A criminal justice package that passed both chambers of the General Assembly last month contains provisions that would grant the state increased power over police discipline and standards of conduct starting in 2022.

The omnibus package, which was backed by Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul, has not yet arrived at the desk of Gov. JB Pritzker, although he has said he looks forward to reviewing the bill which needs only his signature to become law.

Pritzker campaigned on several issues in the bill and indicated his support, but has not yet said directly that he will sign it.

One of the more controversial provisions in the bill would expand the scope of the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board, or ILETSB, which currently oversees training and grant programs for law enforcement and correctional officers throughout the state.

Police certification standards would be made more robust under the legislation, with law enforcement officers placed into three categories: active, inactive and decertified. Only those with an active certification from ILETSB can be legally employed at an Illinois agency in a law enforcement capacity.

A decertified officer has 30 days to file a motion with the board for reconsideration, and all decertifications are subject to judicial review. Once an officer is formally decertified, they are prohibited from ever regaining certification.

Each officer will be responsible for keeping their certification active by submitting verification forms to ILETSB every three years to confirm they've completed all mandatory training and have no disciplinary actions taken against them that would result in decertification.

Under current Illinois law, officers can only lose their certification under very narrow circumstances. They must either be convicted of a felony or a limited list of "decertifiable misdemeanors" such as offering a bribe, theft and prostitution.

From 2009 to 2014, Illinois decertified 64 officers. Over the same period of time, Florida decertified 2,125 officers and Georgia decertified 2,800.

Raoul, in his testimony in House committee in support of the provision during January's lame duck session, told lawmakers that while he does believe Illinois has the best trained and most upstanding law enforcement in the country, the massive discrepancy in the numbers has more

to do with how hard it is to fire and decertify officers for blatant misconduct, even if the officers were known to be repeat offenders.

The new law would grant ILETSB broader discretionary authority to decertify officers that violate the new standards of conduct.

If the board determines an officer committed a felony or "decertifiable misdemeanor" that would normally result in automatic decertification, but the officer has not been charged or convicted, it can decertify that officer through the discretionary process.

Other misconduct that can result in discretionary decertification includes excessive force; failing to intervene in another officer's use of excessive force or failing to render aid; tampering with dashboard and body cameras or their footage; committing perjury or making false statements in an investigation of a crime; and engaging in any unprofessional, unethical or deceptive conduct harmful to the public whether or not it caused actual injury.

While governmental agencies are required to submit violations to ILETSB within seven days of their occurrence, the provision would also allow for members of the public to submit a complaint about an officer, and they may keep their own identity confidential as well.

## Decertification process

Opponents of the bill have claimed the ability to file complaints anonymously will result in officers being targeted by disgruntled citizens and criminals who will flood the system to get them fired.

Raoul contends the provisions of the bill prevent unwarranted termination by filtering complaints through several layers, and that confidentiality is important to preserve the integrity of the process.

"We have to realize there have been incidents throughout the country that make the public at large feel that they can't have the greatest level of trust in law enforcement and we have to restore that public trust," Raoul said in an interview with Capitol News Illinois. "Just like other professions where they may be whistleblowers that their identity is protected such that there's no retaliation against them, but that doesn't mean you don't investigate the allegation thoroughly."

When ILETSB receives a complaint about an officer, it will conduct a preliminary review to determine if there's enough information to investigate. If the review finds there's sufficient cause, the board will conduct a full investigation.

If the board's investigation determines the officer may have conducted decertifiable conduct, it will submit a formal complaint to the Illinois Law Enforcement Certification Review Panel, a new entity created by the legislation with 11 members appointed by the governor and attorney general.

The complaint will result in a for-

mal hearing before an administrative law judge who will hear the allegations in the complaint and testimony from the officer, their legal representation and relevant witnesses to the case. The judge will then deliver their conclusion and a recommendation to the panel.

The panel then votes on whether to recommend ILETSB remove the officer's certification or dismiss the complaint, with a simple majority vote needed either way. The recommendation is nonbinding.

Then, and only then, can ILETSB choose to decertify an officer through another majority vote.

Outside of this process, an officer's certification can only be revoked if they're convicted under the current decertification standards or rendered inactive if the officer fails to submit a valid verification form to ILETSB during their required report-

ing period.

## Transparency database

The legislation also requires ILETSB to enhance transparency, both within law enforcement and for the broader public.

The Professional Misconduct Database, a private portal for chiefs and sheriffs, will be expanded and streamlined for all relevant governmental agencies, law enforcement entities and state's attorneys. The portal will contain an officer's certification history, reported instances of misconduct, suspensions and terminations.

Any agency looking to hire an individual in a law enforcement capacity would be mandated by law to view the individual's entry in the database before offering employment.

ILETSB will also create and maintain two new searchable public data-

bases in an accessible portal on their website. One will contain officers' agencies, their certification status and confirmed instances of misconduct that led to decertification. The other will contain all completed investigations against law enforcement and correctional officers with an identifying information of the officers involved redacted.

The attorney general's office will also have greater latitude to investigate systemic abuse in law enforcement agencies under the new provision. According to Raoul, his office can only do so under the current law if the abuse is a clear human rights violation based on race, gender, national origin or other protected classes but not if it is a general systemic issue.

*See BILL, Page 11*

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# • Wildcats (Continued from front page)

Albrecht said his team's size and athletic ability will allow them to have some advantages over opponents this season.

"I feel a big strength of our team is our size," he said. "With this size, I feel we will be able to rebound and control the paint well. We are also athletic enough that as we are trying to limit looks in the paint we will be able to recover to the perimeter."

The Wildcats will open up their season with a tough away game as they travel to East Dubuque High School to take on the Warriors on Wednesday, Feb. 10. They find themselves in a matchup with a second group of Warriors on Friday, Feb. 12, when the Wildcats will host their first home game of the season against the Warren Warriors.

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# Briefs

## Scholarship open to county residents

The application period is open now for the Wills Family Scholarship program. The scholarship, established by longtime area residents, is available to Jo Daviess County residents.

The Scales Mound School Board serves as administrator for the scholarship program, which is open to recent or past high school graduates to help with the costs of attending a vocational two- or four-year institution.

To apply, send a letter of application to the Scales Mound School

at 210 Main St., Scales Mound, IL 61075 by April 30. Applicants should note "Wills Family Scholarship Program" on the envelope.

## Local students make dean's list

Madeline M. Klippert of Hanover, Ryleanne Stuckey of Apple River and Ellen Fox of Stockton are among the students named to the fall semester dean's list at the University of Iowa in Iowa City.

Klippert, a freshman, is studying nursing, while Stuckey is studying radiation sciences and Fox is study-

ing English.

To qualify for the dean's list, students must achieve a GPA of 3.50 or higher on 12 semester hours or more of UI graded coursework during a semester.

## Elizabeth student notches academic honors

Treyce Thomas of Elizabeth was named to the dean's list at Rockford University for the fall semester.

To be named to the list, students must have at least a 3.5 GPA and no grades below a "C" with all requirements completed for the semester.

# • Memories (Continued from front page)

With such limited time to prepare and plan, Wiegel is sending his girls out there and just letting them play.

"We will not have a press breaker installed, we'll have only one out of bounds play, and won't worry at all about end of game plays," he said.

Instead, they have been able to focus on fundamentals and getting back to the roots of basketball.

"We are working our tails off on passing, receiving passes, defensive positioning and rebounding."

The Wildcats are looking to take advantage of this rare opportunity to play out a season that holds little to no pressure or consequences. This desire to have fun and improve will play right into their strengths, Wiegel said, explaining, "We have a competitive group of kids throughout our entire program.

Our strength right now is we have a desire to improve, we are focused at practice and we work hard. We will maximize our ability and put a competitive team on the floor."

The Wildcats lost a number of talented leaders from last year's squad, including Second Team All-Conference guard Claire Wienen. Though they may struggle at first to replace the offensive firepower of Wienen and Reese Miller, the Wildcats have an impressive roster consisting of three seniors and a strong group of seven juniors.

The Lady Wildcats return a number of players with quality experience at the varsity level. Three starters from last year's team — Livia Haas, Emma Kloss and Sarah Pratt — will look to lead the way. They also return four other varsity

letter winners as this may be one of the most experienced teams Wiegel has put on the floor. With time to learn and grow, this year of focusing on improving could lead to a bright future for the RRSW Wildcats.

River Ridge-Scales Mound was to begin its season Feb. 8 with an away game at Pecatonica.

One interesting safety protocol this season is that teams will play both regular season matchups with conference opponents in the same week. This type of scheduling will allow for improved contact tracing and limits interactions with other teams, but could also lead to some competitive matchups as teams will know each other very well after playing eight quarters together in a single week.

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# Scholarships open to area students

Officials at the University of Illinois Extension Office in Elizabeth recently announced the availability of several scholarships — the Ralph & Katherine Norris Scholarship, the Home & Community Education Scholarship and the Dalgarn Family Scholarship.

## Ralph & Katherine Norris Scholarship

Ralph and Katherine Norris donated funds to provide scholarships for Jo Daviess County residents studying agriculture or related fields.

Scholarships will be awarded to people pursuing a two- or four-year

degree program as full-time students. Current high school students, college students and others continuing their education may apply.

Applicants must be accepted at a chosen school, college or university. Past applicants must submit a new application each year. Recipients cannot receive the scholarship for more than four years.

## Home & Community Education Scholarship

The Jo Daviess County Association for Home & Community Education is offering three scholarships of \$250 each to Jo Daviess County high school graduates pursuing a degree.

## Dalgarn Family Scholarship

This scholarship is presented with the Dalgarns' belief that advanced education strengthens not only the individual, but the family and community as well by providing

life-changing exposure to a diversity of experiences, cultures and perspectives.

The \$1,000 Dalgarn Family Scholarship will be awarded to a deserving graduating senior and active 4-H member seeking to further his or her education at a four-year institution. The scholarship is open to all fields of study.

Selection criteria will be based upon active, productive membership in a Jo Daviess County 4-H Club (minimum of five years), demonstrated leadership and tenacity as demonstrated by school and community ac-

tivities, hard-work and compassion as evidenced by experiences and letters of recommendation, scholarship as demonstrated by grades and test scores and by financial need.

Completed application materials are due no later than March 20. Only complete submissions will be considered.

Applications for all of the scholarships are available at go.illinois.edu/jsw or may be picked up at the Jo Daviess County Extension office, 204 Vine St., Elizabeth. For more information, call the Extension office at 815-858-2273.

# Education foundation announces grants, endowment

The Stockton Education Foundation recently awarded several grants to local students and teachers:

- \$4,000 for smart boards for first-grade classrooms
- \$2,900 for a table saw and Saw Stop safety feature for the agriculture department
- \$5,480 for a kiln in the art department
- \$140 for a monitor for middle school special education
- \$975 for instructional materials for elementary school teachers
- \$200 for a 3-D printer in the high school computer lab

The grants were made possible through donations and memorial gifts from community members.

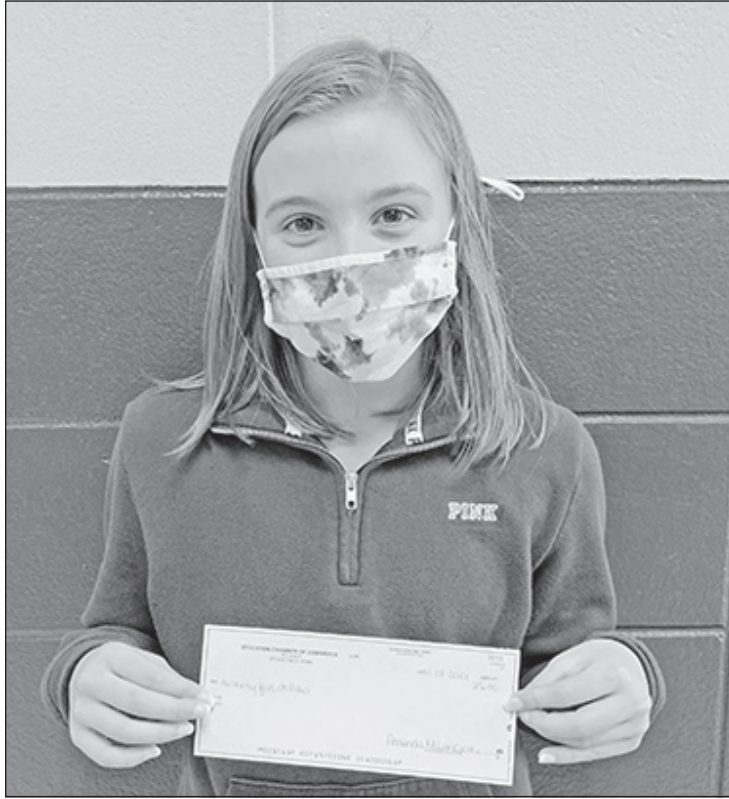
Foundation officials also announced the first endowment in the

organization's history, initiated by the Mackeben family in honor of their parents, Cliff and Betty, in the amount of \$10,000.

"The foundation's goal is to raise the level of the total endowment to at least \$50,000 in five years, using the income from the principal investment to support academic programs for Stockton's students and teachers," according to a news release.

Donations to the endowment can be made through memorials, direct donations, wills and family trusts, land/property and other donations of value.

For more information about the endowment or the foundation, contact foundation founder Dave Gilliland at drdavidgilliland@gmail.com or 815-297-2602.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS The Scoop Today



Shirley Cook



Bobby Rillie



Max Schuldt



Ariana Arand

SUBMITTED PHOTOS The Scoop Today

## Leading by example

Each month Stockton Middle School students are recognized for going above and beyond to display the Blackhawk Way expectations. They have been nominated for special acts of being respectful, responsible and safe. The students recently honored as Blackhawks of the Month, clockwise from top left, eighth-grader Shirley Cook, seventh-grader Bobby Rillie, sixth-grader Ariana Arand and fifth-grader Max Schuldt.

## Stockton notes super spellers

Above, top competitors in the Stockton Spelling Bee were recognized recently. Pictured from left are sixth-grader Evelyn Noller, first place; seventh-grader Piper Brown, second place; and fifth-grader Madelyn Libberton, third place. Below, Noller displays the Stockton Chamber Bucks check she received, compliments of Illinois Bank and Trust.

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## Dessert theater plans 20th anniversary season

The Mighty Richland Players Dessert Theater in Orangeville has announced its 2021 20th anniversary season. The plan is to perform three shows this year, including a world premiere.

Award-winning playwright Phil Olsen has chosen Mighty Richland Players Dessert Theater as one of the theaters to world-premiere his newest play.

"The comedy, 'The Birthday Club,' has already won awards in theatrical competitions, and the theater is excited to bring it to the stage," according to a news release from the theater group. "This play introduces us to Cheryl and her four friends who gather together in her living room every time each of them has a birthday. All in different places in their lives, they share the ups and downs, joys and failures and the craziness of life's journey."

"It's a great reminder of how much, underneath it all, we still need each other."

Performance dates for "The Birthday Club" are April 16 through April 18 and April 23 through April 25.

### Fall features 'Blithe Spirit'

"Blithe Spirit" will be performed this fall. COVID-19 shutdowns occurred the week the show was to open last year and the theater is finally bringing the Noel Coward show to the stage. The three-hour show will have two intermissions, one regular length and one short. The original MRPDT cast from last spring will all be returning.

The show centers around a skeptical novelist, Charles Condomine, who invites self-

proclaimed medium Madame Arcati to his home for a séance. Hoping to gather material for a new book, his he dismayed when the hapless psychic accidentally summons the spirit of his late wife, Elvira. His home and life are quickly turned into a shambles as his wife's ghost torments both himself and his new bride, Ruth.

Performance dates are Sept. 24 through Sept. 26 and Oct. 1 through Oct. 3

### 'Little Red Schoolhouse' returns

"The Little Red Schoolhouse" is back for a third sequel. Depicting one-room schoolhouse Christmas memories, this show will bring back familiar characters along with some new ones. Did you attend school in a one-room schoolhouse? Come and join in the fun and share reflections of your time there.

Performance dates are Nov. 27, Nov. 28 and Dec. 3 through Dec. 5.

### Tickets include dessert

Reservations are required, and tickets can be reserved by credit card by calling 815-819-1310.

The current social distancing and cleaning regulations will be observed for all performances.

Doors open a half hour before the 7 p.m. shows begin. Dessert, which is included in the ticket price, will be served during intermission.

The theater is located in a historic building at 203 W. High St. in Orangeville. For more information about the theater and the 2021 season, go online to [mightyrichlandplayers.org](http://mightyrichlandplayers.org).

# Newly formed Senate committee prioritizes mental health issues amid pandemic

By Grace Barbic  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Leadership in the Illinois Senate has formed a new committee to focus on mental health issues in the current General Assembly as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to significantly alter everyday life.

"Although it's always been important, because mental health and physical health are one in the same in my opinion, now because of COVID it's become even more essential that we really address these problems head on," said Sen. Laura Fine, D-Glenview.

Senate President Don Harmon, D-Oak Park, named Fine as chair of the newly created Senate Committee for Behavioral and Mental Health. When Fine joined the Senate last year, she approached Harmon about establishing a committee focused specifically on mental health and behavioral issues.

Her advocacy on the issue was nothing new.

Prior to joining the Senate, Fine served in the state House of Representatives for the 17th district from 2013 to 2019, where she served as vice chair on the House Committee for Addiction and Mental Health, chaired by Rep. Deb Conroy, D-Elmhurst.

Fine said she understands firsthand how detrimental and challenging it can be to ensure mental health needs are met. Her own life experiences have inspired her to bring the issue of mental health to the forefront in the state.

Over 10 years ago, her husband was hit head-on by a truck and his left arm was amputated at the scene.

The truck driver did not have insurance, so Fine's family had to rely on their own insurance to cover the medical bills.

Amid a seven-month legal battle with her insurance company over coverage of multiple surgeries, Fine said her husband struggled to adjust to his life-changing injury.

It got to the point where her husband tried to take his own life. Fortunately, Fine said, she was able to find her husband in time to make it to the emergency room. But she said she felt helpless because her insurance company didn't cover mental health, despite her husband's urgent need for care.

"We need to make sure that when you're looking for these services, you have coverage for these services," Fine said. "Because the last thing that enters your mind is 'this is the health that could save my life, but I can't afford it.' And just knowing from our experience, that happens to a lot of people and we can't let that happen."

Previously, most mental health-related bills heard in the Senate would go to the Human Services Committee, but Fine said that committee was too broad and she wanted to chair one with a more focused approach to mental health.

She said she hopes the new committee, the first of its kind for the Senate, will lead the passage of groundbreaking legislation.

John Patterson, spokesman for Harmon, acknowledged Fine's dedication to bettering mental health services in the state.

"The Senate believes it deserves a forum for debate and a launching pad for progress," Patterson said on behalf of Harmon. "The Senate President looks forward to the great work Sen. Fine and the committee will do."

The House Committee for Addiction and Mental Health has been working for about four years now with Conroy as its Chair. Conroy saw a need for such a committee when she witnessed the intersectionality of mental health and addiction issues her constituents were facing as the opioid and heroin crisis be-

came prevalent in her district and the state.

As vice chair of that committee, Fine worked closely with Conroy, passing legislation related to mental health parity to ensure that mental health issues would receive the same protections under law as other health issues when it comes to insurance coverage.

The new law, enacted in the state in 2015, includes important provisions to extend and clarify coverage, educate consumers about their rights, require certain minimum treatment benefits and improve enforcement of the law, according to Get Covered Illinois.

"We started that fight together," Conroy said. "So now that she's able to actually have a committee devoted to that in the Senate...it's great news for our state, for our constituents."

Conroy said their work with mental health parity will continue into the 102nd General Assembly, and she is looking forward to the working relationship between the two committees.

"When you're able to take on big issues that affect mental health and addiction and you can educate both chambers at the same time, it helps you to expedite that fight and issues much faster than having to go from one chamber to the next," Conroy said.

Fine said she plans to file a number of mental health-related bills in the new General Assembly, focusing on medical necessity, addressing the need for psychiatrists in mental health deserts and increasing telehealth availability for those seeking safe ways to get help during the pandemic.

"I feel like if we could save one person's life with this committee, that's huge," Fine said. "My goal with this committee is to take away that stigma, so everybody who needs help can seek it and do so in an affordable and accessible way. I'm really excited Illinois is taking mental health seriously."

*Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service covering state government.*

## • Spread (Continued from front page)

"If you have COVID-19 and your symptoms are mild, you will be able to isolate at home for two to three weeks," Pedersen said. "Stay hydrated, use over-the-counter medicines to help ease your symptoms, get lots of rest and just take good care of yourself."

"Everyone recovers at their own speed," she said. "If you're sick, be respectful of your health and others' and stay home."

Gridley reports that well over half of FHN staffers have received their first COVID-19 vaccination, and are on track to get their second dose on time. They haven't seen any severe side effects in those who've received the vaccine, though some people

have reported mild fatigue, headaches and chills.

"We are working with the Stephenson County Health Department and other health departments in the area to coordinate vaccination clinics for the general public as soon as it's possible," Gridley said. "We'll share details on those vaccination clinics in the regular media, online and on social media as soon as we can."

"In the meantime, please continue to follow the precautions — wear a mask, wash your hands, and keep your distance, and stay safe," he said.

The video, along with all of the previous weeks' videos, is available on FHN's COVID-19 information site, [www.fhn.org/coronavirus](http://www.fhn.org/coronavirus).

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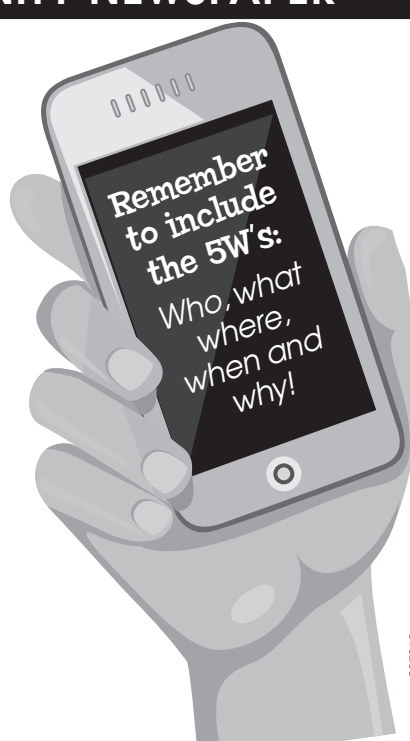
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# GOP members hope to block new teacher standards

By Peter Hancock  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Republican Illinois state lawmakers are pushing back on proposed new standards for teachers and administrators that are scheduled for a hearing before a legislative rulemaking committee later this month.

Supporters of the proposed "Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards" say they're merely an attempt to make sure that all educators are trained in ways to reach students across all racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. But critics are calling them a form of political indoctrination that seeks to inject partisan, liberal ideology into the classroom.

The new standards would apply to teacher training programs at Illinois colleges and universities rather than K-12 school curricula. They are scheduled to come up for legislative review

on Tuesday, Feb. 16, before the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules, or JCAR, a legislative body that has oversight authority over state regulatory agencies.

If approved, the standards would take effect in October 2025 in order to give state-approved educator preparation programs ample time to incorporate them, according to a statement from the Illinois State Board of Education.

ISBE also noted it will "offer optional professional development on the standards to current educators," but school districts "maintain local control over what professional development they choose."

During a virtual news conference Feb. 1, three Republican House members said they hope JCAR will block the adoption of the proposed rules.

**See BLOCK, Page 13**

## • Bill (Continued from page 7) Potential 'cleanup language'

Republicans and law enforcement groups have voiced fierce opposition to the criminal omnibus legislation as a whole, urging Pritzker in a news conference last week to veto the bill once it arrives on his desk.

On police certification, Republican lawmakers take issue with the unfunded mandates involved in the new system and mandatory trainings for officers. The bill goes too far without providing more funding for police departments, they said, especially as the state is already hurting for revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the continued structural budgetary pressures.

The bill's sponsors in the General Assembly, Chicago Democrats Sen. Elgie Sims and Rep. Justin Slaughter, have indicated budgetary issues and clean-up language can be addressed in follow-up legislation in the new session, which is why the bill's effective dates are pushed back by a year

or more instead of being effective immediately.

A release posted to the ILETSB website the day after the legislation's passage reads "we have asked for our appropriations to be increased and funding secured to accommodate the increased trainings and duties associated with processing certification verifications, investigating statewide complaints, and seeking the decertification for reported misconduct."

It continues, "we trust that in the upcoming months, discussions on this topic will be fruitful."

Despite opposing the broader bill, law enforcement has been supportive of the certification provisions. Starting in June, the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police, the Sheriff's Association and state's attorneys collaborated with the office of the attorney general and the governor's office to craft the language. According to Raoul, the group met nearly 20 times.

"We were trying to work with the

attorney general on this," Joe Moon, president of Illinois Troopers Lodge 41, said at the Wednesday Republican news conference. "However, before that could happen this was all rammed together and shoved out in the lame duck session for a vote."

While police certification was originally its own legislation, it was added to the criminal justice reform omnibus package on the final day of the lame duck session.

"With regards to people urging the governor to veto, I welcome discussion about specific elements of the bill and where there might be need for a follow-up, cleanup language and so forth. I think that is a healthy part of the legislative process," Raoul said. "My participation has been to negotiate in good faith and to have the input of law enforcement along the way."

*Capitol News Illinois is a nonpartisan, nonpartisan news service covering state government.*

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## LEGAL NOTICES

### 2021 HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION PERSON 65 YEARS OF AGE

Qualifications:

- **Must own and occupy home as a full time resident as of January 1, 2021**
- **Must be liable for paying the real estate taxes on the property**
- **Must be of the age of 65 or older in 2021**

Apply at the Chief County Assessment Office, 330 N. Bench Street, Galena, IL prior to May 31, 2021 or phone 815-777-1016. First time applicants are required to submit a copy of their driver's license. Those currently receiving this exemption do not need to reapply.

Chief County Assessment Officer  
(Published in The Scoop Today Feb. 10, 2021)

389556

### 2021 OWNER OCCUPIED EXEMPTION

Qualifications:

- **Must own and occupy home as a full time resident as of January 1, 2021;**
- **Must be liable for paying the real estate taxes on the property**

Apply at the Chief County Assessment Office, 330 N. Bench Street, Galena, IL prior to May 31, 2021 or phone 815-777-1016. Applicants are required to submit a copy of their driver's license or Federal Income Tax form. Those currently receiving this exemption do not need to reapply.

Chief County Assessment Office  
(Published in The Scoop Today Feb. 10, 2021)

389557

### IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

STEPHENSON COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
FLAGSTAR BANK, FSB  
Plaintiff,

-v.-  
TODD A. WILLIAMS,  
RAYKELLE J. EASLEY  
Defendant

20 CH 13

NOTICE OF SHERIFF SALE  
PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on September 30, 2020, the Sheriff of Stephenson County will at 9:30 AM on February 18, 2021, at the Stephenson County Courthouse, 15 N. Galena Ave.,

(West Door), FREEPORT, IL, 61032, sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash, as set forth below, the following described real estate:

THE SOUTH 62 FEET OF LOTS 31 AND 32 IN BLOCK 4 IN LINCOLN BOULEVARD SUBDIVISION IN THE WEST HALF OF SECTION 36, TOWNSHIP 27 NORTH, RANGE 7 EAST OF THE FOURTH PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN; SITUATED IN STEPHENSON COUNTY IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS.

Commonly known as 720 S. MCKINLEY AVE., FREEPORT, IL 61032

Property Index No. 18-13-36-331-032

The real estate is improved with a single family residence.

The judgment amount was \$80,742.70.

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 on residential real estate 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.

Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale

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 this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assess-

ments required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1).

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, contact Plaintiff's attorney: Alexander Potestivo, PESTESTIVO & ASSOCIATES, P.C., 223 WEST JACKSON BLVD, STE 610, Chicago, IL, 60606, (312) 263-0003. Please refer to file number 311395. E-Mail: ilpleadings@potestivolaw.com

Case # 20 CH 13  
I3163146

(Published in  
The Shopper's Guide  
Jan. 27, Feb. 3 & 10, 2021)

388961

### IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 15TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

JO DAVIESS COUNTY -  
GALENA, ILLINOIS  
ILLINOIS BANK AND TRUST

Plaintiff,  
-v.-  
DENNIS J. PIERRO,  
TRUSTEE OF THE DENNIS J. PIERRO LIVING TRUST,  
DATED MARCH 5, 2007 et al  
Defendant

2020CH56

### NOTICE OF SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on November 12, 2020, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 1:30 PM on March 5, 2021, at the office of Vincent Roth Toepfer & Leinen PC, 11406 U.S. Route 20 W, Galena, IL, 61036, sell at a public sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate:

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Property Index No. 18-003-075-00

The real estate is improved

with a single family residence.

Sale terms: 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, including the Judicial Sale fee for the Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund, which is calculated on residential real estate 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/ or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. No fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and SUBJECT TO A PRIOR RECORDED 1st Mortgage 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.

Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale.

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 this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1).

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.

You will need a photo identification issued by a government agency (driver's license, passport, etc.) in order to gain entry into our building and the foreclosure sale room in Cook County and the same identification for sales held at other county venues where The Judicial Sales Corporation conducts foreclosure sales.

For information, examine the court file, CODILIS & ASSOCIATES, P.C. Plaintiff's Attorneys, 15W030 NORTH FRONTAGE ROAD, SUITE 100, BURR RIDGE, IL, 60527 (630) 794-9876

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Case Number: 2020CH56  
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Case # 2020CH56  
I3163262

(Published in The Scoop Today Jan. 27, Feb. 3 & 10, 2021)

389049

### 2021 Disabled Veterans' Standard Homestead Exemption

Qualifications:

- **You must be an Illinois resident who has served as a member of the U.S. Armed Forces on active duty, Illinois National Guard, or U.S. Reserve Forces and not dishonorably discharged;**
- **You must have at least a 30% service-connected disability certified by the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs;**
- **You must own and occupy the property as your primary residence on and be liable for**

Continued on next page



# •Block

(Continued from page 11)

"You know, across the country and around the world, we've seen politics be injected in more and more parts of our lives. And the litmus test of 'is someone progressive enough or not' has come up time and time again," said Rep. Tom Demmer, R-Dixon. "Unfortunately, the rule that's being offered by the state board of education today, around culturally responsive teaching standards, is really just an attempt to impose further progressive politics into our education system, instead of focusing on the things that we know teachers, administrators, students and families across Illinois need."

Demmer was joined in the news conference by GOP Reps. Steven Reick, of Woodstock, and Adam Niemerg, of Dieterich. Demmer and Reick both serve on JCAR.

Reick pointed specifically to a portion of the new standards that call on teachers to "understand and value the notion that multiple lived experiences exist, that there is not one 'correct' way of doing or understanding something, and that what is seen as 'correct' is most often based on our lived experiences."

He also pointed to another provision calling on teachers to "(a)ssess how their biases and perceptions affect their teaching practice and how they access tools to mitigate their own behavior (racism, sexism, homophobia, unearned privilege, Eurocentrism, etc.)."

Another provision calls on educators to "(b)e aware of the effects of power and privilege and the need for social advocacy and social action to better empower diverse students and communities."

"Let's be clear. This rule is not an improvement to education," Reick said. "It's an attempt to interject politics into the classroom. The standards that ISBE wants to impose are beyond misguided. Requiring certain political viewpoints in our school systems is simply unacceptable."

JCAR is a 12-member group that is evenly divided between House and Senate members and between Democrats and Republicans. Its main function is to review proposed agency rules to make sure they do not conflict with state law and to make sure administrative rules reflect the General Assembly's intent when it passed a law authorizing such rules.

In most cases, the panel makes a finding of "no objection," meaning the agency is free to adopt the final rule. Occasionally, when JCAR members have some concerns about a proposed rule, they will vote to make a "recommendation" that the agency go back and clarify a point or tighten up its language.

But JCAR also has authority to issue an "objection" to a proposed rule if enough members believe it is inconsistent with state law, that it would have an adverse economic impact on small businesses, municipalities or nonprofit organizations, or that it fails to meet some standard or requirement of the Illinois Administrative Procedures Act.

An objection may also be accompanied by a "prohibition" against

adopting a proposed rule if JCAR believes it constitutes a threat to the public interest, safety or welfare.

An objection or prohibition, however, requires a vote of at least eight of the 12 members. That means even if all six Republicans voted to object, they would still need at least two Democrats to go along.

Carmen Ayala, the state superintendent of education, defended the proposed rules, arguing that they are intended to help address the wide achievement gaps between different racial and ethnic student groups.

"Culturally responsive teaching and leading helped me improve the reading and math skills of every one of our student groups when I was a district superintendent and to achieve double digit growth among my students of color," Ayala said in a statement. "Cultural responsiveness is inclusive of all of the experiences our educators, students, and families bring to the classroom."

The state of Illinois administers standardized tests each year in English language arts and math to students in grades 3 through 8 and once in high school.

According to scores from the 2019 tests, the most recent scores available, only 37.4 percent of all students met or exceeded the state's standards for English language arts. That included 47.7 percent of all white students but only 25.6 percent of Hispanic students and 17.7 percent of Black students.

In math, only 32 percent of all students met or exceeded the state's standards, including 41.7 percent of white students, 20.4 percent of Hispanic students and 11.8 percent of Black students.

Republicans at the recent news conference said that's an indication that schools need to focus more on teaching basic reading, writing and math skills, not on cultural sensitivity lessons. But Ayala argued that the two go hand-in-hand.

"As we help students recover from learning loss due to the pandemic, giving our teachers opportunities to learn about effective, equitable, and research-based strategies like cultural responsiveness could not be more important," she said. "Every student deserves to feel welcomed, included, and accepted at school. Students are more engaged when they see their cultures represented in what they learn at school."

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



Continued from previous page

## of less than \$250,000 for the primary residence;

- **MUST renew annually.**

A certified DD Form 214 and a **current** disability certification letter from the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs for the current assessment year must be provided.

Deadline for filing an application is July 1, 2021.

Please contact the Chief County Assessment Office at 815-777-1016 for an application.

Chief County Assessment Office  
(Published in The Scoop Today Feb. 10, 2021)

389559

## 2021 SENIOR CITIZENS ASSESSMENT FREEZE HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION

Qualifications:

- **Must be 65 years of age or older in 2021;**
- **Have used the property as your principal place of residence since January 1, 2020;**
- **Own the property on January 1, 2020 and January 1, 2021;**
- **Must be a single family residence;**
- **Be liable for the payment of property taxes for 2020 and 2021;**
- **Have a total household income of no more than \$65,000 for 2020.**
- **Must renew annually**

You **must** submit a complete copy of both your Federal income tax including Schedule 1 with your application. If you **DO NOT** file income tax, then you **must** submit a copy of your Statement of Social Security Benefits, Statement of Pension Benefits, W-2's and 1099's or any other household income. You must apply for this exemption every year.

This exemption freezes the assessed value of your property. **It does NOT freeze your tax bill.** The deadline for filing is July 1, 2021.

If this is the first time you are eligible, please contact the County Assessment Office at (815) 777-1016 for an application.

Chief County Assessment Office  
(Published in The Scoop Today Feb. 10, 2021)

389558

## 2021 Disabled Persons' Homestead Exemption

Qualifications:

- **You must be disabled or become disabled during the as-**

essment year;

- **You must own or have a legal or equitable interest in the property on January 1, 2021;**
- **You must occupy the property as your principal residence on January 1, 2021;**
- **You must be liable for the payment of the property taxes;**
- **Must renew annually.**

Proof of disability must be submitted in the form of a Class 2 Illinois Disabled Person

Identification Card, Social Security Administration disability benefits, Veterans Administration disability verification you are receiving a person for non-service connected disability. Railroad or Civil Service disability benefits (100% disability).

Deadline for filing is July 1, 2021.

Please contact the Chief County Assessment Office at 815-777-1016 for an application.

Chief County Assessment Office  
(Published in The Scoop Today Feb. 10, 2021)

389560

## Returning Veterans' Homestead Exemption

Qualifications:

- **You must be an Illinois resident who has served as a member of the U.S. Armed Forces, Illinois National Guard or U.S. Reserve Forces;**
- **You must have recently returned from active duty in an armed conflict involving the armed forces of the U.S.;**
- **You must have owned or had a legal or equitable interest on January 1, 2021;**
- **You must be liable for the payment of property taxes.**

A certified DD Form 214 must be provided or if not discharged, then your military orders and travel voucher showing date of return must be provided.

Deadline for filing is December 31, 2021.

Please contact the Chief County Assessment Office at 815-777-1016 for an application.

Chief County Assessment Office  
(Published in The Scoop Today Feb. 10, 2021)

389561

## IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

STEPHENSON COUNTY  
- 15 North Galena Avenue,  
FREEPORT, ILLINOIS

ESTATE OF

Zacharias Thottuvelil,  
DECEASED.

21 P 9

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

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

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

E-filing is now mandatory for documents in civil cases with limited exemptions. To e-file, you must first create an account with an e-filing service provider. Visit <http://efile.illinois-courts.gov/service-providers.htm> to learn more and to select a service provider. If you need additional help or have trouble e-filing, visit <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/FAQ/gethelp.asp>.

Jessica Duhig  
Handler Thayer, LLP (45414)  
191 North Wacker Drive,  
Suite 2300  
Chicago, Illinois 60606  
(312)641-2100  
I3164032

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

389844

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# Classifieds

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for rent

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MUST BE 16 YEARS OLD

**Colony  
BRANDS, INC.**  
& Affiliates

**Village of Winslow** seeks a part-time maintenance worker. Responsibilities include lawn mowing, snow plowing, general maintenance and working with the Water Superintendent. Please send resume to winslow.il@hotmail.com or call LeRoy at 815-275-2613.

388743

## Managerial

### Lena Sullivans Foods Now Hiring Night Manager

Must be 21 years or older  
Previous retail experience preferred  
Applications available at service desk

389891

## Part Time Help Wanted

### Help Wanted

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

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

389856

## Sales/Marketing

### ADVERTISING SALES EXECUTIVE

*Rock Valley Publishing*, your hometown newspapers serving the stateline has an opening for an experienced Media Sales Representative to call on current and new accounts in a protected sales territory.

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**For immediate consideration send resume/job history to:**

Vicki Vanderwerff, Director of Advertising  
Email: vicki@southernlakesnewspapers.com  
Fax: (262) 725-6844

316524

## Apartments

**LENA 2 BDRM-GROUND FLOOR** appliances furnished, no smoking. \$425/mo. 815-369-2827

### Other Real Estate

**PUBLISHER'S NOTICE** All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Fair Housing Act which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial/ status or national origin, or an intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination. Familial status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination call HUD toll-free at 1-900-669-9777. The toll-free telephone number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275. **EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY**

## Announcements

**CLASSIFIED IN-COLUMN ADS cannot be credited or refunded after the ad has been placed. Ads canceled before deadline will be removed from the paper as a service to our customers, but no credit or refund will be issued to your account.**

**DISCLAIMER NOTICE** This publication does not knowingly accept fraudulent or deceptive advertising. Readers are cautioned to thoroughly investigate all ads, especially those asking for money in advance.

## Firewood / Fuel

**RIISING PROPANE COSTS?** Our firewood is still priced the same! 815-297-2790

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[www.rvpublishing.com](http://www.rvpublishing.com)

## transportation

### Automobiles

**1995 CABRIO:** Convertible. New battery/brake lines/brain box. 110 mlg. 847-477-6384 or 696-3289.

**2004 JEEP GRAND Cherokee** Laredo 4x4, straight 6, no rust, good tires, runs good, highway miles. \$2000 OBO. 608-934-5562 or 608-558-7612

**2007 FORD 500 LIMITED 101K**, \$4200. Can text 262-989-4112

**2007 FORD EXPEDITION** 165K, new cats, coil pack, plugs, tires,trailer brakes, 3rd row. Call or text 262-989-4112

**2012 CHEVY TRAVERSE 2 new** tires, new brake pads. \$6500 OBO. 815-947-2972

### Automobiles Wanted

**TOP DOLLAR FOR YOUR FULL SIZE JUNK TRUCKS & SUV's.** Haul away 7 days a week. 262-758-1807

## Trucks & Trailers

**99 'BLK FORD RANGER STEP** 200K, runs great, frame issues. \$700 OBO. Call 262-325-0950.

## Vans, Mini Vans

**2006 FORD E350 Super duty 12** passenger Van. 5.4 V8, 225,000 miles. \$3,200. 608-921-4010.

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Section**

**Call (815) 369-4112**

**To place an ad in our Business & Service Section...**  
**Call Laurie at (815) 369-4112**



# State to receive \$19 million opioid settlement

CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

The state will receive \$19.8 million from a settlement reached Thursday between a coalition of attorneys general, including Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul, and the consulting firm McKinsey.

McKinsey has been investigated and sued by multiple states for its role in the opioid epidemic. The settlement, totaling \$573 million, will be the first multistate settlement related to the opioid crisis to result in substantial payment, according to a Thursday release from Raoul's office.

According to Raoul's office, the settlement "will be used to abate and address the impact of the opioid epidemic throughout Illinois and the other participating states."

McKinsey was sued due to its work for Purdue Pharma, the company behind the manufacture of OxyContin, an addictive opioid, which helped exacerbate the opioid crisis. The states' investigation of Purdue found the company had implemented marketing schemes presented by McKinsey to target vulnerable populations and push physicians to prescribe more opioids for over a decade.

According to the settlement, when states sued Purdue Pharma in 2019, McKinsey partners attempted to destroy evidence of their work for Purdue. Along with the monetary payments, the settlement also requires McKinsey to prepare tens of thousands of internal documents relating to its work for Purdue and

other opioid companies, investigate the partners responsible for the attempted destruction of evidence, implement a strict ethics code and end its consulting work for companies involved in the sale and manufacture of Schedule II and Schedule III narcotics.

Raoul reached the settlement alongside 52 other attorneys general for 46 states, the District of Columbia and five U.S. territories.

## College employees garner honors

Several area residents were among the Highland Community College employees honored with awards recently.

Paige Klever of Lena, a student information specialist, received an Excellence Award and an award for five years of service.

Klever "has been invaluable in the implementation of new recruiting software that will help (the admissions department) streamline several processes," according to a news release.

"Every day Paige works with

families to field questions and show Highland at its best with compassion and respect," the release said.

Several employees received awards for years of service.

- 10 years: Alicia Kepner of Lena, coordinator, nursing/allied health programs

- 15 years: Douglas Block of Pearl City, trustee

- 20 years: Carolyn Petsche of Warren, director, Learning & Transitional Education Services; and Ken Rausch of Pearl City, maintenance mechanic

## REAL ESTATE LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE  
FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
STEPHENSON COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
FLAGSTAR BANK, FSB

Plaintiff,

-v.-

TODD A. WILLIAMS, RAYKELLE J.  
EASLEY

Defendant

20 CH 13

NOTICE OF SHERIFF SALE  
PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on September 30, 2020, the Sheriff of Stephenson County will at 9:30 AM on February 18, 2021, at the Stephenson County Courthouse, 15 N. Galena Ave., (West Door), FREEPORT, IL, 61032, sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash, as set forth below, the following described real estate:

Commonly known as 720 S. MCKINLEY AVE., FREEPORT, IL 61032

Property Index No. 18-13-36-331-032

The real estate is improved with a single family residence.

The judgment amount was \$80,742.70.

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 on residential real estate 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.

Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale.

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 this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1).

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 ACCOR-

DANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW.

For information, contact Plaintiff's attorney: Alexander Potestivo, POTESTIVO & ASSOCIATES, P.C., 223 WEST JACKSON BLVD, STE 610, Chicago, IL, 60606, (312) 263-0003. Please refer to file number 311395. E-Mail: ilpleadings@potestivolaw.com

Case # 20 CH 13

13163146

(Published in The Shopper's Guide

Jan. 27, Feb. 3 & 10, 2021)

388962

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE  
15TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT  
JO DAVIESS COUNTY - GALENA,  
ILLINOIS

ILLINOIS BANK AND TRUST  
Plaintiff,

-v.-

DENNIS J. PIERRO, TRUSTEE OF THE  
DENNIS J. PIERRO LIVING TRUST,  
DATED MARCH 5, 2007 et al

Defendant

2020CH56

NOTICE OF SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on November 12, 2020, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 1:30 PM on March 5, 2021, at the office of Vincent Roth Toepfer & Leinen PC, 11406 U.S. Route 20 W, Galena, IL, 61036, sell at a public sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate:

Commonly known as 3A75 GENERAL LEE CT, APPLE RIVER, IL 61001

Property Index No. 18-003-075-00

The real estate is improved with a single family residence.

Sale terms: 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, including the Judicial Sale fee for the Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund, which is calculated on residential real estate 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/ or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. No fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and SUBJECT TO A PRIOR RECORDED 1st Mortgage 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.

Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale.

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 this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1).

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.

You will need a photo identification issued by a government agency (driver's license, passport, etc.) in order to gain entry into our building and the foreclosure sale room in Cook County and the same identification for sales held at other county venues where The Judicial Sales Corporation conducts foreclosure sales.

For information, examine the court file, CODILIS & ASSOCIATES, P.C. Plaintiff's Attorneys, 15W030 NORTH FRONTAGE ROAD, SUITE 100, BURR RIDGE, IL, 60527 (630) 794-9876

THE JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION  
One South Wacker Drive, 24th Floor, Chicago, IL 60606-4650 (312) 236-SALE

You can also visit The Judicial Sales Corporation at [www.tjsc.com](http://www.tjsc.com) for a 7 day status report of pending sales.

CODILIS & ASSOCIATES, P.C.  
15W030 NORTH FRONTAGE ROAD,  
SUITE 100  
BURR RIDGE IL, 60527

630-794-5300

E-Mail: [pleadings@il.cslegal.com](mailto:pleadings@il.cslegal.com)

Attorney File No. 14-20-04549

Attorney ARDC No. 00468002

Case Number: 2020CH56

TJSC#: 40-2393

NOTE: Pursuant to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, you are advised that Plaintiff's attorney is deemed to be a debt collector attempting to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

Case # 2020CH56

13163262

(Published in The Scoop Today

Jan. 27, Feb. 3 & 10, 2021)

389051

## Proposals would give voters more authority

CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Republican lawmakers from both chambers of the General Assembly are promoting three legislative proposals to give voters greater authority to amend the state constitution, recall legislative leaders and other lawmakers, and repeal recently passed state laws.

The "Voter Empowerment Project" includes three amendments to the state constitution, meaning each would need approval from three-fifths of lawmakers before it would head to voters for approval in a statewide election year. The threshold for approval from voters on a constitutional amendment is 60 percent of voters on the specific question or the majority of those voting in the election.

House Minority Leader Jim Durkin, R-Western Springs, said whether or not the bills get to the floor for full debate in the upcoming legislative session may be dependent on what rules the House adopts under newly seated Speaker Emanuel "Chris" Welch, D-Hillside.

The House is scheduled to return to discuss rules today, Feb. 10. A frequent Durkin critique of former Speaker Michael Madigan was that he let bills he did not like languish before the House Rules Committee, meaning they would not gain a hearing at the substantial committee level or a vote on the House floor.

When it comes to the measures discussed today, Durkin said, "We just want an up or down vote."

Welch has indicated he is open to reforming House rules, and he and Durkin have spoken several times since Welch was inaugurated, according to both leaders.

## Freelance Writers & Photographers

Rock Valley Publishing is seeking freelance writers and photographers to cover community events, municipal meetings, feature stories and high school sports in the area. If you've got an interest in community events & a talent for writing or photography, we may have work for you. You'll be paid for each story or photo we use. If interested, please contact Ed Nadolski at [enadolski@standardpress.com](mailto:enadolski@standardpress.com).

**Rock Valley**  
Publishing LLC





## Stockton Education Foundation Awards over \$14,000 in Grants & Announces Creation of First Ever Endowment

The Stockton Education Foundation is pleased to announce the first endowment in the organization's history initiated by the Cliff & Betty Mackeben Family in honor of their parents, Cliff and Betty, in the amount of \$10,000. The Foundation's goal is to raise the level of the total endowment to at least \$50,000 in 5 years, using the income from the principal investment to support the academic programs for Stockton's students and teachers. The Foundation extends its gratitude to the Mackeben Family for its support of the Foundation and its goals for students and teachers.

### Donations to the endowment can be made by:

- \*Memorials      \*Direct donations      \*Wills and family trusts
- \*Land and/or property      \*Other donations of value

Questions about the endowment may be addressed to Foundation Founder Dave Gilliland at [drdavidgilliland@gmail.com](mailto:drdavidgilliland@gmail.com) or by phone at 815-297-2602. The Foundation's address is 540 North Rush Street, Stockton, Illinois 61085.

### Foundation Members include:

Pattie Krippendorf, president and founding member  
Patty Arand, treasurer and founding member  
Millie Graves, secretary and founding member  
Mary Stayner, founding member  
Mike Mammoser, founding member

Leslie Hawley, founding member  
Anne Breed, founding member  
Jeff Werner, current member  
Gail Gilliland, current member  
School administrators Colleen Fox, Brad Fox, Casey Downey, James Bunting

Because of the generosity from community members through donations and memorials in the past year, the Foundation recently awarded the following grants to students and teachers:

- \*\$4,000 for smartboards for 1st grade classrooms
- \*\$2,900 for table saw and Saw Stop safety feature for the agriculture department
- \*\$5,480 for kiln in the art department
- \*\$140 for monitor Middle School special education
- \*\$975 for instructional materials for Elementary School teachers
- \*\$200 for 3D printer in High School computer lab

The foundation hopes to hold the popular Radio-A-Thon in the fall of 2021 providing the event can be hosted in a safe and healthy environment.