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Miss Poppy has been crowned

Janessa Avila crowns Brishti Schoonhoven-Hussain Miss Poppy 2023 for the American Legion Auxiliary in Lena. Both young ladies are Junior members of the American Legion Auxiliary. Brishti is the daughter of Abdullah and Meredith Schoonhoven-Hussain and is in the fourth-grade class at Lena-Winslow Elementary.

Lena Sons of The American Legion to sponsor Cubs' game outing for veterans

The Lena Sons of The American Legion will sponsor their third annual trip to a Chicago Cubs game on July 18. Those attending will be leaving from the American Legion Home at 316 W. Main St., at 1 p.m. for the 7:05 p.m. game. The SONS will provide transport and a meal, as well as attend the game.

If you are a veteran and would like to attend please email scott.bill.stich@gmail.com or come to the Memorial Day Breakfast at the Lena American Legion home from 7 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. where information will be available. The proceeds from this breakfast will be going towards this outing.

Broncos finish regular season with much needed win

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT

The Orangeville Broncos had a rough go of things throughout the 2023 baseball season. Although they didn't get the regular season results they had hoped for, the Broncos managed to finish the season on a positive note.

The week didn't start great for the Broncos. After entering the final week of the regular season with a record of just 1-19, Orangeville suffered a 23-0 loss to Milledgeville. It was a familiar feeling for the Broncos, who suffered another blowout defeat and their twentieth loss of the season.

One thing that is true of this Bronco squad and their head coach Josh Fahs is that they refuse to give up. No matter the results, the Broncos continued to put up a fight in each and every one of their games.

On Thursday, May 11 the Broncos got one more opportunity to do that as they played host to Shullsburg. Despite having just four hits on the day, the Broncos took advantage of some sloppy defense to put up some runs.

It wasn't looking good for the Broncos early on, however. Shullsburg put up five runs in the very first inning as it looked like Orangeville was on the verge of another disappointing loss. They began to chip away at the lead in the bottom of the second.

Three consecutive walks to Mason Conrow, Kayden Pfeiffer, and Wyatt Miller had the Broncos in business. Sometimes all you need to do is put the ball in play, and that is just what Mitch Soddy did. On a groundball, Soddy managed to reach base safely thanks to a defensive error by Shullsburg. That error proved costly as a pair of runs came in and the Broncos brought themselves within three runs.

Heading into the bottom of the fourth, the Broncos trailed by a score of 6-2. Once again, Soddy found himself in the middle of the action as he was hit by a pitch with one out in the inning. Eventually, Soddy reached home safely on an Adam Setterstrom groundout. The run brought the Broncos within three once again.

Shullsburg got that run back and more in the top of the sixth. A pair of runs put Shullsburg up 8-3 with just one and a half innings left to play. The Broncos went to work in the bottom half, and to no one's surprise, Soddy was right there for it all. Soddy singled to the left side, driving in Alex McDearman for Orangeville's fourth run

See BRONCOS, Page 20

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An Earth Day celebration

Illinois 4-H members came together on Earth Day, April 22, to plant oak trees at the Butterfly Farm. Stephenson County 4-H Program Coordinator, Brenda Heimann, states, "This helped bring a special awareness to both our youth and the community workers about the importance of planting trees, why we plant trees, and how to take care of them properly."

News briefs

Woodbine Bend Golf Course hole in one

On April 26, Woodbine Bend Gold Course had a hole in one. Troy Mulholland hit a 9-Iron from the blue tee's measuring 143 yards to the pin. The hole in one was witnessed by Owen Logemann and Charlie Breed as they were kindly letting Troy play through. Congratulations, Troy!

Carroll County Help Center Thrift Shop

Carroll County Help Center Thrift Shop is having a $2 bag sale on infant and children's clothes through size 14 every Friday and Saturday in May. Customers can choose a free toy with each purchase while supply lasts.

Thrift Shop hours are Fridays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Thrift Shop is located at 126 South 4th St. Savanna.

American Legion to update Memorial Day roll call

After a few years not holding the roll call of deceased veterans at the Lena Memorial Day service, The American Legion has reinstated this as part of their service. To be sure that all local veterans are honored, the Legion is asking for assistance in collecting names of anyone veteran who has passed away since May 2022.

If you know a veteran that lived in Lena or was a member of the Lena American Legion that passed away, please email jamcps54@yahoo.com and include the time of their service.

Bake and rummage sale

A Bake and Rummage Sale Fundraiser will be sponsored by Holy Ghost Court #228 of the 1891 Financial Life (National Catholic Society of Foresters) in the Holy Ghost church basement. The sale will take place on Memorial Day weekend Friday through Monday, May 26 through May 29. Funds raised up to $1500 will be matched through the "Hearts and Hands" program. Proceeds will go towards replacing Father Wernerus' grave cover. Contact Karen Reese for any questions at 608-568-3124 or dkreese@tds.net

Townsend Family Reunion

The Annual Townsend Family Reunion will be held Sunday, June 4 at the Townsend Cemetery. Potluck lunch will be at 12:30 p.m., with a walking tour of the cemetery to follow. Please bring a chair, table service, and a dish to pass. Tables will be provided. Join to learn more about the family members at their final resting place. If it is raining, meet at the Stockton Park house.

A big thank you to everyone for the kindness and sympathy expressed to our family at this difficult time. The cards, notes, memorials, flowers, food and prayers will always be remembered! We weren't ready to say good-bye to Grandpa Roger, he has left a very big void in our lives, but we are happy to know he left with the angels on Easter morning to be welcomed home by family and friends and that we will all be together again. Thank you!

Mary Lobdell • Tim and Brenda Lobdell & family
Troy and Barb Lobdell & family • Tyler Lobdell
Gretchen and Tom Kempel & family
Abigail Bower & family

437864

Thank you to the ladies and others that helped me when I fell on my way into Sullivan's. Also, thank you to whomever went to tell Norma.

Erv Klaas

437659

Church news

St. John's Lutheran Church

St. John's Lutheran Church, Pearl City, will celebrate the Seventh Sunday of Easter and Graduation Recognition on May 21. A Worship Service with Holy Communion will begin at 9 a.m. with Pastor Michelle Knight presiding. Chancel Choir will sing. A reception for graduates will be held in Luther Hall following the service.

The Grace Meal will be served on Sunday, May 21. The menu is barbecue, Lutheran potatoes, carrots, applesauce, and a cookie. Reservations are due to the church office by 5 p.m. on Thursday, May 18.

The second night of Vacation Bible School (VBS) for the summer's Community VBS Family Nights will take place on June 4. A meal will be served from 5 to 5:20 p.m. for families to enjoy. The children will rotate through stations of Bible study, crafts, and music. Confirmation students will be helping. VBS will continue this summer on July 2 and August 6. There will be no charge for participating.

On Thursday, May 25 cards and dominoes will be played in Luther Hall at 1 p.m. All are invited for a fun afternoon of games.

St. John's Lutheran Church of Pearl City is an ELCA parish and is located at 229 S. First St., in Pearl City. The church is handicapped accessible. Please call 815-443-2215 for information or with any questions.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

All are invited to worship at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 118 E. Mason St. Lena, IL on Sunday, May 21 for Sunday Worship Service. Holy Communion will be celebrated in this service. The reading will be from John 17:1-11.

On Wednesday, May 23 Peace Corps Quilting group will meet from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. No quilting experience necessary. Come and tie the quilts and make difference in the world.

All services will be recorded and available on the church's Facebook page and website. Please visit http://goodshepherdlena.org/ or and Facebook https://www.facebook.com/GSLCLenaIL for more information. Please contact the church office at 815-369-5552 with any questions.

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, May 21, 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 meet Wednesday, May 24 at 8 a.m. at Stella's Café, 100 N Main St, Stockton, Illinois. Everyone is welcome to join.

Sunday, May 21 will be the annual White Elephant and Bake Goods Auction. This will take place immediately after service around 11 a.m. on the lower level of the church.

Would you like to get more involved and enjoy the company of the congregation? Join for one of the monthly gatherings. Men's Night is held at 6:30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month. During this time the men spend time visiting, playing games, and getting to know each other better. Bible Study is offered 6:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. Crafternoon is held from 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month. During this time there are snacks, a brief devotional thought, and plenty of time to work on crafts individually or together. All of the above-mentioned events are hosted on the lower level of Salem United Church of Christ, and all are welcome to join. For more information on any of these gatherings, you can contact salemwingsofjoy@yahoo.com.

Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation awarded grant

The Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation (JDCF) is pleased to announce that it is one of four grant recipients from the Community Foundation of Jo Daviess County's Future Fund. "We're very excited to announce funding for four grants this year. We received more proposals than ever before from throughout the County for a wide variety of projects and had to make some difficult decisions," said Eric Dregne, Community Foundation President.

JDCF received $2,500 to have the informational brochures available at its seven public and two partner preserves translated into Spanish. "For many native Spanish speakers, English is a second language. Therefore, it's important for us to offer our materials in the language they use for a more inclusive experience," says Kelly Myers, JDCF's Development Director.

According to the Community Foundation, "as the Future Fund grows, it will continue to provide grants to projects that will create a significant impact in Jo Daviess County, by improving family economic security, supporting education, and enhancing community development."

Obituary

KEITH WOLF

Keith Edwin Wolf, 93, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, May 10, 2023, at the Monroe Hospice Home. Keith was born on Sept. 21, 1929, in Monroe, WI to Kermit and Hilda (Stauffacher) Wolf. He married Gladys Neuenschwander on June 1, 1953. Their 70th wedding anniversary would have been next month.

Keith was a lifelong farmer in the rural Orangeville area where his true passion was dairy farming. He also sharpened mower blades for his family and friends. Keith enjoyed traveling with Gladys. Keith was active in the Orangeville United Methodist Church. He also enjoyed searching round barns out across the country.

Keith is survived by his wife Gladys, of Freeport, IL, three daughters and one son; Doreen (Pat) O'Brien of Winnebago, IL, Donna (Doug) Lamb of Henry, IL, Tom Wolf of Orangeville, IL, and Dee (Russ) Robb of New Windsor, IL, seven grandchildren; Tim (Kendra) O'Brien, Kevin (Callie Sherman) O'Brien, Warren Lamb, Mitchell Lamb, Brian Lamb, Caitlin Robb, and Nolan (Kristin) Robb, six great-grandchildren; Kaelan O'Brien, Landon Sherman, Carson Robb, Olivia Robb, Alex Lamb, Mia Lamb. He was preceded in death by his parents Kermit and Hilda Wolf, and his brother Howard.

A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. on Thursday, May 18, 2023, at the Orangeville United Methodist Church in Orangeville, IL. A visitation will be from 4 p.m. until 7 p.m. on Wednesday, May 17, 2023, at the Cramer-Leamon Funeral Home in Orangeville, IL. Cremation rites have been accorded. Pastor Roger Bronkema will officiate the services. A memorial has been established in his name for the SSM Health Monroe Hospice Home, and the Orangeville United Methodist Church. Condolences may be sent to the family at www.leamonfh.com.

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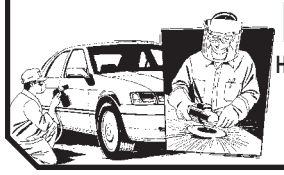
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EDITOR: Kathleen Cruger
Advertising Sales: Cyndee Stiefel: lenaads@rvpublishing.com
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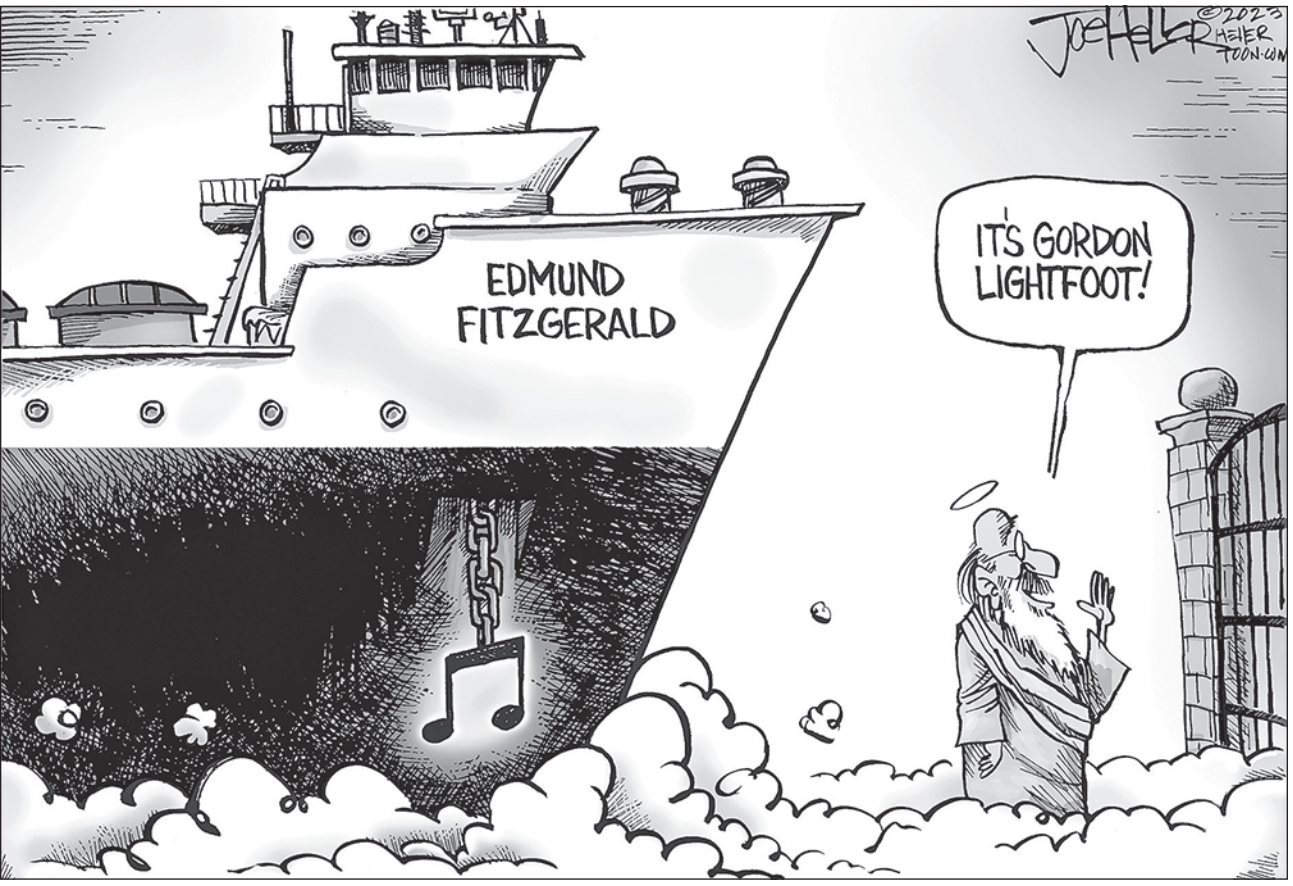
OPINION



Weekly connection

Moms are pretty special

By **SCOTT CERNEK**
Columnist

This year I spent two Sundays waxing eloquently about the virtues of mothers and motherhood from the pulpit. Usually, we just give the moms one Sunday, but this year we decided to give them two weeks since they are such an important part of all of our lives. I think it's true that mothers have been uniquely gifted by God to nurture and guide children. My sermon this week was about such things. We looked at Proverbs 1 verses 8 and 9 where we read this, hear, my son, your father's instruction and forsake not your mother's teaching. I found it interesting how we are supposed to just hear our father's instruction, but we are to do more than hear our mother, we are to act on our mother's teaching. We Dad's are pretty good at giving advice and orders, but it is the mothers who usually can work more patiently with the kids to actually help them figure out the issue at hand.

A few years ago, it started to be a trend that moms were coaching more and more little league baseball teams around the country than ever before. I think it is because moms tend to be more patient with the young ones. I do like getting out the baseball bat and ball and pitching to the grandkids, but they don't always want to work at it for very long. When I coached little league back in the day, I found that sometimes my fielders were more interested in

See MOMS, Page 6

Slices of life

Things I used to do

By **JILL PERTLER**
Columnist

The last two years have been full of changes for me—both huge and incremental.

Many of my readers have accompanied me on my journey, and for that I'm forever grateful. It's been fraught with grief, and sadness and even, at times, despair.

And then again, hope and growth.

But sometimes—sometimes—you just have to find humor in the darkness. Dark humor I guess it is. So if you'll bear with me, here, I'll indulge in just a bit of that.

My husband was 56 when he died. He seemed young, but I wondered how young that really is, so I looked up the statistics online. For all males born alive, nearly 90 percent of them live past age 56. That puts my husband in the top 10 percent.

He was always an over-achiever.

I guess you could say he left me in the lurch. Or at least alone. With memories of what I used to have, and what I have now. For instance:

I used to have a husband.

Now I have an urn

He used to sit on the couch. He even had his own spot right in front of the TV. His long legs sprawled across the length of it, taking up lots of space.

Now he sits on a small table in my bedroom right near the window, where the sunshine and music of birds singing comes in during the early morning hours.

Despite this beauty, he is very contained. No more dangling legs.

He was forever charging his phone—or trying to, because he could never find his charging cord. The kids would steal it and it almost became a family joke (for everyone but him, and maybe even him now that I think about it).

I still keep his phone charged. It sits on my bedside table. I plug it in every morning. Once a week his phone reports back regarding the screen time used over the past seven days. In the last two years he's managed to whittle his screen time down to nearly zero. (Again, he was always an over-achiever.)

He was the family photographer, and made me smile for the camera everywhere we went.

No one makes me pose for photos anymore—at restaurants, at the zoo, on the boat, at the fleet store next to the baby chicks. I used to cringe at posing; now I realize I miss him making me feel awkward, as weird as that sounds.

He used to try to pack the car before vacations. But, honestly, he wasn't good at it. No, in all honesty, he sucked at it.

I don't have anyone to pack the car now (thank goodness). I do it myself, and don't have to do any repacking, but wish I did. Oh, how I wish for his mismanaged, lousy packing skills.

We used to get up in the morning together and make the bed together. He took one side; I took the other.

Now I get up whenever I choose. I make the bed myself. It is easy because I only have to make my side. The other side of the bed goes unused—neat and tidy. Making half the bed is so much simpler than making the whole thing, said no one ever.

See SLICES, Page 6

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Applications are available online or please pick up at the Village Hall, 155 W. Front Ave., Stockton, IL 61085

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Alyssa Mae Kempel
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Love,
Grandma Mary

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Highland spring honors students present semester projects

Five Highland Honors students presented their spring semester projects in person and by video in the Clarence Mitchell Library at Highland Community College, 2998 W. Pearl City Rd., Freeport, Ill. on Friday, May 5 Highland's Honor students created and designed the projects on a chosen topic.

The Honors Program at Highland Community College is designed to provide eligible students with enhanced educational experiences in select courses chosen in cooperation with college faculty. Students must maintain a 3.5/4.0-grade point average to remain eligible for the Honors Program. Students must possess an ACT composite score of 25 or greater, or 1200 out of 1600 on SAT, or finish in the top 10 percent of their high school graduating class. This is the 14th year of the program.

Honors program provides additional hands-on workforce and learning experience. Students work alongside an instructor to develop and complete the project. Topics vary from further research of a particular field of study, current events or trends, a course's curriculum, and the student's interests and goals.

Students who presented were:

Quinn Wilkinson of Mount Carroll created a 3D collapsible tray to be attached to a walker, from measurements through the creation of the parts.

Olivia Wilhelms of Freeport completed case studies on the toy and electric car battery industries, analyzing economic indicators to be able to forecast future trends.

Clara Bartels of Freeport researched and completed a paper comparing and contrasting teachers' treatment, requirements, and daily life in 1923 and 2023.

Liza Lopez of Lena developed blueprints, performed cost assessments, and fabricated grate covers for a drainage system at a local kennel.

Destiny Overman of Warren presented two projects. On one, she completed a paper on the life of jazz icon Billie Holliday, focusing on the rendition of "Strange Fruit" and the impact it had on the Jim Crow era. She also created a children's book that delves into death and the process of grief.

For more information on the Honors Program, contact Evan Talbert at evan.talbert@highland.edu. For more on programs and classes at Highland Community College, visit highland.edu.

Congrats Orangeville 2023 Graduates

Leah Baker

Hunter Bowers

Nathan Brinkmeyer

Cooper Chapman

Madelyn Collier

Alexus DeHaven

Austin Farmer

Savanna Folgate

Karsen Henneman

Victor Huerta

Mitchell Isely

Jesse Kehler

Kara Kinney

Kyle Kloepping

Caiden Kraft

Payton O'Connor

Chase Oakes

Morgan Owens

Bradyn Pacek

Maisen Pfeiffer

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Opinion

In my opinion

Inviting Illinoisans to identify statesmanship in Prairie State

Editor's note: *This op-ed was distributed by Capitol News Illinois on behalf of the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute. The opinions expressed in this article are the author's own.*

By John T. Shaw

John T. Shaw

"A statesman," said the great Prussian diplomat Otto von Bismark, "is a politician who thinks of his grandchildren."

Three years ago, former Illinois Governor Jim Edgar and I decided to create the Paul Simon-Jim Edgar Statesmanship Award to shine a spotlight on remarkable leadership that is taking place in our state and our communities.

We were looking for Illinois political leaders who are thinking about their grandchildren—and acting to create a better future for them.

The annual Simon-Edgar Statesmanship Award is presented to an elected state or local government official in Illinois who has demonstrated a pattern of public service characterized by vision, courage, compassion, effectiveness, civility, and bipartisanship.

I believe that Governor Edgar and Senator Paul Simon, the founder of the Institute that I'm privileged to lead, represent the best of Illinois statesmanship. Governor Edgar, a loyal Republican, and Senator Simon, a steadfast Democrat, were always willing to work with members of the other party and independents to get things done for Illinois.

Governor Edgar and I are eager to receive and review nominations about inspiring leaders in Illinois—mayors who are crafting creative plans for their cities and making hard decisions to realize their aspirations; city council members who are committed to long-term strategies for their communities; and state legislators and constitutional officers who are willing to break from party orthodoxy to advance solutions that improve the lives of fellow Illinoisans.

For our inaugural award, we selected 11 Republican members of the Illinois General Assembly who supported a critical budget package in July 2017, breaking from their party in the interest of fiscal solvency for Illinois. That budget ended a two-year fiscal stalemate that tarnished Illinois' reputation, damaged schools, battered the state's credit rating, and led to about $15 billion in unpaid bills. The 2017 budget paved the way for subsequent fiscal progress in the state as reflected in upgrades to Illinois' credit by rating agencies.

Last year, we selected former House Majority Leader Barbara Flynn Currie as the recipient of the Simon-Edgar Award. We cited her four decades of forceful, creative, consequential, and civil leadership in the Illinois General Assembly. Representative Currie, a Democrat, served in the Illinois General Assembly from 1979 to 2019 and was the House Majority Leader from 1997 to 2019. She helped create Illinois' Earned Income Tax Credit, championed clear air and water legislation, pushed for the first Freedom of Information Act, advocated for same sex marriage, drafted critical school funding and juvenile justice reforms, and fought to end the death penalty in Illinois.

The nomination process for this year's Simon-Edgar Award opened on April 1 and we are accepting nominations until June 1. To nominate a candidate or candidates, please write a brief letter describing how the person has displayed the qualities of statesmanship outlined above. Please send an email to PaulSimonInstitute@siu.edu or send your letter to Paul Simon Public Policy Institute, Southern Illinois University, Mail Code 4429, 1231 Lincoln Drive, Carbondale, Ill. 62901-4304.

The recipient of the 2023 Simon-Edgar Award will be announced in early August.

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

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.

We reserve the right to edit a letter for reasons of clarity, space restrictions and libel.

• Moms (Continued from page 4)

the butterflies than going after the ball and throwing it back into the infield. Instead of yelling at the fielder like I would, the "mom coaches" would giggle and patiently ask the fielder to get after it. They had better success sometimes because of their patience. There can be a difference between a father and a mother in that way.

This Mother's Day was a little different from the last few that I can remember. For the first time in a long time my mom wasn't in her house on Mother's Day so I could drop off a card and some flowers as I usually do. A couple months ago she went to stay with my sister out in Montana to get a little rest and to spend some time with their family. My sister has lived out in Montana for a couple decades with her husband and family and hasn't had a lot of time with our mom. I'm pretty happy for all of them to have some time together. Mom's out there watching her grandkids play little league and pony league baseball games, going out for ice cream, taking relaxing rides in the country and all sorts of things. When she was here in the farmhouse, she never had much time to do such things. She had a lot of work to do out in the yard and keeping the house clean. It's nice that she's getting the opportunity to get away from all that now.

It seems a little funny to drive by the empty home farmhouse though. Since we moved back to our home area some six years ago almost any time, I drove by the farmhouse I would see her lamp on next to her chair burning softly, and now it's dark when I drive by. I guess we are all entering a new chapter of life. It was sure nice to be able to drop in and chat with her these last several years. We were gone from the area for many years and only had limited days each year to see her and my dad.

God is good and He continues to lead us down the road to our eternal home one day. I hope you remembered to wish your mom a Happy Mother's Day, if your mom is still here. If not, find somebody else's mom and bless them with a little joy.

Until next week, God bless.

• Slices (Continued from page 4)

I used to take life—and so many things—for granted. I used to take my husband for granted.

And then he got sick and he died, at age 56, putting him in the top 10 percent of his class. I guess that's an A, if death gives out report cards.

But I'm pretty sure that wasn't his plan for the end game, she said with a wry smile.

I used to have a husband.

Now I have an urn.

And it is a damn fine urn. Beautiful even. Just like our life together.

I'd challenge anyone to say anything else about it.

Enough said. No, go out and do it, whatever that is for you.

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

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Anahi Hernandez-Saucedo

Jordan Johnson

Austin Little

Cade Monks

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Pritzker reflects on three years of pandemic as disaster declarations are set to end

End of state, federal orders will affect some federal benefits

By Peter Hancock
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

In the earliest days of the COVID-19 pandemic, Gov. JB Pritzker recalls being handed a report from researchers at the University of Illinois. The analysis was written by scientists and mathematicians who were trying to estimate how many deaths and hospitalizations would occur under different scenarios—one if the state took no action; another if it imposed only moderate mitigation measures; and yet another if it imposed significant measures such as a stay-at-home order. "And without any mitigations, their projection was, just in the Chicago area alone, we would see 40,000 deaths in approximately four months," Pritzker recalled in an interview . He said he still keeps a copy of that report in his office.

On March 9, 2020, Pritzker issued his first statewide disaster declaration related to COVID-19, a declaration he would go on to renew every 30 days for more than three years. In the following days, he would issue executive orders closing schools to in-person attendance, then closing bars and restaurants and, eventually, a general stay-at-home order that would shutter all "nonessential" businesses for months to come. "We were advised by the Department of Homeland Security that there were certain kinds of businesses that should be deemed 'essential,' and the Department of Homeland Security had a list that they had put together for these sorts of emergencies," Pritzker said. "And so that was what we used and what virtually every state used to determine what should stay open and how to keep people safe."

Now, more than three years after he issued that first disaster declaration, the last of his pandemic-era executive orders are set to expire. Pritzker announced in January that Illinois' disaster declaration would end on May 11, the same day chosen by the Biden Administration to end the federal COVID disaster declaration that also dates back to early 2020.

From a practical standpoint, most people won't notice the end of the disaster declaration because the state pandemic-related orders that most directly affected their daily lives—school closures, mask mandates, limits on public gatherings—have long since expired. But for some, it will mean the end of certain federally funded benefits.

"There are no restrictions," Pritzker said. "Why was there a disaster declaration? Because in order for us to receive the federal benefits that were being offered to SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) recipients, who are the poorest people in our state, people who needed Medicaid, who are the poorest people in our state, you needed to match up your disaster declaration and executive orders with the federal government's executive orders and disaster declaration. So we did that."

Pritzker said some people will receive less aid through SNAP and some Medicaid recipients could lose their eligibility, but he said those changes will not have a significant impact on the state budget The end of the disaster declaration will also mean that as of May 11, testing and many of the treatments for COVID-19 will no longer be free, although Pritzker said they will be covered by insurance.

Looking back over the last three years, though, Pritzker reflected on what it was like during the initial weeks and months of the pandemic when scientists and public health officials all over the world were still trying to understand this novel virus. "We didn't know much about COVID-19, or even how it was spread," he said. "Remember early on, there was some belief that it could be spread on surfaces. And so, people were wearing gloves to open their packages and things like that. "So there wasn't a lot of information. What we knew was that the most effective way to keep people safe in the early moments of this would be for people to keep some social distance."

Over the course of the next several months, Pritzker held daily news conferences—usually accompanied by his public health director at the time, Dr. Ngozi Ezike—to relay the most recent information, announce new mitigation orders and provide the latest statistics on infection rates, hospitalizations and deaths. "Remember, communication to the public was vitally important when the federal government was providing very little," Pritzker said. "And so that's the reason why I was at that podium every day, for months straight. It was because people needed to know what the latest information was."

By summer 2020, the state began to gradually roll back many of the mitigation orders on a region-by-region basis and by the end of the year, the first vaccines became publicly available. Throughout 2021, new variants of the virus would emerge, leading to temporary spikes in COVID cases, hospitalizations and deaths. But as the vaccines became more widely distributed, the death and hospitalization rates started falling steadily, and in 2022 Pritzker began phasing out many of mitigation orders that had been in place.

See PRITZKER, Page 17

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Stockton CUSD 206 adopts new policy manual

The Stockton CUSD 206 board of education has completed its policy manual development project and voted to adopt a new district policy manual at its meeting Monday, May 15, 2023, at 6 p.m. at Stockton Middle School Conference Room.

"Board members who worked on this project spent numerous hours to make certain that our district policies are in compliance with current laws and accommodates our students and the community," said Dan Breed Stockton board president. "I want to thank everyone for the hard work to make this happen."

"It took a number of hours and a lot of work from the entire team to complete this project," added Superintendent James Bunting. "We are committed to keeping this manual current and staying up to date with needed policy changes and additions." The Board will use its subscription to IASB's *PRESS Plus* service to keep its policy manual up to date going forward.

Following adoption, the policy manual will be available at *stocktonschools.com.*

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392651

General Assembly approves criminal sentencing reforms for minors

Measure supported by coalition of victim advocates

By Andrew Adams
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Illinois lawmakers have approved a measure that reforms criminal sentencing for minors, particularly victims of child sex trafficking. House Bill 3414 adds to the factors that judges must consider in the process of sentencing children found guilty of a crime. The bill would require a judge to consider a child's involvement in the child welfare system, whether they have a history of domestic abuse or sexual exploitation and the results of any mental health evaluations the child has gone through. This is in addition to existing factors that judges already consider, such as age, maturity and potential for rehabilitation.

The bill also creates a method for judges to depart from sentencing guidelines, including mandatory minimums, or to transfer a minor offender to juvenile court for sentencing. This would only be allowed if the child commits a crime against a person who had, in the previous three years, been convicted of one of several specific crimes including aggravated sexual abuse, sexual abuse of a child or engaging a child in prostitution, among other crimes.

The bill also adds to the factors judges must consider when a prosecutor asks to transfer a case to adult court. These new factors include whether the child has any involvement in the child welfare system, whether the child was subjected to "outside pressure" and the child's degree of participation in the crime. The measure passed 33-20 in the Senate May 10 after passing the House on a 67-40 vote on March 22. It can become law with a signature from the governor.

Proponents of the bill say it is part of a nationwide movement to include protections in law for victims of child sex trafficking. These laws are sometimes called "Sara's Law" after Sara Kruzan, a survivor of child sex trafficking who killed her trafficker in 1995. After being sentenced to life in prison, Kruzan's sentence was later commuted, allowing her to be paroled in 2013. In 2022, Kruzan was granted a pardon by California Gov. Gavin Newsom. "We're giving the courts extra opportunities to check and see: Was this victim brought into this situation because of some sort of trauma?" the bill's sponsor, Sen. Mike Simmons, D-Chicago, said in an interview.

The bill was supported by a coalition of state and national advocacy groups including the Juvenile Justice Initiative, the Women's Justice Institute, Rights4Girls, the Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault.

The Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Assault, or CAASE, took a leading role in pushing for the bill. "There's an understanding that youth require more support and more compassion than our system gives them," Madeleine Behr, CAASE's policy director, said in an interview.

Behr also said the bill is part of an ongoing movement toward racial justice in the criminal legal system. "This is going to be really important for Black and brown girls in particular," Behr said.

A U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics report from 2011 found that over a two-year period, victims of sex trafficking were disproportionately Black and disproportionately Hispanic.

In the past few years Illinois has passed several high-profile criminal justice reform laws, including the broad-ranging SAFE-T Act that is currently under review by the Illinois Supreme Court. The high court heard oral arguments in March around several constitutional questions related to the bill.

Republicans in the Senate raised concerns with the bill, mostly around the fact that judges will have to consider additional factors even when the perpetrator has not been the victim of abuse or trafficking. "The crimes we are talking about, where a person is being transferred to adult court, these are not retail theft," Sen. Steve McClure, R-Springfield, said. "These are not minor crimes. These are the worst of the worst."

McClure added that some of the provisions in the bill already have similar considerations in law, such as if there was involvement in the Department of Children and Family Services or if the parent had been found to be neglectful or abusive. "In situations where there should be leniency, the tools are already in our statute to provide for leniency," he said.

See REFORMS, Page 17

Congrats Scales Mound 2023 Graduates

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Ella Distler

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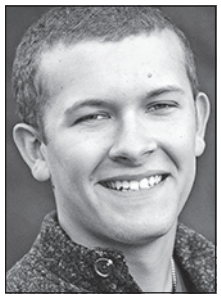
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Isaac Heffernan

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Pearl City FFA Alumni announce award winners

The Pearl City FFA Alumni would like to congratulate Ethan Bremmer and Brea Musser on winning outstanding record book awards. Each year, Pearl City FFA Alumni meet to evaluate the record books of members of the Pearl City FFA. Record books are part of an FFA member's Supervised Agriculture Experience (SAE), a student-led, work-based experience that an agriculture instructor supervises. The SAE takes part outside of the classroom.

After record books are evaluated, students go through an interview process regarding their record book and their SAE. This prepares the FFA member to compete at the section level. During this time, the Pearl City FFA Alumni select outstanding first, second, and third-year record books.

Ethan Bremmer was awarded the Outstanding First Year Record Book award. Bremmer completed a record book in dairy placement. Brea Musser was awarded the Outstanding Third-Year Record Book Award. Musser completed a record book in beef placement. Both FFA members were awarded a certificate and a Pearl City FFA tumbler to recognize them for their hard work.

SUBMITTED PHOTO *Rock Valley Publishing*

Brea Musser and Ethan Bremmer display their outstanding record book awards presented by the Pearl City FFA Alumni.

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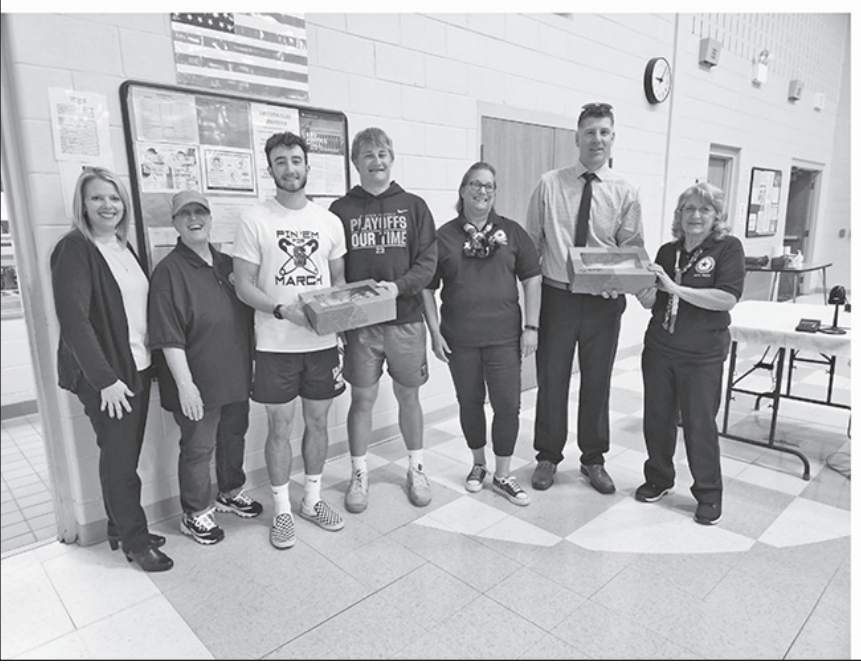

SUBMITTED PHOTO *Rock Valley Publishing*

Book donation

Dawn Spinhirne of the Lena American Legion Auxiliary presents a book to Brittany Gaulrapp of the Lena Public Library in honor of Gold Star members. The book is titled Civil War by State.

SUBMITTED PHOTO *Rock Valley Publishing*

Teacher appreciation week

The Lena American Legion Auxiliary thanks the Lena-Winslow school staff for their dedication to the students during Teacher Appreciation Week. Cookies were provided for staff members. Pictured are (left) Norma Salomon and Legion member Kathy Pignato, (right) Legion member Marsha Tessendorf, Elementary secretary Deb Winning, and Legion member Kathy Pignato, (bottom left) Principal Ann DeZell, Dawn Spinhirne, students Jacob Zeal and Maisen Smith, Principal Andy Lobdell, and Kathy Pignato, (bottom right) Kathy Pignato, Bus Mechanic Duane Reed, and Marsha Tessendorf.

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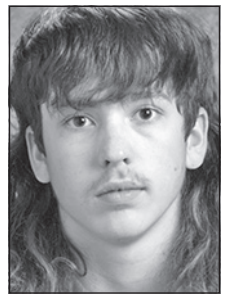
Hunter Ernst

Madeline Harbach

Olivia Harnish

Noah Hess

Dayton Julius

Olivia Keeffer

Lauren Kehl

Kylah Kurek

David Lancaster

Garrett Luke

Griffin Luke

Parker Luke

Maddux Morgan

Dustin Oppold

Emily Paul

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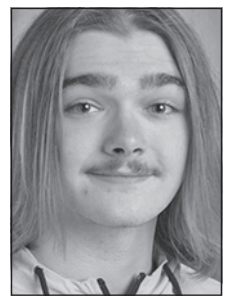
Tristian Preston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Lita Schmoll

Kaelan Schubert

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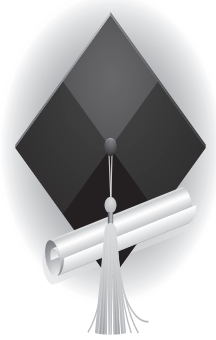
Whittney Sullivan

Bailey Thornton

Ella Wackerlin

Ivan Wickler

Abigail Wilkinson



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Congrats Warren 2023 Graduates

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Kyle Borman

Benjamin Brinkmeier

Sofie Burke

Jaylyn Carter

Cyler Cornelius

Madyson Evans

Lucas Griffin

Brodie Haley

Alex Harris

Ava Heidenreich

Blake Heller

Tyler Heller

Arik Kaiser

Jack Leverton

Kaitlyn Lozada

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Alivia Thruman

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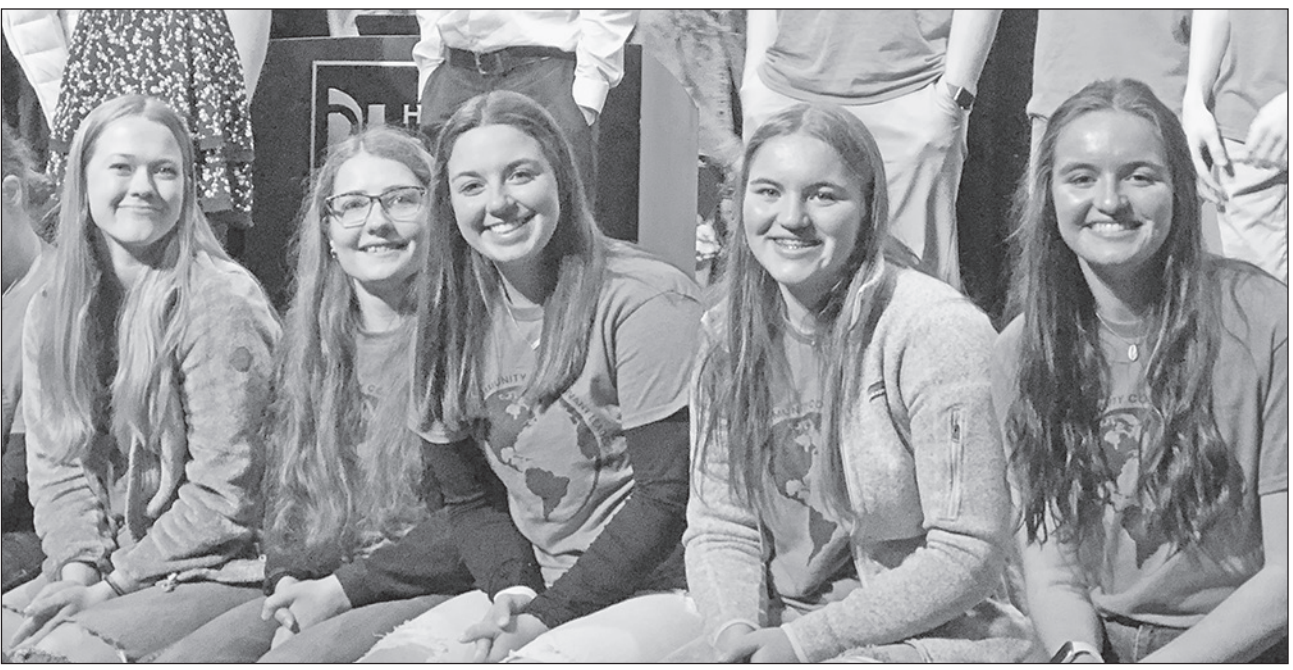


SUBMITTED PHOTOS *Rock Valley Publishing*

Pearl City students working hard

(Above Left) Ben Bremmer and Aaliyah Whitney use Ag Day at Pearl City to teach the Pearl City fourth graders about agriculture and celebrating agriculture within the community.

(Above) Jordan Johnson and Elizabeth Dinderman read to the Pearl City Kindergartners about pigs and took some time to show the students one of their very own.

(Left) The end of year celebration for Servant Leadership was held at HCC on Sunday, April 23. Pictured are leaders Laine Rosenstiel, Lakota Scace, Jordan Johnson, Ava Bremmer, Addie Bremmer. Not pictured is Nathan Brinkmeier.

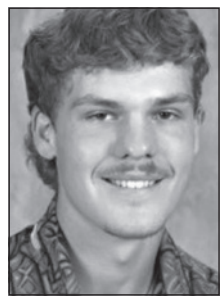
Congrats Warren 2023 Graduates

Tyler VenHuizen

Liliana Varela

Abigail Winters

Payton Wolf



Keaton Wulfekuhle

Sierra Young

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From Lena's Kitchen

The not so skinny cook

We had some beautiful weather to celebrate the week before Mother's Day. The trees and bushes have popped out with beautiful green leaves, and the spring bushes are flowering. I think that spring has arrived. This week we have some interesting recipes to help you usher in the spring season. Enjoy cooking this week!

Cheese Dreams

These appetizers can be made ahead of time and they would be great on a brunch table for Mother's Day. They are easy to make and have simple ingredients.

2 C. finely grated sharp Cheddar cheese
2 C. butter, softened
3 T. heavy cream
1 egg
1 t. Worcestershire sauce
½ t. salt
½ t. dry mustard
Hot sauce to taste
1 pkg. firm white sandwich bread slices

Preheat oven to 375. Beat cheese and butter at medium speed with mixer until blended. Beat in heavy cream, egg, Worcestershire sauce, salt, and dry mustard. Add hot sauce to your taste. Cut the crusts from the white bread slices. Cut each bread slice into 4 squares. Spread cheese mixture on half of bread squares (about 1 t. per square); top each with 1 remaining square. Spread remaining cheese mixture over top and sides of sandwiches. Pace sandwiches 1 inch apart on a lightly greased baking sheet. Bake for 15 minutes or until golden brown.

Spinach Radish Salad

This salad has a great poppy seed dressing. The spinach, radish, and avocado combination make a great green salad side or a luncheon meal.

1/3 C. sliced almonds
1/3 C. extra-virgin olive oil
2 T. lemon juice
1 T. poppy seeds
1 T. honey
1 T. cider vinegar
½ t. salt
¼ t. pepper
1½ pkg. (5 oz.) baby spinach
2 avocados, pitted, peeled, cut into ¾ inch pieces
½ C. sliced radishes
½ C. sliced green onions

In a dry skillet over medium heat, cook almonds, stirring often, until lightly toasted; reserve. In a medium jar with tight-fitting lid, combine oil, lemon juice, poppy seeds, honey, vinegar, salt, and pepper. Seal with lid; shake vigorously until well blended.

In a large serving bowl, combine spinach, avocado, radishes, and green onions. Drizzle dressing over the salad; toss until evenly coated and combined. Sprinkle with reserved toasted almonds.

Beef and Cauliflower Pie

This is an easy casserole that has the meat, potatoes, and vegetables in one pan. Add some cheese to the top, and you have a great meal.

1 pkg. (16 oz.) frozen cauliflower florets
2 lbs. boneless beef sirloin steak, cut into 1-inch pieces
2 t. onion powder
1 t. dried oregano
¾ salt
¾ C. beef broth
2 T. Worcestershire
1 T. flour
1 can (14.5 oz.) diced potatoes, drained
1 can (14.5 oz.) sliced carrots, drained
1 C. shredded cheddar

Grease a 2½ qt. baking dish. Cook cauliflower per package directions. Sprinkle beef with onion powder, oregano, and salt. Grease a nonstick skillet with cooking spray and heat over high heat. In batches, cook beef, stirring until browned, 2 minutes per batch. Remove meat. Mix broth, Worcestershire and flour in a bowl; add to skillet. Over medium-high heat, bring to a boil; cook, stirring until thickened, 2 minutes. Stir in beef, potatoes, and carrots. Cook until heated, 1 minutes. Transfer to the prepared baking dish; top with cauliflower and cheddar. Broil until golden, about 4 minutes. Serve.

Chicken Crouton Casserole

If you are looking for an easy and quick supper, this chicken casserole will fill the bill. You can use canned chunk chicken, rotisserie chicken, or cook some chicken breasts and thighs ahead of time. This creamy casserole will please just about everybody.

1 can chicken broth
1 can cream of chicken soup
1 C. sour cream
½ C. butter, melted
1 pkg. (12 oz.) seasoned stuffing cubes
4 C. shredded cooked chicken
Minced parsley for garnish

Preheat the oven to 375. In a large bowl, combine the broth, soup, sour cream, and butter. Stir in croutons and chicken. Transfer to a greased 9 x 13 baking dish. Bake, uncovered, until heated through, 20 to 25 minutes. Sprinkle with parsley.

Rhubarb Cheesecake Tart

It is rhubarb time again. If you were able to keep your rhubarb from freezing, it will be popping out of the ground any day now. If you have lots, I know people who would love it if you shared. Remember that frozen rhubarb plants are poisonous, so don't eat the rhubarb if the leaves have had frost. If you cut if off or pull it out, it will come back. You just have to be patient.

1½ C. graham cracker crumbs
2 T. plus 1 2/3 C. sugar
5 T. butter, melted
Red food coloring
8 oz. trimmed fresh rhubarb, cut into ½ inch pieces
12 oz. Cream cheese at room temperature
4 egg yolks
1 t. vanilla
3 egg whites
½ t. cream of tarter

Heat oven to 325. Coat a 9-inch tart pan with removable bottom with cooking spray. In medium bowl, combine graham cracker crumbs and 2 T. sugar; stir in butter. Press in bottom and upside of tart pan. Bake until set, about 8 minutes. Transfer to a cooling rack; cool completely.

Transfer pan to rimmed baking sheet. In medium pot, combine 1 C. sugar and 1 C. water; tint with food coloring. Over medium heat, bring to a boil. Add rhubarb; cook, stirring often, until softened and syrup forms, 4 to 5 minutes. Drain, reserving 1 t. syrup. Let cool; pat fruit dry. On medium speed, beat cream cheese and 1/3 C. sugar until smooth; beat in egg yolks and vanilla until combined. Reserve 2 T. rhubarb. Stir in remaining rhubarb to egg mixture. Spread in crust. Bake on rimmed baking sheet until no longer wet in center, about 25 minutes.

On medium speed, beat egg whites with cream of tartar until soft peaks form. On high, beat in remaining sugar, one tablespoon at a time until dissolved and mixture is stiff. Spread over hot filling. Bake until golden, 15 minutes, cool on rack. Mix reserved rhubarb and syrup, spoon on top.

Rhubarb Oat Crumb Bars

This simple recipe is a way to eat rhubarb almost like a cookie. It uses a sugar cookie mix for its base. It is not rich like pie or cheesecake, but it is a great treat that is easy to make.

2 T. cornstarch
1 lb. rhubarb stalks, cut into ½ inch pieces
¼ C. sugar
¼ C. strawberry jam
1 pkg. (17.1 oz.) sugar cookie mix
½ C. butter, softened
1 egg
½ C. rolled oats

Preheat the oven to 350. Line a 9-inch square baking pan with enough foil to overhang sides by 2 inches. Coat with cooking spray. In a bowl, mix cornstarch and 2 T. water. In a pot, mix rhubarb, sugar, and jam. Over medium heat, cook, stirring until mixture is mostly smooth, 8 to 10 minutes. Stir in cornstarch mixture. Cook until thickened, 1 to 2 minutes; let cool.

See KITCHEN, Page 18

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437459

•Reforms (Continued from page 9)

Sen. Jason Plummer, R-Edwardsville, said the bill is a "get-out-of-jail-free card" for young offenders. Senate Minority Leader John Curran, R-Downers Grove, said the bill would make it more difficult for prosecutors to crack down on things like carjacking in the city and suburbs, something he called "an epidemic of violence." "This bill is going to make it more difficult in prosecuting and enforcing those crimes," Curran said. Curran also criticized the expanded list of factors judges would have to consider in sentencing. "This bill now has a factor that a judge must consider: Was the accused offender subject to peer pressure? Not sure how that's relevant," he said.

Simmons defended the bill after it passed by saying it would not require judges to do anything other than take more information into consideration. "This legislation gives judges the space to look at these other categories," Simmons said. "But the legislation does not put a thumb on the scales of justice."

•Pritzker (Continued from page 8)

Pritzker maintains that as a result of those measures, Illinois avoided the direst predictions of the mathematicians and scientists at the University of Illinois. According to the Illinois Department of Public Health, as of April 30, the entire state of Illinois has seen 36,850 confirmed COVID-19 deaths, and another 5,155 "probable" disease-related deaths. "But if one were to look at how Illinois handled the pandemic—and this is kudos and gratitude to the people of Illinois—people did the right thing," Pritzker said. "And the vast majority of people in Illinois understood what they needed to do. They heard what they needed to do from the experts, and they did it. And the result of that is, to the extent one can use the word 'success' here, the result is that we had real success here at keeping people safe and alive."

'No Child Wet Behind' giveaway for parents in need

The diaper is one of the many overlooked costs of poverty. Babies require up to 12 diapers a day, and toddlers can require as many as 8. State and national safety-net programs do not assist with diapers for families living in poverty. The FHN Value Support Team is proud to present its 3rd annual diaper (and other essentials) giveaway for parents in Stephenson and Jo Daviess counties. The diapers and other essentials for the event have been donated by FHN and Aramark team members.

No Child Wet Behind will be held from 10:30 a.m. to12:30 p.m. (or while supply lasts) on Tuesday, May 16 in the Lincoln Mall parking lot, 1247 W. Galena Avenue in Freeport. Parents are invited to receive a free bundle of size-appropriate diapers (sizes 2 and up) for each child in their household at this free, drive-through event. Each household also will receive an essentials bundle containing baby wipes, wash, and lotion. All materials distributed through this drive will be marked and will not be returnable to any location.

Parents may also receive a free car seat check at the event, and speak with representatives from WIC and Illinois Family Connects. Information about and support for breastfeeding, postpartum depression, and other health concerns will be available at the event, as well.

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LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON TOWNSHIP BUDGET PLEASANT VALLEY TOWNSHIP

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Tentative Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for the Township of Pleasant Valley, in the County of Jo Daviess, State of Illinois, for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2023 and ending March 31, 2024, will be on file and conveniently available to public inspection by appointment from Town Clerk upon request after 8:00 p.m., the 11th day of May, 2023.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN HEREBY that a public hearing on said Budget and Appropriation Ordinance will be held at 7:00 p.m., the 8th day of June, 2023 at the Town Hall in this Township of Pleasant Valley and that final hearing and action on this ordinance will be taken at a meeting to be held at the Town Hall following the public hearing.

(Published in
The Scoop Today
May 17, 2023)

437594

PUBLIC NOTICE

We, Brent and Colleen Myers are bringing forth our Land Patent for the following parcel located at 4606 Lily Creek Road Freeport, Illinois [61032]. Any party interested in viewing or challenging this claim can view the associated documents here__https://www.statenationalhelp.com/brent-colleen-myers

(Published in
The Shopper's Guide
March 22, 29,
April 5, 12, 19, 26,
May 3, 10, 17 & 24, 2023)

434572

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON ROAD DISTRICT BUDGET PLEASANT VALLEY TOWNSHIP

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Tentative Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for the Road Purposes of the Township of Pleasant Valley, in the County of Jo Daviess, State of Illinois, for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2023 and ending March 31, 2024, will be on file and conveniently available to public inspection by appointment from Town Clerk after 8:00 p.m., the 11th day of May, 2023.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN HEREBY that a public hearing on said Budget and Appropriation Ordinance will be held at 7:00 p.m., the 8th day of June, 2023 at the Town Hall in this Township of Pleasant Valley and that final hearing and action on this ordinance will be taken at a meeting to be held at the Town Hall following the public hearing.

(Published in
The Scoop Today
May 17, 2023)

437595

PUBLIC NOTICE

Stockton Community Unit School District #206 has a vacant seat on its Board of Education. The seat may be filled by a resident of the Stockton School District.
Procedure to fill vacancy:

1. Send letter of interest and any relevant credentials to: Superintendent James Bunting, Stockton CUSD #206, 540 North Rush Street, Stockton, Illinois 61085 by Wednesday, May 31, 2023.

2. The Board will interview prospective candidates on the evening of Monday, June 5, 2023. The Board will then install the new member at its regular meeting on Monday, June 19, 2023.

Prospective candidates can call James Bunting at 815-947-3391 or email james.bunting@stocktonschools.com with questions

(Published in
The Scoop Today
May 17, 2023)

437719

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT STEPHENSON COUNTY - 15 North Galena Avenue, FREEPORT, ILLINOIS
ESTATE OF
Duane E. Williams,
DECEASED.

23 PR 22

Notice is given to creditors of the death of the above named decedent. Letters of office were issued to Carla Williams, 331 Valley View Drive, Lena, Illinois 61048, as Independent Executor, whose attorney of record is SJ Chapman, Bielski Chapman, Ltd, 123 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 November 3, 2023, 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.illinoiscourts.gov/service-providers.htm to learn more and to select a service provider. If you need additional help or have trouble e-filing, visit http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/FAQ/gethelp.asp.

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(Published in
The Shopper's Guide
May 3, 10 & 17, 2023)

436764

PUBLIC NOTICE

We, Brian and Carla Myers are bringing forth our Land Patent for the following parcel located at 4480 Illinois Route 26 North, Freeport, IL [61032]. Any party interested in viewing or challenging this claim can view the associated documents here https://www.statenationalhelp.com/brian-carla-myers

(Published in
The Shopper's Guide
March 22, 29,
April 5, 12, 19, 26,
May 3, 10, 17 & 24, 2023)

435765

IN*CI*DENTAL*LY

Dentists and dental students advocate for oral health

By
DR. STEPHEN PETRAS
Illinois Licensed General Dentist

More than 700 dentists and dental students took part in the seventh annual ADA Dentist and Dental Student Lobby Day in Washington DC on March 5 through March 7. During the event, the attendees heard presentations from various experts on the general status of oral health in America and legislative acts that organized dentistry is trying to enact in Congress. They also participated in training sessions on how to successfully advocate for better oral health care in their communities and at both the state and national levels. To give you a brief insight into what this means for you, I will cover just two of the issues addressed.

As I reported earlier this year, one area of focus is insurance reform. Dentists across America are working to make sure that more of your premium dollars are spent on actual dental care. In addition, the attendees met with members of Congress to advocate for ELSA (Ensuring Lasting Smiles Act) or HR (House of Representatives) 1916/S.754, which seeks to protect children born with congenital abnormalities such as cleft lip and palate. Although these types of birth defects interfere with a person's ability to breathe, speak, and/or eat in a normal manner, many insurance companies call this a "cosmetic" issue and refuse to cover any necessary reconstructive surgery. Often those insurance companies that concede to pay for the initial surgical repair will not pay for any further reconstructive procedures to improve function as the child grows. Thanks to the dentist and dental student Lobbyists, ELSA was introduced by a bipartisan group of Representatives and Senators in the House and Senate on March 16, 2023. If passed, the Ensuring Lasting Smiles Act "would require all private group and individual health plans to cover medically necessary services resulting from a congenital anomaly or birth defect. This would include inpatient and outpatient care and reconstructive services and procedures, as well as adjunctive dental, orthodontic, or prosthodontic support."

Another area of focus is a lack of federal dental coverage for adults on Medicaid. Lack of oral health coverage leads many Medicaid recipients to turn to emergency departments to relieve dental pain. In addition, poor periodontal health plays a significant negative role in systemic health conditions such as heart disease and diabetes. In fact, a recent Analysis of Dental and Medical Claims has revealed that controlling periodontal disease in patients is associated with lower outpatient healthcare costs for patients covered by Medicaid, as well as those covered by commercial insurance policies. Providing adults on Medicaid with regular access to oral care has been estimated to save our healthcare system $2.7 billion annually.

On March 24 of this year, ADA President George R. Shepley returned to Washington to participate in the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health. The Purpose of the Conference is to end hunger, increase physical activity and promote healthy eating in order to reduce the incidence of diet-related diseases, including obesity, diabetes, and hypertension. Dr. Shepley spoke on nutrition and the effects of added and often hidden sugars in food. Excess sugar overloads our organs, causing dysfunction and leading to disease. Currently, 42.4 percent of American adults are obese, and 11.3 percent have diabetes. Almost 20 percent of children are obese, and .35 percent are diabetic. Excess sugar is damaging both our oral and overall health. Excess sugar leads to oral disease, which exacerbates systemic disease and systemic disease exacerbates oral disease. In light of this bi-directional relationship, Dr. Shepley spoke about the need for dental-medical-dietetic collaboration to educate and advocate for the optimal health of all our citizens.

•Kitchen

(Continued from page 16)

Prepare sugar cookie mix per package directions with butter and egg. Press 2/3 dough into bottom of pan. Mix oats into remaining dough. Spread rhubarb mixture on crust; crumble oat mixture on top. Bake until golden, 45 minutes. Let cool before cutting into squares.

Final Thoughts

The fields are really looking good. They are planting all over the place. I know people are buying plants for the garden and their pots. Maybe the potatoes and peas that were planted on Good Friday will begin to pop up through the ground. People have been finding rhubarb and asparagus. Someone told me that when the lilacs bloom, the morel mushrooms will pop up all over the place. I know that there are people who are just waiting for them to come in. They make such a good spring treat.

We will continue to look for Spring recipes. If you have any rhubarb or spring fruit recipes, we would like to see them. 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.

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real estate

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417244

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garage sales

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Rock Valley Publishing

A big thanks

The Lena American Legion Auxiliary held the annual recognition for van drivers that dedicate their time to assist local veterans. This was the 28th year the van has taken veterans to Madison for doctor appointments. Pictured are delegates for the Veterans' Assistance Commission of Stephenson County and Maryna that were thanked and recognized for their community assistance efforts and for the support they offer local veterans.

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• Broncos

(Continued from front page)

of the game. Later on, with two outs, Setterstrom singled to left, driving in Soddy and Boden Gustafson to bring the Broncos within two. An error on a Blake Komprood grounder made it a game again as the Broncos now trailed 8-7.

With the game in reach, Karsen Henneman shut things down on the mound. Henneman got three strikeouts to quickly get the Broncos back to the plate so they could continue to ride the momentum. The Broncos came down to their final strike as they trailed 8-7 with two outs in the bottom of the seventh. In a 2-2 count, Gustafson connected for a line drive into right field. The base hit allowed Miller to score and eventually Soddy as well as the Broncos walked it off for a 9-8 victory.

Soddy, just one of two seniors on the Orangeville roster, led the way offensively with three runs scored and one run batted in on one hit. Setterstrom had a big day, going two for three with one run scored and three RBI. Gustafson finished with a pair of RBI and one run scored on one hit.

Soddy started the game on the mound as well. In three innings of work, Soddy allowed just two earned runs on five hits and five strikeouts. Henneman got the win in relief, going four innings with six strikeouts and three earned runs on five hits allowed. Henneman is the only other senior on this year's roster as he and Soddy got to finish things off the right way. The win was the perfect way to end the regular season before facing off with the River Ridge-Scales Mound Wildcats to open the postseason earlier this week.

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