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VOL. 90 • NO. 3

YOUR FREE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 10, 2024

## Three area students receive FHN Healthcare Career Scholarships

Three area students have been awarded scholarships to help cover the cost of healthcare education. An outstanding group of students applied for the Healthcare scholarships this year.

The students wrote an essay about their career path along with strengths and personal goals to support the healthcare needs of FHN's service area, and the top candidates were selected for face-to-face inter-

views. After the interviews, three Healthcare Scholarship applicants were chosen to receive a \$1,000 scholarship. All of FHN's scholarships are funded through donations to the FHN

Foundation. The 2023 Healthcare Career Scholarship winners include **Jacob Brown** from Morrison, who is pursuing a Pharmacy degree at UIC College of Pharmacy in Rockford,

**Haley Brudi** from Stockton, who is pursuing a Physical Therapy degree at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, **Emma Kempel** from Winslow, who is pursuing a Nursing degree at University of Dubuque in

Dubuque, Iowa. FHN offers Healthcare Career scholarships each year; the application period opens early each summer. For more information, visit [www.fhn.org/scholarships](http://www.fhn.org/scholarships).



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Three students have been awarded \$1,000 FHN Healthcare Career Scholarships to help cover the cost of healthcare education. All of FHN's scholarships are funded through donations to the FHN Foundation. Pictured from left to right are Emma Kempel, FHN President and CEO Mark Gridley, Jacob Brown and FHN Executive Vice President/COO/CNO Kathryn Martinez. Haley Brudi was unable to attend the ceremony.

Postal Customer \*\*ecrws



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# Obituaries

## GARY ROTE

Gary L. Rote, 85, of Cedarville, IL, passed away at home, Thursday, Jan. 4, 2024, with his family by his side. He was born Sept. 13, 1938, in Monroe, WI to William H. and Helen (Bellville) Rote. On June 28, 1958, he married Marlene Wild at Stavers United Methodist Church in rural Monroe.

Gary started farming at a young age, which started with hogs as a 4-H project and later progressed to various livestock, dairy and crops. He was a member of First Free Methodist Church in Freeport, IL. Gary's memberships and affiliations also included the Illinois Holstein Association, past member of the Buckeye Mutual Insurance Board, past board member of the Orangeville Community Bank, and past President of the Stephenson County Holstein Association. He was an avid fan of the Green Bay Packers. Gary found great joy in watching the wildlife out his back door. He always was a great supporter for the Stephenson County Fair. Most of all, he enjoyed watching his kids and grandkids participate in their many activities including sports, music and showing cattle.

He is survived by his wife Marlene of Cedarville; five children Wendy (John) Korth of Freeport, IL, Shelly (Tom) Moyer of Davis, IL, Brian (Lori) Rote of McConnell,



IL, Darcy (Mark) Thompson of Geneva, IL, and Brandon (Courtney) Rote of Davis, IL; siblings Richard Rote

and Donna (Rote) Schluesche both of Monore, WI; sister-in-law Shirley Wild of Winslow, IL; and thirteen grandchildren Becky Korth, Elizabeth (Heath) Wales, Amanda (Garet) Ballard, Benjamin (Brandy) Korth, Laura (Derek) Erwin, Matthew (Jessica) Moyer, Carley Rote, Crystal (Mitchel) Stites, Carson Rote, Dalton (Christine) Thompson, Victoria Thompson, Alexis Rote and Samantha Rote; and 11 great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, infant brother Ronald, and brother-in-laws Walter Schluesche and Robert Wild.

Funeral services were held on Monday, Jan. 8, 2024, at First Free Methodist Church, 2157 W Cardinal Dr, Freeport, IL 61032, with Rev. Don Jamerson officiating. A visitation was held Sunday, Jan. 7, 2024, at Burke-Tubbs Funeral Home in Freeport. Burial will be at Cedarville Cemetery. A memorial has been established in Gary's memory. The family would like to extend their gratitude to Freeport Hospice and the private nurse that gave Gary great care during his final weeks.

## TONI REED

Toni R. Reed, 58 of Lena, IL passed away on Jan. 3, 2024, at FHN. She was born on March 30, 1965, at Dr. Boeke's office in Winslow, IL to Bob and Karen (Bauer) Johnson. She married Dave Reed on Nov. 7, 1981, at the Lena Methodist Church and together they raised a family.

Toni kept busy throughout the years. She worked at Gilley's Supperclub in her younger years where she had a lot of fun and made friends. She also spent many years babysitting nieces and nephews and became like a second mother to them. The past 18 years she was a devoted caregiver for the elderly.

Toni enjoyed spending time with her grandchildren, crocheting, baking, watching the 49ers play, learning about genealogy, and sight-seeing. She enjoyed memorable trips to Florida, Colorado, Minnesota, and Salem, MA. She will be greatly missed by both family and friends.

She is survived by her boy-



friend Todd Lloyd; children- Randy (Amanda) Reed, Nicole (Justin) Hesselbacher, Samantha Reed, Dylan (Jordyn)

Reed, and Erik Huerta; mother- Karen Johnson; sister- Brenda (Rod) Hale; grandchildren- Preston, Sidney, Beau, Liv, Bram, Jada, Max, Ethan, Clairissa, Aurora, Wyatt, Baby Reed due in July, and Vae; numerous aunts, uncles, nieces, and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her father Bob Johnson; grandpa and grandma Bauer, grandpa and grandma Johnson, Aunt Janice Truax and Connie Bauer, and nephews Christopher and Raymond Love Jr.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date. Cremation rights have been accorded. Condolences may be sent to the family at [www.leamonfh.com](http://www.leamonfh.com).

## DIANE J. KLINEFELTER

Diane J. Klinefelter, 74, of Shannon, formerly of German Valley, died Thursday, Dec. 28, 2023, at the Serenity House in Oregon, after a brief illness and broken heart (from losing the Love of her life eight years ago), surrounded by her loving family. Born Aug. 4, 1949, in Freeport, the daughter of James and Iva (Reemtsma) Mennenga. She graduated from Winnebago High School in 1967. Diane married Roger L. Klinefelter on Jan. 25, 1974, in Silver Creek Reform Church, German Valley.

Diane worked as a beautician for many years. She also helped at the Valley Inn in German Valley. Diane enjoyed mowing their lawn and taking care of Silver Creek Cemetery for years with her husband Roger. She dearly loved spending time with her children, grandchildren and attending all of their events.

Diane is lovingly survived by her sons, James (Aman-



da) and Tim "Tiny" (Rachael) Klinefelter; grandchildren, Eric (Shania) Schaney, Olivia, Ryker, Charles

Klinefelter, Alley, Abigeal, William Weber all of Shannon; Sister, Eunice (Norman) Miller of German Valley, Sisters-In-Law Jean Mennenga of Pecatonica and Helen Mennenga of Blue Eye, MO; Great Grandchildren Piper & Haven Schaney; and Many nieces, nephews, great nieces and nephews and cousins.

She was predeceased by her husband, Roger; parents, James and Iva Mennenga; brothers, Wayne and Merle; niece, Beth Miller, great niece Kaylee Hawk.

The family wishes to Thank Dominique Beck who became a great friend and part of the family to Diane, the Serenity House and staff for all their kind care given to their Mom and Grandma, and Dr. Terry Miller for the care given and FHN staff.

A funeral service was held on Friday, Jan. 5, 2024, in Bethel United Methodist Church, 217 S. Hickory St., Shannon, with Pastor Brenda Morris, Pastor Ellis Boughton and Dawn Barr will co-officiating. There was a visitation at the church on Thursday, Jan. 4, 2024. Burial took place in Silver Creek Cemetery, German Valley. A memorial fund has been established. Condolences may be shared at [www.hermannfuneralhome.com](http://www.hermannfuneralhome.com).

## SHERIDAN BRINKER

Sheridan Brinker 82, died peacefully, Jan. 2, 2024, at his home surrounded by his family. Sheridan was born Aug. 13, 1941, in Lena, IL, to Ivan and Gladys (Medeke) Brinker. He attended Warren and Lena schools and graduated from Lena High School in 1959. He loved cars and learned to work on them at several garages in the area. After serving his country in the Air Force, where he met his wife Marybeth, he continued his education at Spartan School of Aeronautics in Tulsa, OK. He and his wife returned to Lena where they raised three awesome sons. In 1986 he opened Brinker's Pit Stop and served as a bus mechanic for The Lena-Winslow School District.

He was an avid outdoorsman, hunting in Montana, fishing on Lake Michigan and in Canada. Later he bought land in Lena on which he planted over two thousand trees to create a tree farm. On his land he built a log cabin and expanded a pond for ducks and geese. He was recognized by the Department of Natural Resources for Wildlife Conservation Management.

He is survived by his wife Marybeth; sons- Chris (Angie) of Lena, Tom Brinker of Rockton, and Erick (Nettie) of Winnebago; eight grand-



children- Colton, Ash-tyn, Hanna, Abby, Eme, Olivia, Sydney, and Sawyer Brinker; sister Anita Bonebright;

brothers Robert (Vikki) Brinker and Scott (Cathy) Brinker all of Lena; brother and sister-in-laws Edith (Edwin) Jones, Thomas (Tina) Pye; sisters-in-law Linda Pye, Miriam (Curt) Breneman; many wonderful nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; brothers-in-law Larry Bonebright and David Pye; nephew Sean Breneman.

Special thanks to Anita, Mimsy, and Jen for their unwavering love and support. Also, thank you to all the staff of FHN Hospice, and the VA in Madison and Freeport.

A visitation was held on Sunday, Jan. 7, 2024, from 10-12 at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Lena. A funeral service and fellowship followed. Pastor Thomas Mosbo officiated the service. Cremation rites have been accorded. In lieu of flowers a memorial has been established for Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Parkinson's Foundation and Good Shepherd Church. Condolences may be sent to the family at [www.leamonfh.com](http://www.leamonfh.com).



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It's a big book, it takes a lot of reading, a lot of studying, a lot of thinking and meditating to grasp what it says. But when you do, it will change your life; it will lead you into fullness, liberty & beauty. That's what the Bible is for. To feed upon this word is tremendously significant & important.

Thank you to the Lena Lions, Lena Area Church Cooperative and Leamon's for remembering me during the holiday season.

Elsie Lobdell

449376



## DAVID JULIUS

David Julius, 56, of Stockton, IL, passed away peacefully at home surrounded by his family. David was born on July 6, 1967 in Freeport, IL to Donald and Gloria (Lewis) Julius. He was a 1985 graduate of Stockton High School. David received a bachelor's degree in communications from Western Illinois University. On May 8, 2004, David and Alysson Fisher were united in marriage at Trinity United Methodist Church in Freeport.

David spent most of his career in sales. Most recently, David worked in manufacturing at V&V Supremo Foods in Browntown, WI, which he loved. He enjoyed traveling with his family, especially to Gulf Shores, AL and to the little cabin in Virginia, IL. He could be found doing renovation projects around the house, golfing with his friends, or fishing. David was a devoted father, quick-witted, and an all-around jokester.

David is survived by his



wife Alysson of Stockton, their children; Austyn (Alivia) Menefee of Freeport, Dayton and Delaney

Julius, both of Stockton, his mother; Gloria Julius of Stockton, sister Jolene (Jim) Jones of Stockton, mother-in-law; Vicki Kleckler of Lena, brother-in-law; Andy (Cathy) Fisher of Toledo, OH, father-in-law; Terry Fisher of Schapville, niece; Lindy Fleharty of Stockton, nephew; Ryan (Alivia) Fleharty of Stockton, and many great nieces and great nephews.

He was preceded in death by his father Donald Julius and his father-in-law Terry Kleckler.

A celebration of life is going to be held around David's birthday later this summer.

Cremation rites have been accorded. Condolences may be sent to the family at [www.leamonfh.com](http://www.leamonfh.com).

# Obituary

## HELEN FULLERTON

Helen Marie (Rockey) Fullerton, 92 passed peacefully surrounded by family at 12:03 p.m. on Dec. 28, 2023. Helen was born in Freeport on Aug. 24, 1931, to Dr. LF and Flossie (Priewe) Rocky. She was the eldest of three daughters. She had a very happy childhood in Orangeville and Freeport. She graduated from Freeport High School in 1949. To this day she could tell you who lived in every house around her neighborhood and beyond. It was a close community and in those days, everyone knew their neighbors.

It was during her Home Economics studies at Purdue University that she met her future husband, Charles D. Fullerton. They were married on her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday in 1952. Together they made their home after graduation in LaFayette, Indiana. During the next 12 years two daughters were born, and in 1964 they moved to be closer to family in Freeport. They built a house south of Eleroy, Illinois. Helen enjoyed being a stay-at-home Mom, while doing some substitute teaching in area schools.

In 1968, they moved west of Freeport to Harlem Center Road and enjoyed country living. Helen started a dog boarding kennel they called "Chelen's Kennel", which stands for Chuck plus Helen. She loved watching other people's dogs, even though they had seven dogs of their own. It has been rumored that if you sent a post card to your pet while on vacation, she would go out and read the card to your pet. She put her heart into everything she did.

When her daughters were in high school, Helen went to work outside the home. She very much enjoyed the years she worked at Economy, St. Paul, and Met Life Insurance companies in Freeport. Many co-workers will remember enjoying the baked goodies she loved to share at work.



When they bought a 5<sup>th</sup> wheel camper, traveling became their next hobby. Door County and a 3-week trip through Nova Scotia were the big trips, along with many weekend outings with camping friends or grandchildren. Many great memories were made while camping with Grandma Helen and Grandpa Church.

Charles passed in 2008 and Helen chose to move into assisted living in Freeport after a few years. She reconnected with acquaintances she had known through the years and made new friends too.

Helen was predeceased by her parent and her husband. She is survived by her daughters and their families as follows: Terri (Daryl) Thyberg of McConnell, Illinois and their children, Tamie (Dr. Greg) Dammann, Joanie Gora (Jeremy Morse) and Andrew (Nicole) Thyberg, Cathy (Tim) Nelson of Durant, Iowa and their daughter, Amanda (Austin Arnold) Weik. Great-Grandchildren: Sophia (Daniel) Vale, Samantha (David) Wichman, Cameron (Maddy) Dammann, Nate Dammann (Fiance - Lily Prabhaker), Ellie and Ethan Gora - Thyberg, Haley, Gracelyn, Brooklyn, Delyla, Brayden, Mary, Gad, Elijah and Isaiah Thyberg. Great Great Grandchildren: Flora Grace and Poppy Louise Wichman, Margaret Ruth and Jennifer Joy Vale. She is also survived by her two sisters; Roberta Dildine of Dallas, TX and Catherine (Kit) Baldwin of Freeport and many nieces, nephews and cousins.

A visitation will be held on Jan. 14, 2024, beginning at 1 p.m. and a service to immediately follow at 2 p.m. all at Walker Mortuary in Freeport. Condolences can be left for the family at [www.walkermortuary.com](http://www.walkermortuary.com).

# Concerns about herbicide resistance addressed at Northwest Illinois Agronomy Summit

Herbicide resistance is one of agronomic crop producers' most challenging issues. Kathryn Seebruck, Crops Educator, U of I Extension, will address *Navigating the Inevitability of Herbicide Resistance* at the upcoming Northwest Illinois Agronomy Summit. Our understanding of resistance is not keeping pace with the frequency of resistance evolution, making it increasingly difficult to mitigate. This presentation will explore herbicide resistance evolution, discuss the rise in non-target-site (NTS) resistance, and illustrate the importance of utilizing multiple control methods to prevent weed seed production.

The Northwest Illinois Agronomy

Summit will be held on Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2024, with the program running from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Highland Community College Student Conference Center, 2998 W. Pearl City Road, Freeport, IL.

Additional topics to be addressed include *Practical Nitrogen Management for Corn*, presented by Giovanni Preza Fontes, Field Crops Agronomist, U of I Extension. Connor Sible, a Postdoctoral Research Associate with the Crop Physiology Department at the University of Illinois, will present *Understanding Biologicals for Row Crops*. Dan Smith, Southwest Regional Specialist, Nutrient and Pest Management Program, University of Wisconsin-

Madison, will discuss *Building Soil Health in Northern Climates*. Highland Community College Agriculture Instructor Justin Ebert will be on hand to talk about the Highland Community College research plots and the results from this past growing season.

To register or for more information about the *Northwest Illinois Agronomy Summit*, visit us online at [go.illinois.edu/jsw](http://go.illinois.edu/jsw) or call U of I Extension at 815-235-4125. Registration is required to attend. Registration cost is \$25. Lunch is provided. CEUs for Certified Crop Advisors will be available: 1 in Nutrient Management and 1 in Crop Management.

# Church news

## Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

All are invited to worship at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 118 E. Mason St. Lena, IL. On Sunday, Jan. 14, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. for Worship Service. The service can be joined in person or via Facebook Live. The reading will be from John 1:43-51.

On Wednesday, Jan. 17 Peace Corps Quilting group will meet from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. All are welcome to join and no quilting experience is necessary. The Peace Corps is also looking for any extra or unused material to be donated to assist in making these quilts.

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

## Salem United Church of Christ

Join for a service led by Pastor Christopher Ham at Salem United Church of Christ, 8491 West Salem Road, Lena, Illinois, this Sunday, Jan. 14, 2024, 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, Jan. 17, 2024, at 8 a.m. at Amigo's, 306 North Galena Avenue, Freeport, Illinois. Everyone is welcome to join.

If you would like to participate in a fun evening of crafting, please join us for Crafternoon from 4 to 7 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. This

is hosted on the lower level of Salem United Church of Christ, and all are welcome to join.

For more information on any Salem related items, please contact 815-369-4511 or [salemwingsofjoy@yahoo.com](mailto:salemwingsofjoy@yahoo.com).

## St. John's Lutheran Church

St. John's Lutheran Church, Pearl City, will celebrate the second Sunday of Epiphany on Sunday, Jan. 14 at 9 a.m.

The Women's Gathering group will be meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 16 with Fellowship at 9:45 a.m. and a Bible study at 10 a.m.

The January Grace Meal will be served on Sunday, Jan. 21. It will consist of

meatloaf, mashed potatoes, a vegetable, and dessert. Reservations for the meal need to be placed by Thursday, Jan. 18 and can be done so at the church office.

The Healthy Wolves group will be packing backpacks on Wednesday Jan. 10 at 3:15 p.m. If interested in donating to this ministry, reach out to the church office for more information.

There will be cards and dominoes in Luther Hall on Thursday, Jan. 25 at 1 p.m. View Restaurant in Lena.

St. John's Lutheran Church of Pearl City is an ELCA parish and is located at 229 First St. in Pearl City. We are handicapped accessible. If you need to contact the pastor or church, you may call 815-443-2215 for information.

# THE SCOOP TODAY

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# Stockton Park District Park House Rental

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# OPINION



## Weekly connection

# Real winter returns



By **SCOTT CERNEK**  
Columnist

In case you haven't noticed it's been a very mild winter so far here in southern Wisconsin. I don't think any of the lakes in this area are frozen yet and it's almost the middle of January. I have the feeling, however, that these warm temps might be about to come to a screeching halt. I heard someone say the other day that we are supposed to have forty snows this winter. Who knows, maybe we're just running a little late this year. I remember a fierce winter that we experienced back in 1978-79. It was quite a winter as I recall. I was a junior in high school that year, and I can remember the snow being so deep that it was stacked up about twenty feet high on both sides of our country road. One day that year my brothers and I had a rather harrowing experience on the farm. It was actually on Christmas Eve, and we needed to move a fresh cow and her calf from the dry cow barn which was about a half mile down the road to the home dairy barn. It was in the late afternoon, and it had been snowing and blowing with great intensity. We took off anyway cutting through the drifts with the tractor pulling the cattle trailer behind. We hoped to make quick work of the task at hand and get back to the warm barn out of the blizzard. By the time we got to the dry cow lot, loaded up the cow and calf, and headed back to the home farm, the wind had really picked up and it was snowing and blowing like crazy. In fact, the drifts of snow were

so deep that we got stuck fast about halfway home and couldn't move an inch. Part of the problem was that it had snowed almost every day for a week, and there was only a narrow path in the road to follow. With the new snow coming down and the wind blowing so hard as well, huge drifts quickly moved in and completely blocked the road. It was impossible to see the sides of the road and so we got off the trail on our way back home and got sucked down into the deep deep snow.

We tried rocking the tractor and trailer back and forth to get free, but to no avail. We were stuck fast. The poor cow and calf were getting pummeled with snow and wind and so were my brother and I as we braced ourselves against the north wind, lowered our heads so our eyes wouldn't freeze shut, and scrambled home on foot as quickly as we could. Thankfully, we had just purchased a new International 5288 front wheel assist tractor that fall for chisel plowing, and it proved to be perfect for the job at hand. We fired that tractor up and headed down the road straining to stay on the path, as we drove to where the other tractor and trailer were stuck with the cow and calf inside. We hooked up a log chain and breathed a prayer as we began to try and pull it out of the ditch. I remember having to yank hard on that chain several times with the big tractor to get the momentum started, and once the smaller tractor and trailer began to move, we opened up the throttle and pulled with all our might. By the time we got that tractor and trailer to the barn, that poor cow and calf were covered in several inches of snow and ice. We quickly got them off the trailer and into the barn where we had a pen piled high with warm soft straw for them to curl up in. We also filled the manger with some

## One Man's Opinion

# The love of animals



By **JIM SACIA**  
Former State Representative

Over the Christmas season, it is shown over and over on all prominent TV channels. Every time I see the commercial, I become angrier! (Silent Night plays softly in the background.) I'm referring to the American Society For The Prevention Of Cruelty To Animals (ASPCA) commercials. The photos break your heart – shivering, emaciated, chained up dogs next to empty water and food containers. The starving

abused horses, the stumbling near blind kittens... How can people be so cruel? A noted actress appeals to you to just contribute \$19 a month and if we get 3,000 new donors we can make a

huge difference. This has to be among America's greatest frauds. We talk with our spouse, saying, "Certainly we can afford \$19 a month for such a worthy cause?" You feel so good for helping these poor abused critters. Here is the tragic reality... Two cents of every dollar or 38 cents of your \$19 goes directly to animal welfare. The rest goes to offshore branch accounts and fattening executives running the agency according to the Center for the Environment and Welfare.

ASPCA CEO "million dollar" Matt Bershadker makes \$856,785 in base salary per year and another \$104,740 in benefits. The most recent figures show 259 people at the ASPCA make six figure salaries. They have over \$11 million tucked away in Caribbean accounts. In 2021, CBS News investigators found that since 2008, the ASPCA has raised more than \$2 billion for "animal welfare." In that time, it has spent \$146 million, or about 7%, of the total money raised in grants to local animal welfare groups. They spent three times that, or \$421 million, in fundraising. That's how they get you to contribute "just \$19 to such a worthwhile organization."

Ladies and gentlemen – don't do it! Go to your local shelter. They have no budget for fundraising. They desperately need your financial help. My personal favorite is Friends Forever in Freeport, and there are many surrounding us all. Friends Forever operates on your contribution and most employees there are volunteers. They are like you and I – they love animals and want nothing more than to get them good homes. What could be more meaningful? They truly deserve your support "for the love of animals."

### FREELANCE REPORTERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS NEEDED

Rock Valley Publishing is seeking freelance reporters and photographers to produce local news and photos for your hometown newspaper. Weekly stories and photos needed for Jo Daviess and Stephenson Counties. Writing and reporting experience a plus. Work from home as an independent contractor with no in-office requirement.

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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.**

# Illinois breaks wheat yield records

By Phyllis Coulter  
FARMWEEK

Illinois wheat growers broke yield records for the third year in a row.

Farmers not only broke the record in 2023, they “smashed it,” according to Mark Schleusener.

Usually when a record is broken, it is by one to two bushels per acre, last year it was by eight, said Schleusener, Illinois state statistician for USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

The new state average wheat yield estimate for 2023 is 87 bushels per acre, up from 79 in 2022.

“We kind of smashed the record,” he said on Dec. 18 when the data was released.

Illinois wheat farmers also broke county high yield records. It is the first time a county averaged more than 100 bushels per acre, he said. Again, the year’s results blasted past that with five counties surpassing that mark.

Tazewell County took top honors with the highest average yield in the state at 108.5 bushels per acre.

Stephenson, Knox, Jo Daviess and Gallatin counties all also topped the impressive 100-bushel-county-average.

“It was a remarkable year to grow wheat in Illinois,” he said.

While noteworthy, the high yields weren’t a complete surprise. An Illinois wheat tour projected high yields as did NASS.

“Every time we gave a new forecast, it got higher,” the state statistician said.

In both May and June, the forecasts were 78 bushels. In both July and August in more mature crops, estimates leaped to 84 bushels per acre and stayed there. The new number of 87 bushels also comes from a larger sample size, Schleusener said.

Washington County, which has the most wheat acreage in Illinois, had the highest production last year coming in at more than 6.4 million bushels.

Randolph County came in second in total production, just shy of 3.4 million bushels, and Perry County came in third with almost 3 million bushels.

Earlier in the year, some people scoffed at the high yields projected by the Illinois Wheat Association (IWA) after its annual wheat tour in May.

Tour participants projected an average of 97.1 bushels per acre based on 57 samples from 20 counties, mostly south of Interstate 70. The projections were far above anything ever seen in this part of Illinois.

During the tour, IWA used a new method to enhance crop scouting with more focus on spikelet measurements and tiller counts to make yield projections. The results, using the new technique, were greeted with some skepticism because they were so much

higher than in the past.

“Everybody kind of laughed at us,” said Mark Krausz, IWA president. But no one is laughing now. “I think we were pretty accurate,” he said.

Projections in previous years had been considerably lower than the actual final yields, so the IWA sought the help of the University of Illinois for some tweaks in its forecasting to be more accurate.

The new system including spikelet and tiller information proved much more precise, especially taking into consideration the dry weather that followed the wheat tour. The lack of rain brought yields down a little from the earlier potential tour members saw in May, Krausz said.

“Not everybody had exceptional wheat; some wheat was just good,” said the Clinton County farmer of areas that didn’t receive timely rains during the year.

As for 2024’s wheat crop, Krausz said it’s looking good so far. Like last year, milder temperatures helped the winter wheat get off to a good start.

“I’ve been all over the state and it has real good potential,” he said.

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



Illinois wheat growers broke yield records for the third year in a row in 2023.

SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

## News briefs

### Veterans’ Pantry in need of items

Items listed below are needed for the Veterans’ Pantry in Freeport. The support of the community has been tremendous, and the pantry as well as the veterans are so grateful. Items may be brought to the American Legion Home at 314 W Main Street on Saturdays from 10 to 11 a.m. Please call 815-369-4684 to make other arrangements.

The current needs for the Veterans Pantry in Freeport are mouthwash, sham-

poo, conditioner, deodorant, body wash, lotion, dish soap, Kleenex, paper towels, toilet tissue, laundry detergent, light bulbs, pillows, soups, food, fruit cups, and can openers.

### Blackhawk Unit of Home Extension

The January meeting of Blackhawk Unit of Home Extension will be held Jan. 18, 2024, at the Pearl City Library at 1 p.m. Judy Shippee will be giving the lesson on “Cheese Please”. The program booklet will be filled out for the year at this meeting as

well. Please come and enjoy the fellowship with friends.

### SSM Health hosts blood Drive in Monroe

To help meet the continued national blood supply need, please consider participating in SSM Health’s Community Blood Drive on Tuesday, Jan. 30. The Blood Drive will run

from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the St. Clare Conference Center at their main clinic located at 515 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue in Monroe.

Appointments are encouraged but not required. To schedule, please visit Bloodcenter.org or call SSM Health Monroe Hospital Volunteer Services Coordinator, Mary Berger, at 608-324-1569. Please eat before donating and bring a photo ID.

## • Winter (Continued from page 4)

fresh hay for the mother to eat. She munched on the hay and then lied down close to her calf, and soon their body heat had melted the snow, and they were warm and dry and chewing their cud contentedly. It was a winter adventure I’ll never forget.

I am so thankful that God has provided a way for people to be rescued from

the danger of sin. We read in II Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. In a way, we rescued that cow and calf just as God rescues us through faith in the Christ. Until next week, God bless.

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**The Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation will host several events in the new year, including the annual Open Hike Night at Casper Bluff Land and Water Reserve on Saturday, Jan. 20. Join as bonfires burn throughout the trails and luminarias light the way.**

## JDCF announces first events of the year

The Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation (JDCF) hosts a series of nature related events for people of all ages throughout the year. There are several coming up to kick-off 2024 and all are invited to attend.

The JDCF book club, 'Conservation Conversation', is back by popular demand starting on Jan. 10, 2024. This is a free series of Zoom discussions that will take place on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. To honor JDCF's mission statement, and in recognition of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge, the reading and discussion will focus on land, water, and the Driftless Area. For the reading list and to sign up for the Zoom links, please visit [www.jdcf.org/events](http://www.jdcf.org/events).

JDCF's annual Open Hike

Night at Casper Bluff Land and Water Reserve will be held on Saturday, Jan. 20 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Join to experience the preserve and the adjacent Casper Creek Natural Cemetery after dark. Luminarias will light the trails leading to the Thunderbird effigy mound, the Galena Rotary Pavilion, and through the natural cemetery. There will also be several communal bonfires burning.. RSVPs are not needed, and guests are free to arrive and depart at any time during the event. There is no fee to attend but donations are gladly accepted. Celebrate the start of a new year by getting outside and enjoying the magical Casper Bluff located at 870 S Pilot Knob Rd, Galena, IL. Snow date is 1/27/24, same time. Check [www.jdcf.org](http://www.jdcf.org) for updates.

# Stockton boys battle through injuries, snap recent losing streak

By Trenten Scheidegger  
CORRESPONDENT

After falling to the Warren Warriors on Jan. 2, the Stockton Blackhawks found themselves in quite a predicament. The loss to Warren was their third consecutive regular season loss. It was also their second consecutive loss to Warren, as they faced off to end the first half of the season.

Not only did the Blackhawks drop back-to-back games to the Warriors, but their upcoming schedule wasn't looking too friendly. The Blackhawks had to face off with a surprising Galena Pirates squad on Jan. 4. Stockton was on the road for that matchup where saw them lose to the Pirates 54-37.

In the midst of it all, Stockton head coach John Hammann took the time to discuss the state of the team. "We have been battling some key injuries that have hurt our team with our depth and rotation, which has put everyone on our team in a different role," Hammann shared. Injuries shook the whole team up. Hammann explained, "When a player's role changes, there is an adjustment period for everyone on the team."

Despite the injuries, the Blackhawks continue to fight

their way through a grueling schedule. With upcoming matchups against the Durand Bulldogs, the River Ridge Wildcats, and the East Dubuque Warriors, the Blackhawks will be used to being the underdogs. "Our schedule has been very difficult and does not get any easier as we get into conference play," Hammann said.

Stockton's coach is still hoping to see the team progress, no matter the opponent. "We are looking to improve every day in practice, so that it translates to games. We are working on cleaning up some of the mistakes we are making in games to make sure that we put ourselves in a position to succeed."

Stockton saw some of that improvement on Saturday, Jan. 6, when they faced off with Black Hawk at this year's Stateline Shootout in Warren. The Black Hawk Warriors have struggled through the season as they came into the shootout with a winless 0-10 record. Stockton was just 3-8, but they were riding a four-game losing streak. With both teams eager for a win, this was set up for an exciting game, despite the overall records.

From the opening tip,

Stockton got off to a hot start. Bennett Graves and Carter Blair provided an early spark with their three-point shooting. They each hit a pair of shots from deep as Stockton put up four three-pointers in the opening quarter. Will Westaby added four first quarter points of his own as the Blackhawks jumped out to a big lead.

By the start of the second quarter, Stockton already held a 22-6 advantage. Black Hawk would chip away at the deficit, however. The Warriors outscored the Blackhawks 15-8 in the second. If it wasn't for Graves' third three-pointer of the game, Stockton's lead would have all dwindled even further. Westaby added another three points in the second to help the Blackhawks take a 30-21 lead into halftime.

Both teams came out strong in the second half. The third quarter featured multiple momentum shifts as both teams looked to set themselves apart. Westaby continued to attack the defense down low as he put up another four points. Colby Tucker had five points in the quarter with a three-pointer and two free throws. The duo helped the Blackhawks take a 42-32

lead into the final quarter.

The fourth quarter became a physical game as the Blackhawks looked to run out the clock. The Warriors hit a couple of late three-pointers, which gave them life. In the end, a basket from graves and a free throw by Westaby provided the only fourth quarter points for Stockton. That was just enough to win as Stockton picked up a 45-42 victory over Black Hawk.

Graves led the team in scoring with 15 points off a trio of three-pointers. Westaby was the only other Stockton player in double figures with 12. Blair added eight, while Tucker had seven in the victory.

Hammann saw his team improve their record to 4-8 with the victory over Black Hawk. Despite that overall record, Hammann remains pleased with his squad and the way they have fought. "The boys continue to work hard every day in practice and play hard in games, which I am very proud of. We just need to focus on executing at a higher level in games," Hammann added.

Stockton is set to play host to the Amboy Clippers on Jan. 13 at 2:30 p.m.

## Warriors pull off upset over Scales Mound in buzzer beater fashion

By Trenten Scheidegger  
CORRESPONDENT

Despite a change at the head coach position, the Warren Warriors have found their stride as of late. At the beginning of the season, the Warriors were playing under Branden Behlke. At semester, Behlke returned to Black Hawk and Troy Pafford took over the position. Since the change, the Warriors have picked up some impressive victories over Stockton and Scales Mound.

Warren faced off with the Stockton Blackhawks on Jan. 2. At the time, both teams were coming off long breaks. They faced off with each other back on Dec. 21, which was their last game before the new year. Back in December, Warren picked up a 45-34 victory over Stockton. The Warriors began 2024 the same way they ended 2023, with a win over the Blackhawks.

Stockton held the energy early in the game as the home team. Things went back and forth, but the Blackhawks took a 10-9 advantage to end the first. Some pesky defense gave the Warriors momentum

early in the second quarter, however. A steal by Treyton Pafford led to an assist to Bryce VanRaalte down low. That gave the Warriors a 13-10 advantage early in quarter two.

Stockton continued to keep the pace. Later in the quarter, Carter Blair hit a tough shot to tie the game at 18-18. Blair was fouled on the play but was unsuccessful on the and-one opportunity. That turned into an extra chance for the Blackhawks as Harbach tipped a rebound to Jon Randecker for a physical layup underneath.

In the closing moments of the first half, Warren tied the game with some savvy defense. Stockton was trying to hold the ball for the last shot. After a double team in the corner by Braxten Kent and Teagan Sabinson, Pafford stole a pass over the middle. Pafford took it the distance, tying the game 20-20 with an easy layup. The game remained tied until the half.

After an even first half, the Warriors dominated the third quarter. The offense came out firing on all cylinders as they outscored the Blackhawks

21-8 in the third quarter. Warren outscored Stockton 14-10 in the fourth, but it was the big third quarter that stood out.

VanRaalte had an explosive night offensively, leading the team with 24 points. Brady Stietz was Warren's next leading scorer with six. Stockton was led by Randecker with 14. Colby Tucker was the only other Blackhawk in double figures with 10. Harbach added six as Stockton fell to Warren 55-38.

Two days later, the Warriors kept it rolling when they faced perhaps their toughest challenge of the young season. On Jan. 4, the Warriors held a record of 5-5. Their opponent, the Scales mound Hornets, were ranked in the state of one of Illinois' premier 1A boys basketball teams. Despite that, the Warriors put on a show in front of their home crowd.

There was no shortage of offense in the first quarter. VanRaalte put in work down low with six first quarter points. Stietz added a pair of his own baskets, and Sabinson hit a three-pointer. On the other end, Thomas Hereau

had an electric start. Hereau hit a pair of three-pointers on his way to 11 first quarter points.

Warren always managed to keep themselves close, and the end of the first quarter was a perfect example of that. In the closing seconds, Warren displayed some great passes before a Stietz assist to VanRaalte to beat the buzzer. By the end of one, Warren trailed by just a point at 16-15.

In the second quarter, the Warriors caught fire from deep. In fact, it was a bit of a three-point contest as both teams combined for six threes in the quarter. It was Warren who had the majority of them, as Sabinson and Pafford each hit a pair in the second. Pafford had 10 points in the quarter which allowed the Warriors to get out to a first half advantage. At the break, Warren held a 33-28 lead.

In the third quarter, the three-point magic shifted to the Hornets' hands. Max Wielen hit a pair of big three-pointers to help the cause. Evan Cogan, who

See UPSET, Page 7

Pearl City FFA's Carry Outs Available

## Pork Chop Dinner

**Tuesday, Jan. 16 • 5 - 7:30 p.m.**  
at the Pearl City High School Cafeteria

**The dinner will include a pork chop sandwich, chips, cookie and drink for \$8.00**



**Tickets can be purchased from members of the Pearl City FFA or at the door.**

The Pearl City FFA & FFA Alumni host this dinner and a silent auction to raise funds to benefit the Pearl City FFA Chapter. Illinois Pork Producers and Stephenson County Pork Producers support this event with grant funds. After dinner, cheer on our Pearl City Wolves Boys Basketball team as they play the Le-Win Panthers. Please join us for an evening of fun and help support the Pearl City FFA!

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# Around the Northern Hills

There are many benefits in becoming a Farm Bureau member. The Farm Bureau fights for farmers. We represent three out of every four farmers in Illinois. Whether you have 10 acres or 10,000 we are here to serve you. For more than 100 years, we have stood by our mission to improve the future of agriculture.

The Farm Bureau gives back. From scholarships to resources for teachers or donating nearly one million meals to local food banks, we take pride in caring for our communities.

The Farm Bureau works the Hill. Capitol Hill, that is. We are a grassroots organization. Our members work with local, state, and federal legislatures to help protect farmers and develop better ways to farm. It also keeps you in the know. From apps to workshops, we are known for our factual information that helps farmers work smarter and consumers stay informed.

The Farm Bureau saves you money. You will find more than 302,000 discounts on agriculture, health, travel and automotive programs on the Illinois Farm Bureau Member Benefit App. You can't afford not to be an Illinois Farm Bureau Member.

## Scholarships program

The Jo Daviess County Farm Bureau Foundation's scholarship program provides scholarships to students who are majoring in agriculture, agribusiness, vocational or an agriculture related course of study. The scholarships are awarded on the basis of exceptional scholastic ability.

All applicants must meet these eligibility guidelines:

1. Must be a Jo Daviess County Farm Bureau member, spouse of member or member's child.
2. Must be accepted for enrollment or be enrolled at an accredited college, university, community college or vocational/technical school.
3. Must be majoring in agriculture or an ag-related study.
4. Must exhibit potential for successful completion of study.

General scholarship applications must have successfully completed 12 college credits and be enrolled as a full-time student (up to two \$500 scholarships will be awarded). Highland Community College applicants do not have to



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

have any college credits completed to apply for the scholarship (up to two \$500 scholarships will be awarded). A copy of the application can be found at [www.jodaviesscfb.com](http://www.jodaviesscfb.com). Click on the foundation tab to find the link to the application.

## Member benefit platform

Have you had a chance to try out Illinois Farm Bureau's member benefit platform? This is a great way that you can save as a farm bureau member! Personally, I have come across some great discounts through this platform. What I like is that you can set up notifications on your phone to be alerted of nearby discounts. To access the new web platform at <https://ilfb.abenity.com>. Members must create an account and provide their Illinois Farm Bureau member number. Members can also go to the iPhone app store, search IL Farm Bureau membership benefits, and download the app on their iPhone or iPad. If you have any questions about the new member benefit platform, feel free to call our office.

## Join FB ACT text messaging

The Illinois Farm Bureau Agricultural Contact Team (FB ACT) is comprised of Farm Bureau members who are ready to respond to IFB action requests. When Illinois Farm Bureau (IFB) issues an action request, it signals your voice is needed on a major action request, or on a major legislative or regulatory issue facing Illinois farmers.

By signing up for FB ACT text messages, you will be notified the instant your voice is needed in Washington D.C., or Springfield. To sign up or renew your FB ACT text message subscription, please text the keyword "FARM" to this number - 52883, and you will be ready to act for ag!

## Farm Fun Fact

Sheep are the only source of lanolin, which is grease that comes from wool before it has been washed. Lanolin is used in lotions and cosmetics.

# Stockton Chamber of Commerce news

December was packed with holiday cheer and tradition including the Annual Living Windows display arranged by the McGovern's. We thank you for this wonderful event and donation of Christmas music.

The Miss Merry Christmas and Little Jack Frost crowning had to be postponed until the following week because of an unexpected electrical outage due to downed wires that happened right before the tree lighting ceremony.

We would like to extend our warmest "thank you" to the emergency services departments and utility companies who worked tirelessly through the cold, for their hard work

and dedication, and for keeping everyone safe.

The Christmas Walk proved to be successful! We look forward to continuing this tradition and growing it to become an even bigger and better event in the future.

## Chamber Membership Drive

The Chamber Membership Drive is in full swing. If you are a member, we have sent out a membership renewal form to you in the mail. Are you interested in becoming a Chamber member or do you know a local business who would be interested in becoming a chamber member? Visit any of our Chamber members for

more information or visit <https://www.villageofstockton.com/chamber/join-the-chamber/>.

## Hudson's Tack & More opens in Stockton

We would like to extend a warm welcome to Hudson's Tack & More! On Dec. 28, Stockton welcomed a new business to its Downtown district. Hudson's Tack graciously opened its doors to the community to show off their fine selection of saddles, supplements, and "everything equine." Stop in and say hello to Kristina Larkin, Monica Larkin, or Dusty Curry at Hudson's Tack & More, located at 110 West Front Ave, Stockton.

# FHN celebrates December DAISY, BEE Award winners

Every day, every person at FHN strives to provide exceptional, compassionate care to patients and their loved ones. FHN is proud to announce the December 2023 DAISY and BEE award recipients.

FHN's December DAISY award winner is Emergency Department Triage Nurse Doug Munda, who helped an injured little girl stay calm for evaluation and treatment. "My daughter instantly formed a bond with Doug and was comforted by his gentle demeanor," his nominator said. He gave her a stuffed animal, and asked if she could take care of the animal for him. "She did not require any pain medication, as Doug made

sure she had a warm blanket, the Disney Channel on the TV and her stuffed animal next to her."

The DAISY (Diseases Attacking the Immune System) Award is an international recognition program for hospitals that honors and celebrates the skillful, compassionate care nurses provide every day. The DAISY Foundation was established by the family of J. Patrick Barnes after he died from complications of the auto-immune disease ITP (Idiopathic Thrombocytopenic Purpura) in 1999. During his hospitalization, his family deeply appreciated the care and compassion shown to Patrick and his entire family. When he died, they felt

compelled to say "thank you" to nurses in a very public way: The DAISY Award.

FHN's December BEE Award recipient is CNA Lillie Curtiss, who provided excellent care to a post-surgical patient. Her nominator spent the night at the hospital after knee surgery, and said, "When I woke up the next day, Lillie joyfully walked into my room. She did not have to ask any questions about my care. I thought I was at a spa. Any assistance I needed, Lillie was there to help."

Just like a DAISY would not be able to grow without the help of the BEE, our nurses could not do what they do for our patients without the outstanding teamwork of other health care professionals. The BEE (Being Exceptional Everyday) Award honors patient care (non-nurse) staff who assist a nurse or a patient and

his or her family in delivering excellent patient care.

Patients or their loved ones can learn more about the awards and share their story at [www.fhn.org/daisy-bee](http://www.fhn.org/daisy-bee) - and a multidisciplinary selection committee of FHN will select the DAISY and BEE Award honorees from nominations submitted by patients and family members. DAISY honorees will be recognized at a public ceremony in his or her unit at FHN and will receive a certificate, an award pin, and a hand-carved stone sculpture entitled *A Healer's Touch*. Everyone in the unit will celebrate with cinnamon rolls - a favorite of Patrick's during his illness. BEE honorees will be recognized publicly on their unit, receive a certificate, and award pin and the unit will celebrate with honey-themed treats.

## • Upset (Continued from page 6)

went scoreless in the first half, hit his first basket with a three of his own. Derrick Distler added a three as the Hornets hit four of them in the quarter.

Warren ran their offense through Pafford in the third. Pafford hit a pair of his own three-pointers as he put up 10 in the quarter. Scales Mound outscored Warren 16-15 in the quarter, but Pafford did just enough to maintain the lead.

Heading into the fourth, the Warriors held a 47-44 lead. The Hornets continued to operate from deep as Wiene hit two more three-pointers. Kaden Deurr hit a three of his own.

In the end, it was Jordan Kohl who hit the biggest three of the night. Kohl had two three-pointers in the final quarter, both of which came in the final seconds of the game. With under 30 seconds to play, VanRaalte grabbed an offensive rebound and quickly hit Kohl on the right wing. Kohl,

just a sophomore, drilled the shot to tie the game at 57-57.

Coming out of a timeout, the Warriors played great defense. Scales Mound tried to hold for the final shot, but VanRaalte stole a pass over the middle. With seven seconds left, he found Pafford up court. Pafford fumbled the pass, however, nearly leading to a turnover. What ensued was a work of art as Stietz caught the ball on the baseline and tossed a behind the back pass to a wide-open Kohl. No backboard, no rim, Kohl needed nothing but net to put the Hornets away. His buzzer beater three-pointer knocked off Scales Mound as Warren picked up a 60-57 victory.

Pafford led the way in scoring with 24. VanRaalte was next up with 13, and Sabinson added 11 in the victory. Wiene led the Hornets with 17 points, while Hereau finished with 15. Jonah Driscoll added eight in the loss.

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# American Legion Auxiliary to host Pie Baking Contest and Annual Soup Tasting

The American Legion Auxiliary will be holding the annual Pie Baking Contest on Saturday, Jan. 20, 2024. Fruit pies should be delivered to the American Legion Home in Lena between 10 a.m. and 12 p.m. Pies will be judged, and cash prizes will be awarded.

2:30 p.m. The Annual Soup Tasting will feature over 15 different soups and dessert for \$8 per adults and \$3 per children under 10.

Come join for a weekend of fun. The American Legion Home is located 316 West Main Street in Lena, across from the historical water tower. Please call 233-9078 or 369-4684 with any questions.

On Sunday, Jan. 21, 2024, the units will once again sponsor an activity from 11 a.m. to



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## Happy Birthday to you!

The Lena Living Center celebrates all of their December birthdays with cake, ice cream, and music by Denny Diamond. Thank you to Cafe 217 and Lena Lions Club for sponsoring the Monthly Birthday Party.

# Get your hometown news before it's hot off the press!

The Scoop Today and Shopper's Guide are now available by FREE eSubscription to residents and businesses in Stephenson and Jo Daviess Counties.

As an alternative to mail, a free digital eSubscription will be available by request. A link to your eSubscription will be emailed to you every week. Now is your chance to get your hometown news before the newspaper is hot off the press!

The Scoop Today/Shopper's Guide eSubscription can be read on a computer, laptop or tablet. There will be no telemarketing calls, no solicitation, no strings attached, just convenient, free delivery, compliments of our advertisers.



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## Stephenson County Farm Bureau news

By Victoria Hansen

More than \$192,000 in scholarships are available for agriculture students through the IAA Foundation. "We are once again pleased to offer a scholarship program that encourages students to explore degrees in agriculture related fields," said Jennifer Smith, IAA Foundation development manager. "It is imperative that the next generation of agriculture leaders receives the financial support they need to stay immersed in their education and build their career in agriculture."

Agriculture students and Illinois Farm Bureau® (IFB) members, spouses and children are eligible to apply for 110 college scholarships offered by the IAA Foundation, Illinois Farm Bureau's charitable arm. The scholarships, ranging from \$1,000 to \$7,500, will be awarded in total of \$192,001 for the 2024-25 school year. Applications are open for a variety of financial awards including the newly created Promoting Careers in Agriculture Scholarship, Robert E. Koeller Scholarship and the Allen and Ellen M. Blessman Scholarship. Additionally, the IAA Foundation offers scholarships on behalf of Prairie Farms Dairy and several family scholarships established to honor loved ones. Fellowships are also available to support students pursuing advanced degrees in fields that directly relate to agriculture.

Scholarships are awarded based on involvement in extra-curricular activities, community service, academic performance, leadership experiences and an essay. Previous winners of an IAA Foundation scholarship are eligible to apply again if the individual scholarship allows.

A full listing of available scholarships and eligibility guidelines is available at [www.iaafoundation.org](http://www.iaafoundation.org). Applications must be completed online by Feb. 15. For more information, contact your county Farm Bureau, the IAA Foundation at 309-557-2232, or email Jennifer Smith at [jsmith@ilfb.org](mailto:jsmith@ilfb.org).

### Carroll County Farm Bureau offers Members Health Screenings/Blood Draw

On Friday, Jan. 19 from 6 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. at the Carroll County Farm Bureau office invites the community to take part in a preventative health screening with a three-panel blood draw for \$100 for the basic package. The Preventative Health Screening package for \$100 includes Full blood draw CMP, CBC & Lipid panels, Cholesterol blood sugar, protein counts electrolytes, liver enzymes, blood cell counts and much more. Blood Pressure checks will also be given. Participants will receive the results within three weeks. The blood draw is on par with standard draw at doctors' office. Appointments are required and must be scheduled in advance. To schedule please call Thrive Wellness at 309-550-9172.

### Circa 21 Bus Trip

On Sunday, Feb. 18 the Carroll and Stephenson County Farm Bureaus will travel to see a production of *Murder on the Orient Express* at the Circa 21 Theater in the quad cities. The trip will depart the Freeport Walmart parking lot at 1:15 p.m. and will stop at the Carroll County Farm Bureau in Mount Carroll as an additional pickup at 1:45 p.m. The trip is estimated to return to Mount Carroll at 9 p.m. and Freeport at 9:30 p.m. The member price is \$100 and the non-member Price is \$120. The cost includes transportation, show admission, dinner/dessert and all gratuities. Reserve a spot by calling either the Carroll County Farm Bureau at 815-244-3001 or the Stephenson County Farm Bureau at 815-232-3186.

### Stephenson County Farm Bureau Member Social

Join the Stephenson County Farm Bureau at Lena Brewing on Feb. 8 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. For a member social. A light dinner will be provided. This is a great opportunity to network with other Farm Bureau members. Reservations not required. Call 815-232-3186 with questions.



# Lady Broncos defeat Pearl City, improve to 19-1

By Trenten Scheidegger  
CORRESPONDENT

The Orangeville Broncos continue to dominate the girls basketball world as one of the best 1A teams in all of Illinois. Last week, they continued to prove that as they picked up victories over Durand and Pearl City.

On Jan. 4, the Broncos hit the road to face off with the Durand Bulldogs. At the time, Durand held a record of 5-6. Meanwhile, the Broncos sat atop the NUIC at 17-1. Orangeville was also riding a three-game winning streak, which they had no intention of giving up.

Durand's defense had no answers for Whitney Sullivan in the opening quarter. That's something most defenses struggle with against the

Broncos, and that remained true for the Bulldogs. Sullivan put up 12 points, including going four for four at the line in the first quarter. Laney Cahoon sunk an early three as the Broncos took a 19-11 advantage into the second quarter.

There, Orangeville continued to grow their lead. Sullivan dominated the paint as she put up another nine points. Nadalee Doyle went to work, hitting a three-pointer and a couple of inside baskets. Cahoon added four as the Broncos outscored Durand 2-9 in the quarter. By the break, Orangeville held a 41-20 advantage.

Things only got worse for Durand in the second half. Orangeville's pesky defense held the Bulldogs to just six

third quarter points. Meanwhile, the Broncos put up another 19 points on their end.

This time, it was Cahoon doing the damage. In the third quarter alone, Cahoon hit a pair of three-pointers as she put up 10 points. Doyle hit another three in the quarter as she added six points of her own.

By the fourth, Orangeville held a nearly insurmountable lead as they were up 60-26. The number two ranked Broncos managed to let the clock run out on a 64-26 victory over Durand. Sullivan led Orangeville with 23 points. Cahoon was the next leading scorer with 17, and Doyle was right behind her with 15.

The very next day, the Broncos hit the road again as they traveled to face off with

the Pearl City Wolves in another conference matchup. Pearl City came in at just 3-14 on the year, and they found themselves in a tough matchup against the winning Broncos.

Once again, the Broncos got off to a dominant start. In the very first quarter, Kaylynn O'Haver hit a three-pointer, giving her five quick points. Doyle added five of her own. The Broncos mixed things up early on as Cahoon and Sullivan, who typically lead the team in scoring, had just two points each.

Pearl City struggled to get their offense going. Fallyn Endress and Tana Gravert were the only Wolves to score in the quarter. By the end of the first, Pearl City already trailed by a score of 14-4.

Orangeville began to pick things up in the second quarter as Sullivan put up six points. Bailey Jordan added a basket of her own as the Broncos outscored Pearl City 13-4 in the quarter. By the break, Orangeville held a 27-8 advantage.

The Broncos continued to run their offense in the third quarter. Cahoon caught fire with 12 points in the third. Addy Wheeler hit a pair of three-pointers on her way to eight third quarter points. O'Haver hit her second three of the night as well.

The Wolves also came out firing in the third. Danica Stager and Kendra Kuhlmeier each hit threes in the quarter. In fact, the Wolves had one of their better offensive quarters of the season as they

combined for 14 in the quarter. Despite that, they still went into the fourth trailing Orangeville 55-22.

Cahoon led the Broncos with 15, while Sullivan was the only other Orangeville player in double figures at 10. Wheeler and O'Haver each finished the game with nine. Pearl City was led by Endress, who finished with six. Three other Wolves finished with five in Stager, Kuhlmeier, and Gravert.

The Broncos improved to 19-1 on the year as they picked up a 57-24 victory over the Wolves. On Jan. 13, Pearl City will continue their season as they play host to the Polo Marcos. Orangeville won't be in action until Jan. 17 when they play host to the Dakota Indians.

# Orangeville-Aquin falls to Durand as losing streak continues

By Trenten Scheidegger  
CORRESPONDENT

The Orangeville-Aquin Broncos have experienced the ups and downs that a young coop should expect. Early in the season, the Orangeville-Aquin boys basketball team hit their stride with three wins in four games played. With victories over Hiawatha, Benton, and West Carroll, the Broncos saw their record improve to 3-5 on the season.

A five-game losing streak followed that 3-5 stretch. Perhaps the most painful part of watching their record fall to 3-10 was how close the Broncos have been to win-

ning in most of those games. The losing streak began with a nine-point loss to River Ridge back on Dec. 16. A 48-44 loss to Warren and a 46-43 loss to Forreston followed. The Broncos then ended 2023 with a loss to Dakota, before starting 2024 with another loss to Durand.

Despite the losses, the Broncos can feel confident about how they compete. In each and every game, Orangeville-Aquin has given themselves a chance to come out on top. They continued to prove they can compete with anyone when they faced off with the Dakota Indians for

their last game of 2023.

In the first quarter, the Broncos may have surprised the Indians. They matched Dakota point for point as the game went into the second quarter tied at 12-12. That's where things got out of hand for the Broncos, however. Dakota's offense went on a big run, taking a 32-19 lead into halftime.

Orangeville-Aquin's offense came out strong in the second half. Brant Carlson got the scoring started with a tough layup from the right side of the paint. Carlson was fouled on the play, which led to a successful and-one op-

portunity. Shortly after, Cody Wirth sunk a three-pointer from the left wing. Wirth followed that up with a one-hander in the middle of the paint, which bounced around the rim before falling in.

The Broncos appeared to find their stride offensively. Unfortunately for them, Dakota's offense was just as impressive. Despite the Orangeville-Aquin run, Dakota managed to maintain their lead as they took a 47-35 advantage into the fourth quarter.

The Broncos put up 12 in the fourth, but it wasn't enough to comeback as they fell to the Indians 61-47. Carlson led the Broncos in scoring with 15 points. Wirth was right behind him with 14. Brock Tyrrell added eight in the losing effort.

Things didn't get any easier for the Broncos when they began the new year. On Jan.

4, Orangeville-Aquin took on the Durand Bulldogs in an NUIC matchup. Durand brought a 10-3 record into their matchup with the Broncos. Once again, the Broncos hoped to pull off an upset as the underdogs.

Another tough first half left the Broncos trailing early on. Orangeville-Aquin kept pace early on, but Durand eventually pulled away for a 34-21 advantage.

Once again, the Broncos came out strong in the second half. In the third quarter, Wirth hit a pair of baskets before going two for two at the free throw line. Jaxon Grilliot hit a three-pointer on his way to five third quarter points. Tyrrell, Carlson, and Ben Briggs each had baskets in the quarter. The Broncos managed to chip away at the lead as they went into the fourth trailing 48-38.

Orangeville-Aquin contin-

ued to have the momentum in the fourth. Ben Briggs began to find success down low with a trio of baskets. Wirth hit two big shots to close the gap. Late in the game, Grilliot found Briggs down low for an assist. Briggs' second basket of the quarter made things interesting as the Broncos only trailed by just eight with over two minutes left to play.

That was as close as they would get, however. The Broncos went on to fall by a final score of 61-54. Wirth had a solid night offensively, leading the way with 16 points. Briggs was the only other Bronco in double figures with 13. Tyrrell added eight, while Carlson had seven in the loss.

Despite the losses, the Broncos don't seem far off from coming out on top. They will get another opportunity on Jan. 12 when they play host to the Pearl City Wolves.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

# F-4 Jet project well underway

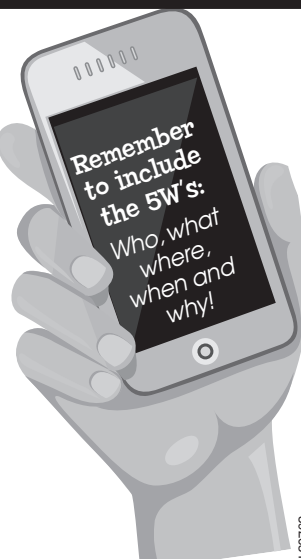
Members of the Northwest Illinois F-4 Aerial Combat Memorial Committee go over a tentative layout for the memorial park which will be the permanent home of the jet. Donations are still needed to be able to finish this project. If everything goes well, the project should be finished this summer. Memorial pavers are still available.

## You ought to be in pictures!

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SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Freeport's FHN Women's Health Team was recently recognized for their outstanding efforts to provide equitable quality care to all mothers and babies. Posing with

their awarded plaque are (from left) Melissa Larson, Madasyn Brener, Robin Ortman, Keri Schubert, Linn Carter, Allissa Bruning, and Danielle Wittig.

# Freeport FHN OB Team recognized for outstanding commitment to care

The Illinois Perinatal Quality Collaborative (IL-PQC) has recognized the FHN Women's Health team at FHN Memorial Hospital in Freeport for the team's outstanding efforts to provide equitable quality care to all mothers and babies.

"Of the 74 participating hospitals in Illinois, just 24 managed to meet all the rigorous criteria for this recog-

nition so far. Also, FHN was one of just eight in the state to be recognized at the ILPQC Annual Conference for having a parent partner involved in their teams committee," said FHN Women's Health Service Line Director Linn Carter, MSN, APN/CNS-BC, NEA-BC. FHN's team hosts quarterly community breakfasts for past patients as a way to receive feedback on what is

going well and potential improvements to assure respectful care is given at all times.

"Congratulations to our Women's Healthcare team for their unwavering commitment to improving the lives of women and infants throughout our community," said FHN President and CEO Mark Gridley, MBA, FACHE. "We're incredibly proud to have them as part of

our healthcare family."

To earn this recognition, the FHN Women's Health team goes above and beyond for all of its patients by screening for social determinants of health (SDOH), economic and social conditions that affect individuals access to healthcare both prenatally and again when admitted to the hospital for delivery. They also screen for access of care for pregnant moms, collect valuable demographic data,

and screen for available resources. They also prioritize staff and provider education to stay up-to-date with the latest healthcare practices.

The FHN OB team scored exceptionally high marks for respectful care upon discharge, showing the team's dedication to providing the best possible experience for their patients throughout their healthcare journey.

The FHN OB team is one of the first women's health-

care teams in the state to participate in the Illinois Perinatal Quality Collaborative (IL-PQC) Equity and Safe Sleep of Infants (ESSI) Initiative. Being part of Wave 1 ensures FHN is a leader in expanding team members' knowledge and community involvement in safe sleep for families.

For more information on the FHN Women's Healthcare team and OB team, visit [www.fhn.org/womens-health.asp](http://www.fhn.org/womens-health.asp).



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## FHN Get Fit 2024 begins Jan. 21

FHN's popular wellness program is back to help participants work toward their best health. Get Fit 2024 is heavy on tips, videos, and rec-

ipes to help participants build a healthy lifestyle for years to come.

Get Fit 2024 is a free 12-week online program begin-

ning and ending with in-person screenings. Participants can join as an individual or as part of a 4-person team.

Participants will receive special Get Fit 2024 newsletters with healthy lifestyle information including exercise tips and healthy recipes. They also can take advantage of special offers from local fitness partners and participate in fun contests, and of course, win great prizes. Signup for FHN's Get Fit 2024 is open now at [www.fhn.org/getfit](http://www.fhn.org/getfit).

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# Trump faces ballot challenge in Illinois minutes after filing his petitions

## Objectors say he's disqualified under 14th Amendment for role in Jan. 6 Capitol riots

By Peter Hancock  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Illinois is now among the growing list of states in which former President Donald Trump will have to fight to have his name appear on the 2024 election ballots.

A group of five voters filed a joint objection to Trump's candidacy on Jan. 4, arguing that Trump should be disqualified under the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which prohibits anyone who took part in an insurrection against the United States from holding federal office.

The objection alleges that Trump's attempts to overturn the results of the 2020 elections, including his involvement in events leading up to the Jan. 6, 2021, storming of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, amounted to an insurrection.

"Consequently, Donald J. Trump is disqualified from, and ineligible to hold, the office of President of the United States," the objection states. "Accordingly, his nomination papers are invalid under Illi-

nois law because when Trump swore he was 'qualified' for the presidential office, as required by (state statute), he did so falsely."

Jan. 4 was the first day for presidential candidates to file petitions for the March 19 primary ballot. According to the Illinois State Board of Elections' website, the Trump campaign filed its petitions at 8 a.m., along with fellow Republican candidates Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, and Texas businessman Ryan L. Binkley.

On the Democratic side, President Joe Biden's campaign filed petitions, along with Minnesota Congressman Dean Phillips and author Marianne Williamson. As of Jan. 4, Trump was the only candidate facing an objection. The deadline for filing objections is Friday, Jan. 12.

Similar objections have been filed in multiple other states. So far, however, they have only been upheld in Colorado and Maine. The Trump campaign has filed appeals in

both of those cases, including a direct appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court in the Colorado case.

Matthew Piers, a Chicago-based attorney who filed the Illinois objection, said in an interview that the cases highlight the differences in election laws among the various states.

In some states, he said, primary elections are considered operations of political parties, not the states themselves, and therefore are not subject to rules set by the state. But in Illinois, he said, state law specifically requires candidates to state on their nominating petitions that they are qualified for the office they are seeking.

Article II of the U.S. Constitution requires presidents to be "natural born citizens" who are at least 35 years of age and who have been residents of the United States for at least 14 years.

But the 14th amendment, enacted in the aftermath of the Civil War, adds more conditions, barring any former

public officials who previously took an oath to support the Constitution from holding certain public offices in the future if they ever engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the United States or gave aid or comfort to its enemies.

The objection cites numerous other government agencies and officials who have concluded that the events of Jan. 6, 2021, were an insurrection, including decisions of the Colorado Supreme Court and the Maine secretary of state to keep Trump's name off the ballot in those states.

The objection also cites several recent court rulings, including some involving people convicted of crimes stemming from the Jan. 6

events at the Capitol.

In an email, Illinois Republican Party Chairman Don Tracy said the state party is neutral in the GOP primary but that the issue of Trump's candidacy should be decided by voters.

"This attempt to remove President Trump from the ballot without due process is an anti-democracy attempt to limit the voting rights of Illinois citizens and should be dismissed outright," Tracy said.

Legal challenges to a candidate's qualifications for office are not uncommon in Illinois. Dozens of them are currently pending at the Illinois State Board of Elections against candidates for the General Assembly and various judicial

positions, mostly based on claims that petition signatures were invalid or insufficient.

In 2016, a challenge was filed against Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton based on her petition signatures. And in 2012, Democratic President Barack Obama faced three nearly identical challenges to his candidacy based on false allegations about his citizenship.

State Board of Elections spokesman Matt Dietrich said in an email the objection to Trump's candidacy will be investigated by a hearing officer who will make a recommendation to the board's general counsel. The full, eight-member bipartisan board will consider the challenge at a meeting Tuesday, Jan. 30.

# Youth Naturalist Program offered by Illinois Extension

Learn about nature at Wee Nats (Wee Naturalists), a fun interactive program for youth ages 4-7, hosted by The University of Illinois Extension for Jo Daviess, Stephenson, and Winnebago counties. Kids will learn about different environmental education topics through a story, activity, craft, and hike.

University of Illinois Extension 4-H Youth Educator Kelly Lafferty will offer the

program on the second Monday of the month at the Pecatonica Library, located at 400 W. 11th St. #400 in Pecatonica. Each program will be held from 4 to 5:30 p.m. An adult must stay with the child during the program.

Program dates and topics include:

- Monday, Feb. 12, 2024: Stargazing
- Monday, March 11, 2024: March Winds

- Monday, April 8, 2024: Prairies
- Monday, May 13, 2024: Wildflowers

Please dress according to the weather as they will spend time in nature.

Register by visiting the University of Illinois Extension online at [go.illinois.edu/WeeNatsPec](http://go.illinois.edu/WeeNatsPec) or by calling their office at 815-986-4357.



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1		7	3					6
								9
					8			
	5	3						
	7	1		5		2		
			2					1
5			9	7			6	4

Level: Intermediate

		8		6			3	9
						6	1	
9				7	4		5	
3			1	5			7	
		1						
				3				
		3			8	5	4	
	6					7		1
			5				8	

Level: Advanced

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**Like puzzles?** Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test! **Here's How It Works:** Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

## COMPUTER TERMS WORD SEARCH

R Y J H D P D S V W C H S I G G U L S D  
 F O S A W E R C E C N E G I L L E T N I  
 E E E R U K S E N F J I C N H M J L F U  
 R G L D D R D K F J N P N T C E J E L T  
 A Y I D S H E M T E R W R C P O R B U M  
 W R F R O B H B O O R U I O T U P T U O  
 T V B I S O U G O T P E P L Y G Y A B O  
 F S E V K K R T B O H H N U P O T P A L  
 O A P E Y E T U O A T E U C F C O I C C  
 S L H M C T R G C A C N R E E F W A Y K  
 F F J I F A A N O P D K P B R S M F D Y  
 H F F S T N S P M P L R U K O L J G E J  
 H F I Y U P H H P L V M A P F A D K W L  
 O J P D P E S P U I I Y A O N O R L B E  
 H A U L N R D Y T C S E E P B D W D N E  
 B K T V I S U P E A U F T H S Y E V D D  
 F H R T D O J C R T E B L J Y L E S H W  
 M H A E P N M G M I J B P H P L G K D B  
 L T T D M A J J B O P S C P Y R O M E M  
 O S S Y W L B G L N T I A B H M K F C G

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

- APPLE
- APPLICATION
- BACKUP
- COMPUTER
- DESKTOP
- EJECT
- FILES
- HARD DRIVE
- INPUT
- INTELLIGENCE
- KEYBOARD
- LAPTOP
- MEMORY
- MOTHERBOARD
- OFFICE
- OUTPUT
- PERSONAL
- PREFERENCES
- REBOOT
- SLUGGISH
- SOFTWARE
- SPAM
- STARTUP
- TRASH

### CLUES ACROSS

1. Defensive nuclear weapon
4. Moved back and forth
9. One-time coach of the Cowboys
14. Last letter
15. Cause to become less intense
16. Genus of tree bugs
17. Body art
18. Romance novelist
20. Be filled with love for
22. City
23. Make vivid
24. Horses
28. Mauna \_\_, Hawaiian volcano
29. Atomic #18
30. Shortly
31. A type of prejudice
33. Whirls
37. Six
38. Old world, new
39. \_\_ Hess, oil company
41. Talk
42. Not off
43. Begets
44. Cars need them
46. Computing architecture (abbr.)
49. Of I
50. Journalist, activist Wells
51. Takes apart
55. Lists
58. Positively charged electrode
59. Hard, colorless compound
60. Inflammation of the peritoneum
64. Trent Reznor's band
65. Simply dry fruit
66. "Ivanhoe" author
67. Google certification
68. French commune
69. Medieval circuit courts
70. Soviet Socialist Republic

### CLUES DOWN

1. Indigenous people of Mexico
2. Dietary supplement
3. Having a particular sheen or luster
4. Views

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
14				15						16				
17				18						19				
20				21				22						
23						24	25						26	27
		28					29				30			
31	32					33		34	35	36			37	
38				39	40								41	
42				43						44	45			
46		47	48				49			50				
51				52	53	54				55			56	57
			58							59				
60	61						62	63					64	
65							66						67	
68							69						70	

5. Academic Bill of Rights
6. Automobile
7. When you anticipate arriving
8. Beef or chicken intestine
9. Conspiracy
10. Blood disorder
11. Long-time NBAer Shawn
12. Time zone
13. US, Latin America, Canada belong to
19. Upton Sinclair novel
21. What a cow does
24. Cavalry-sword
25. Ancient Greek war galley
26. Stars
27. Rebukes
31. Billion year periods
32. Some are in a bottle
34. Tears down
35. Lethal dose
36. Humorists
40. Midwestern US state (abbr.)
41. Frameworks
45. Rocker Billy
47. More thin
48. Dog
52. Habitual repetitions
53. State of fuss
54. Uneasy
56. Chemical compounds
57. More cognizant of reality
59. A place to build
60. Exclamation that denotes disgust
61. Supplement with difficulty
62. Very slick
63. Hill or rocky peak

# Illinois State Police launches new road rage campaign

The Illinois State Police (ISP) is launching an educational, public awareness campaign focused on reduc-

ing incidents involving road rage. The new campaign, *Road Rage. Don't Engage.* is designed to raise awareness

about an increase in road rage incidents leading to violence, as well as educate the public on the signs of road rage and

tips on how to prevent and handle these situations.

"Although road rage is nothing new, we're seeing people react more aggressively and dangerously," said ISP Director Brendan F. Kelly. "The message is simple - if you see or become part of a road rage situation, don't engage. That extra car length you gain by cutting someone off, or arriving 10 seconds earlier by tailgating another person, is not worth your life."

ISP developed a campaign to raise public awareness about road rage and the disturbing trend. The campaign consists of social media, including a social media toolkit, along with billboards and radio ads in strategic markets. ISP Safety Education Officers across the state will continue to educate the public on the dangers of road rage and how to deal with the dangerous be-

havior.

According to an AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety study, when drivers explained why they became violent, the reasons were often trivial, such as the other driver wouldn't let them pass or they kept tailgating. Almost 80% of drivers reported aggressive behaviors while driving, including speeding and following other vehicles too closely.

Road rage is anger and frustration caused by the stress of driving in a motor vehicle. Some of the most common signs of road rage and aggressive driving are:

- Following too closely or tailgating
- Improper or erratic lane changing
- Illegally driving on the shoulder of the road (emergency lane), in a ditch/median, or on sidewalk
- Passing where prohibited
- Failure to yield right of

way

- Failure to obey traffic laws, signs, and devices
- Failure to yield to emergency personnel and construction zone speed limits
- Failure to signal
- Driving too fast for conditions or in excess of posted speed limit or racing

ISP reminds the public that when it comes to aggressive drivers and road rage, don't engage. The following are tips on how to avoid being the victim of road rage:

- If you are in the left lane and someone wants to pass, move to your right and allow them to pass
- When merging, make sure you have plenty of room and use your turn signal
- If someone cuts you off, slow down and give them room to merge into your lane

**See CAMPAIGN, Page 17**

## Extension offers natural resources event

Embrace winter's beauty through outdoor exploration and indoor inspiration at University of Illinois Extension's Winter Trails & Naturalist Tales from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 27, 2024. Winter Trails & Naturalist Tales will be held at the Torstenson's Education Center located at 13735 Cook Road in Pecatonica and will include three "naturalist tales," an opportunity for hiking/bird watching, and lunch. "We have offered this winter event for 14 years and see it as a way for participants to learn about their natural surroundings, while also being able to connect with like-minded

individuals," states Margaret Larson. Extension Director and coordinator of the event.

Connie McIntosh, long time Extension Master Naturalist and wildlife photographer, will be presenting her talk Myth Busting Nature, clearing up many misconceptions people have about wildlife and nature in an interactive presentation. Tricia Bethke, Forest Pest Outreach Coordinator with Morton Arboretum, will address the stresses oak trees experience due to climate events in her talk Too Much of Not Enough Water: What's Wrong with My Oak Trees.

Joni Decker, who serves

as the conservation specialist at the Rockford Park District, will share information about the many, largely unknown natural areas that are part of the park district in her presentation More Than Playgrounds: Natural Areas of RPD.

The cost is \$15 per person and includes lunch. For more information or to register, visit [go.illinois.edu/WTNT2024](http://go.illinois.edu/WTNT2024) or call (815) 986-4357. Pre-registration is required by January 24. If you need reasonable accommodation to participate in this program, please contact the Winnebago County Extension office at (815) 986-4357.

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# DONLEY AUCTIONS

# Amid record overdoses and drug counselor shortage, workforce expansion program aims to fill gap

## Joint program offers funds, tuition assistance and stipends for future alcohol and drug counselors

By Dilpreet Raju  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Amid five straight years of record overdose deaths in Illinois, a new state program aims to alleviate a shortage of professionals who work to prevent substance use disorders.

Illinois' behavioral health counselor workforce "is aging while new entrants are declining," according to a 2019 report to the General Assembly; 56 percent of certified substance use disorder workers in the state were over the age of 50 at the time.

According to the Behavioral Health Workforce Center's latest data from 2023, 81 of Illinois' 102 counties have fewer than 13 licensed professional counselors per 60,000 residents, straining those counselors tasked with servicing a large portion of

the state.

To alleviate the workforce shortage, the state's Department of Human Services has partnered with the Illinois Certification Board to offer stipends to lessen the financial burden for those working toward certification in substance use prevention and treatment.

The 2019 task force report also found the state's "already below-national-average" number of behavioral health professionals dropped 23 percent between 2016 to 2018, coinciding with a two-year period in which social services funding was slashed as lawmakers and the governor failed to approve a state budget.

While the state's human service funding has increased in recent years, an analysis from the Chicago-based

Center for Tax and Budget Accountability, a nonprofit think tank, found that the current fiscal year marks the first since FY 2000 in which the increase outpaced inflation.

### Workforce expansion

The Illinois Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor Workforce Expansion program launched in May and is currently set to run through June 2024. It offers aid in the form of scholarships, tuition payments, internship stipends, application fees and \$1,000 upon hire with a state-licensed provider, following graduation from an ICB accredited training program.

Adriana Trino-Pujals, executive director of the Elgin-based Latino Treatment Center, said the challenge to find, hire and retain workers

in behavioral health has remained difficult, mainly due to economic constraints that can push students to consider other career paths. According to Bureau of Labor Statistics data analyzing 2022 payrolls, the median salary for a behavioral health counselor in Illinois is about \$48,000.

Some students who start classes to obtain a certification can't afford to finish, Trino-Pujals said.

"And then you're going to take that same person and I'm going to tell them that we're going to pay them 30-grand a year. Well, at that point, I'd rather go work at Walmart," she said.

The new workforce expansion program is a partnership between the ICB — an independent organization that credentials several human services positions in the state—and the IDHS Office of Substance Use Prevention and Recovery.

Chris Boyster, executive director of the ICB, said the workforce expansion program aims "to ensure that there's absolutely no barriers for completion."

"Let's say you want to become a CADC, but that class is taught on Monday nights and Monday nights you don't have anybody to watch your child. It will cover day care," Boyster said.

The CADC Workforce Expansion program will also provide internship stipends up to \$7,500, providing some reimbursement for work that might otherwise have been unpaid. It can also be used to pay for application and initial certification fees, along with transportation and course costs. Fees associated with enrolling and studying to become a CADC run at least \$500, according to the ICB Schedule of Fees.

To qualify for the program's \$1,000 hiring stipend, a student must be in the process of getting credentialed as a CADC and agree to a two-year employment period with a state-licensed facility.

Information on how to apply to participate in the program can be found at [ilcadworkforce.org](http://ilcadworkforce.org).

The workforce expansion program received a \$3 million appropriation in the current-year budget. IDHS spokesperson Daisy Contreras said in an email the program's continuation in future fiscal years is "pending the availability of funds and program performance indicators."

It's too early in the program's implementation to track significant trends, IDHS saw an "initial increase of approximately 30% in new applications" for the first half fiscal year 2024, which began in July. That followed a dip in the number of CADC applicants coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic, she said.

### Rising toll

During 2021, the latest year for which comparable data is available, more than 3,000 people died of an opioid-involved overdose in Illinois, while 1,995 in the state were killed by firearms, according to the Illinois Department of Public Health Opioid Data Dashboard and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That same year, 1,611 people in Illinois died of alcohol-induced deaths—more than the number of people killed in traffic accidents, according to KFF, formerly known as The Kaiser Family Foundation.

CADCs offer support and try to assess the needs of individuals who seek treatment.

Jen Anel, who works as overdose prevention manager at Chicago Recovery Alliance, said that in addition to working hundreds of hours in unpaid internships to qualify for her CADC, she had to work multiple jobs to make ends meet. She became certified in 2018 and said her coursework focused heavily on abstinence and relapse prevention.

"Abstinence is the goal," Anel said. "There was not really any sort of harm reduction education, or what do we do with a client who is continuing to use. How do we help that person identify their own goal, which may not even be abstinence?"

Anel said she left her job in traditional substance use treatment because she saw an opportunity to help more people, and in a more direct way.

Trino-Pujals, who also serves as the ICB's treasurer, said the program is a step toward keeping more students engaged in the field of substance use treatment and harm reduction.

"We have a horrible shortage," she said. The lack of CADCs "has hindered us to be able to continue to progress in our field."

### 'Too little, too late'

Trino-Pujals said she was inspired to become an alco-

hol and drug counselor partly because both of her parents worked in substance use treatment, and she saw her father recover from alcoholism.

"Once I took the test, it not only propelled me professionally, but it also helped me to understand a lot more of the fields, theories and different processes regarding (substance use treatment)," she said.

The ICB expanded its reach in November by naming eight universities, public and private, as accredited training programs, including Loyola University, Southern Illinois University Carbondale and the Chicago School of Professional Psychology. The move will make CADC courses more readily available to college-age students interested in recovery and treatment work.

The program is one of three IDHS initiatives aimed at addressing the shortage of behavioral health workers in the state, with the others being a loan repayment program and another workforce incentive program focusing on certifying people who have lived experience as peer support specialists.

Still, many advocates say the recent state efforts are not nearly enough. Anel, for example, said she fears the hiring stipend is still too low to incentivize people to pursue a certification.

"Two years for \$1,000? I'm going to keep it real here, come on," Anel said.

John Werning, the executive director of Chicago Recovery Alliance—a harm reduction organization founded over three decades ago—said he is skeptical of state investment in an overdose program that isn't directly aimed at slowing the state's death toll.

"People who use drugs far outnumber the amount of people who are seeking or treatment or who qualify for a substance use disorder diagnosis," he said. "We've never seen a reduction in the demand for drug use in this country and we've only seen overdose rates climb."

Werning said there remains a need for investment in more social service programs such as overdose prevention sites because a diversity of options expands what people can utilize, hopefully saving more lives.

"It might also be too little, too late," he said, "we need broad, really tremendous investments in social services across the board, not just treatment modalities."

*A Great Big*  
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Please keep my paper coming:

# Jobs up in most metro areas in November

Over-the-year, total non-farm jobs increased in ten metropolitan areas and decreased in four for the year ending November 2023, according to data released today by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the Illinois Department of Employment Security (DES). Over-the-year, the unemployment rate increased in eleven metropolitan areas and decreased in three.

"Further job growth continues to expand throughout every corner of the state

across a variety of industry sectors, creating new opportunities for workers," said Deputy Governor Andy Manar.

"IDES and its workforce partners are committed to assisting both employers and jobseekers with available resources to find the right fit for their workforce and employment needs."

The metro areas that had the largest over-the-year percentage increases in total nonfarm jobs were the Danville MSA (+3.0 percent, +800), the Springfield MSA

(+1.5 percent, +1,700), and the Carbondale-Marion MSA (+1.5 percent, +900). Total nonfarm jobs in the Chicago-Metro were up +0.9 percent or +34,500.

The metro areas with the largest over-the-year percentage decreases in total nonfarm jobs were the Decatur MSA (-1.1 percent, -700), the Rockford MSA (-1.1 percent, -1,600), and the Kankakee MSA (-0.7 percent, -300). Industries that saw job growth in a majority of metro areas included: Government (twelve areas); Ed-

ucation and Health Services (ten areas); and Leisure and Hospitality (nine areas).

The metro areas with the largest unemployment rate increases were the Lake County IL-WI Metro (+0.4 point to 3.9 percent), the Rockford MSA (+0.4 point to 5.2 percent), the Decatur MSA (+0.3 point to 5.1 percent), and the Elgin Metro (+0.3 point to 4.1 percent). The unemployment rate fell in the Carbondale-Marion MSA (-0.1 point to 3.7 percent), the Chicago Metro (-0.1 point to 4.3 percent),

and the Springfield MSA (-0.1 point to 3.5 percent)

## Rockford MSA

The not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased to 5.2 percent in November 2023 from 4.8 percent in November 2022.

Total nonfarm employment decreased by -1,600 over-the-year.

The Leisure-Hospitality (+600), Other Services (+300), Government (+100) and Educational-Health Services (+100) sectors had payroll gains over-the-year.

The Manufacturing (-1,600), Construction (-400) and Transportation-Warehousing-Utilities (-400) sectors recorded employment declines over-the-year.

## Ogle County

The not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased to 4.2 percent in November 2023 from 4.1 percent in November 2022.

Total nonfarm employment increased by +150 over-the-year.

See **JOBS**, Page 20

# Highland Lifelong Learning offers new courses in February

Highland Community College Lifelong Learning February classes include Terrarium Bottle, Maple Syrup 101, Espresso Drinks and How to Order Them, Beginning Wheel-Thrown Pottery, and Soft Pastel for Beginners. To register online and view the complete Lifelong Learning schedule, visit [highland.edu/lifelong](http://highland.edu/lifelong).

## Terrarium Bottle

Location: Clara Joyce Flowers, 13493 E. Blair Hill Road, Stockton

Registration Deadline: Jan. 25

Class: Feb. 1; 6-7 p.m.

Fee: \$75

Instructor: Drew Groezinger

Learn about tips and tricks

for growing indoor houseplant terrariums, and make a large 14" terrarium bottle! All supplies are included.

## Maple Syrup 101

Location: Highland Community College, Student/Conference Center (Building H), room H-127, 2998 W. Pearl City Road, Freeport

Registration Deadline: Feb. 7

Class: Feb. 14, 21, 28;

6-7:30 p.m.

Fee: \$39

Instructor: Bob Sutter

This class is for the beginner backyard hobby producer who wants to start making maple syrup and put out a few taps. Attendees will learn how to tap a tree, collect the sap, process it into syrup and

refine their techniques for bottling.

## Espresso Drinks and How to Order Them

Location: Higher Grounds Coffee, 1709 S. West Avenue, Freeport, Ill.

Registration Deadline: Feb. 10

Class: Feb. 17; 10-11:30 a.m.

Fee: \$19

Instructor: Erica Williams

Gain knowledge and confidence in ordering a specialty drink made just for you! Leave not only empowered but with a gift certificate for one drink of choice.

## Beginning Wheel-Thrown Pottery

Location: Highland Com-

munity College, Student/Conference Center (Building F), room F-053, 2998 W. Pearl City Rd., Freeport

Registration Deadline: Feb. 12

Class: Feb. 19, 26 and

March 4, 11; 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Fee: \$99

Instructor: Dana Russell-Brown

Learn basic wheel-throwing skills as well as glazing techniques. Bring an apron, towel and a pottery tool kit (available at the HCC bookstore, online or craft stores). No experience is necessary.

## Soft Pastel for Beginners

Location: Elizabeth Business Hub, 131 N. Main St. Elizabeth

Registration Deadline: Feb.

14

Class: Feb. 21; 6-8 p.m.

Fee: \$29

Instructor: Brian Engle

Learn the basic techniques, color blending and composition, as well as how to create beautiful, vibrant pastel paintings! A set of pastels and paper will be provided.

Other courses Include:

- Homemade Pizza - Generations Brewing, Freeport

- Korean War - Faith Community Church, Davis

- Succulent Planter - Clara Joyce Flowers, Stockton

- Cooking with Smoke - Generations Brewing, Freeport

- Welding for Garden Art - Iris - HCC, Freeport

- Assassination of Lincoln

- Galena Public Library, Galena

- Macrame Spring Gnome Garland - Old Sandstone Gallery, Mt. Morris

- Civil War Medicine, Hollywood Style - The Good, the Bad, the Ugly - Lena Historical Museum, Lena

- Dried Flower Twiggy Wreath - Clara Joyce Flowers, Stockton

- Essential Skills for Basic Wood Carving - Old Sandstone Gallery, Mt. Morris

For more information

about Lifelong Learning and

to find out the latest course of-

ferings, call 815 599-3403 or

email [lifelonglearning@highland.edu](mailto:lifelonglearning@highland.edu). Sign up for spring

courses at [highland.edu/lifelong](http://highland.edu/lifelong).

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# Service Corner



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# LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

STEPHENSON COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, PLAINTIFF,  
VS.  
LINN PERKINS, SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF JESSIE LEE EVANS, DECEASED; ANN EVANS A/K/A ANN M EVANS; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS; BARBRETTEA EVANS; KARLOS M EVANS; GREGORY A EVANS; UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES OF JESSIE LEE EVANS, DEFENDANTS.

NO. 2022FC46  
701 SOUTH BENTON AVENUE  
FREEPORT, IL 61032

NOTICE OF SALE PURSUANT TO JUDGMENT OF FORECLOSURE UNDER ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE ACT

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered by the Court in the above entitled cause on October 26, 2023, Sheriff of Stephenson County will on 2/6/2024, in Stephenson County Courthouse 15 N. Galena Ave (West Door), Freeport, IL 61032, at 9:30am, sell at public auction and sale to the highest bidder for cash, all and singular, the following described real estate mentioned in said Judgment, situated in the County of Stephenson, State of Illinois, or so much thereof as shall be sufficient to satisfy said Judgment:

LOT NUMBER SEVEN (7) IN BLOCK NUMBER THREE (3) IN PURINTON'S ADDITION TO THE CITY OF FREEPORT, SITUATED IN THE CITY OF FREEPORT, COUNTY OF STEPHENSON IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS. TAX NO. 18-14-31-436-007

COMMONLY KNOWN AS: 701 South Benton Avenue  
Freeport, IL 61032  
Description of Improvements: The property is a single family home.

The Judgment amount was \$29,170.00.

Sale Terms: This is an "AS IS" sale for "CASH". The successful bidder must deposit 10% down by certified funds; balance, by certified funds, within 24 hours. NO REFUNDS.

The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments or special taxes levied against said real estate, water bills, etc., and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to plaintiff. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.

Upon payment in full of the bid amount, 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 property will NOT be open for inspection. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information.

The successful purchaser has the sole responsibility/expense of evicting any tenants or other individuals presently in possession of the subject premises.

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

IF 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: Visit our website at <http://ilforeclosuresales.mrpillc.com>.

Between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. only - McCalla Raymer Leibert Pierce, LLC, Plaintiff's Attorneys, 1 N. Dearborn St., Suite 1200, Chicago, IL 60602. Tel. No. (312) 346-9088. Please refer to file# 22-09062IL

PURSUANT TO THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT, THE PLAINTIFF'S ATTORNEY IS DEEMED

TO BE A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

Plaintiff's attorney is not required to provide additional information other than that set forth in this notice of sale.

I3232773  
(Published in The Shopper's Guide Dec. 27, 2023 and Jan. 3 & 10, 2024) 448459

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

STEPHENSON COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
LAKEVIEW LOAN SERVICING, LLC, PLAINTIFF,  
VS.

ROBIN LYNN MARTIN A/K/A ROBIN MARTIN; GERALD NORDGREN, SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF ROBIN LYNN MARTIN, DECEASED; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS; UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES OF ROBIN LYNN MARTIN; JOE ANDREWS A/K/A JOSEPH ANDREWS; CHRIS ANDREWS A/K/A CHRISTOPHER ANDREWS; GABRIELLE ANDREWS; JOSH ANDREWS A/K/A JOSHUA ANDREWS; TYLER ANDREWS; ALISSA ANDREWS; UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES OF RICKY ANDREWS; UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES OF JOHNNY ANDREWS, DEFENDANTS.

NO. 22 FC 55  
1011 SOUTH MAPLE AVENUE  
FREEPORT, IL 61032

NOTICE OF SALE PURSUANT TO JUDGMENT OF FORECLOSURE UNDER ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE ACT

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered by the Court in the above entitled cause on November 8, 2023, Sheriff of Stephenson County will on 2/6/2024, in Stephenson County Courthouse

15 N. Galena Ave (West Door), Freeport, IL 61032, at 9:30am, sell at public auction and sale to the highest bidder for cash, all and singular, the following described real estate mentioned in said Judgment, situated in the County of Stephenson, State of Illinois, or so much thereof as shall be sufficient to satisfy said Judgment:

COMMENCING AT A POINT ON THE SOUTH LINE OF LOT 14 IN BLOCK 32 IN KNOWLTON'S SECOND ADDITION TO THE TOWN (NOW CITY) OF FREEPORT, WHERE THE EAST LINE OF MAPLE AVENUE (NOW SOUTH MAPLE AVENUE) INTERSECTS SAID SOUTH LINE; THENCE RUNNING EAST ALONG SAID SOUTH LINE 120 FEET TO A POINT 150 FEET WEST OF THE WEST LINE OF UNION STREET (NOW SOUTH CHICAGO AVENUE); THENCE NORTH PARALLEL WITH THE WEST LINE OF UNION STREET (NOW SOUTH CHICAGO AVENUE) 65 FEET; THENCE WEST PARALLEL WITH THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID LOT, 120 FEET TO SAID EAST LINE OF MAPLE AVENUE (NOW SOUTH MAPLE AVENUE); THENCE SOUTH ALONG SAID EAST LINE OF MAPLE AVENUE (NOW SOUTH MAPLE AVENUE) 65 FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING. SITUATED IN THE CITY OF FREEPORT, STEPHENSON COUNTY AND STATE OF ILLINOIS.

TAX NO. 18-14-31-453-013  
COMMONLY KNOWN AS: 1011 South Maple Avenue  
Freeport, IL 61032

Description of Improvements: The property is a single family. The property has a two car garage. The garage is detached. The exterior is vinyl siding. The color is white. I am unable to verify that the gas is on or off. I am unable to verify that the water is on or off. The property has a fence. The property is vacant. Boarded up front door  
The Judgment amount was \$75,653.70.

Sale Terms: This is an "AS IS" sale for "CASH".

The successful bidder must deposit 10% down by certified funds; balance, by certified funds, within 24 hours. NO REFUNDS.

The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments or special taxes levied against said real estate, water bills, etc., and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to plaintiff. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.

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For Information: Visit our website at <http://ilforeclosuresales.mrpillc.com>.

Between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. only - McCalla Raymer Leibert Pierce, LLC, Plaintiff's Attorneys, 1 N. Dearborn St., Suite 1200, Chicago, IL 60602. Tel. No. (312) 346-9088. Please refer to file# 22-11906IL

PURSUANT TO THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT, THE PLAINTIFF'S ATTORNEY IS DEEMED TO BE A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION

WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

Plaintiff's attorney is not required to provide additional information other than that set forth in this notice of sale.

I3232775  
(Published in The Shopper's Guide Dec. 27, 2023 and Jan. 3 & 10, 2024) 448462

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE:

The following self-storage Cube contents containing household and other goods will be sold for cash by CubeSmart Asset Management, LLC as Agent for Owner #4409, 555 W. South Street Freeport, IL 61032 to satisfy a lien on January 18, 2024 at approx. 1:00 p.m. at [www.storagetreasures.com](http://www.storagetreasures.com) Cube 1318 Adryanna Pempilton

(Published in The Shopper's Guide Jan. 3 & 10, 2024) 448863

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT STEPHENSON COUNTY - FREEPORT, ILLINOIS  
Wilmington Savings Fund Society, FSB, as trustee of Stanwich Mortgage Loan Trust F

PLAINTIFF  
Vs.  
Rodney C. Bratley; et. al.  
DEFENDANTS

No. 2023FC36  
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 08/22/2023, the Sheriff of Stephenson County, Illinois will on February 15, 2024 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:  
THE SOUTH 41 FEET AND 3 INCHES OF THE WEST 165 FEET OF THE SOUTH HALF OF LOT 41

Continued on next page





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444841

## real estate

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

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## for sale

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**2002 F250 LARIAT** 7.3L Powerstroke, 4X4, Ext. Cab Long Bed, 102,500 miles. RUST FREE, leather heated seats, Line-X bedliner. This truck is in excellent condition inside and out. \$19,800 Call or Text 608-897-5775

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27066

# REAL ESTATE NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT STEPHENSON COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, PLAINTIFF,  
VS.  
LINN PERKINS, SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF JESSIE LEE EVANS, DECEASED; ANN EVANS A/K/A ANN M EVANS; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS; BARBRETTE EVANS; KARLOS M EVANS; GREGORY A EVANS; UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES OF JESSIE LEE EVANS,  
DEFENDANTS.

NO. 2022FC46  
701 SOUTH BENTON AVENUE FREEPORT, IL 61032  
NOTICE OF SALE PURSUANT TO JUDGMENT OF FORECLOSURE UNDER ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE ACT  
PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered by the Court in the above entitled cause on October 26, 2023, Sheriff of Stephenson County will on 2/6/2024, in Stephenson County Courthouse 15 N. Galena Ave (West Door), Freeport, IL 61032, at 9:30am, sell at public auction and sale to the highest bidder for cash, all and singular, the following described real estate mentioned in said Judgment, situated in the County of Stephenson, State of Illinois, or so much thereof as shall be sufficient to satisfy said Judgment:

TAX NO. 18-14-31-436-007  
COMMONLY KNOWN AS: 701 South Benton Avenue Freeport, IL 61032  
Description of Improvements: The property is a single family home.  
The Judgment amount was \$29,170.00.

Sale Terms: This is an "AS IS" sale for "CASH". The successful bidder must deposit 10% down by certified funds; balance, by certified funds, within 24 hours. NO REFUNDS.  
The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments or special taxes levied against said real estate, water bills, etc., and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to plaintiff. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.  
Upon payment in full of the bid amount, 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 property will NOT be open for inspection. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information.  
The successful purchaser has the sole responsibility/expense of evicting any tenants or other individuals presently in possession of the subject premises.  
If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee shall pay the assess-

ments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g) (4).

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: Visit our website at <http://ilforeclosuresales.mrpllc.com>.

Between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. only - McCalla Raymer Leibert Pierce, LLC, Plaintiff's Attorneys, 1 N. Dearborn St., Suite 1200, Chicago, IL 60602. Tel. No. (312) 346-9088. Please refer to file# 22-09062IL

PURSUANT TO THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT, THE PLAINTIFF'S ATTORNEY IS DEEMED TO BE A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

Plaintiff's attorney is not required to provide additional information other than that set forth in this notice of sale.

I3232773  
(Published in The Shopper's Guide Dec. 27, 2023 and Jan. 3 & 10, 2024)  
448460

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT STEPHENSON COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
LAKEVIEW LOAN SERVICING, LLC, PLAINTIFF,  
VS.  
ROBIN LYNN MARTIN A/K/A ROBIN MARTIN; GERALD NORDGREN, SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF ROBIN LYNN MARTIN, DECEASED; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS; UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES OF ROBIN LYNN MARTIN; JOE ANDREWS A/K/A JOSEPH ANDREWS; CHRIS ANDREWS A/K/A CHRISTOPHER ANDREWS; GABRIELLE ANDREWS; JOSH ANDREWS A/K/A JOSHUA ANDREWS; TYLER ANDREWS; ALISSA ANDREWS; UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES OF RICKY ANDREWS; UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES OF JOHNNY ANDREWS,  
DEFENDANTS.

NO. 22 FC 55  
1011 SOUTH MAPLE AVENUE FREEPORT, IL 61032  
NOTICE OF SALE PURSUANT TO JUDGMENT OF FORECLOSURE UNDER ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE ACT  
PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered by the Court in the above entitled cause on November 8, 2023, Sheriff of Stephenson County will on 2/6/2024, in Stephenson County Courthouse 15 N. Galena Ave (West Door), Freeport, IL 61032, at 9:30am, sell at public auction and sale to the

highest bidder for cash, all and singular, the following described real estate mentioned in said Judgment, situated in the County of Stephenson, State of Illinois, or so much thereof as shall be sufficient to satisfy said Judgment:  
COMMENCING AT A POINT ON THE SOUTH LINE OF LOT 14 IN BLOCK 32 IN TAX NO. 18-14-31-453-013 COMMONLY KNOWN AS: 1011 South Maple Avenue Freeport, IL 61032

Description of Improvements: The property is a single family. The property has a two car garage. The garage is detached. The exterior is vinyl siding. The color is white. I am unable to verify that the gas is on or off. I am unable to verify that the water is on or off. The property has a fence. The property is vacant. Boarded up front door  
The Judgment amount was \$75,653.70.

Sale Terms: This is an "AS IS" sale for "CASH". The successful bidder must deposit 10% down by certified funds; balance, by certified funds, within 24 hours. NO REFUNDS.  
The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments or special taxes levied against said real estate, water bills, etc., and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to plaintiff. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.  
Upon payment in full of the bid amount, 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 property will NOT be open for inspection. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information.  
The successful purchaser has the sole responsibility/expense of evicting any tenants or other individuals presently in possession of the subject premises.  
If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g) (4).

IF 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: Visit our website at <http://ilforeclosuresales.mrpllc.com>.

Between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. only - McCalla Raymer Leibert Pierce, LLC, Plaintiff's Attorneys, 1 N. Dearborn St., Suite 1200, Chicago, IL 60602. Tel. No. (312) 346-9088. Please refer to file# 22-11906IL

PURSUANT TO THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT, THE PLAINTIFF'S ATTORNEY IS DEEMED TO BE A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

Plaintiff's attorney is not required to provide additional information other than that set forth in this notice of sale.

I3232775  
(Published in The Shopper's Guide Dec. 27, 2023 and Jan. 3 & 10, 2024)  
448464

ANY INFORMATION WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

Plaintiff's attorney is not required to provide additional information other than that set forth in this notice of sale.

I3232775  
(Published in The Shopper's Guide Dec. 27, 2023 and Jan. 3 & 10, 2024)  
448464

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT STEPHENSON COUNTY - FREEPORT, ILLINOIS  
Wilmington Savings Fund Society, FSB, as trustee of Stanwich Mortgage Loan Trust F PLAINTIFF  
Vs.  
Rodney C. Bratley; et. al. DEFENDANTS

NO. 2023FC36  
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 08/22/2023, the Sheriff of Stephenson County, Illinois will on February 15, 2024 at the hour of 9:30 AM at Stephenson County Courthouse 15 North Galena Avenue 1st Floor, West door of courthouse Freeport, IL 61032, or in a place otherwise designated at the time of sale, County of Stephenson and State of Illinois, sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash, as set forth below, the following described real estate:

PIN 18-13-36-226-009  
Improved with Single Family Home  
COMMONLY KNOWN AS: 307 N. Whistler Ave Freeport, IL 61032  
Sale terms: 10% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the auction; The balance, including the Judicial sale fee for Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund, which is calculated at the rate of \$1 for each \$1,000 or fraction thereof of the amount paid by the purchaser not to exceed \$300, in certified funds, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.  
If the property is a condominium and the foreclosure takes place after 1/1/2007, purchasers other than the mortgagees will be required to pay any assessment and legal fees due under The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4).

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 14-23-03741.  
I3235675  
(Published in The Shopper's Guide Jan. 3, 10 & 17, 2024)  
449164

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COUNTY OF STEPHENSON - FREEPORT, ILLINOIS  
MORTGAGE ASSETS MANAGEMENT, LLC; PLAINTIFF,  
vs.  
CHARLOTTE R GRANT; UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ACTING BY AND THROUGH ITS AGENCY THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS;  
Defendants,  
23 FC 14  
NOTICE OF SALE  
PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure entered in the above entitled cause Intercounty Judicial Sales Corporation will on Wednesday, February 14, 2024, at the hour of 2:00 p.m., Security First Title Company, 205 West Stephenson Street, Freeport, IL 61032, sell to the highest bidder for cash, the following described mortgaged real estate:  
P.I.N. 89-18-13-36-377-007.  
Commonly known as 1247 W. STOVER ST., FREEPORT, IL 61032.

The improvement on the property consists of a single family residence. If the subject mortgaged real estate is a unit of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Condominium Property Act.  
Sale terms: 10% down by certified funds, balance within 24 hours, by certified funds. No refunds. The property will NOT be open for inspection.  
For information call Mr. James P. Palazzolo at Plaintiff's Attorney, Potestivo & Associates, P.C., 223 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois 60606. (248) 853-4400 ext 1200.  
I3235908  
(Published in The Shopper's Guide Jan. 10, 17 & 24, 2024)  
449354

The improvement on the property consists of a single family residence. If the subject mortgaged real estate is a unit of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Condominium Property Act.  
Sale terms: 10% down by certified funds, balance within 24

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 14-23-03741.  
I3235675  
(Published in The Shopper's Guide Jan. 3, 10 & 17, 2024)  
449164

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COUNTY OF STEPHENSON - FREEPORT, ILLINOIS  
MORTGAGE ASSETS MANAGEMENT, LLC; PLAINTIFF,  
vs.  
CHARLOTTE R GRANT; UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ACTING BY AND THROUGH ITS AGENCY THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS;  
Defendants,  
23 FC 14  
NOTICE OF SALE  
PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure entered in the above entitled cause Intercounty Judicial Sales Corporation will on Wednesday, February 14, 2024, at the hour of 2:00 p.m., Security First Title Company, 205 West Stephenson Street, Freeport, IL 61032, sell to the highest bidder for cash, the following described mortgaged real estate:  
P.I.N. 89-18-13-36-377-007.  
Commonly known as 1247 W. STOVER ST., FREEPORT, IL 61032.

The improvement on the property consists of a single family residence. If the subject mortgaged real estate is a unit of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Condominium Property Act.  
Sale terms: 10% down by certified funds, balance within 24 hours, by certified funds. No refunds. The property will NOT be open for inspection.  
For information call Mr. James P. Palazzolo at Plaintiff's Attorney, Potestivo & Associates, P.C., 223 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois 60606. (248) 853-4400 ext 1200.  
I3235908  
(Published in The Shopper's Guide Jan. 10, 17 & 24, 2024)  
449354

The improvement on the property consists of a single family residence. If the subject mortgaged real estate is a unit of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Condominium Property Act.  
Sale terms: 10% down by certified funds, balance within 24

hours, by certified funds. No refunds. The property will NOT be open for inspection.

For information call Mr. Chad Lewis at Plaintiff's Attorney, Robertson, Anschutz, Schneid, Crane & Partners, PLLC, 205 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60601. (708) 668-4410 ext. 52109. 23-096726 IJSC INTERCOUNTY JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION [intercountyjudicialsales.com](http://intercountyjudicialsales.com) I3235902  
(Published in The Shopper's Guide Jan. 10, 17 & 24, 2024)  
449352

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COUNTY OF STEPHENSON - FREEPORT, ILLINOIS  
DEUTSCHE BANK NATIONAL TRUST COMPANY, AS TRUSTEE FOR GSAA TRUST 2004-3, MORTGAGE PASS-THROUGH CERTIFICATES SERIES 2004-3; PLAINTIFF,  
vs.  
ROY R. RODDEWIG; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NONRECORD CLAIMANTS;  
Defendants,  
23 FC 42  
NOTICE OF SALE  
PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure entered in the above entitled cause the Sheriff of Stephenson County will on Thursday, February 15, 2024, at the hour of 9:30 a.m., 1st floor, Courthouse, 15 N. Galena Ave., Freeport, IL 61032, sell to the highest bidder for cash, the following described mortgaged real estate:  
P.I.N. 89-18-13-36-377-007.  
Commonly known as 1247 W. STOVER ST., FREEPORT, IL 61032.

The improvement on the property consists of a single family residence. If the subject mortgaged real estate is a unit of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Condominium Property Act.  
Sale terms: 10% down by certified funds, balance within 24 hours, by certified funds. No refunds. The property will NOT be open for inspection.  
For information call Mr. James P. Palazzolo at Plaintiff's Attorney, Potestivo & Associates, P.C., 223 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois 60606. (248) 853-4400 ext 1200.  
I3235908  
(Published in The Shopper's Guide Jan. 10, 17 & 24, 2024)  
449354

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COUNTY OF STEPHENSON - FREEPORT, ILLINOIS  
MORTGAGE ASSETS MANAGEMENT, LLC; PLAINTIFF,  
vs.  
CHARLOTTE R GRANT; UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ACTING BY AND THROUGH ITS AGENCY THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS;  
Defendants,  
23 FC 14  
NOTICE OF SALE  
PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure entered in the above entitled cause Intercounty Judicial Sales Corporation will on Wednesday, February 14, 2024, at the hour of 2:00 p.m., Security First Title Company, 205 West Stephenson Street, Freeport, IL 61032, sell to the highest bidder for cash, the following described mortgaged real estate:  
P.I.N. 89-18-13-36-377-007.  
Commonly known as 1247 W. STOVER ST., FREEPORT, IL 61032.

The improvement on the property consists of a single family residence. If the subject mortgaged real estate is a unit of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Condominium Property Act.  
Sale terms: 10% down by certified funds, balance within 24 hours, by certified funds. No refunds. The property will NOT be open for inspection.  
For information call Mr. James P. Palazzolo at Plaintiff's Attorney, Potestivo & Associates, P.C., 223 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Illinois 60606. (248) 853-4400 ext 1200.  
I3235908  
(Published in The Shopper's Guide Jan. 10, 17 & 24, 2024)  
449354

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# Madigan trial delayed until October for SCOTUS review of bribery statute

## At court hearing, former Democratic powerhouse makes first appearance in court

By Hannah Meisel  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Former Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan won't be spending his 82nd birthday in a federal courtroom this spring after a judge on Jan. 3 granted this request to delay his bribery and racketeering trial originally set to begin April 1.

Madigan claimed the small victory while appearing in court for the first time since he was indicted nearly two years ago, opting to show up in person to a hearing at the Dirksen Federal Courthouse Jan. 3 despite having been granted permission to appear via videoconference. Sporting a black suit and royal blue tie, the former speaker spoke only once during the hearing.

"Yes I do, your honor," Madigan said in reply to U.S. District Judge Robert Blakey's question as to whether he consented to the trial's rescheduling to Oct. 8.

The trial is now scheduled for several months after the U.S. Supreme Court is expected to weigh in on the case of a northwest Indiana mayor convicted under the same federal bribery statutes at play in Madigan's case.

Attorneys for the former speaker and his codefendant argued the high court's ruling could affect the outcome of Madigan's case.

Blakey agreed during the hourlong hearing, likening the risk of going to trial prior to the Supreme Court's expected June ruling to stepping on a Lego brick.

"I'd go, 'George! I thought I told you to pick up the Legos!'" Blakey said, recounting telling his then-young son to clean up his toys. "And he'd say, 'Eh, I picked up most of them.'"

Blakey acknowledged that while only a third of the 23 charges Madigan is facing could be affected by the high court's ruling and posited that no parties involved want to "walk into a dark room with no shoes on" and be thrown a Lego by the Supreme Court.

Most critically, Blakey said, delaying the trial until after the Supreme Court's ruling would avoid the possibility of having to redo the entire trial, which he said would be a waste of everyone's resources. Government prosecutors opposed the delay, but in a filing Tuesday evening offered that they'd be willing to

reevaluate jury instructions if the high court had not ruled by the time the case was nearing a close in late spring.

But Blakey rejected that solution, saying the "critical juncture" for clarity on what the federal bribery statute says does not occur during jury instructions. Rather, he said, it occurs even before opening statements begin, as attorneys on both sides prepare for trial.

"You're absolutely right: there's a bunch of the case that won't be affected," he said. "But there's enough of the case that's going to be affected that it might require retrial."

The case at issue on the Supreme Court's docket is a review of a 2021 conviction of a northwest Indiana mayor who accepted \$13,000 from a company that had recently won contracts to sell garbage trucks to the city. The high court accepted the case last month and is expected to clarify whether "gratuities" are the same as bribes, even if there's no quid pro quo agreement in place.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Amarjeet Bhachu pointed out that prosecutors in the Northern District of Illinois are over-

seeing that case, which stems from Portage, Indiana, about 20 miles east of the Illinois border.

"When you corruptly solicit a payment ... an actual quid pro quo isn't required," Bhachu maintained during the Jan. 3 hearing.

But Federal appeals courts have split on the issue, and Madigan has already attempted to have the case dismissed on similar grounds, though Blakey has yet to rule on that motion from last year.

Madigan was forced out of his 36-year reign as House Speaker in early 2021 as pressure grew from his own Democratic caucus after he was cited as "Public Official A" in federal charging documents against electric utility Commonwealth Edison and former top lobbyists and executives at the company.

Prosecutors alleged ComEd bribed Madigan with jobs and contracts for his political allies in exchange for favorable legislation in Springfield. ComEd agreed to pay a \$200 million fine as part of its resolution of the legal action against it, while the company's former CEO and three ex-lobbyists fought the charges in a seven-week trial

last spring. All were ultimately convicted by a jury.

The four are still awaiting sentencing, which was originally scheduled for January before being delayed due to court scheduling conflicts. Also awaiting sentencing is the former ComEd executive who wore a wire against his colleagues and became the government's star witness in last year's trial.

Madigan wasn't indicted until March 2022, more than a year after he'd stepped down from nearly every public office he'd held, including as head of the state's Democratic Party and the legislative seat he'd kept for 50 years representing Chicago's southwest side.

The indictment was largely a repackaging of allegations from the ComEd cases, claiming Madigan and his codefendant—ComEd's longtime top outside lobbyist Mike McClain—ran a "criminal enterprise" via the power Madigan had accumulated from his positions as both a political power broker and name partner in a Chicago-based property tax law firm.

In October 2022, the feds

added an additional count alleging telecommunications giant AT&T Illinois had been part of a bribery scheme similar to ComEd's, wherein the company allegedly gave jobs and contracts to Madigan allies in exchange for favorable treatment in Springfield.

## Jobs

(Continued from page 15)

Government (+100) and Professional-Business Services (+75) had the largest payroll gains over-the-year. The Trade-Transportation-Utilities (-125) and Financial Activities (-50) sectors recorded employment decline over-the-year.

## Stephenson County

The not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 4.2 percent was unchanged from November 2022.

Over-the-year, nonfarm payrolls held steady.

Manufacturing (+50) had the largest payroll gains over-the-year. The Financial Activities (-125) sector recorded the largest employment decline over-the-year.



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