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YOUR FREE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 2023

Warhawks prepping for 2023 softball season

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT

The Warren-Stockton Warhawks varsity softball team is eager to hit the field for 2023. Ever since the Warhawks fell short in last year's regional semi-final, the team has been waiting for another opportunity. Last year's Warhawks lost

three seniors to graduation, including NUIC-West First Team All-Conference player, Claire Riedl.

Despite that, the Warhawks have plenty of returning talent to be excited about. Elaina Martin is back for her senior campaign as the team's catcher. Last season, Martin boast-

ed a .389 batting average, a .488 on base percentage, and a team-leading five homeruns. Martin also led the team in hits and slugging percentage, all according to Max Preps. Martin was recognized for her play as she was named First Team All-Conference in the NUIC-West for the second

time.

Joining Martin in returning for a senior campaign is Lauren Kehl, who is also a two-time First Team All-Conference member. Kehl is the team's leading pitcher and her connection with Martin behind the plate is very real. Last season, Kehl pitched a majority of the innings for the Warhawks, including a pair of impressive postseason performances. In a regional win over Milledgeville, Kehl pitched all five innings with seven strikeouts and just one walk allowed. Even in the postseason loss to Pearl City, Kehl threw all seven innings and racked up another seven strikeouts. Kehl also provides a solid bat as she hit five dou-

bles last season.

Joining the standout duo are six other returning starters from last year's squad. Three seniors in Alivia Thru-man, Janel Radaszewski, and Morgan Blair are back. A pair of juniors in Addy Bohnsack and Reese Raisbeck are back, as well as sophomore Maizy Fonseca.

Altogether, the Warhawks look to be one of the more experienced teams around in terms of varsity playing time. Warren-Stockton Head Coach, Mike Renz, is hoping last year's playing opportunities will benefit this year's squad. Renz said the team "gained valuable experience at numerous positions last season."

Renz also expects the team's overall speed to play a role in their success in 2023. Last year, the Warhawks hit 43 extra-base hits. A majority of those came from pure hustle as the Warhawks combined for 34 doubles and a trio of triples. You can expect Warren-Stockton to put their aggressive baserunning on display once again in 2023.

If the Warhawks can cut down on their overall number of strikeouts and continue to build a solid team around Martin and Kehl, they will be in a solid position this season. Warren-Stockton is currently scheduled to open their season with a Monday, March 13 home matchup against Morris-



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

A heartwarming fundraising success!

Stockton Elementary participated in the Kids Heart Challenge which was organized by K-4 Physical Education teacher, Miss Alt. They raised \$3,599.34 and reached 90% of their \$4,000 goal. Sydney Lawfer was the top fundraiser and broke the school record by raising \$505.40 for the Kids Heart Challenge. This earned her the opportunity to smash a pie into Miss Alt's face. Way to go, Sydney!

Will Family County Scholarship Program

The Wills' Family, long-time residents and philanthropic members of the area, have established a scholarship program for Jo Daviess County residents through the family trust. The Scales Mound School District Board of Education will administer the Scholarship program. Scholarships will be available to support attendance at vocational two and four year institutions. Recent or past high school graduates are eligible to apply.

Please send a letter of application to the Scales Mound School at 210 Main St., Scales Mound, Illinois by April 30, 2023, for the coming school year. Please note the Wills Family Scholarship Program on the envelope.

Wills Family Scholarship Fund

In honor of the Goldie Wills Family, namely Eldon Wills, Gordon Wills and Wilbur Wills, the "Wills Family Scholarship Fund" has been established. The goal of this special fund is to assist this year's Jo Daviess County high school graduates and current full-time college or vocational students with their education.

Basic Requirements

Any senior student or high school graduate student who is intent upon pursuing either a two-year or four-year vocational or academic post-secondary education is eligible.

Good academic standing with at least a "C" cumulative grade point average is

required along with being a resident of Jo Daviess County.

Selection Procedure

Qualifying applicants will submit a written letter of application including a list of all school activities, community activities, a description of the post-secondary coursework to be pursued, and career intentions.

The letter of application must be submitted by April 30.

Claim Procedure

Proof of registration at either a two-year or four-year post-secondary education program. Such proof will be presented to the administration at Scales Mound High School.

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Church news

Calvary Church Stockton

On Sunday March 12 at 6 p.m., the Third Joint Lenten Service will be held at Calvary Church in Stockton. For many years, Calvary, Wesley and Willow churches have held Joint Lenten Services, alternating locations. Debbie Leininger will be presenting *The Life of Christ in Story and Song*. Leininger is an accomplished flutist from Freeport. Refreshments will be available in Fellowship Hall following the program. All are invited.

The next program will be on Sunday, March 1 at p.m. at the Willow Church southeast of Stockton. The Christ's Country Choir, composed mostly of members from the Willow Church, will offering a program in song. If the parking lot is too muddy, the service will be moved to Calvary Church.

St. John's Lutheran Church

St. John's Lutheran Church, Pearl City, will celebrate the Third Sunday in Lent on March 12. A Worship Service with Holy Communion will begin at 9 a.m. with Pastor Michelle Knight presiding. The service will be available on Livestream on the St. John's Pearl City Facebook Page. Sunday school will be held during church.

Healthy Wolves Backpack has been a weekly ministry of St. John's since April of last year. Backpacks are filled with food and taken to the Pearl City school every Friday. The backpacks are sent home with families for the weekend so that adequate nutrition can be provided for children over the weekend. The families then return the backpack, and they are refilled to be sent home for the next weekend. We currently are serving 41 children through this program. Backpacks are assembled Thursdays at 3:30 p.m. in the upstairs youth kitchen. Anyone in the community is invited to help. Visit the St. John's Lutheran Church website for more information on how to volunteer.

On March 15 a mid-week soup supper will be served from 6 to 6:30 p.m. A short service will begin at 6:30 p.m. The weekly services will be held in Luther Hall. All community members are welcome.

A Community Family Fun Night will be held March 18 beginning with a potluck at 6 p.m. in Luther Hall. Games and activities for all ages will be held until 8 p.m. Please bring a dish to pass and comfortable clothes. This fun night will be fellowship and fun for all ages. Anyone from the community is invited to attend.

The March Grace meal will be held on Sunday, March 19 with all orders for curbside pick-up. The menu is lasagna, vegetable, applesauce, Italian bread, and pudding. All meals by reservation only. Reservations made to the church office by phone at 815-443-2492 or email at prshadmin@gmail.com by Thursday, March 16 at p.m. The meal is supported by a grant from the Freeport Community Foundation and Thrivent.

Confirmation Class will meet for supper and study at 5:30 p.m. in the Youth Room on Sunday, March 19. Women's Gathering Bible Study will be March 21 beginning at 9:45 in Luther Hall. The Bible Study will be led by Lori Kempel and hostesses will be Karen Bremmer and Lee Frey.

St. John's Lutheran Church of Pearl City is located at 229 S. First St., in Pearl City. If you need to contact the pastor or church, you may call 815-443-2215 for information.

Salem United Church of Christ

All are welcome to join for a service led by Pastor Christopher Ham at Salem United Church of Christ, 8491 West Salem Road, Lena, Illinois, this Sunday, March 12, 2023, at 10 a.m. The Adult Sunday School will be hosted prior to service, starting at 9 a.m. on the lower level of the church. Children's Sunday School is held during church service at 10 a.m.

The Wednesday Breakfast Bunch will be meeting Wednesday, March 15 at 8 a.m. at the Beltline Café, 325 West South Street, Freeport, Illinois. All are welcome to join.

On the first Wednesday of each month, Salem United Church of Christ hosts a Men's Night. On these evenings the men meet at 6:30 p.m. at the church in fellowship hall on the lower level for a time of visiting, playing games, and getting to know each other better. On the third Wednesday of each month from 3:30 to 7:30 p.m., Salem hosts a Crafters' afternoon at the church on the lower level. Everyone is invited to come and work on crafts. There will be snacks, a brief devotional thought, and plenty of time to share projects with one another. For more information on these gatherings, please contact salemwingsofjoy@yahoo.com.

Obituary

SHIRLEY SINCOX

Shirley Ann (Kuehl) Sincox, age 83, of Apple River, IL, passed away Saturday, Feb. 25, 2023, at the Lafayette County Manor in Darlington, WI. Shirley was born in Mound City, South Dakota on March 15, 1939. The Kuehl family moved to the northern Illinois area in the early 1950's where Shirley would become a proud graduate of Stockton High School. As she would say, "Go Blackhawks!"

She met William "Keith" Sincox and they wed on Aug. 31, 1958, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Elizabeth, IL. They would go on to move around southwestern Wisconsin while having three children, and settling in Ridgeway for 30 years before retiring to Apple River. Shirley held various jobs between housewife and secretarial work while the kids were growing up. She ended her working years at Janlin Plastics and retired officially from Engineering Industries in Verona, WI. She loved reading, completing puzzles, walking, watching hummingbirds (affectionately known as her "hummers") and keeping a pristine yard (even though she complained often about it!). She relished in living next to her granddaughter and spending time with her while she grew up.

Shirley was known specifically for loving to visit and travel with friends, especially Fern and Buster Stadel, Joanne and Virgil Martin, and Lillian and Leroy Beyer. Shirley and Keith traveled around the country and world on bus tours and cruises all throughout their lives. She loved spending time playing cards and especially singing with all her siblings when their families got together. Shirley was known for her love of music, listening to her brother Dean sing with his band "The Nomads" and later "The Maddmen", visiting the Crystal Grand Music Theater and The Fireside often for shows and concerts.

She was a devout woman and an avid church-goer who sang in many church choirs over the years, delighting



in all opportunities to sing solos. They became regulars at Vince's Restaurant in Monroe, WI and will miss their visits with Giacomo. She will be missed for her beautiful voice and ability to crack a joke no matter the time or circumstance!

Shirley is survived by her husband of 64 years, Keith; daughter Kris (Steve) Olson and son Kevin (Julie) Sincox; only granddaughter Erin (Paul) Sincox; sister Esther Schlichting (Wayne) Wand and brother Dean (Darlene) Kuehl; sisters-in-law Doreen Kuehl and Marlene Burge; brothers-in-law Howard (Debbie) Sincox and John (Karen) Sincox; and her many nieces and nephews whom she adored and loved very much. In addition to her parents August William Carl Kuehl and Sophia Louise Wandmacher Kuehl, she is preceded in death by her daughter Kathy Durst; brother Dietrich "Dick" (Hulda) Kuehl, sister Mina (Bill) Gotham, sister Elsie (Melvin) Kunz, brother Walter (Ada) Kuehl, sister Dorothy (Norman) Kolasch, brother Otto Kuehl, sister Adela (Milton) Burk; brother-in-law John Schlichting and sisters-in-law Jan Kuehl and Elaine Crom.

A visitation and memorial service was held at the Apple River United Methodist Church in Apple River, IL on Friday, March 3. Visitation was from 10 a.m. to noon with a memorial service at 12 p.m.

A graveside service at Elmwood Cemetery in Warren, IL followed the memorial with a meal at the Apple River UMC afterward for family and friends to celebrate her memories. Condolences may be sent to the family at www.leanonfh.com.

The family of Betty Raders wishes to thank all who sent cards, flowers and food at the time of her passing. All your thoughts of sympathy were very much appreciated. Also thanks to all the Hospice workers who helped take care of mom in her last days as well as in-home health care workers who took care of her around the clock. They all did a wonderful job.

Sharon & Robert Schlachter, Jill Lance, Jana Herman, Mark & Lora Raders



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EDITOR: Kathleen Cruger

Advertising Sales: Cyndee Stiefel: lenaads@rvpublishing.com

Office Manager: Jessica Tessoroff

To contact The Scoop Today & Shopper's Guide:

Telephone: 815-369-4112 • 815-947-3353 • Fax: 815-369-9093

Email: News/Letters to the Editor: scoopshopper@rvpublishing.com

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Results of ENF Mid-Winter Bald Eagle Count released

The President of the Eagle Nature Foundation (ENF), Terrence N. Ingram, has released the results of its 2023 Midwinter Bald Eagle Count that was conducted on Jan. 28 and 29. The count was conducted by hundreds of volunteers from Southern Illinois to Northern Minnesota and from Indiana to Nebraska. This was the 63rd year this eagle count has been done. The results of the count help monitor any changes in the wintering bald eagle population.

The volunteers sighted a total of only 1127 bald eagles when just last year they sighted 2070. The number of immature bald eagles that were sighted has dropped to 189 while last year they sighted 406 immatures. While the total numbers of eagles seen has dropped tremendously the percentage of young has remained the same for both years, 24.7%.

What is most disturbing is a dam on the Mississippi River, #5A, which had 52 adult eagles last year had no eagles on either of the two count days this year. Lock and Dam #5 had 92 adult eagles last year and this year only had 12 adults. Last year the Illinois River lost 71 birds from the year before, while this year it remained almost the same as it only lost three birds this year. Last year the area along the St. Croix River in Minnesota had lost 116 birds from the year before and this year it lost another 68 birds with only five birds, three adults and two unknowns, being sighted.

Last year Lock and Dam #19 lost 31 birds and this year it gained back 28 keeping the eagle population in that area stable. The area south of St. Louis lost 9 birds last year and lost another 9 birds this year. This year the Missouri River in Eastern Nebraska recorded 30 birds less than last year and the number of immatures dropped from 14 to only six this year, but the number of 4-year-old birds, or subadults, increased from one last year to four this year.

There were seven dams on the Mississippi River which did not send in a report this year. This may account for some of the total loss of birds recorded, but the overall count does not look good, especially when the total number of immatures is dropping greatly from one year to the next.

The average percentage of immatures for the 63 years of the count is 27.1%, while this year it was only 24.7%. The average percentage of young eagles for the past five years is only 23.7%. The average percentage of young for the first five years, in the early 1960's, was 19.4% and for the second five years of the count it was 28.5% higher than this year's. Perhaps the Bird Flu or West Nile Virus or some chemical in the environment is the cause for this decline in the immature eagles being sighted or even being fledged.

Each year the Annual Midwinter Bald Eagle Count is scheduled for the last weekend in January which normally is between the Southward Migration and the Northward Migration, to keep the movement of the birds is low. The Southern Migration usually peaks sometime during early half of January and the Northern Migration peaks around the middle to the end of February. The migration north usually has two peaks, depending on whether the birds are nesting in Northern Wisconsin, Michigan or Minnesota or further north into Canada. Some lockmasters provide hourly reports of the eagles sighted at their dam for the two count days, which helps determine how much migration is taking place during the two count days.

Many thanks to the volunteers who make this count possible.

News briefs

Lena American Legion Post 577

The Lena American Legion Post 577 will have their monthly meeting at the Legion Hall on March 14, 2023, at 7 p.m. New members welcome. For more information call 815-369-5245.

Blackhawks Unit of Home Extension meeting

The March meeting of Blackhawk Unit of Home Extension will be held March 16, 2023, at 1 p.m. at the Pearl City Library. Roll call will be answered by "Share something Irish". Kim Plantz will give the lesson on *Impact of Substance Use Disorder on Family*. Ruth Ann Jordan and Plantz will bring raffle items.

Meetings are open to all who wish to join for information and fellowship.

Lena Cemetery presentation

Jacob Andrews, Sexton of the Lena Cemetery, will give a presentation on the "Past, Present, and Future of the Lena Cemetery". The event will take place at the Lena Historical Museum located at 427 Grove St. on Sunday, March 12 at 2 p.m. The public is invited to attend. Tours of the museum will be available. Refreshments will be served. This is a free event but donations are always appreciated.

McConnell American Legion Auxiliary

The McConnell American Legion Auxiliary monthly meeting will be held on March 15, 2023, at the McConnell Legion. Social time will begin at 5 p.m. and the meeting will begin at 5:30 p.m. Please note the starting time for this meeting is 30 minutes earlier than previously scheduled meetings. All are welcome to attend. Please contact mcconnellauxiliary@gmail.com with any questions.

Stockton CWA to host guest speaker Dr. DeeDee Wampfler

The Stockton Concerned Women for America (CWA) is pleased to announce a guest

speaker for the Wednesday, March meeting at 2 p.m. Dr. DeeDee Wampfler will return to give part 2 of her presentation given on Feb. 8. The meeting is at Calvary Church at the corner of Rush and Maple streets, just south of the Middle School. New attendees are welcome.

Pearl City School District pre-school registration

Pearly City School District is opening registration for preschool-aged children ages two and a half, three or four years. If interesting in enrolling a child, please call 815-443-2715 to schedule a screening appointment or for further information.

Land Values Conference set for March 23

What's happening with farmland values in Illinois, along with lease rates, will be the topics of discussion at the 2023 Illinois Farmland Values Conference to be held here at the DoubleTree by Hilton on March 23. The event is sponsored by the Illinois Society of Professional Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers.

According to Luke Worrell, AFM, ALC, principal at Worrell Land Services, Jacksonville, IL, and overall chair of the annual ISPFMRA event, "We'll be looking at what happened to land values in 2022, the impact of high-

er interest rates, and the fact that our assumptions from last year's conference were correct....We have continued to see a sharp rise in land values."

"While certain pockets of Illinois experienced more strength than others, in general, Illinois land was up across the board," Worrell states. "To find out how much and where, you'll need to hear the complete report and look at the 2023 Illinois Land Values and Lease Trends Report." This report, produced annually, has information on land sales and trends for 2022 bro-

ken down into 10 geographic areas of the state. "Everyone attending gets a free copy of the report," Worrell explains. Copies are available for purchase and can be ordered at the organization's web site www.ispfmra.org. No telephone orders, please.

The program at the Conference will get underway at 8 a.m. and conclude by 11:45. The keynote speaker for the meeting will be Dr. David Kohl, professor emeritus at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA. He topic will be *Macroeconomic Mega Trends*.

Also on the morning pro-

gram will be Bruce Sherrick, Ph.D., and Gary Schnitkey, Ph.D., both with the University of Illinois, and Worrell. They will look more closely at influences on land sales, outside influences on prices being paid, who's buying and selling, and what to look for in terms of 'crystal balling' the future of land values and lease/rent rates.

Advance registration is not required but is requested. The cost for ISPFMRA and RLI members is \$70, \$85 for non-members. Registration information is available at www.ispfmra.org.

March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month

The National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG), dedicates March as Problem Gambling Awareness Month (PGAM). The 2023 campaign theme is "Celebrating 20 Years".

Groups across America hold conferences, air Public Service Announcements,

provide counselor trainings, host health screening days, run social media campaigns and engage in other activities to increase public awareness of problem gambling and the availability of prevention, treatment and recovery services.

Problem gambling is de-

fined as all gambling behavior patterns that compromise, disrupt or damage personal, family or vocational pursuits. Approximately 2 million U.S. adults (1% of the population) are estimated to meet criteria for severe problem gambling. Another 4-6 million (2-3%) meet the criteria for mild or

moderate problem gambling.

If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, call the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling Helpline at 1-800-426-2535, Text at 1-850-888-4673 or Live Chat through the WCPG website at www.wi-problemgamblers.org.



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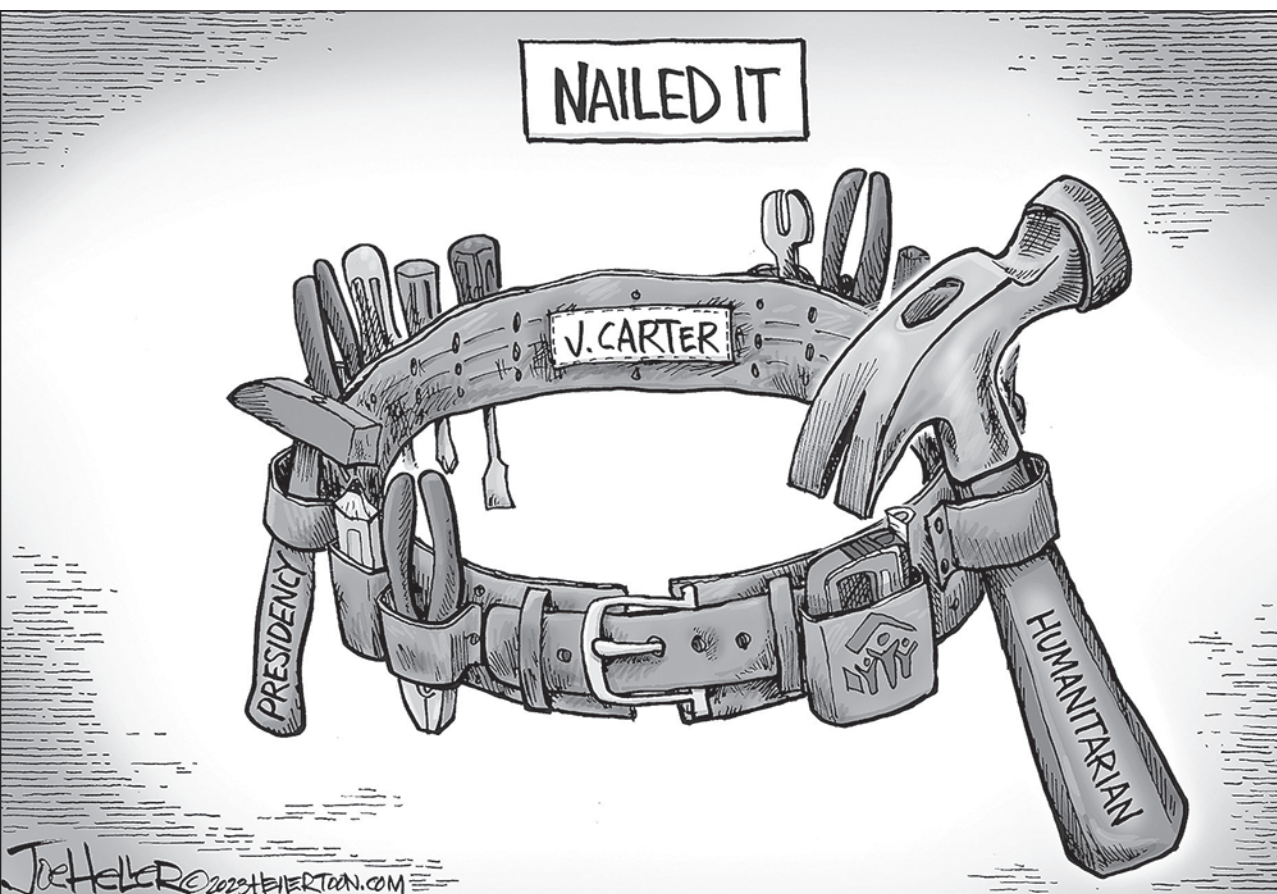
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OPINION



Weekly connection

The fun of a hobby farm

A couple years ago I was able to purchase an eleven-and-a-half-acre field that is connected to our farm. Since all the acreage on the original farm I bought was pasture, I didn't have any land of my own to grow feed on for my hobby animals. So this worked out great and that next spring, I excitedly borrowed some of my brother's equipment, tilled up the soil and seeded down my new field to oats and alfalfa. I mixed a little brome grass in with the alfalfa just to give the hay some variety. The oats are used as a cover crop for the alfalfa which grows slowly underneath



By
SCOTT CERNEK
Columnist

while the oats grow fast and tall overhead. When the oats are cut midsummer then the alfalfa becomes established and can be harvested the next year and for the next few years without any replanting of oats.

The oats did indeed grow tall that first year and the field yielded a nice crop which I paid my brother to harvest

and then sold him back the oats for feed. Then I baled up four big loads of nice dry oat straw and put two in my shed and two in another barn on a farm nearby where my brother keeps some heifers. Because it was such a good growing season some of the brome grass grew up fairly tall with the oats and so it was cut with the combine and thrown into the windrow with the oat stubble. The past couple years I've used that straw for bedding for my animals. Now usually sheep, horses, goats, calves, or cows don't eat straw they just lay on it. The funny thing is that this oat straw with the little bit of brome grass mixed in makes it kind of tasty for the livestock. So along with their hay, I see them eating some of their bedding whenever I throw it in their pen. They don't eat a lot of the straw, but I can see they like to pick around in it to find the sweet brome grass. There also may be some oats mixed in there

that they are going after.

Last year was the first year for cutting the hay and I was able to get four nice cuttings off that field which has lasted me nicely through the winter months. I figure about the time I run out of straw, I can till the field up and seed it down to oats and start the process all over again. My beef herd is growing because from the time I started a few years ago when I bought two Angus heifers and one Simmental, I've only had one baby calf that was a bull. All the rest have been heifers. I even had to butcher a couple of my original cows because I didn't want my herd to get too big. The good thing is that whether you butcher a steer or a cow or a heifer they all taste the same, delicious!

Last year I sold my dairy cows so now I'm looking forward to being able to build my beef numbers up a little. There are few things as

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Slices of life

Waste this day

"A wasted day can be time well spent so long as it is wasted with purpose"—
Anonymous

We are a culture often consumed with the material world. We assess value based on our net worth, which is often decreased by net waste. Time spent amassing wealth is valuable; time spent wasting time is just that. And that could very well lead to a squandered life.

I beg to differ. Sometimes the best times are the ones deemed nonproductive. Those that touch our heart, but contribute little or nothing to our 401k balance. Sometimes the heart yearns for the immense potential of a wasted day—time spent doing whatever it is that feeds our soul, which is just as critical to our well-being as feeding the bank account.

Quite simply, we need both to survive. But sometimes one is sacrificed for the other because we walk (or preferably run) through life with blinders on. Tomorrow is assumed and expected, even though it is never promised. We often forget this, and in that vein, we forget to value the premise of wasted time. Time spent on just us.

"Just" us—as if we aren't important enough to warrant squandered time. Go ahead, squander in whatever way feels best to you.

Waste this day but appreciate this moment. Go for a walk.

Train for a 5K or a marathon - both equally valuable to your psyche. Attend a yoga class or find one online.

Take more than a day and drive across the country. See the sites. Stop at small towns and chat with the locals.

Write a love letter or maybe a poem. Share them both with the person you love. Take a risk.

Go out to eat and order your favorite dish or maybe try something you've never eaten before. Cook in your own kitchen but do it with passion and from scratch.



By
JILL PERTLER
Columnist

Bake homemade cookies or a meal of comfort food and share them with a friend. Create a new recipe and don't worry about it failing.

Paint—a wall, a canvas, your nails or the town red.

Dance in your living room or in public. Sing karaoke.

Take a nap.

Watch a sappy movie, or an action flick. Take your pick.

Write a letter to your former or future self. Review any life regrets and tell yourself that you've always done the best you can with what you have, because it's the truth.

Spend an afternoon with your dog or cat on your lap or lying at your feet.

Make something with your hands—paint, sculpt, sew, build. Don't say, "I can't" or "I never learned to..." Just do it.

Take time to appreciate - the air, trees, birds, wood, grass - all the world around you.

Volunteer for a charity you believe in. March for a good cause.

Get out. Do. Reach out. Make a connection. Smile. At a friend, at a stranger, at yourself in the mirror. Look inward. Reflect. Meditate. Pray. Journal. Give thanks.

Be glad that you are you. Indulge in unencumbered time. Call it what you want: wasted time, leisure time, meditative time, a vacation from reality or just the weekend.

Do it unapologetically and with abandon, because it is time spent "just" for you.

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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Letter to the editor

I just read the Jo Daviess County Board voted to go forward with Renovation of the Jo Daviess County Courthouse. As a citizen of Jo Daviess County, I don't believe the Jo Daviess County Board should make the final decision on this important project. There was an Ad Courthouse Committee appointed that spent very little time on all of the options. This is a huge project that needs time spent looking at other options, not just what Architects are stating.

This building has been a huge expense for a number of years. There are a lot of problems with the current structure that need

addressing. This building has been costing the taxpayers a lot of money over the last decade. Why didn't this Ad Courthouse Committee look at all of the options? The Committee was just appointed about three months ago. How can you make decisions on a project this size in that short of time?

Was a new site considered? What about current parking at the current building? We will lose parking if the old building is renovated. What was the cost of moving to a new location versus renovation? Other counties have moved to new locations and jail facilities are at different locations. I agree something needs to be

addressed with our current courthouse

Has your County Board Representative addressed you in your district? You voted for your representative. It is their job to discuss matters of this importance with their constituents. Find out before it is too late.

As a Jo Daviess County taxpayer, I am against the Jo Daviess County Board making decisions without input from the citizens of Jo Daviess County that will amount to millions of dollars that will end up on your tax bill. This decision affects everyone in Jo Daviess County.

Ron Mapes
Stockton, IL

• Farm (Continued from page 4)

enjoyable in the spring and summer as watching those strong little beef calves out on the pasture with their mothers kicking up their heels and growing bigger and bigger. By fall it's time to wean the calves and separate them from the herd until they are big enough to breed or send to market. I sure get a great deal of enjoyment out of having a few cattle, a couple ponies, a horse, and I can't forget a few sheep too around the place. It keeps me in touch with the cycle of life and keeps our freezers full as well.

In the book of James 5:7 we read, Therefore, be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets

the early and late rains. Without God's faithful rains farming wouldn't be very

enjoyable and we would all be in trouble. Until next week, God bless.

Guidelines for writing, submitting a letter to the editor

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

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

Send letters to: scoopshopper@rvpublishing.com

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

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

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This workshop will be held from 1 p.m.

to 4 p.m. The cost is \$50. Instructing are Tom and Joanne Blodgett. Please wear work clothes, a sweatshirt, closed-toed shoes, gloves, hat, and jacket in case the event is outdoors. To register visit <https://www.scfiberartfair.com/workshops>.

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The workshop will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The cost is \$60. Instructing is Jill Colbert. To register visit <https://www.scfiberartfair.com/workshops>.



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- Friday, April 21, 5:00 pm Co-sponsor Keller Williams Realty Signature, 802 Spring St., Galena
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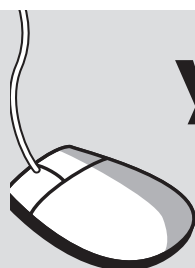
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Pritzker launches children's behavioral health initiative

Goal is to expand services to address youth mental health crisis

By Peter Hancock
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Citing what he called a nationwide crisis in children's mental health, Gov. JB Pritzker recently unveiled a sweeping plan to overhaul and expand the availability of children's behavioral health services in Illinois. "Long before COVID-19 turned our world upside down, our nation was facing a mental health crisis," Pritzker said at an event at the West40 Regional Safe School in the west Chicago suburb of Maywood. "Nearly one in five children experienced a mental health disorder, from depression to anxiety to ADHD. But only 20 percent of them received the behavioral health care that they needed."

ker launched what was called the Children's Behavioral Health Transformation Initiative, a project that involved six state agencies and other outside entities that deal with children's mental health. Its task was to build a coordinated, interagency approach to ensuring young people with significant behavioral health needs receive the community and residential services they need.

The results of that effort were released in a recent report that examined data from multiple state agencies to assess the need for services, determine which populations are most affected by the crisis and come up with a plan for coordinating state resources to meet those needs. "It's a blueprint for transformation

of the behavioral health system for Illinois' youth," Pritzker said. "This is an unprecedented interagency effort that will provide more and better treatment and save lives."

Although a recent study by Mental Health America found Illinois ranks 13th-best overall on a set of factors related to youth mental health care, the Transformation Initiative analysis found that 40 percent of young people in Illinois who experienced major depressive episodes were unable to receive mental health care.

Youth in care of the Department of Children and Family Services who need inpatient residential treatment for their condition are disproportionately Black, the report found. As well, the report found a quarter of all the beds at resi-

dential treatment facilities are unavailable due to understaffing.

It also found that the state has a fragmented system of delivering mental and behavioral health services, with different state agencies providing services under different standards and often paying different reimbursement rates for similar services. "Multiple state agencies operate programs that provide services to support children's behavioral health, but there is minimal systematic coordination and no holistic, developmentally informed approach to meeting youth needs," the report stated. "With no central point of entry to help families navigate, children and families must access services differently across agencies, meet agency-specific eligibility re-

quirements, and maintain access to services with minimal supports.”

To address that issue, Pritzker said, the Transformation Initiative developed and pilot tested a new online portal where people seeking assistance for youth could connect with the services they need. He described it as “a kind of a front door for stakeholders seeking assistance for youth with the greatest needs.”

As of Jan. 30, after only a few months of operation, Pritzker said, 41 percent of the cases that came through that portal had already been connected with interventions, placements and services. "So with a successful pilot underway and under our belt, we are now going to build out this more robust care portal for children and families seeking

behavioral health services," he said. "And we're adding to it a hotline for assistance and specialized guidance for those beginning the process of accessing care."

The Transformation Initiative report also spells several other recommendations for improving services. Those include standardizing reimbursement rates for services so providers are compensated consistently; offering universal screening in schools and health care settings for behavioral health problems so they are detected early; and expanding eligibility for current programs and developing new service types. “Our ability to provide the behavioral health support that we desperately need for our kids and adults

See INITIATIVE, Page 12

Northeast Illinois Forestry Association announces annual dinner meeting

The Northwest Illinois Forestry Association (NIFA) will welcome Kevin Oetken at its annual dinner meeting on Tuesday, March 28, at 7 p.m. at the Mount Carroll Church of God. Following dinner, Oetken will make a presentation showcasing Native American artifacts, which he has personally found over 45 years of collecting. Oetken is a consultant forester and owns Woodland Forestry Consulting. He has a great interest in how Native Americans used trees, wildflowers, and wildlife for thousands of years, and how European settlement has impacted our environment in a much shorter period of time.

Reservations must be made by Sunday, March 19. With a reservation, fee for the

dinner and program is \$20 for NIFA members and their guests, or \$25 for non-members. Without a reservation, it is \$30. Dinner fees can be paid when you register here or at the door. The dinner this year will feature Arnold Farm pork and beef. Reservations can be made by phone to Key-

in Cahill at 815-979-8900, by emailing kevincahillfarm@gmail.com or on the website at www.nifatrees.org/events.

The Church of God is located at 816 S. Clay Street, Mount Carroll, Illinois. Clay Street is Route 78 and the Church is just north of Route 52/64 on the east side of Clay.

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Spend the day on the farm at Discovery Center

Discovery Center is celebrating all things farming with Ag All Around Us on Saturday, March 11 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Discovery Center and the Winnebago-Boone Farm Bureau are joining forces to create a "farm-tastic" day! Explore the ways agriculture makes use of science, technology, engineering and math. Chat with local farmers, peek at live barnyard babies, make and sample butter, learn how to make a worm bin and sprout house, and get the scoop on soil. Enjoy cute

crafts, earth-loving activities, and eye-opening information. Bandanas, work boots and bib overalls optional.

All activities are included with general admission to Discovery Center. General admission: \$10 adults; \$10 children ages 2-17; free to Discovery Center Members and children age 1 and younger. This event is sponsored in part by the Winnebago-Boone Farm Bureau and its Agriculture in the Classroom program, and a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Something to smile about

Janet Dvorak from Stockton Dental Center gave dental presentations to the Stockton Elementary students. The students learned the importance of brushing and flossing their teeth, how many teeth they have and all about cavity bugs! All students received goodie bags filled with dental supplies provided by Stockton Dental Center.

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Joseph Winter, Ethan Kloss, Sawyer Fry, Ty Spahn, Laiken Haas, Logan Keleher, and Thomas Harms give it their all at the tug-o-war competition.

River Ridge FFA celebrates National FFA Week

Each year the week of George Washington's birthday is celebrated by FFA Chapters across the nation as National FFA Week. FFA Chapters are encouraged to have special activities and events to promote their organization within their own school districts. The River Ridge FFA Chapter planned several activities for their members and student body once again this year.

Each day of this special week had a themed dress up day, from "Camo and Country" to "Here by the Flag" patriotic colors. The FFA Week Committee had events for the whole school to participate in such as the duck hunt (finding plastic bath ducks around the school) and truck judging. Other events were planned just for FFA members to participate in, including the hay bale toss, musical buckets, tug-o-war, and making dirt dessert. The FFA officers also showed their appreciation for the support of the faculty and staff by serving them a hot breakfast on the last day of the week. Overall, it was a great week. Students had a blast with the activities and promoting their organization.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing
Avery Engle, Cora Dittmar and Cora Ritchie help make breakfast for faculty and staff to show their appreciation for supporting the River Ridge FFA and all that they do.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing
Lucas Holland assists in preparing the Teacher Appreciation Breakfast.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing
Sawyer Fry participates in the hay bale toss with Logan Keleher and George Winter cheering him on.

River Ridge-Scales Mound baseball prepping for 2023

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT

After losing four players to graduation, the River Ridge-Scales Mound Wildcats will have some holes to fill in 2023. One of their biggest losses was Breyton Fry, who was a Second Team All-Conference infielder in the NUIC-West.

Despite that, the 2023 Wildcats return a number of their core players from a team that finished 10-16 last season. Specifically, their entire pitching staff is back. That includes Maddox Knauer who is back for his senior campaign. Maddox is a two-time, First Team All-Conference pitcher-catcher. Jeremy Knauer, the RR-SM Head Coach, calls Maddox their ace, but it doesn't end with him. "Dylan Diehl is a terrific number two for us," Knauer said, adding that Diehl is a "strike thrower who pitches to contact." Knauer went on to add that, "Derek Distler is a sophomore who we expect big things from." In the bullpen, Knauer is confident in their guys for relief saying, "We also have some nice bullpen pieces in George Winter, Joe Winter, Mason Smith, and Ty Spahn." It's no secret the Wildcats will look to rely on their arms on the mound this season.

For the most part, the Wildcats return a majority of their starting lineup from last season. Knauer says they will be led defensively by Charlie Wiegel, who will look to hold things down in center field. Wiegel is one of three seniors on the roster this year, including Jacon Deurr and Landis Longmore.

While the Wildcats should look to be in improved team in 2023, there are still a lot of concerns surrounding this team. Knauer acknowledged that stating, "Lots of question marks still. We had way too high of a strike out rate the last two seasons. That is going to have to change if we want to find more success." The Wildcats also have some questions about a few key positions around the field. "Maddox will be asked to do more catching this season, which isn't ideal since he also pitches a lot," Knauer shared. The Wildcats will also be looking to sophomore Damon Dittmar to step in behind the plate this year. They will also have to find a replacement at first base as they lost Caden Albrecht who held down the position in recent years.

The hope for the 2023 Wildcats should be to get back to a five hundred winning percentage for the regu-

lar season. After going 10-16 last year, the Wildcats and Knauer know their weaknesses and how to play to their strengths. If RR-SM can find their identity throughout the year and play their best ball when it matters most, they could be in a position to make a postseason run. Their depth on the mound is a luxury that most high school teams don't have. If Knauer can find a way to get some consistency from the offense, RR-SM should be in a good position.

It won't be easy, however. With a talented NUIC, the Wildcats will face plenty of tough competition in the Northwestern Illinois area. Knauer acknowledged some of the better teams in the area saying, "Lena is going to be very good this season, bringing back a lot of last year's regional championship team. Galena is a young and upcoming team who are set-up nicely for some sustained success. Pearl City has the best pitcher in the area in Nathan Brinkmeier and has more than enough talent around him to compete for a regional this year."

The Wildcats are hopeful to throw their name in the mix of things. They will begin their 2023 season on Tuesday, March 21 when they play host to Milledgeville.

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The American Farm Bureau Federation, in partnership with Farm Credit, is seeking entrepreneurs to apply online for the 2024 Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge. Now

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See CHALLENGE, Page 16

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'Omnibus' health care bill passed amid criticisms

Wide-ranging law put popular, controversial measures into a single package

By Peter Hancock
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

A law recently signed by Gov. JB Pritzker will extend the deadline for the state to transfer criminal defendants deemed mentally incompetent to stand trial from jail to a mental hospital. That same bill, House Bill 240, also gives nursing homes in Illinois two more years to comply with minimum staffing levels implemented in 2022 before getting fined by the Department of Public Health.

Those are just two parts of a 67-page "omnibus" health care bill that passed the General Assembly on the final day of its recent lame duck session.

And even though parts of the bill received criticism, many lawmakers who opposed those elements said they felt compelled to vote for it anyway because other parts of the bill were too

important. Those necessary provisions included enabling certain rural hospitals to draw upon more federal funds, distributing federal disaster aid to ambulance services impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and extending the deadline for a shuttered hospital in Chicago's west suburbs to reopen under new ownership.

"I think that there are some important changes in this bill, and I certainly disagree with the process of putting things together where some I really support and some I don't," said then-Rep. Avery Bourne, R-Morrisonville, during a committee hearing on the bill.

Bourne ran unsuccessfully for lieutenant governor in 2022, giving up the opportunity for a fifth term in the House.

Extended jail stays

Previous standards set in Illinois law set a 20-day deadline for the Department of Human Services to assume custody of a criminal defendant deemed incompetent to stand trial or found not guilty by reason of insanity. DHS would then be required to place them in a psychiatric institution.

The new law extends the period a defendant can sit in jail to 60 days. And, if DHS cannot place the defendant in a facility in that amount of time, it can ask the court for 30-day extensions until such time as a space becomes available.

Officials in the Pritzker administration testified that DHS often isn't able to do that, either because the agency doesn't get notice from the court that a defendant needs to be transferred or because there simply aren't enough staffed beds available in Illi-

nois' seven state-run mental institutions.

"I think it really was just an attempt to try to be realistic," said Ann Spillane, Pritzker's general counsel, in committee testimony earlier this month. "We're not meeting 20 days. We haven't for a long time."

State officials estimate there are currently more than 200 individuals in county jails who have been awaiting transfer to a state mental hospital for 60 days or more.

Spillane said DHS is working to expand the number of mental hospital beds in the state, but there has been a "tremendous increase" in the past year in the number of people found unfit to stand trial or not guilty by reason of insanity.

But county sheriffs, who oversee county jails, argued they have staffing shortages too, and that they are not equipped to house and treat people with severe mental illnesses.

Jim Kaitschuk, executive director of the Illinois Sheriffs' Association, said the problem is especially severe in southern Illinois where there is a shortage of community-based mental health services to begin with. He pointed to ongoing litigation filed by a number of state's attorneys over DHS' failure to promptly take people into its custody out of county jails.

"We certainly understand the dilemma that the Department of Human Service has in terms of getting those staff," he said. "The problem

is, at the local level, we have that same problem. So, we're not able to maintain the level of staffing and the number of people and the beds that we need within our county jails."

He also said many counties lack community services to provide treatment to the individuals.

During House debate earlier this month, now-retired House Republican Leader Jim Durkin, of Western Springs, said he understood the concerns of county sheriffs, but said the rest of the bill was too important to be held up by that issue.

"Don't let this provision kill or change your position or change your vote on this," he said. "It's a really good bill."

Durkin suggested lawmakers should continue to negotiate that specific issue in the new General Assembly which began Jan. 11.

Nursing homes

Other lawmakers had similar issues with a provision giving nursing homes two more years—until 2025—to come into compliance with minimum staffing requirements before facing fines from the Department of Public Health.

Illinois has some of the most understaffed nursing homes in the country, and last year lawmakers passed a sweeping overhaul of the way they are reimbursed through Medicaid that included as much as \$700 million per year in incentive payments to increase their staff and raise wages for nursing home

workers.

But nursing home industry lobbyists said many facilities are still reeling from the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and that statewide, employment in nursing homes is still below pre-pandemic levels.

"Pandemic exhaustion has led to the resignation of thousands of nursing home employees and strained the long-term care labor market," Ron Nunziato, director of policy and regulatory affairs at the Health Care Council of Illinois, said in a statement.

He said nursing homes are facing the same hiring obstacles as the rest of the health care industry. "The pipeline for workforce development is slow in many areas of the state and it will take years for nursing homes to recover from staffing challenges," Nunziato said.

Rep. Lakesia Collins, D-Chicago, a former nursing home worker, spoke against that provision on the floor of the House, but at the same time said her objections to it weren't enough to reject the whole bill. "I am not going to sink the ship on this because these other measures are very important," she said. "But as a former nursing home worker, I would be remiss to not speak about the importance of short staffing and the provision in the bill about holding off for another two years around the penalties."

The bill passed the Senate on Jan. 6 by a 32-15 margin. It passed the House Jan. 10, 85-24.

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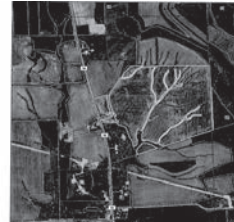
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Pritzker announces \$60 million park grants, declines to endorse Chicago mayor candidate

Grant allotments put added emphasis on 'distressed' communities

By Jerry Nowicki
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Gov. JB Pritzker last week announced the release of nearly \$60 million in grant funding to help local governments develop public parks and open spaces, over 20 percent of which will go to "distressed" communities. The money through the Open Space Land Acquisition and Development grants was distributed to 118 projects, all but one ranging from \$102,800 to \$600,000 per grant, per a news release. The allotment to "distressed" communities—which are determined by an area's poverty level and land value—is a roughly five-fold increase from the previous fiscal year.

The governor made the announcement at a park in Springfield that will receive \$600,000 through the Springfield Park District to demolish an outdoor pool and build a modern splash pad and pool facility.

Pritzker noted that the current fiscal year marks the first time that 100 percent of costs in distressed communities will be covered, as lawmak-

ers waived the cost-sharing requirement for projects in those communities that would normally apply to grantees.

"This means that places needing renewal and restoration like the city of Cairo, which is a recipient of their first ever OSLAD grant will be able to improve their parks and their green space," Pritzker said.

Cairo was slated to receive \$599,500 in grant funding. Approximately 59 percent of the grants are directed to the Chicagoland area, including Cook and its five surrounding counties. A total of 46 counties will see new projects.

At least \$12.5 million of the more than \$59 million in funding will go to distressed communities.

Among the other projects, the city of Benld in Macoupin County will receive \$600,000 at the site of its former elementary school that was destroyed by underground mine subsidence in 2009. Peoria Park District will receive \$255,000 to acquire 40 acres along the Illinois River Bluff to extend a hiking trail and conduct conservation work.

It will also receive \$600,000 to replace an outdoor swimming pool at its Lakeview Park with a modern splash pad and pool facility. Another \$600,000 would go to the Chicago Heights Park District to build three soccer fields, new lighting and spectator seating at Commissioners Park.

This year, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, which oversees the grants, contracted with the Northern Illinois University Institute for the Study of Environment, Sustainability and Energy. Through that partnership, 15 undergraduate and graduate NIU students served as supervised grant reviewers.

"One of our students shared that she and her family had enjoyed access to a brand-new neighborhood park, in her small village in Illinois," said Thomas Skuzinski, director of the institute at NIU. "And knowing that she had played a role in helping to bring that kind of opportunity to families and communities statewide, was in her words, truly life changing, and easily the most important thing that

she had ever done in her life."

The OSLAD grant program has been in place in Illinois since 1986, and the Fiscal Year 2023 allotment is the largest in its history. Pritzker's proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2024 includes \$56 million for OSLAD grants.

Chicago mayor race

The governor's announcement came one day after a mayoral election in Chicago that saw incumbent Mayor Lori Lightfoot fail to earn a spot in the April runoff election. Instead, former Chicago Public Schools chief Paul Vallas will face Cook County Commissioner and Chicago Teachers Union organizer Brandon Johnson in the April 4 runoff. Vallas had success in more conservative areas of the city and garnered

34 percent of the vote, while Johnson was more successful with liberal voters and carried 20 percent. Lightfoot came in third with just 17 percent, failing to make the runoff.

Pritzker said he would not be endorsing a candidate in the runoff—at least not yet.

"Primaries are messy," Pritzker said. "And they don't usually illustrate the candidates' positions on the issues all that well. And so, I think it'll be important for the candidates that made it through that primary process and now in the runoff, to articulate their positions and the contrast between their views."

As a Chicago voter, Pritzker said, he'd be "listening and watching intently," although he would not say who he voted for on Tuesday. He

also said he had not spoken to Vallas, Johnson or Lightfoot since election night. "The governor and the mayor of the city of Chicago have to be able to work together," Pritzker said when asked about potential endorsements. "We saw for years, I think, under (Democratic Chicago Mayor) Rahm Emanuel and (Republican Gov.) Bruce Rauner, where they didn't, and that wasn't good for the state or for the city of Chicago."

He added, "I keep that in mind every day when I think about what I say, what I do, who I endorse—how is that relationship affected by the things that I do? And I hope they'll keep that in mind as well."

See GRANTS, Page 12

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Around the Northern Hills with Annette Eggers



Annette Eggers

Mark your calendars for our 2023 Cover Crop Field Days! The events will be held April 7, July 21, and September

15. Full details about the field days will come as we get closer to the program dates. I look forward to seeing you all there.
Rules of the Road trucking seminars
The Jo Daviess County Farm Bureau will be hosting

one of IFB's "Rules of the Road Trucking Seminars." This seminar will cover recent changes, as well as some of the more established but still misunderstood rules. Topics will include the USDOT number, UCR registration, Entry Level Driver Training, and driver's

license classifications, to name a few. The meeting will take place on Wednesday, March 15 at 10 a.m. at the Elizabeth Community Building. This meeting, and all the meetings across the state, are free to farm bureau members, but advanced registration is required. To sign up, call

our office at 815.858.2235 or email jdcfbmgr@gmail.com and we will add you to the list.

Ag in the Classroom fundraiser

Want home cooked meals, but short on time? I've got the perfect solution for you! Take part in the Ag in the Classroom Freezer Meal Fundraiser. You will get 10 meals frozen for you and ready to re-heat. Each meal feeds three to five people. The cost is \$180 for the set.

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 - Cowboy Casserole
 - Chicken & Biscuits
 - Lasagna

Orders are due to our office by March 13. Pick-up is set for April 5 from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. To place your order, stop in our office or go to our website at www.jodaviesscfb.com and click on the order form on the home page.

Gently used farm toys requested

We need to replenish our farm toys used at Farm Fun

Days this summer and thought who better to ask than our members. If you have gently used farm toys that are no longer being used, we would love to put them to good use. We would rather bring new life to old toys than buy new. If you can help us out, please drop them off at our office. Thank you in advance.

Scholarships available

Applications are now available for nurse practitioner scholarships through the Illinois Farm Bureau Rural Nurse Practitioner Scholarship program. There will be 15 scholarships worth \$4,000 each. The scholarship program helps encourage and develop a pool of rural health practitioners to help meet the health care needs in rural Illinois. Students who receive the scholarship agree to practice for two years in an approved rural area in Illinois. To be eligible, students must be Illinois residents and be a registered nurse accepted in an accredited Nurse Practitioner Program. Applications are available at www.rimsap.com and are due May 1.

Farm Fun Fact

The average size of a farm in Illinois is 358 acres.

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• Grants

(Continued from page 11)

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| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------|------|-----------------|
| Darien | Park | Dis- | trict—\$600,000 |
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| Village of Richmond | | | —\$137,390 |
| Village of Algonquin | | | —\$600,000 |
| Ogle County | | | |
| Village of Davis Junction | | | —\$600,000 |
| Winnebago County | | | |
| Village of New Milford | | | —\$600,000* |
| Village of Machesney Park | | | —\$506,150 |

• Initiative

(Continued from page 7)

hinges on growing our behavioral healthcare workforce. We have to do it," state Rep. Lindsey LaPointe, D-Chicago, a former social worker, said during the event.
As part of his budget proposal, Pritzker asked for \$22.8 million to begin to fund and implement the Transformation Initiative's recommendations. Pritzker also signed an ex-

ecutive order establishing a new office of Children's Behavioral Health Transformation Initiative Chief to lead the interagency effort to implement that plan. At the event in Maywood, he announced that Dana Weiner, a child welfare expert at the University of Chicago's Chapin Hall who chaired the Transformation Initiative, would fill that role.

FROM LENA'S KITCHEN



The not so skinny cook

At least this Thursday was uneventful, and I am hoping that the snow that is predicted for Friday goes south of us. This week has been an interesting one with all our clean-up attempts from last week. With stoves and refrigerators running, we all could get back to cooking. This week there is something for just about everybody. Have a great week cooking.

Broccoli Slaw with Lemon Dressing

You can buy the broccoli slaw mix in a bag to prepare this easy salad. It needs to sit for about 30 minutes, so make it first and add it to your dinner.

½ C. sour cream
3 T. lemon juice
2 T. mayonnaise
1 T. white wine vinegar
2 t. grated lemon zest
1 T. Dijon mustard
½ t. salt
¼ t. pepper
1 pkg. (12 oz.) broccoli slaw mix
2 large red apples, julienned
In a large bowl mix the sour cream, lemon juice, mayo, vinegar, zest, mustard, salt, and pepper. Add coleslaw mix and apples; toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate at least 30 minutes before serving. Note: you can substitute red wine vinegar or apple cider vinegar for the white wine vinegar.

Crab and Shrimp Stuffed Sole

This seafood recipe is our first week's dish for the Lenten season. It can be made with the canned crabmeat or the frozen mock crab meat. You can substitute flounder or cod for the sole if you have trouble finding it. Serve with a salad and bread, and you have a delicious Friday dinner (or any night for that matter).

1 can (6 oz.) crabmeat, drained, flaked and cartilage removed
½ C. chopped cooked peeled shrimp
¼ C. soft breadcrumbs
¼ C. butter, melted, divided
2 T. whipped cream cheese
2 t. minced chives
1 garlic clove, minced
1 t. grated lemon zest
1 t. minced fresh parsley
4 sole fillets (6 oz. each)
1½ C. cherry tomatoes
2 T. chicken broth

2 T. lemon juice
½ t. salt
½ t. pepper

In a small bowl, combine the crab, shrimp, breadcrumbs, 2 T. butter, cream cheese, chives, garlic, lemon zest and parsley. Spoon about ¼ C. stuffing onto each fillet; roll up and secure with toothpicks.

Preheat oven to 400. Place each fillet on a double thickness of heavy-duty foil, about 18 x 12 in size. Combine the tomatoes, broth, lemon juice, salt and pepper with remaining butter; spoon over fillets. Fold foil around fish and seal tightly. Place foil packet on baking sheet. Cook for 20 minutes. Carefully remove the foil from the fish to let the steam out. Serve immediately.

Cowboy Pasta

This weeknight meal combines pasta, meat, and corn for a hearty and creamy stovetop dish. It is easy to prepare, and if you add a salad and some bread you are good to go. I have said before that I cook my bacon in the oven and avoid a mess, but if you cook it on the stove, you have the pan ready to go. If you want a little more kick, add more chili powder or some minced jalapeño peppers.

8 oz. medium pasta shells
5 bacon strips, chopped
1 lb. ground beef
1 medium red onion, chopped
1 medium red pepper, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
2 C. frozen corn, thawed
1 can (14 ½ oz.) diced tomatoes, drained
1¼ C. buttermilk
4 oz. cream cheese, cubed
1 t. chili powder
½ t. salt
¼ t. pepper
1 C. shredded Monterey Jack cheese

Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain; set aside. In a large skillet, cook bacon over medium heat until crisp, stirring occasionally. Remove bacon with a slotted spoon; drain on paper towels. Discard all but 1 T. drippings. In the same pan, cook the beef, onion, and red pepper over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain. Add garlic; cook and stir until fragrant, 2 minutes. Add corn, tomatoes, buttermilk, cream cheese, chili powder, salt, pepper, and reserved pasta; stir to combine. Stir in Monterey jack cheese and add bacon.

Chocolate Chip Dip

This sweet dip is a great dessert that you can make ahead and have as a sweet treat anytime. Serve it with

graham crackers or even try ginger crackers! You can buy dessert dips at several places around town, but you can also make your own. From experience I know they can be addictive.

1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened
½ C. butter softened
¾ C. powdered sugar
2 T. brown sugar
1 t. vanilla
1 C. miniature semisweet chocolate chips

Graham crackers or Ginger crackers

In a small bowl, beat cream cheese and butter until light and fluffy. Add the sugars and vanilla; beat until smooth. Stir in chocolate chips. Serve with graham crackers or ginger crackers.

Nutty Cheesecake Squares

These bars are an easy way to have a quick dessert that is both tasty and pretty. The recipe makes a 9 x 13 pan. They can be used as a spring dessert or on any cookie tray.

2 C. flour
1 C. finely chopped pecans or walnuts
2/3 C. packed brown sugar
½ t. salt
2/3 C. cold butter
Filling
2 pkg. (8 oz. each) cream cheese, softened
½ C. sugar
2 eggs, room temperature and lightly beaten
¼ C. 2% milk
1 t. vanilla

In a large bowl, combine the flour, nuts, brown sugar, and salt; cut in butter until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Set half aside; press remaining crumbs mixture onto the bottom of a greased 9 x 13 pan. Bake at 350 for 10 to 15 minutes or until lightly browned.

In a large bowl, beat filling ingredients until smooth; pour over crust. Sprinkle with reserved crumb mixture. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack for 1 hour. Store in the refrigerator.

Final Thoughts

It truly has been an eventful week. Just like a lot of people in Lena, I had to deal with storm damage. I lost tree limbs that luckily didn't hit anything permanent on the way down. I now have to wait for my tree guy to come and take the two remaining trees in the backyard down. They are too damaged to save, and I think having two "Charlie Brown" pine trees in the yard is over. My trusty electrician is working

on my motion light. I think there was too much ice and motion, so it gave up the ghost (sorry about out the puns).

I need to thank Jessica from *The Shopper's Guide*. The reason there was a column in last week's paper was because she came to my house and got the hard copy. The internet didn't come on until later in the weekend. It was a long couple of days without the television and internet. My, we are very spoiled. Thank you to all the

people who worked so hard to get us back to normal. We certainly are lucky to have such dedicated electricians, plumbers, Commonwealth Edison workers, Mediacom workers, Village of Lena Employees, firemen, and EMTs. They worked a lot of hours to keep us safe and get us back and running. We are blessed by their dedication.

Next week we will be turning to the "green" of St. Patrick's Day. We will have some recipes for that celebration, and then it's time

to start thinking about Easter. Remember that the Lena Evangelical Free Church will be having concerts on Wednesdays during Lent.

We will continue to have some meatless dishes (you know I will have at least one tuna and noodle casserole!). If you have any recipes that you would like to share with us, you can contact us in person, by mail at From Lena's Kitchens, *The Shopper's Guide* at 240 W. Main St. or email us at scoopshopper@rvpublishing.com.

LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT STEPHENSON COUNTY - FREEPORT, ILLINOIS U.S. Bank Trust National Association, not in its individual capacity but solely as owner Trustee for RCF 2 Acquisition Trust PLAINTIFF

Vs. Melanie Lewin; et. al. DEFENDANTS

No. 2022FC36 NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on 12/20/2022, the Sheriff of Stephenson County, Illinois will on April 20, 2023 at the hour of 9:30 AM at Stephenson County Courthouse 15 North Galena Avenue 1st Floor, West door of courthouse Freeport, IL 61032, or in a place otherwise designated at the time of sale, County of Stephenson and State of Illinois, sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash, as set forth below, the following described real estate:

LOT 13 IN WINTER HEIGHTS SUBDIVISION, A SUBDIVISION IN THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 25 AND THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 36, ALL IN TOWNSHIP 27 NORTH, RANGE 7 EAST OF THE FOURTH PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED SEPTEMBER 16, 1954 IN BOOK "F" OF PLATS, PAGE 5 AND A CORRECTED PLAT

RECORDED IN BOOK "F" OF PLATS, PAGE 49. SITUATED IN THE CITY OF FREEPORT, STEPHENSON COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

PIN 18-13-36-108-017 Improved with Single Family Home

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Sale terms: 10% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the auction; The balance, including the Judicial sale fee for Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund, which is calculated at the rate of \$1 for each \$1,000 or fraction thereof of the amount paid by the purchaser not to exceed \$300, in certified funds, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.

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

If the property is located in a common interest community, purchasers other than mortgagees will be required to pay any assessment and legal fees due under the Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS

605/18.5(g-1).

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

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

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

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

For information: Examine the court file or contact Plaintiff's attorney: Codilis & Associates, P.C., 15W030 North Frontage Road, Suite 100, Burr Ridge, IL 60527, (630) 794-9876. Please refer to file number 14-22-03879. I3214900

(Published in The Shopper's Guide March 8, 15 & 22, 2023)

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Lena-Winslow Elementary School
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A tongue thrust is a condition where the tongue is thrust against or between the top and bottom teeth when swallowing or speaking. In babies, a powerful tongue thrust allows them to squeeze milk out of a breast or bottle, serves as a natural reflex to avoid choking, and is considered to be part of a normal infantile



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

swallowing pattern. Most children will outgrow this primary swallow pattern and

Tongue Thrust

develop a mature, functional pattern of swallowing by age four. In a functional or normal mature swallow, the tongue rests in the palate, the teeth come together, the lips are closed and a person swallows with the force of the swallow being against the palate. Normal orofacial growth and development are dependent on this. Persistence of tongue thrusting when swallowing and speaking can lead to negative alterations in orofacial growth, development, and function. It may also lead to lisping.

Contributing factors to the persistence of tongue thrust may include long-term sucking habits that influence the tongue's movement (thumb, fingers, pacifiers) allergies accompanied by chronically swollen tonsils or adenoids (difficulty swallowing can be a result of adenoids, frequent sore throats, or tonsils), chronically blocked nasal passages, mouth breathing (in order for a child to develop a normal swallow pattern, he or she must be able to breathe through the nose), tongue-tie, prolonged use of a bottle

or sippy cup, an enlarged tongue (congenital or Down's syndrome) and a narrow palate. It is not uncommon to have a combination of several of these contributing factors.

Signs that your child may have tongue thrust include the tip of the tongue sticking out between the teeth, whether the child is resting, swallowing, or speaking, your child is breathing through their mouth rather than their nose, your child is unable to close their lips completely, their front teeth do not meet when their mouth is closed (they may have difficulty biting into some foods), they have gaps in their teeth or misaligned

teeth, and they lisp when they say words with an "s" or "z".

In order to successfully treat your child's tongue thrust, all of the underlying causes must be addressed. This may include a frenectomy to release the tongue tie, consultation with your child's pediatrician, an ENT to address airway issues, and a speech therapist to correct tongue posture, swallowing patterns, and articulation issues. Orthodontic treatment will not be initiated until these, and any sucking habits have been addressed, to assure that the restored bite is maintained.



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•Challenge

(Continued from page 9)

competition, which will culminate in the top 10 semi-finalists competing in a live pitch competition in front of Farm Bureau members, investors and industry representatives at the AFBF Convention in January 2024 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

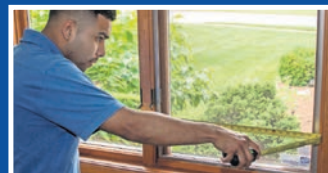
Applications remain open through May 12, and the 10 semi-finalist teams will be announced Sept. 12. Each of the semi-finalist teams will be awarded \$10,000 and a chance to compete to advance to the final round where four teams will receive an additional \$5,000 each. The final four teams will compete to win Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge Winner, for a total of \$50,000, Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge Runner-up, for a total of \$20,000, People's Choice Team selected by public vote, for an additional \$5,000 (all 10 semi-finalists compete for this honor).

Prior to the live pitch competition, the top 10 semi-finalist teams will participate in pitch training and mentorship from Cornell University's SC Johnson College of Business faculty,

and network with representatives from the Agriculture Department's Rural Business Investment Companies.

Recent winners of the Ag Innovation Challenge include NORDEF, a company that developed technology to produce diesel exhaust fluid at the point of use (2023 Ag Innovation Challenge Winner) and Grain Weevil Corporation, a grain bin safety and management robot that improves farmer well-being by controlling risks and costs (2022 Ag Innovation Challenge Winner). Other examples of successful Ag Innovation Challenge participants, as well as detailed eligibility guidelines and the competition timeline, can be found at fb.org/challenge.

Entrepreneurs must be members of a county or parish Farm Bureau within their state of residence to qualify as top 10 semi-finalists. Applicants who are not Farm Bureau members can visit <https://www.fb.org/about/get-involved#join> to learn about becoming a member. Applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on May 12.



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