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VOL. 86 • NO. 15

YOUR FREE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 2024

Lena Business and Professional Association hosts annual dinner



The Lena Business and Professional Association (LPBA) held their annual dinner on Tuesday, March 19. The association would like to thank everyone that attended for a great turnout and a good time. Attendees received updates on projects happening around town from Village President Steve Buss. Terry Andrews and Louise Lameyer (pictured) were honored for their dedication to the Christmas Parade for the past ten years. The LBPA also gave an update on the \$5,000 grant received from The Foundation for Northwest Illinois. The grant allowed the association to offer a buy-one-get-one at 50% on Lena Money during this past holiday season, encouraging shoppers to support local businesses. As of March 19, over \$10,000 has already been spent in Lena businesses through this promotion.

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Obituaries

IRENE HAVENS

Irene G. Havens, of Elizabeth, IL, passed away Tuesday, March 26 in her home with her family by her side. Funeral services were held on Saturday, March 30, at the Law Jones Funeral Home in Elizabeth. Visitation was held prior to the service at the funeral home. Burial was in Ladies Union Cemetery, Stockton, IL.

Irene was born on the family farm in Stockton on Nov. 30, 1929, daughter of Levi and Hilda (Krupke) Smith. She was the oldest of six and spent a lot of time on the farm helping with chores and taking care of her younger siblings. Irene met the love of her life, Clyde Havens, at the Structo Toy Factory in Freeport, IL, where they both worked. They hit it off right away, and the rest was history. Irene and Clyde married on Nov. 28, 1964. Together they raised six children and celebrated 52 beautiful years of marriage until Clyde's passing in 2016.

Irene worked hard her whole life. She worked at the toy factory for 20 years



before quitting to raise her family. During this time, she started selling Avon which she continued for 20 years. When the kids were old enough to go to school she became a cook, and worked all over Jo Daviess County for many years. Later in life Irene took a step back so she could babysit her grandchildren more and more, which she absolutely loved.

Irene is known around the area for raising Chihuahuas. She loved the little dogs, and always had a pet dog of her own while her kids were growing up. In her spare time Irene enjoyed tending her garden and looking out at her flowers. She sewed ripped clothes for her family and made all her grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren quilts and blankets.

At the center of Irene's life was her family. She was a proud mother, grandmother,

great-grandmother, and great-great-grandmother. She cherished the time she got to spend with her grandchildren, and loved them deeply, but Irene missed Clyde greatly for these last eight years. She wanted her family to take comfort knowing she is now hand in hand with her husband again.

Irene will be dearly missed by her seven children, Sharon (Terry) Cross of Orangeville, IL, Terry (Jenny) Havens of Hanover, IL, Sherri (Ken Sporerl) Havens of Hazel Green, WI, Bonnie (Adam Brant) Patterson of Scales Mound, IL, Connie Havens of Elizabeth, Rena (Doug) Smith of Galena, IL, and Clydene Olson of Hanover; 23 grandchildren, 38 great-grandchildren and one on the way, and 8 great-great-grandchildren and one on the way; and three siblings, Robert Smith of Warren, IL, Elvin (Loralee) Smith of Lena, IL, and Kathryn Duitsman of Freeport.

Irene is preceded in death by her loving husband, Clyde; her daughter, Sylvia; her brother Leroy Smith; her sister Alice Tipton; and her parents, Levi and Hilda.

VIOLET ALTENBERN

Violet Altenbern passed away at the age of 98, on Friday, March 29, 2024. She was born at Willow, on Aug. 15, 1925, to Arthur and Edna (Thompson) Buchenau. She married Marvin Altenbern on Sept. 19, 1942, in Lena, he passed away on Dec. 2, 1994. They farmed in the Lena area.

After they retired from farming, they moved into Lena where Violet volunteered at the Lena Nursing Home for 20 years. She was known for baking lots of cookies for the treat after Bingo at the nursing home. She loved helping with the older people. For seven years she and Marvin would take the Northwest Farmer



newspaper to Belvidere to get it printed. She cleaned the office there, helping to get the paper ready to be sent out.

Violet was a strong lady, as she lived through two house fires, one on the farm with Marvin and one in town alone. Violet was surrounded by many nieces and nephews, and a very good friend Pat Edler, who was like a daughter to her.

Preceding her in death is her parents, her husband Marvin, one brother Melvin

Buchenau, one sister Bernice Katzenberger, a good friend Nancy (Noller) Farrington and a good friend Bud Ethridge.

Funeral services were held at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, April 2, 2024, at the Zion Community Church in Pearl City. A visitation was from 9 a.m. until the time of services at the church. A luncheon followed the services. Burial was at Chapel Hill Memorial Gardens in Freeport. Wayne Fischer and Chip Sohl officiated the services.

In lieu of flowers, a memorial has been established in Violet's memory. Condolences may be sent to the family at www.leadmonfh.com.

NORMAN WYBOURN

Norman E. Wybourn, 92, of Lena passed away on March 23, 2024, at the Lena Living Center surrounded by his family. Norman was born on February 9, 1932, in Lena to William and Doris (Schubert) Wybourn. He married Janice Ferguson on June 14, 1951, in Lena. Norman worked at R.E. Cox Construction for 52 years.

He was a 51-year member of the Midwest Operating Engineers Union. Norman enjoyed hunting, gardening, his dogs, especially Suzy, and spending time with his family.

Norman is survived by his four children- Willamette Wilson of Lena, Terry (Rhonda) Wybourn of Dekalb, IL, Noreen Steinmann of Monroe, WI, and Leigh Ann (Nor-



man) Knoll of Lena; nine grandchildren- Jamie (Heather) Wilson, Jayson (Lisa Bauer) Wilson, Sara (Marty) Bauer, Amy (Chad) Barger, Aaron (Darci) Steinmann, Shawn (Kerri) Steinmann, Corey (Samantha) Steinmann, Angie (Chris) Brinker, and Eric (Brittany) Knoll; twenty-two great grandchildren; five great-great grandchildren with one on the way; two brothers: Darryl (Faye) Wybourn of Waddams Grove and Robert Wybourn of Lena; sister Dixie (Terry) Althoff of Waddams Grove and special friend Donna Ruch of Mon-

roe. He was preceded in death by his parents, wife Janice in 1998, son-in-law Larry Steinmann; three brothers- Duane, Harlan, and William; and four sisters-in-law - Darla, Joyce, Carol, and Lucille Karnatz.

Funeral Service was held on Thursday, March 28, 2024, at St. John's Lutheran Church in Lena. Visitation was held from on Wednesday, March 27, 2024, at St. John's Lutheran Church. Rev. Jason Shaw officiated the services. Interment took place at the Lena Burial Park. A memorial has been established in his memory. Condolences may be sent to the family at leadmonfh.com. The family would like to thank the Lena Living Center staff and Unity Hospice staff for their care and support.

Church news

St. John's Lutheran Church

St. John's Lutheran Church, Pearl City, will celebrate the second Sunday of Easter on Sunday, April 7. We will be blessing bibles and giving them to our Confirmation students that day as well.

Everyone is welcome to come to St. John's to play cards and dominoes on Thursday, April 25 at 1 p.m. The Men's group will be meeting for their monthly Men's Breakfast on Wednesday, April 3 at 7:30 a.m. at Garden View restaurant in Lena. The April Grace Meal will be on Sunday, April 21. Meals can be picked up between 11 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. on the 21. Reservations are due in the church office by Thursday, April 18. The menu for the April meal will be Pork Chops, Lutheran Potatoes, Corn, Cole Slaw and Tapioca

Puttting. This meal is possible due to donations and a grant from the Foundation of Northwest Illinois.

The Healthy Wolves group will be packing backpacks on Thursday, April 4 at 3:15 p.m. If interested in donating to this ministry, reach out to the church office for more information.

St. John's will be hosting a Wellness Screening on Saturday, May 4 from 8 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. The screenings done will include blood pressure, glucose, and cholesterol for adults (fasting is not required). It is open to the public and free of charge.

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.

Salem United Church of Christ

Join Salem United Church of Christ for a service led by Pastor Christopher Ham on Sunday, April 7, 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 meet on April 10 at 8 a.m. at Beltline Café, 325 West South Street, Freeport, IL. Everyone is welcome to join.

Please join for Crafternoon from 4 p.m. 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

See CHURCH, Page 3

We want to sincerely THANK everyone that sent cards, flowers, memorials, and food and visited at the time of Dad's passing. We also thank all who helped in any way. The outpouring acts of love were truly appreciated. There was one monetary gift and one gorgeous flower arrangement that came anonymously. I thank all the hospice people that kept Dad comfortable and handled so much so I had less to do. A sincere "thank you" goes out to the staff and volunteers at the Friendship Center. It was a great place for Dad to go, and he enjoyed it there! A sincere "thank you" goes to everyone that helped Dad the last week at the Lena Living Center. They kept Dad as comfortable as possible. It was hard to let Dad go, but it was time for him to be out of pain. Dad had a great faith in his Lord and Savior, and was ready to go to his eternal home! God bless all of you!

Kathy, Jacob, Liz, Matt, (Sarah) Logan, Rachel Clay (Nathan)



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Officials say state veterans homes have reformed after deadly 2020 COVID-19 outbreak, but staffing challenges remain

By Cole Longcor
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Illinois' veterans affairs director recently told a legislative panel that while state-run veterans homes have better policies in place following a COVID-19 outbreak that killed 36 residents at the LaSalle Veterans Home in 2020, understaffing remains a challenge.

"The need for long-term care will explode over the next 20 years," Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs Director Terry Prince told the Legislative Audit Commission. He predicted long-term care populations would grow by 200 to 500 percent in that span.

He said while IDVA has employees who "are dedicated and devoted and willing to work overtime," the department has also let its census decrease at state-run veterans homes to keep staff-to-patient ratios sustainable.

"It could be easy to say yeah, we're gonna fill the Quincy Veterans Home and fill it all the way up to 400 people, but you have to have

the staff to do so," he said.

He said staffing remains difficult even though Illinois' "fantastic" benefits package for staff at veterans homes is "nearly \$40,000 higher than the civilian equivalent."

As for responding to COVID-19 outbreaks, Prince said the department is in a much better place than it was in 2020. Beginning in late October that year, the LaSalle home experienced a COVID-19 outbreak that sickened nearly 200 people—a whopping 85 percent of residents and 35 percent of staff tested positive for the virus, which eventually killed three dozen residents.

The deadly outbreak led to legislative hearings and scrutiny of Gov. JB Pritzker's administration's response. The General Assembly called for an audit, which was published in 2022. The 12-member Legislative Audit Commission held its hearing to review it last week.

The audit made three major recommendations, including mandating testing of staff and residents during COVID

outbreaks—defined as two or more cases—and delineating responsibilities between IDVA and IDPH. Additionally, the audit recommended the governor's office increase oversight of administrative staff and create a senior home administrator position within IDVA.

"I want to make sure that it's recognized that this agency threw everything at this situation as they did during the COVID crisis," Prince said.

IDVA Assistant Director Anthony Vaughn told the panel that when he arrived at LaSalle toward the end of the outbreak in December 2020 as the home's newly appointed interim administrator, he found "a dedicated staff looking to do the right thing."

But he also compared the scene to a "Marine Corps unit that's just been through a big battle."

"And they're still recovering, and they're still hurting, but they want the leadership to be able to move on," he said.

While a 2021 report from the Illinois Department of Hu-

man Services inspector general found fault with IDVA's response, the auditor general's report was more critical of the state's public health department. The auditor general's office described the previous IDHS inspector general report as "flawed" for its reliance on interviews rather than documentation.

Scott Wahlbrink of the auditor general's office told lawmakers that the Illinois Department of Public Health was not responsive to the crisis even though officials there were repeatedly made aware "on almost a daily basis" from their counterparts at the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs.

"IDPH did not identify and respond to the seriousness of the outbreak," Wahlbrink said. "It was the IDVA chief of staff who ultimately had to request assistance."

That chief of staff, Tony Kolbeck, was among those fired after the IDHS report on the outbreak. IDVA Director Linda Chapa LaVia was fired as well.

Pritzker, in response to the audit in 2021, said IDPH was following U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance not to visit a congregate facility and risk disease spread when a phone call would suffice.

Prince said one of his major changes has been improving communication.

"I have a direct line to Gov. Pritzker, if I need to call the governor for something," he said. "I have regular conversations with the IDPH director."

Since the outbreak, Prince said the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs has made changes to prevent future outbreaks and keep residents and staff safe. Angela Simmons, IDVA senior home administrator, said that IDVA has weekly infection control meetings to review daily tests that are reported to IDPH.

In addition to increased reporting, Simmons said the department has begun including staff from the state's five veterans homes to develop policies for how to respond to

situations ranging disease outbreaks to daily incidents.

"Our policy process right now is stronger than it ever has been," Simmons said. "We get input from the homes."

Since the outbreak there have also been major staffing changes in IDPH and IDVA. Prince was appointed in April 2021, and IDVA hired a senior home administrator and an agencywide infection specialist. It is also looking to hire a medical director this year.

Rep. Amy Elik, R-Godfrey, asked Prince if the state's veterans homes had seen "outbreaks of other infectious diseases" since IDVA overhauled some of its procedures that have served "as sort of a test."

Prince said the veterans homes have seen other outbreaks with better outcomes.

"I believe in my heart of hearts that the vaccine has been one of the biggest things that has made this a much different story than back in 2020," he said. "We are much better positioned."

Jerry Nowicki contributed to this report.

News briefs

Female veterans brunch

The Lena American Legion Auxiliary will honor female veterans with a brunch on Saturday, April 20, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. This will be held at the Lena American Legion Home at 316 W. Main St., Lena. There will be no charge for this brunch. Join for fellowship and entertainment. Please call 815-369-4684 or jamcps54@yahoo.com to make reservations or with any questions. Reservations are requested by April 10.

The Jimmys to perform in Freeport

On Saturday, April 6 The Jimmys will perform at Masonic Event Center located at 305 W. Stephenson Street, Freeport, IL. Doors open at 6 p.m. and the show begins at 7 p.m. General admission seats are \$20 with a food and cash bar available. Tickets can be purchased at greaterfreeport.com/events.

• Church (Continued from page 2)

lower level of Salem United Church of Christ, and all are welcome to join.

For more information on any Salem related items contact 815-369-4511 or salemwingsofjoy@yahoo.com.

Seasons of Life ladies conference

The Seasons of Life ladies conference will be held on April 26 and 27 at Cedarville Baptist Church. On Friday, April 26 enjoy dinner

at 5 p.m. and Christa Mielke at 6 p.m. Christa Mielke and Cheryl Stitzinger will present on Saturday, April 27 from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. with lunch to follow. Tom Meyer, The Bible Memory Man, will recite the book of Revelation at 2 p.m. Cost to attend is \$40/ adults and \$20/youth. Saturday only tickets are \$10.

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Illinois community colleges empower women to pursue careers in historically male-dominated industries

By Teresa Garate
VICE CHAIR, ILLINOIS
COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD
As a career advocate for community inclusion and access to critical services like health care and education, I felt compelled to highlight the work of Illinois Community Colleges across our state that empower women to pursue careers in historically male-dominated industries.



Teresa Garate

March is National Women's History Month when we celebrate and remember women's achievements. Creating opportunities for women through education is a 24/7 mission for the Illinois Community College System. Illinois' community

colleges continue to be leaders in actively dismantling barriers, supporting women's long-term career goals, and providing adequate resources. As a key facilitator of workforce training in our state, the Illinois Community College System plays a pivotal role in reshaping the landscape of gender representation in the workforce.

Community colleges are not merely centers of community education; they are engines of empowerment, driving change and

inclusivity. As an Hispanic woman, this empowerment is especially important to me given the student population across our community college system. Women make up more than 50 percent of the enrollment in community colleges, and the colleges serve 72 percent of the minority population in public higher education.

Through innovative programs, dedicated support services, and collaborative partnerships, Illinois community colleges are paving the way for women to thrive in fields where they have historically been underrepresented.

One of the most significant contributions of Illinois community colleges is the development of tailored programs designed specifically to prepare women for careers in male-dominated industries. From welding and manufacturing to construction trades, these

programs provide women and other underrepresented groups with the specialized skills and knowledge necessary to excel in their chosen fields. By offering hands-on training, mentorship opportunities, and real-world experiences, these programs equip individuals with the confidence and competence to succeed.

Illinois community colleges recognize the unique challenges faced by women entering male-dominated fields and take steps to support those challenges. From having the right safety gear to fit women available in a welding program or inviting female industry speakers and alumni to talk to a STEM class, these efforts foster a supportive and nurturing environment that empower women to pursue their career aspirations with determination and resilience.

See CAREERS, Page 5

Scribe trying to get Man Card back after watching season finale of The Bachelor

Editor's note: Previously published columns by Mike Sandrolini are being re-published periodically on the Opinion page.

This column was originally published in 2018.

I can't recall when I first received my Man Card. Perhaps it arrived in the mail during my late teens and early 20s when I concluded that certain pop songs I heard on WLS-AM 890 didn't exactly square up with what I perceive are alpha male standards. For example, the 1970s tear-jerker, titled "Feelings" by Morris Albert (Sample lyrics: Teardrops ... rolling down on my face ... trying to forget my feelings of love) and then in the 1980s when "Never Gonna Give You Up" by Rick Astley hit the airwaves.

The latter is a tune about some guy looking for a full commitment in a relationship, and wanting to tell a woman how he feels. A full commitment? Expressing your feelings? Rick, what were you thinking? It's safe to assume Rick Astley had his Man Card suspended long-term (if not revoked on the spot for life) after he recorded this ditty.

There are other ways in which one can have his Man Card suspended. Here's my shortlist:

- Watching "The Notebook"
- Watching "Dancing with the Stars" (or ice dancing)
- Watching any of those Hallmark Channel holiday movies. Gentlemen, I don't know how else to say this, but you can't let your sweetheart sweet-talk you

into watching "Snow Bride" or "Hitched for the Holidays" with her.

• Putting one of those stick family bumper stickers on the rear window of your minivan.

• Singing "Sweet Caroline" if you happen to be out listening to a live band that happens to play it (which is often). A longer suspension of your Man Card privileges awaits you if you sing the chorus and yell, "So good! So good! So good! So good!"

• Singing "Don't Stop Believing" or "Brown Eyed Girl" (see "Sweet Caroline" entry)

In recent years, I've been upgraded to a Platinum Man Card because I've never taken a selfie as long as I've owned a smartphone (four years and counting) and for being able to quote lines from the old Dos Equis "Most Interesting Man in the World" radio and TV commercials: (Sample quotes: "He's never lost a sock" ... "He lives vicariously through himself" ... "He has never relied on mistletoe" ... "His shirts never wrinkle" ... "He has won the lifetime achievement award—twice.")

Today, however, I have a confession to make. I have backslid—*in* arguably the worst way possible.

Fellas, I can't even look up as I admit that—gulp—I watched most of the two-hour season finale of The Bachelor.

Arie Luyendyk Jr., a former Indianapolis 500 winner (that's worth Platinum Man Card status right there), proposed to Becca, then broke off their engagement

See MAN CARD, Page 5

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More than 900 books collected in SSM Health Pediatrics book drive

In less than a month, SSM Health Monroe Clinic Medical Group's Pediatrics team collected 951 new or gently used children's books to give to pediatric patients at sick visits. The book drive, open to staff at SSM Health, collected books at the clinic in Monroe as well as other SSM Health Monroe Medical Group locations.

"We are so appreciative of everyone that donated books. We weren't sure what to expect, but this is well beyond anything we imagined," shared Amy Schultz, RN, and Manager of Monroe's Pediatrics team. Teams will begin distributing the books soon.

Pictured are SSM Health Monroe Clinic Medical Group Pediatrics team members Dr. Katie Rebedew, Sarah Schroeder, RN, and Marissa Eaton, RN as they hold donated books for patients collected from their staff book drive at SSM Health Monroe Clinic Medical Group.

• Man Card (Continued from page 4)

and went running back to Lauren, who took him back (he originally dumped Lauren for Becca).

Indeed, I know the entire storyline. Sad, isn't it?

I'm still trying to figure out how I let my guard down and allowed myself to get snookered into watching the season finale. Maybe it was all the posts I viewed from women friends on Facebook discussing The Bachelor that piqued my curiosity. Or poking fun at the show one day with a co-worker.

The thing is, I never could understand the allure of The Bachelor in the first place. Why would anyone—whether a bachelor or a bachelorette—want to experience having his or her love life being played out on national TV? Or, in Arie's case, be the object of

every woman's scorn across the country?

I guess it all makes for compelling TV and drives up ratings. Well, I sure fell for it hook, line and sinker.

What have I done? I've been asking myself this question repeatedly since getting a notice from Man Card, Inc. (on official Man Card letterhead, no less) that my Man Card has been suspended indefinitely.

I've been informed that my case will be brought before a Man Card tribunal within the next few weeks. Here's hoping the tribunal offers me a plea bargain since I'm a first-time offender.

After all, the fact that I've never taken a selfie, have never sung "Sweet Caroline" and have never watched "Snow Bride" has to count for something.

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• Careers (Continued from page 4)

Furthermore, Illinois community colleges actively cultivate partnerships with industry leaders to ensure that their programs remain relevant and responsive to the evolving needs of the workforce.

These partnerships facilitate internships, job placements, and networking opportunities, providing students with valuable connections and practical experience in their chosen fields. By bridging the gap between education and industry, these collaborations enhance the employability of women graduates and facilitate their transition into male-dominated professions.

It is essential to acknowledge the critical role of financial aid and scholarships in making education more accessible and affordable for

students pursuing careers in traditionally male-dominated fields. Illinois community colleges offer a range of financial assistance options, enabling women and others from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds to pursue their educational and career goals without undue financial burden. By removing financial barriers to education, these colleges ensure that all women can fulfill their potential in these professions and contribute meaningfully to the workforce.

I am proud to be a part of the Illinois Community College Board, a group of dedicated women and men who support the many goals of Illinois' community colleges, including empowering women to forge successful career paths in any industry they choose. Through their commitment

to innovation, inclusivity, and excellence, these institutions are transforming lives and driving necessary change in our communities. As we continue to champion gender equality and diversity in the workforce, let us recognize and celebrate the invaluable contributions of Illinois community colleges in creating a more equitable and inclusive future for all.

Teresa Garate has spent more than 30 years working throughout Illinois and the US as an expert in public health, social and human services, and education. She has served as a member of the Illinois Community College Board and represents the community college board on the Illinois Board of Higher Education since 2012 and was recently named vice chair of the board.

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The Scoop Today and Shopper's Guide phone: 815-369-4112

Our Area Churches Welcome You

APPLE RIVER UMC
 102 E. Baldwin St., P.O. Box 188,
 Apple River, IL 61001
Pastor Libby Rutherford (815) 990-1428
Church (815) 594-2223
 • Sunday Worship – 9 a.m.
 • Bible Study - Every Monday 9 a.m.
Friendly Folks - Casual Attire - Join Us!

CALVARY CHURCH OF STOCKTON
 315 W. Maple St., Stockton, IL 61085
 815-947-2414
 E-Mail: calvarychurchofstockton@yahoo.com
 • Sunday Worship – 10:00 a.m.
 • Sunday School – 8:45 a.m.
 • Communion and Potluck every 1st Sunday
 (except no potlucks during summer)
 • Wednesday Night Bible Study - 6:30 p.m.
 • Every other Sat. Youth Group - 6 - 8 p.m.
 You may find our facebook page and weekly messages by searching for "Calvary Church of Stockton on facebook.com

You are welcome! Please visit us!

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
ELCA STOCKTON
 600 N. Main St., Stockton
Pastor Chrissy Salser (815) 988-9450
 E-Mail: cle600@mediacombb.net
 Find us on Facebook at [ChristOnMainSt](#)
 • Worship times: Saturday, 5:30 p.m.
 Sunday, 10 a.m.
 • Sunday School: Sunday, 9 a.m.

EBENEZER – SALEM UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST
 P.O. Box 102, Pearl City, IL 61062
Pastor Randy Nicholas
See Facebook or call 815-291-1965
 • Sunday Worship - Currently 8:30 a.m.
 • April services are at Salem UCC Church
 Corner of Loran & Kent Roads

EVANGELICAL FREE
CHURCH OF LENA
 720 N. Freedom Street, Lena, IL 61048
 815-369-5591
Pastor Casey Dwyer, Pastor
 • Adult bible study and Children's Sunday
 School - 8:45 a.m.
 • Sunday Morning Worship Service and
 Children's Church/Nursery – 10:00 a.m.
 • Awana Wednesdays at 6 p.m. (Sept. - April)
 • Pastor's weekly sermons at
www.lenafreechurch.org

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 309 S. Main Street, Elizabeth, IL 61028
 email: firstumcofelizabeth@gmail.com
Pastor Donna Hoffman 608-293-0163
 email: dhoffman8@gmail.com
 • Sunday Worship - 8:30 a.m.
 • Women's Faith Group -
 1st Tuesday monthly - 9:30 a.m.
We are handicapped accessible
 Find us on Facebook at
www.facebook.com/fumcelizabeth

GOOD SHEPHERD
LUTHERAN CHURCH
 118 East Mason Street, Lena, IL 61048
Pastor Thomas Mosbo (815) 369-5552
 • Sunday Worship – 9:30 a.m.
 • Sunday School – 10:45 a.m. (Sept. - May)
 • Piece Corps Quilters –
 Wednesdays at 8:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

GRACE BIBLE CHURCH OF
WOODBINE
 1904 S. Vel Tera Road, Elizabeth, IL 61028
Pastor Michael Burdett (815) 858-3843
 • Sunday Worship – 10:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
 • Sunday School – 9:30 a.m.
 • Prayer meeting – Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.
 Sunday services broadcasted at 11:30 a.m. on
 Radio WCCI 100.3 FM

HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC CHURCH
 223 E. Front Avenue, Stockton, IL 61085
Father Mike Morrissey (815) 947-2545
 • Saturday Evening Mass – 4:30 p.m.
 • Sunday Mass – 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m.
 and 5:00 p.m.
 • Reconciliation Saturday – 3:30 - 4:15 p.m.
 • Parish Hall for Rent – Seats 200

LENA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 118 West Mason Street, Lena, IL 61048
Pastor Melwyn Alagodi (815) 369-5291
 • Sunday Worship – 9:00 a.m.
 • Sunday School – 10:30 a.m.
 • Daily Dial-A-Devotion 815-369-4411

MARTINTOWN COMMUNITY
CHURCH
 W8996 Lena St., Martintown, WI 53522
 (1 mile north of Winslow, IL)
Pastor Kevin Cernek • 608-558-0974
 • Sunday Worship – 8 & 10:30 a.m.
 Worship inside or watch from the
 parking lot on the jumbotron
 • Sunday School for all ages – 9:30 a.m.
 • Sunday Youth - 6 p.m.
 • Tuesday Bible Study - 10:30 a.m.
 • Thursday Prayer & Bible Study - 6 p.m.

MCCONNELL COMMUNITY CHURCH
 211 Hulbert Rd. P.O. Box 97,
 McConnell, IL 61050
 815-868-2324
 Email: mconnellcmtychurch@yahoo.com
Pastor Jordan Cernek
 • Sunday Worship – 9:00 a.m.
 Fellowship hour after every service
 Find us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/mccconnellcommunitychurch.com
** We are handicapped accessible*

NEW VINE COMMUNITY CHURCH
 621 W. Lena St., Lena, IL 61048
 (Coach's Gymnasium)
Pastor Doug Carroll 815-541-4112
 • Sunday Worship – 9:00 a.m.
 with fellowship following
 • Communion first Sunday of each month
 Bible Study Groups available
newvinele.com
 Facebook: New Vine Community Church of
 Lena, IL
** We are handicapped accessible*

PROVIDENCE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST
CHURCH
 15010 W. Howardsville Road
 Lena, IL 61048
 217-357-3723
Pastors Robert Webb & Rob Webb
 • Sunday Worship
 - each 3rd Sunday - 10:30 a.m.
 Potluck lunch following service

SALEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
 8491 West Salem Road, Lena, IL 61048
 (Turn on Salem Road at Eleroy Rest Stop)
Pastor Christopher Ham (815) 369-4511
 • Sunday Worship – 10:00 a.m.
 • Adult Sunday School - 9 a.m.
 (before service)
 • Children's Sunday School - 10 a.m.
 (during service)
**We are handicapped accessible*
 Watch our services or see our upcoming
 events on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/OldStoneChurchWithTheLightedCross/>

SCHAPVILLE ZION
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
 635 East Schapville Road,
 Elizabeth, IL 61028
Pastor Dottie Morizzo
 (815) 845-2272
 Cell (815) 238-0670
www.schapvillezion.org
 • Sunday Worship Service – 10:00 a.m.
 • Sunday School – 10:00 a.m.
 • Bible Study Classes Available

SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS
LUTHERAN CHURCH
 536 E. Schapville Road,
 Scales Mound, IL 61054
Church number (815) 845-2061
Rev. James Mehlretter
 Website: www.shepherdofhill.com
 • Sunday Worship – 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.
 • Sunday School (Sept. – May) – 8:45 a.m.
 • Holy Communion is celebrated weekly.

ST. ANN CATHOLIC CHURCH
 608 East Railroad, Warren, IL 61087
Father Andrew Hernandez (815) 745-2312
 • Sunday Mass – 8:00 a.m.
 • Reconciliation Sunday – 7:30 - 7:50 a.m.

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
 The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod
 625 Country Lane Drive, Lena, IL 61048
Rev. Jason Shaw (815) 369-4035
 • Saturday Evening Worship – 5:30 p.m.
 • Sunday Worship – 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
 • Blast Program at 9:00 a.m.
 • High School & Adult Sunday School
 at 9:15 a.m.

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
 Evangelical Lutheran Church of America
 229 S. First St., Pearl City, IL 61062
www.stjohnspearlcity.org
 815-443-2215
 • Sunday Morning Worship – 9:00 a.m.
 • Christian Education for all Ages - 10:15 a.m.
 Handicapped Accessible

ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH
 8315 S. Massbach Road, Elizabeth, IL 61028
Pastor David Russell
Church: 815-589-3367
 • Sunday Worship – 10:00 a.m.
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ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH
 105 West Webster, Apple River, IL 61001
Father Andrew Hernandez (815) 745-2312
 • Saturday Mass – 6:00 p.m.
 • Reconciliation Saturday – 5:30 – 5:50 p.m.

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH
 410 West Lena Street, Lena, IL 61048
Father Andrew Hernandez (815) 369-2810
 • Saturday Mass – 4:00 p.m.
 • Sunday Mass – 10:00 a.m.
 • Reconciliation Saturday – 3:30 – 3:50 p.m.

ST. PAUL'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH
 (Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod)
 411 W. Catlin St., P.O. Box 506
 Elizabeth, IL 61028
Pastor Mike Nesbit - Cell: 815-858-5621
Church: 815-858-3334
www.stpaulizabeth.org
 All services are available to watch online@
 Facebook: St. Paul Lutheran Church,
 Elizabeth, IL
 YouTube channel: Pastor Mike Nesbit
 • Sunday Worship – 9:00 a.m.
 • Adult Bible Study - Sunday 10:30 a.m.
 Super Sunday on the first Sunday of the
 month, with Sunday School from 10 - 11:30
 a.m.
 Worship services will be held outside during
 the summer. Please bring a lawn chair.
 ALL ARE WELCOME.

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH -
KENT
 The Little Church with a Big Heart
 1334 Sunnyside Road, Kent, IL 61044
 1/2 mile north on Kent Road
 • Sunday Worship – 9:30 a.m.
 • Holy Communion every Sunday
 • Women Meet at 9 a.m. on the 2nd Sunday
 • Chair Lift to Sanctuary

WESLEY UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH
 Corner of Hudson & Benton St.,
 Stockton, IL 61085
Pastor Melwyn Alagodi (815) 947-2541
 • Sunday Worship – 11 a.m.
 • Adult Bible Studies Available
 • Communion Every 1st Sunday
 • First Sunday potluck following church
 services.
 Find us on website StocktonWUMC.org
 or Facebook-Stockton Wesley United
 Methodist Church
** Handicapped Accessible*

WINSLOW GRACE BIBLE CHURCH
 197 Carver Street, Winslow, IL 61089
Pastor Robert Patin (815) 230-1862
608-669-5770
 • Sunday Worship – 10:45 a.m.
 • Sunday School – 9:45 a.m.

ZION COMMUNITY CHURCH
 10100 W. Sabin Church Rd.,
 Pearl City, IL 61062
Pastor Wayne Fischer • 815-266-6260
Pastor Chip Sohl • 815-541-1425
 • Sunday Worship Service – 9:00 a.m.
 • Children's Church - during church service
 • Prayer Shawl Knitting Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.
 • Bible Study Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.



Come worship with us!

Please call 815-369-4112 or 815-947-3353 if you wish to have your church listed on the church page.

Wildcats claw past Wolves, improve to 3-0

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT

After a couple of blow-out victories to open the 2024 baseball season, the River Ridge-Scales Mound Wildcats found themselves in much different circumstances against the Pearl City Wolves. A late inning comeback effort by the Wolves led to an exciting finish when these two teams faced off last week.

The Wildcats and the Wolves narrowly avoided last week's poor weather when they met up on Thursday, March 28. At the time, the Wolves were just 1-3 as they were coming off a 9-3 loss to Polo. The Wildcats were off to a hot 2-0 start, but they had to travel to the Wolves' home field for this one.

Early on, it looked like the Wildcats were set to run away with another one. Their offense combined for four runs

in the top of the first. When George Winter was hit by a pitch to open the game, the Wildcats were in business. After reaching third on a passed ball, George was driven in by a Damon Dittmar single for the game's first run. Shortly after, Joe Winter drove in Dittmar on a fielder's choice. Damon Distler capped off the inning with a liner to right, driving Ty Spahn in to score and putting the Cats up 4-0.

Things settled down after that. In the bottom half, Sam Rife shut down the Wolves as three consecutive strikeouts helped him get out of an early jam. That seemed to set the tone for the game as even the Wildcat bats went quiet after that.

At the end of three, RR-SM still held their 4-0 advantage. George gave his team another opportunity when a five-pitch walk had him on with one out

in the top of the fourth. Two quick groundouts followed, and the Cats went into the bottom half maintaining their four-run advantage.

That's when Pearl City began to find some life. After a leadoff double, a single to right gave the Wolves runners on the corners with one out. A sacrifice fly to center allowed the Wolves to get on the board as they cut into the Wildcats' lead. Another single to right would drive a second run in, bringing the Wolves within two at the end of the fourth.

It didn't take long for the Wildcats to get one of those runs back. Distler had a clutch, two-out single in the fifth, driving Rife in to score. That wound up being an important insurance run as Pearl City continued to put the pressure on in the late innings.

The Wolves tallied another run in the bottom of the sixth,

making the score 5-3. After failing to get a run back in the top of the seventh, the Wildcats brought Dittmar in to close things down in the bottom half.

Dittmar was electric in the save situation. Two quick strikeouts had the Wildcats just one out away from their third victory. Two walks followed, giving the Wolves some life in their final at bat. In a 2-2 count, Dittmar earned a soft grounder back to himself, getting the putout and securing the 5-3 victory over Pearl City.

The Wildcats had just five hits in the game, but they took advantage of every opportunity. Joe finished the day one for four with one run batted in. Rife went zero for three with a walk, one RBI, and one run scored. Distler led the way at the plate, going two for three with two RBI and one walk.

Rife pitched most of the innings, allowing two runs and six hits in just under four innings pitched. Rife struck out five on the day. Distler was excellent in relief, striking out two and allowing one hit in two and one third innings. Dittmar got the save, striking out two and allowing zero hits in the final inning.

After the 3-0 start, the Wildcats are hopeful to play East Dubuque on Thursday, April 4 at 4:30 p.m. The Wildcats are the home team for that game after being scheduled on the road all last week. Only one of those games wound up being played with both the Le-Win game and Polo game being cancelled due to weather.

Around the Northern Hills



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

Did you know that if you are a Jo Daviess County Farm Bureau member and a customer of Stephenson Service Company that you may be eligible for FS patronage benefits? Qualified purchases you make from FS gives

you the potential to become an owner of the company, thereby giving you a voice in its governance. Each year, the FS Board of Directors considers the payment of patronage refunds based on each division's sales and profitability and only pays patronage refunds to Farm Bureau members. If you're not already a member, please contact our office at 815-858-2235 or sign up at www.iyfb.org.

Cover Crop Field Day

We will be hosting his annual fall field day on Friday, April 5 at 1 p.m. It will be held at the first field entrance south of 4629 IL Route 78 on the east side of 78 (south of Stockton). Come see the updates on the multi-year cover crop project. Speakers will include Greg Thoren, owner and host, John Musser, Stephenson Service Co., Art Scheele, AgNetic, UW-Platteville Researchers.

The Young Leaders Committee

Are you between the ages of 18 and 35 and have an interest in agriculture? The Young Leaders Committee is a great group of individuals that enjoy promoting agriculture and I would love to see more people join in. The next meeting is Sunday, April 7 at 6 p.m. here at the farm bureau office in Elizabeth. If you have any questions, call our office at 815.858.2235 or email jdcfbmgr@gmail.com.

Family Farm signs

It's that time of year that we are all thinking of planting (okay, maybe wishing) and sprucing things up around the farm. Why not add a "This is a Family Farm" sign to your landscape? The signs are 17.5" X 23" and cost \$30.

Farm Fun Fact

April is National Garden Month. I think we are all ready to get planting!

You ought to be in pictures!

THIS IS AN OPEN CALL FOR SUBMITTED PHOTOS TO BE USED IN YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

- ▼ Community events, car washes, festivals, lemonade stands, school projects - people at work and at play.
- We are interested!**
- ▼ Show the community what your group has been doing!
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- ▼ Tell us what's happening in the photo
- ▼ **Please do NOT crop your photos.**
- ▼ Tell us who took the photo and we will give them a photo credit

E-mail your photos at the highest possible resolution to:
scoopshopper@rvpublishing.com
BY NOON ON FRIDAY

PHOTOS MAY ALSO APPEAR ON OUR WEB SITE, rvpnews.com

This is your chance to promote your organization or special event!



Affordable health screenings coming to Stockton

Residents can learn about their risk for cardiovascular

disease, osteoporosis, diabetes, and other chronic, serious conditions with affordable screenings by Life Line Screening. Calvary Church of Stockton will host this community event on April 24, 2024. The site is located at 315 W Maple Ave in Stockton.

Screenings can check for the level of plaque buildup in arteries, related to risk for cardiovascular disease, stroke and overall vascular health,

HDL and LDL Cholesterol levels, diabetes risk, kidney and thyroid function, and more. Screenings are affordable and convenient. Free parking is also available.

Special package pricing starts at \$159, but consultants will work with you to create a package that is right for you based on your age and risk factors. Call 1-877-237-1287 or visit www.lifelinescreening.com. Pre-registration is required.

OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, April 6 - 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Food & Drawing

Sign up to win an Echo 56 volt trimmer/blower!

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SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Carroll Jo Daviess Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution annual recognition

On March 16, 2024, Carroll Jo Daviess Chapter National Society Daughters of the American Revolution held their Annual Recognition Day at the Heritage Center in Lanark, IL. Students from Carroll, Jo Daviess, Stephenson, and Ogle Counties were recognized with the Good Citizens award, and residents were recognized for their community service and displaying of the Flag of the United States following the Flag etiquette. Students awarded the Good Citizens Award for their respective schools included (front row) Wyatt Meiners/Milledgeville, Wyatt Janecke/Warren, Jason Prowant/Eastland, Karl Hubb/Stockton, Alex Albano/Polo, Tania Barragan/West Carroll, (back row) Faith Freeman/Freeport, Abigail Frank/Scales Mound, Luran Wille/Orangeville, Avery Engle/River Ridge, Molly Amendt/Lena Winslow.

Stockton FFA student awarded at State

Ashlyn Schubert was selected as the State FFA Supervised Occupational Experience (SOE) Award Winner in Health Science and Technology. Schubert is a member of the Stockton FFA Chapter and the daughter of Mick and Tiffany Schubert. The Illinois FFA recognizes students in Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) areas and six different SOE areas based on their work-based learning experiences outside of the classroom.

23, 2024. The Stockton FFA would like to extend a special thank you to the Stockton Fire Department for escorting Schubert into town.

Schubert was previously chosen as the Chapter, Section, and District awardee in this area. She will receive a plaque for her accomplishments and be celebrated for this great achievement at the 96th Illinois FFA State Convention.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Ashlyn Schubert is recognized as a 2024 State FFA Proficiency winner.

Open House Sunday, April 7 • 1-3 p.m.

436 Hubbard, Winslow • Priced at \$187,500



Move in Ready! Newly Renovated 3 bedroom, 1 1/2 bath home with country views. Eat in kitchen has an abundance of cabinets, stainless steel appliances, granite counters, built in ovens, cook-top, snack bar and there's a breakfast nook. Spacious living room with wood burning fireplace. Family room, office or use as an additional bedroom. Primary bedroom has vaulted wood ceiling and double closets. Updated full bath located between two main floor bedrooms. Main floor laundry and half bath round out the main floor. Up the spiral staircase is the third bedroom with walk in closet, second closet and bookshelves. Large deck off of the breakfast overlooks the L shaped yard. Many updates in the last year some of which include brick facade, some siding, windows, electrical and plumbing, kitchen, updated full bath, new 1/2 bath, front door, flooring, most light fixtures, interior painted, sidewalk, driveway and overhead garage door, opener & remote.

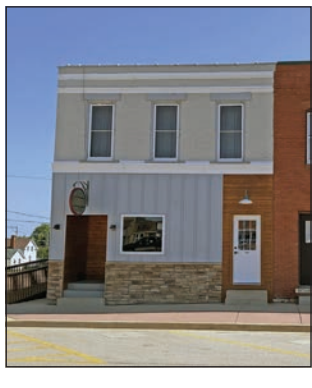
some siding, windows, electrical and plumbing, kitchen, updated full bath, new 1/2 bath, front door, flooring, most light fixtures, interior painted, sidewalk, driveway and overhead garage door, opener & remote.

Listings



Pearl City \$495,000

Seclusion, seclusion, Hunters take note! While driving down its winding lane, you'll notice how beautifully laid out this painstakingly maintained (nearly 25 Acre) recreational property, with home, pole building, & 16' above ground swimming pool actually is! 20 acres of heavy timber has provided exceptional hunting, with 2.5 miles of recreational trails throughout & 1/2 half acre pond, to boot! Call for more information or a private showing.



Lena • \$119,900

Mixed use building in downtown Lena. The main floor has two good size office/retail spaces (16'6 x 19'1 & 13'11 x 15'3), storage room (7'11 x 8'0), half bath and back room (8'6 x 14'10) with entrance off of alley. There is a one bedroom apartment on the second level which can be accessed from the street and also from the back room entrance on the main level. The apartment has a spacious living room (20'8 x 14'5), dining room (7'9 x 13'1), kitchen (7'9 x 10'1), bedroom (11'11 x 9'8), full bath and back storage/laundry room (9'7 x 14'8). There is a ramp to the side door of the building. Newers include one of the two furnaces and air conditioners, new windows in the upstairs (except back storage/laundry) in 2022 and front facade updated, front window and door in 2016. Seller willing to rent the main floor office space, call for information.

New Listing



411 Oak Ridge Dr., Lena \$32,000

Build your new home in Oak View Terrace Subdivision. City water & sewer at lot line. Copy of Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions at listing office.

There are 17 other lots available in Oak View Terrace priced from \$32,000 to \$38,500. Call for more information on these other lots.



Savanna \$29,900

Archer-Lover's dream here! Wooded acreage (over 6 TOTAL ACRES including 4 parcels) of pure bow-hunting delight, providing tons of walnut & oak trees for deer stands or perhaps for harvesting at a later date(?) Such a wonderful investment opportunity, all bundled into one potent package! Here's your chance to attain your own little chunk of the world! Legal Description Continued: LOTS 4-11-12-13 BLK 3 JOHN FULLER ADT. 08-010-711 -00 PART BLOCK 46 DAVIDSON & BELLOWS RE-SURVEY OF SAVANNA

Welcome Home Illinois
300 E. Main Street
Lena, IL 61048
815-291-2330

Faye Heilman
Designated Managing Broker
815-291-9204
WelcomeHomeNIllinois@gmail.com

Ashley Heilman
Managing Broker
815-291-8149
ashn2002@hotmail.com

Julie Willson
Broker
815-690-2792
juliewillson63@gmail.com

Stephenson and Carroll County Farm Bureau news

By Victoria Hansen

Each year I look forward to kicking off the summer with our annual trip to Shipshewana, Indiana. I love visiting the familiar businesses, enjoying treats from the families and farms we visit, and seeing those who have become friends over the years. I would like to invite you on our 2024 trip that will take place Monday, June 10 through Wednesday, June 12. Our tentative agenda is as follows:

Monday: Leave Freeport Walmart at 6:30 a.m., lunch and exploring at Linton Garden, Dinner and a show at Blue Gate Theater.

Tuesday: Tours of Amish Businesses and a threshers meal at an Amish Homestead.

Wednesday: Your choice of attending the famous Shipshewana Flea market, exploring downtown Shipshewana, or relaxing at the hotel before we travel home. Our estimated time of arrive home is 7 p.m.

The trip costs include transportation, all meals with the exception of lunch and dinner on Wednesday, Hotel accommodations at Farmstead Inn, all Gratuities and moderate walking. The cost is based on the number of individuals in

your room and ranges from \$610 to \$400. Non-members pay an additional \$50. To register call 815-232-3186. Space is limited and this trip regularly fills up, so don't miss out.

Prairie Farmer Names 2024 Master Farmers

Prairie Farmer selected four new recipients of the Master Farmer award. The award is noted as agriculture's lifetime achievement award and honors exceptional agricultural production skills, commitment to family and service to their communities.

Chris Hausman, Champaign County: Hausman and his wife, Evonne, are Champaign County Farm Bureau members from Pesotum. They grow 1,450 acres of corn and soybeans adopting practices such as Integrated Pest Management and GPS grid sampling. Hausman was an Illinois Farm Business Farm Management (FBFM) fieldman before heading back to the farm, and he served as the IFB District 12 director for 10 years. He is currently a director on the Longview Bank Board and remains an FBFM client.

Malcolm and Susan Head,

Macon County: The Head's grow corn, soybeans, seed corn and beans, wheat, hay and alfalfa with their sons, Rollin and Alex Head, near Blue Mound. The Head's also raise commercial cows and feeder cattle. Susan Head served on the Illinois Beef Association board and the board for Illinois Beef Foundation Inc. Malcolm Head was a past school board president and chairman of the Blue Mound Lions Club. He currently serves as a director on the Soy Capital Bank Board with 10 locations throughout Decatur, Bloomington, Peoria, Kankakee and Champaign.

Lou Lamoreux, Carroll County: Farm Bureau member Lou Lamoreux raises corn, soybeans, wheat and hay with his wife, Sue, their son, Nathan, nephew, Dan, and Lou Lamoreaux's brother, John. The farming operation near Lanark also includes finisher cattle and cows. Lamoreux served on the Carroll County Board, IL Corn board and Illinois Beef Association board. The Lamoreaux family has been farming since 1867.

Gerald Thompson, McLean County: Former IFB board director for District 7, Gerald Thompson lives with

his wife, Jayme, near Colfax. They raise corn and soybeans with their son, Reid. Thompson is a 1983 graduate of the University of Illinois and serves as a member of the McLean County Board. He has a private pilot's license to fly for fun, check farm fields and visit his children.

Prairie Farmer also named Gary Schnitkey as an Honorary Master Farmer. As an

economist at the University of Illinois, Schnitkey teaches, conducts research and uses the farmdoc website to share farm management information with farmers throughout Illinois.

Recipients will be honored on March 28 at Prairie Farmer magazine's annual event in Bloomington. This award is sponsored by GROWMARK.

Stephenson County Farm Bureau Foundation scholarship

The Stephenson County Farm Bureau scholarship deadline is April 5 at 4:30 p.m. Applications can be found online at www.stephensoncfb.org or on the County Farm Bureau's Facebook page. Please direct questions to Manager, Victoria Hansen at 815-232-3186 or by email at manager@stephensoncfb.org.

The Lena American Legion Auxiliary monthly meeting scheduled for April 10

The Lena American Legion Auxiliary will hold their monthly meeting on Wednesday, April 10, at 6 p.m. at the American Legion Home. Dues can be paid at this meeting. Community service hours should be turned in. Marsha Tessendorf will oversee the social hour.

Female veterans or relatives of

veterans who may be eligible to join are always welcome. For all female veterans who join this year, the dues will be waived for the first year. Members are needed to help serve our veterans, the community, and the children. Juniors will meet on April 13 at 10 a.m. at the Lena Legion Home.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Members of the Jo Daviess Home and Community Education Association attend State Conference

Members of the Jo Daviess County Home and Community Education Association (HCE) participated in workshops and speaker presentations at the annual Illinois

Association of Home and Community Education. Jo Daviess County was selected as County of the Year for District 1. Attendees were (pictured left to right) Alice Davis, Marilyn Wurster, Janice Broshous, Stephanie Vaupel, Eloise Pierce, Ann Coppnell, Deb Dombrowski, and Carrie Haug. Also attending were Keith and Gayle Arnold who accepted the District 1 outstanding member award in honor of the late Marcella Arnold.

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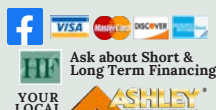
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Lady Panthers win third in a row

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT

The Lena-Winslow Panthers found their rhythm after a slow start to the 2024 softball season. As of March 20, the Panthers were coming off a 10-0 loss to Morrison which dropped their overall record to just 1-3. The cold weather may have kept the Panthers off the field for a week, but they have been red hot ever since.

On Thursday, March 28 the Panthers pounced back into the win column in a nail-biter over Fulton. A big second inning saw the Panthers jump out to a quick five-run advantage as they put up six runs. Faith Offerman got the Panthers on the board with a one-run double up the middle. Chloe Wild followed up with an RBI single of her own. Later on, Kaidynce Lynch broke the game wide open with a three-run double to left.

Fulton would chip away at the lead over the middle innings. By the end of the fifth, Fulton had tied the game 6-6, setting things up for an exciting finish.

It was Eden Dietz who had the hit of the game as her single to right drove in a pair of runs in the sixth inning. That wound up playing the difference

as the Panthers held on to win by a score of 8-7.

Rachael Setterstrom was perfect at the plate, going four for four with a run scored. Lynch went one for four with three RBI. Dietz finished the day two for four with two RBI, and Offerman was one for three with a run scored and one RBI. Wild added an RBI and one run scored in the win.

The close matchup had the Panthers prepared for what was to come. The next day, Le-Win made the short trip to face off with the Warren-Stockton Warhawks. Prior to the game, the Warhawks held a record of just 2-3. After finishing a full seven innings still tied 6-6, the Panthers and Warhawks went into extras to decide a winner.

Having the first at bat, Setterstrom quickly had the Panthers in business when she took a walk to lead off the inning. After a sacrifice bunt by Ava Fiedler, Cierra Hatelak crushed a double to right field. Eventually, Hatelak reached home safely, giving the Panthers an 8-6 lead.

That was all Maddy Chiles needed as she closed things down with three straight outs in the bottom half. Chiles got the win from the circle,

throwing all eight innings while striking out nine and allowing five hits. Just one of Warren-Stockton's six runs were earned. Hatelak led the way at the plate, going three for four with two runs scored and one RBI.

The Panthers captured their third consecutive victory when they traveled to take on the Ashton-Franklin Center Raiders on Saturday, March 30. This time around, the Panthers could play in comfort as they quickly ran away with a dominant victory.

At the end of the first, the game was tied 1-1. That was as close as it would get for the rest of the day, as the Panthers put up seven in the second and five more in the third. Three more runs in the top of the fourth gave Le-Win a 16-1 lead as they scored 15 unanswered runs.

In the end, Le-Win combined for 14 hits as they beat AFC 16-5. Dietz had a massive day at the plate, going three for three with three runs scored and six RBI. Offerman was right behind her, going three for three with one run scored and three RBI. Chiles went two for three with a run scored on the

See PANTHERS, Page 16

Annual Spring Photo Contest for the 89th District

House Minority Leader Tony McCombie is launching her fourth annual Spring Photo Contest for residents throughout her 89th Legislative District. The Leader is calling on residents to capture compelling photos of people, landscapes, or landmarks throughout the community to showcase the beauty of spring. McCombie is looking forward to showcasing the incredible talent throughout the District.

"There is no better way to welcome a new season than through beautiful photos of our community," said McCombie. "In the past, I have seen great talent through photography, and I look forward to reviewing this year's submissions and having the winners displayed in our offices."

To participate, interested area residents can submit a photo that best represents the people and places of the 89th District—including any statues and monuments. The

winning photos will be displayed in Rep. McCombie's Springfield and Savanna offices.

Rep. McCombie will choose winning entries and invite the photographers for an unveiling at the Savanna office. The winning photos will be on display for the rest of the 103rd General Assembly.

Participants are asked to submit their photos by email to mccombiephotocontest@gmail.com. Photos must be taken in the 89th District during this spring. Photos are due ASAP and winners will be announced on June 21. Photos must be sent in high resolution. In the email, please include the photographer's name, home address, email, phone number, and where the photograph was taken.

An 89th District map can be found on Rep. McCombie's website at repmccombie.com. Participants seeking more info can call the district office at 815-291-8989.

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SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

A container vessel traverses the Mississippi River near New Orleans. Water levels on the Mighty Mississippi recovered in recent weeks, which triggered the removal of draft restrictions.

Mississippi River drought over, but situation still shaky

By Tammie Sloup
FARMWEEK

The drought that plagued the Mississippi River basin since 2022 and resulted in ag shipment delays and higher transportation costs is officially over.

"I'm happy to report there are no draft restrictions on the Mississippi River for the third week and we do not have dredges operating for low water," Brigadier General Kimberly Peeples, commanding general of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi Valley Division, said last month. "The Dredges POTTER, HURLEY and JADWIN have completed dredging operations and are on a 72-hour response if needed."

Low water conditions began in the region in September 2022. The Corps maintained 9-foot navigation throughout the system, working with other industries to identify problem spots on the river, and respond with necessary dredge assets.

The low water levels, a result of dryness across the Midwest and South, reduced the ability for barges to effectively navigate, driving up farmers' transportation costs as they sought storage and marketing options for their recently harvested crops the past couple years.

The Mississippi River is one of the busiest waterways in the U.S. Of its 4,267 miles of navigable channels, 589 million tons of cargo move on the system each year with cost savings in transportation at \$12.5 billion, according to the USACE.

But as river levels are bouncing back, the chance of drought hasn't dissipated.

"While river levels have rebounded over the past couple months, river gauge readings are considerably lower compared to years such as 2018,

2019 and 2020," said Mike Steenhoek, executive director of the Soy Transportation Coalition. "In addition, much ground in the Midwest remains severely dehydrated, which means that it will require significant and persistent precipitation to occur to re-charge the soil and provide residual water to maintain water levels on the river.

"Any prolonged period of dry weather could quickly usher in a return of low water levels. This will clearly be an area of focus in the weeks to come."

The USACE also is wrapping up public scoping meetings for the Lower Mississippi River Comprehensive Management Study, which is a five-year, \$25 million mega-study that will deliver recommendations for effective and practical management of the Mississippi River from Cape Girardeau, Missouri, to the Gulf of Mexico.

The purpose of the study is to identify recommendations for the comprehensive management of the region across multiple purposes, including hurricane and storm damage reduction, flood risk management, structure and nonstructural flood control, floodplain management strategies, navigation, ecosystem and environmental restoration, water supply, hydropower production, recreation and other purposes as determined by the Secretary of the Army.

The study area encompasses seven states: Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri and Tennessee.

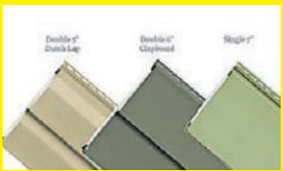
This story was distributed through a cooperative project between Illinois Farm Bureau and the Illinois Press Association. For more food and farming news, visit FarmWeekNow.com.

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Bills in state Senate would further regulate battery storage and disposal

By Cole Longcor
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Two bills that would regulate battery disposal and storage are awaiting action from the full Illinois Senate after unanimous committee approval.

Senate Bill 3481, sponsored by Sen. Sara Feigenholtz, D-Chicago, would require facilities that store electric vehicle batteries to register with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency by February 2026.

The state's Pollution Control Board would set the regulations for the proper storage of EV batteries. IEPA Deputy Director James Jennings said the change "parallels" a state program for used tires.

"The primary distinction is that there are going to be some battery storage locations that don't accept tires," he said. "And historically speaking, those have been the sites that have been more prone to fires," he said.

Sen. Sue Rezin, R-Morris, said she had concerns about fire safety as lithium batteries were the cause of a fire in Morris on June 29, 2021. The fire prompted intervention from the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

Witnesses who testified at a committee hearing on the bills earlier this month said registered and regulated facilities practicing proper storage procedures would limit the risk of fires.

Senate Bill 3686, sponsored by Sen. Dave Koehler, D-Peoria, would require battery producers and importers to implement an IEPA approved battery stewardship plan starting in 2026. Retailers would be encouraged—but not required—to serve as

collection facilities. The plan would regulate the disposal, storage and recycling of certain removable batteries and portable batteries. The bill applies to most types of batteries, with some exceptions. These include liquid electrolyte batteries and lead-acid batteries, like those used in cars.

It would also regulate "medium-format" batteries, which include certain batteries based on their weight and watt-hours.

Producers would be responsible for implementing the program, with the IEPA approving and monitoring the plans. Under the bill a \$100,000 annual fee would be imposed on the producers.

"The main responsibility is with the producers," Koehler said in an interview. "But there's also responsibilities that retailers have. So, if you're involved in selling these batteries, then you also have commitment to being able to recycle those."

Koehler said that the fee is intended to cover the agency expenses but could be used to start community battery recycling centers in the future. The ability to recycle materials from the returned batteries could help offset the program costs to producers. Producers and retailers are prohibited from charging consumers a point-of-sale fee to cover program costs. "We need to take and mine out the useful ingredients, the minerals that that make up batteries, and just make sure that they don't end up in the landfills," Koehler said in an interview.

Christina Seibert, the executive director of the Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County, said collection facilities would be within 15 miles of most residents. She also said that mail back programs could be included in collection plans. Storage and recycling locations would be determined in each stewardship plan and approved by the IEPA.

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Explore the wonders of solar eclipses at Discovery Center Museum

Families and young explorers are invited to embark on an exciting journey into the realm of solar eclipses at the upcoming event hosted by Discovery Center Museum. Set to take place on Saturday, April 8 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., *Solar Eclipse Preview* is

an interactive and educational event promising a day filled with hands-on activities, scientific discovery, and celestial wonder for visitors of all ages. The event, designed to coincide with the upcoming total solar eclipse on April 8, 2024, offers a unique oppor-

tunity for children and families to learn about eclipses in engaging ways while having fun. Highlights of the event include planetarium shows, solar oven adventures, thau-matropes and light-sound exploration, ancient wisdom

and modern science, creative projects, and an eclipse glasses giveaway. Holcomb, Manager of Events and Community Partnerships, expressed excitement about the event, stating, "Our goal is to make science accessible and fun for chil-

dren and families. The solar eclipse event offers a perfect blend of hands-on learning, creativity, and scientific discovery, providing a memorable experience for all participants." For more information about the event schedule, admission

prices, and museum hours, please visit <https://www.discoverycentermuseum.org/>. For more information about the solar eclipse, to <https://science.nasa.gov/eclipses/future-eclipses/eclipse-2024/>. While the path of totality does go through southern Illinois, Rockford-area residents will experience 91% totality at approximately 2:05 pm Monday, April 8, 2024.

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 PATRICIA LOUISE RATKOVICH, DECEASED; UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES OF PATRICIA L. RATKOVICH; TRICIA A HALTER; ROBERT J RATKOVICH; BRIAN R RATKOVICH; ILLINOIS HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS, DEFENDANTS.

NO. 2023FC53
145 NORTH WHISTLER 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 February 20, 2024, Sheriff of Stephenson County will on May 7, 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:

THE NORTH SIXTY (60) FEET OF LOT TWENTY-EIGHT (28)

IN POWELL AND WADDELL'S SUBDIVISION OF THE EAST HALF (1/2) OF THE NORTH-EAST QUARTER (1/4) OF SECTION 36, TOWNSHIP 27 NORTH, RANGE 7 EAST OF THE FOURTH PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, THE PLAT OF WHICH SUBDIVISION IS RECORDED IN BOOK 26 OF DEEDS ON PAGE 267 IN THE RECORDER'S OFFICE OF STEPHENSON COUNTY, ILLINOIS; SITUATED IN THE TOWNSHIP OF FREEPORT, COUNTY OF STEPHENSON AND STATE OF ILLINOIS. TAX NO. 18-13-36-226-020

COMMONLY KNOWN AS: 145 North Whistler Avenue Freeport, IL 61032

Description of Improvements: The property is a single family home.

The Judgment amount was \$80,895.82.

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

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 Rayer Leibert Pierce, LLC, Plaintiff's Attorneys, 1 N. Dearborn St., Suite 1200, Chicago, IL 60602. Tel. No. (312) 346-9088. Please refer to file# 23-16149IL

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.

I3238741
(Published in The Shopper's Guide March 27, April 3 & 10, 2024) 452732

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON TOWN AND ROAD AND BRIDGE BUDGETS

Notice is hereby given that a tentative budget and appropriation ordinance for the Township of Loran in

the County of Stephenson, State of Illinois, for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2024 and ending March 31, 2025. It will be on file and conveniently available to public inspection at 215 E. South Street, Pearl City. It is available from and after May 13, 2024. Please call ahead at 815-443-2880.

Notice is further given hereby that a public hearing on said budgets and appropriation ordinance will be held at 6:00 p.m. on June 10, 2024 at 215 E. South Street, Pearl City and final action will be taken by the Board of Trustees at this meeting.

Deb Foust
Loran Township Clerk
(Published in The Shopper's Guide April 3, 2024) 452680

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE:

The following self-storage Cube contents containing household and other good 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 April 18,2024 at approx. 1:00pm at www.storage-treasures.com Cube 1314 Dana Capasso; Cube 1443 Gregory Tolliver

(Published in The Shopper's Guide April 3 & 10, 2024) 452961

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT STEPHENSON COUNTY - 15 NORTH GALENA AVENUE, FREEPORT, ILLINOIS ESTATE OF Teresa D. Strasser, DECEASED.

24 PR 21
Notice is given to creditors of the death of the above named decedent. Letters of office were issued to David Strasser,

1607 West Fairview Road, Freeport, Illinois 61032, as Independent Administrator, whose attorney of record is SJ Chapman, Bielski, Chapman, Ltd, 123 North Wacker Drive, Suite 2300, Chicago, Illinois 60606.

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

Claims against the estate may be filed with the clerk or with the representative, or both, on or before October 3, 2024, or, if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by section 5/18-3 of the Probate Act, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed.

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

SJ Chapman
Bielski, Chapman, Ltd
123 North Wacker Drive, Suite 2300
Chicago, Illinois 60606
(312)583-9430
I3241246

(Published in The Shopper's Guide April 3, 10 & 17, 2024) 453444

Timber Lake Playhouse announces upcoming spring events

Timber Lake Playhouse, the premier professional summer theatre of northwest Illinois, announces a showing of the interactive *Frozen Sing-a-long* movie. On Saturday, April 13 at 2 p.m., Elsa and Anna will be joined by Kristoff, Sven, and Olaf to present a fun-filled afternoon of singing and movie magic for the whole family.

TLP will host Trivia Night on April 6. Spring events continue on April 20 with Casino Night and The Rat Pack Concert. Take a chance for fantastic prizes, from luxurious gift baskets to exclusive experiences. Indulge in a sumptuous spread of culinary delights while mingling with fellow guests. The evening concludes with a concert featuring Chicago area native, Peter Oprisko's Rat Pack Tribute.

A Kentucky Derby Party Bourbon Tasting Event on May 4, the return of The Four C Notes recreating the music of Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons on May 18, a fund-raising concert featuring local band Better Late Than Never, and TLP's Spring Festival - TLPalooza - with concert featuring Johnny Lyons and the Pride on May 25 round out TLP's spring events before *The Nerd* opens TLP's summer season on May 30.

Information and tickets for all Timber Lake Playhouse events and shows are available online at www.timberlakeplayhouse.org or by calling the Box Office at 815-244-2035.



FROM LENA'S KITCHEN



The not so skinny cook

We are supposed to warm up temperature-wise this week. It will be nice to get back to some April weather. Easter has come and gone, but some of the leftovers are still around. This week's recipes show a way to use them up. Have a great week cooking!

Million Dollar Deviled Eggs

It seems that every magazine has a "million dollar" recipe. This one is for deviled eggs. Although the price of eggs has risen again, and we are paying a lot more for what used to be a cheap ingredient and an even cheaper meal, eggs are still a fairly inexpensive ingredient. Keep this recipe for summer picnics.

- 12 hard-boiled eggs
- 1/4 C. mayonnaise
- 1 T. butter, softened
- 2 t. sweet pickle juice
- 2 t. yellow mustard
- 2 t. Dijon mustard
- 1 t. sugar
- 1/4 t. salt
- 1/4 t. pepper
- Dash of Tabasco
- Paprika
- Cooked and crumbled bacon

Sweet baby pickles, sliced
Peel eggs and cut in half. Remove the yolks to a small food processor (or mash with fork). Pulse eggs to make the yolks fine. Place yolks in small mixing bowl and place egg whites in a deviled egg or serving tray. In a separate bowl, mix the mayo, butter, pickle juice, mustards, sugar, salt and pepper until combined. Add a dash of Tabasco or any hot sauce. Mix in with the yolk mixture until smooth. Pipe or spoon yolk mixture into whites. Sprinkle with paprika or garnish with bacon or sliced pickles. They can stay refrigerated for three days, covered.

Veggie Chopped Salad

If you have any veggies left from the Easter relish tray, this salad is a perfect way to use them up. If you don't have leftovers, it is a good one to start from scratch.

- 3 C. finely chopped fresh broccoli
- 3 C. finely chopped cauliflower
- 3 C. finely chopped celery
- 2 C. frozen peas, thawed
- 6 bacon strips, cooked and

- crumbled
- 1 1/3 C. mayonnaise
- 1/4 C. sugar
- 2 T. grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 T. cider vinegar
- 1/4 t. salt
- 3/4 C. salted peanuts

In a large bowl, combine the broccoli, cauliflower, celery, peas, and bacon. In a small bowl, mix mayonnaise, sugar, cheese, vinegar, and salt until blended. Add to salad and toss to coat. Just before serving stir in peanuts.

Ham and Cheddar Soup

This recipe is the first of ham leftover recipes this week. This hearty soup has the meat, vegetables, and cheese to make it delicious. Let's face it, we still need some soup for the chilly April days.

- 2 C. diced peeled potatoes
- 2 C. water
- 1/2 C. sliced carrot
- 1/4 C. chopped onion
- 1/4 C. butter, cubed
- 1/4 C. flour
- 2 C. 2% milk
- 1/4 t. salt
- 1/4 t. pepper
- 2 C. shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 1/2 C. cubed cooked ham
- 1 C. frozen peas

In a large saucepan, combine the potatoes, water, carrot and onion. Bring to a boil; reduce heat and cover. Cook until tender, 10 to 15 minutes. In another saucepan, melt butter. Stir in flour until smooth. Gradually stir in milk; add salt and pepper. Bring to a boil; cook and stir until thickened, about 2 minutes. Stir in cheese until melted. Stir into undrained potato mixture. Add ham and peas. Heat through. Serve immediately.

Ham and Noodle Bake

Our second recipe for leftover ham is a casserole. You can substitute a different pasta for the noodles and use cream of mushroom instead of cream of celery soup. Add a bag of frozen vegetables or broccoli or asparagus for a different take to the casserole.

- 2 C. uncooked egg noodles
- 1 C. cubed cooked ham
- 1/2 C. shredded cheddar or Swiss cheese
- 1/2 C. cream of celery soup, undiluted
- 1/3 C. 2 % milk
- 4 oz. softened cream cheese, cubed
- 1 t. finely chopped onion
- 2 t. butter, melted, divided
- 1/4 t. poppy seeds
- 1/4 t. dried oregano
- 1/8 t. salt
- 1/8 t. dried basil
- 3 T. dry breadcrumbs

Preheat the oven to 325. Cook noodles according to

package directions. If adding frozen vegetables or broccoli or asparagus, add them the last 4 minutes of noodle cooking time. Drain noodles. In a small bowl, combine the ham, cheese, soup, milk, cream cheese, onion, 1 t. butter, poppy seeds and seasonings. Add to ham mixture. Place noodles and ham in a 1 1/2 qt. baking dish sprayed with cooking spray. In a small saucepan, melt 1 t. butter; add the breadcrumbs to make topping. Sprinkle top of casserole with breadcrumbs. Bake for 35 minutes.

Sauerkraut Casserole

If you have any leftover sauerkraut in the fridge, this casserole will give you a chance to use it up. The sausage combines with the sauerkraut and apples to make a delicious main meal.

- 1 lb. Italian sausage round

- cut into 1 inch slices
- 1 large onion chopped
- 2 medium apples, peeled and quartered
- 1 bag refrigerated Frank's sauerkraut (32 oz.), rinsed and well drained

1 C. water
1/2 C. packed brown sugar
2 t. caraway seeds
Preheat the oven to 350. In a large skillet, cook sausage and onion over medium heat until sausage is no longer pink and onion is tender; drain. Stir in the apples, sauerkraut, water, brown sugar, and caraway seeds. Transfer to a 2 1/2 qt. baking dish sprayed with cooking spray. Bake at 350 for 1 hour.

Ambrosia Cake

If you like orange and coconut, this tropical cake will fill your sweet tooth. It is an easy start because it uses a yellow cake mix. It is pretty

- on a cake stand too.
- 1 yellow cake mix
- 4 eggs
- 1 can (8.25 oz) crushed pineapple in juice
- 2/3 C. vegetable oil
- 1/4 C. water

Frosting

- 3/4 C. unsalted butter, softened
- 4 (3 oz. pkg.) cream cheese, softened
- 1/4 t. vanilla
- 1 1/2 T. orange zest
- 6 C. powdered sugar
- 2 C. unsweetened flaked coconut

Garnish with mandarin orange slices
Preheat oven to 350. Butter and flour 2 cake pans (9-inch). In a large mixing bowl with mixer beat cake mix, eggs, crushed pineapple, and juice and 1/4 C. water at low speed just until moistened, about 30 seconds. Beat at medium speed for 2 minutes.

Pour batter into prepared pans. Bake until a wooden pick comes out clean, 25 to 30 minutes. Remove from pans and let cool completely on a wire rack.

Frosting: in a medium bowl, beat butter, cream cheese, vanilla, and orange zest with a mixer at medium speed until blended. Gradually add powdered sugar, beating until well combined. Place bottom cake round on a cake stand or serving plate. Spread 1 cup of frosting on cake layer. Place 2nd layer on top of bottom layer and spread remaining frosting on top and sides of cake. Sprinkle coconut on top of cake and garnish with mandarin orange slices.

Citrus Cheesecake

Looking for a refreshing citrus taste in a cheesecake.

See KITCHEN, Page 16

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University of Illinois Extension will offer a disaster preparedness program

Being prepared for a disaster is vital to navigating many of the challenges faced during a natural disaster. Talking with friends and family members about what to do in an emergency and why disaster preparedness is essential and will help reduce stress in an already stressful situation. Developing an emergency plan, assembling a disaster supply kit, and practicing your plan will help everyone know what to do to stay safe.

University of Illinois Extension will offer a disaster preparedness program, *Preparing for a Natural Disaster*, for families on Thursday, May 16, from 6-8 p.m. at the U of

I Extension-Stephenson County located in Building R at Highland Community College, 2998 W. Pearl City Road, Freeport, IL.

Nutrition and Wellness Educator Diane Reinhold will meet with adult participants and discuss the importance of developing a culture of preparedness for you and your family, weather warning terms, what to do before and after a disaster, common types of disasters, fire and food safety, and the importance of developing an individual or family disaster plan.

Youth Development Educator Kelly Lafferty will meet with youth and discuss how they can prepare for

a disaster. Youth will create a craft, participate in activities, and listen to local speakers to learn what they can do in the event of a disaster. The youth will then gather with their families and create a family disaster action plan.

To register for *Preparing for a Natural Disaster*, call the U of I Extension at (815) 235-4125 or visit us online at go.illinois.edu/jsw. There is no fee to register. However, preregistration is asked for.

If in need of accommodations to participate, please advise when registering. Early requests are strongly encouraged.

•Kitchen (Continued from page 15)

this recipe fills the bill for those lime, lemon, and orange lovers. This dessert is labor intensive, but it is worth all the steps to have this beautiful and fresh tasting dessert. It would make a great Mother's Day dessert on a brunch table.

- 1 C. flour
 - 1/3 C. sugar
 - 1 t. grated lemon zest
 - 1/3 C. cold butter, cubed
- Filling:**
- 4 pkg. (8 oz. each) cream cheese, softened
 - 1 1/3 C. sugar
 - 2 T. flour
 - 1 t. vanilla
 - 4 eggs, room temperature, lightly beaten
 - 1/4 C. lime juice
 - 1 T. grated lime zest
 - 3 drops green food coloring
 - 1/4 C. lemon juice
 - 1 T. grated lemon zest
 - 6 drops yellow food coloring, divided
 - 1/4 C. orange juice
 - 1 T. grated orange zest
 - 2 drops red food coloring
- Topping:**
- 3/4 C. sour cream
 - 1 T. sugar
 - 1/4 t. lemon extract
- Garnish: lime, lemon, orange slices

minutes. To remaining batter, add orange juice, orange zest, red food coloring and remaining drops of yellow food coloring. Carefully remove pan from oven. Gently spoon over lemon layer. Return to the oven; bake until center is just set and top appears dull, 30 to 35 minutes. Carefully remove pan from oven.

In a small bowl, whisk topping ingredients. Gently spoon over cheesecake in small dollops; spread carefully over cheesecake. Return to oven; bake 5 minutes. Remove springform pan from water bath. Cool cheesecake on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Loosen side from pan with a knife. Remove foil. Cool 1 hour longer. Refrigerate overnight, covering when completely cooled. Remove from pan. Place on cake stand or dessert plate. Top with orange, lime and lemon slices. Refrigerate any leftovers.

Final Thoughts

Hopefully as the weather warms up, spring sports can get back on track. The Cubs opening day at Wrigley happens this week. As a long-suffering Cubs fan, I am hopeful that this year will see some improvement with the team. My friends who are White Sox fans and Brewers fans are just as hopeful.

I know some readers have started plants from seeds, and that is definitely a sign of spring. The rhubarb will begin sprouting too. My family always believed you planted peas and potatoes around Easter; this year because Easter was so early, it might be a good idea to wait.

It has been reported that the Lena Drive Inn has been sold. Great news and it is another sign that spring is on the way. I haven't heard when the opening will come, but I can't wait for some good soft serve ice cream.

We are looking for spring recipes; it is time for rhubarb and strawberry recipes, so send some favorites our way. If you find some recipes to share, you can contact us in person, by mail at From Lena's Kitchens, *The Shopper's Guide* at 240 W. Main St. or email us at atscoopshopper@rvpublishing.com.

•Panthers (Continued from page 11)

day. Lynch was a tough out, going three for four with two runs scored and one RBI.

The Panthers are scheduled to travel to take on Durand on Wednesday, April

3 at 4:30 p.m. On Thursday, April 4 they return home to host Boylan Catholic at 4:30 p.m. On April 5 the Panthers host Freeport with the same start time.

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real estate

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IN*CI*DENTAL*LY

How research in space impacts health on Earth

Ever since we began to explore space, researchers have been tasked with identifying and circumventing the impact that environment has on an astronaut's body and behavior. Prolonged time spent in microgravity causes your muscles, including those of your heart, to lose mass because they are not required to work so hard. You lose bone mass for the same reason. Astronauts traveling outside of Earth's protective



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

atmosphere face increased risk of DNA damage due to the ionizing radiation that permeates space. Stress and increased radiation exposure in space also impacts the crew's immune system.

Although the lungs do not undergo any structural adaptive changes, vital lung capacity, residual capacity and expiratory flow rates are decreased in microgravity. All organ systems are at an increased risk for developing cancer.

Learning how to protect our mission crews against disease and damage has contributed to innumerable advances in healthcare here on Earth. Protecting the space crew's lungs and airways has led to new treatments for asthma and other breathing disorders and the invention of a device that helps diagnosis inflamed lungs.

International Space Station (ISS) researchers have discovered that blocking a specific molecular signaling pathway not only protects astronauts against bone and muscle loss but stimulates growth of these tissues as

well. Learning how to protect the immune system in space is guiding therapies to turn up the immune response for immunosuppressed patients or dial it back in autoimmune or inflammatory diseases. To address DNA damage, scientists on the ISS were the first to demonstrate the gene editing tool, CRISPR (clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats) to repair DNA damage. In fact, genome editing, which allows scientists to modify genes that are involved in cancer development, has become one of the latest technologies for fighting cancer. Robotic technology created for the ISS has led to improvements in surgery equipment on Earth. NASA's innovations have led to a variety of medical devices and procedures, including ear thermometers, insulin pumps,

artificial heart defibrillators and improvements in MRI technology.

Space provides a unique environment to perform healthcare studies that could not be conducted on Earth. Cells assemble and behave in microgravity differently from Earth, but in a similar fashion to how they would in the human body. They do not clump together like they do on earth, which makes it easier to examine their molecular structures.

Microgravity also causes cancer cells to grow and age more rapidly. This allows scientists to observe the progression of cancer growth, and the effect of cancer treatments, much more rapidly than they could on Earth. Certain cells, such as endothelial cells, do not live long when scientists try to grow them on Earth but grow well in space. Endothelial

cells provide the blood supply that tumors need to grow, so extending their life in space gives researchers the time they need to develop treatments that can cut off the blood supply to tumor cells. Taking advantage of microgravity has led to more rapid, effective, and targeted cancer treatment and prevention strategies than ever before.

Research conducted on the ISS has also resulted in the creation of tissue chips. Tissue chips are chips of growing human cells on a transparent microchip. These chips allow cells to grow in three dimensions, mimicking the structure and function of human organs. The use of tissue chips helps speed up research by reducing the need for animal trials before clinical human trials. Tissue chips are being used in drug development, disease treatment and understanding how variations in human genetics can alter how individuals respond to different concentrations or combinations of medications.

Protein crystals grow slower in microgravity, so they produce larger, better-organized crystals than can be grown on Earth. This makes it easier to study their structure and reveal how they cause disease in the body. These advantages helped ISS scientists engineer a monoclonal crystal antibody that is proving to be effective against several kinds of cancer, including oral cancers.

Author Sarah Weeks to visit Lanark Public Library

Lanark Public Library and the Friends of the Lanark Public Library will host an evening with the renowned author Sarah Weeks on April 23, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. Weeks has written more than 60 picture books and novels for young readers, including popular titles *Mrs. McNosh Hangs Up Her Wash*, *Glamourpuss*, *Cheese So B. It, Soof, Pie*, and *Save Me a Seat*. In addition to writing books, she also teaches writing workshops for children and adults.

This event is open to the public for all ages at no charge. It will be held at the Heritage Center, 106 S. Broad St, Lanark, IL. Door prizes will be awarded at the closing of the program. Weeks is happy to sign personal copies, so please bring them along.

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 PATRICIA LOUISE RATKOVICH, DECEASED; UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES OF PATRICIA L. RATKOVICH; TRACIA A HALTER; ROBERT J RATKOVICH; BRIAN R RATKOVICH; ILLINOIS HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY; UNKNOWN CLAIMANTS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS, DEFENDANTS.

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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Between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. only - McCalla Raymer Leibert Priele, LLC, Plaintiff's Attorneys, 1 N. Dearborn St., Suite 1200, Chicago, IL 60602. Tel. No. (312) 346-9088. Please refer to file# 23-161491L

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.

13238741

(Published in The Shopper's Guide

March 27, April 3 & 10, 2024)

452733

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Midwest Auxiliary hosts broasted pork chop dinner April 24

The Midwest Medical Center Auxiliary Foundation is planning a broasted pork chop dinner fundraiser on Wednesday, April 24 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Galena Elks Club, 123 North Main Street, Galena. Advanced tickets for the event are available through April 17 at the hospital gift shop, Whispering Willows, located at Midwest Medical Center (1 Med-

ical Center Drive, Galena) or from Auxiliary members. Cost per ticket is \$15 and includes the pork chop dinner and dessert. Proceeds from the fundraiser benefit special projects at both Midwest Senior Care Community and Midwest Medical Center. In 2023, the Auxiliary sponsored more than \$16,000 in projects, including resident transpor-

tation for Senior Care, new Nursing Home furniture and Bingo supplies, and a microwave for Assisted Living. In addition, the Auxiliary supports both facilities with volunteers, provides a treat cart for Senior Care residents, sends cards and recognizes special days for residents, and staffs the hospital gift shop, which also generates funding for Auxiliary projects.

Highland Chorale and Youth Choir showcase musical talent in concert

Enjoy the musical sounds of both the Highland Chorale and Highland Youth Choir in their spring concert at 3 p.m. Sunday, April 7 at Highland Community College's Fine Arts Theatre in the Ferguson Fine Arts Center, 2998 W. Pearl City Rd., Freeport, Ill. The Highland Chorale comprises singers from all over northwest Illinois, ranging in age from high school

to retirement. The chorale, accompanied Nadia Wirchianski, will be singing such selections as "Deep River" arranged by Victor C. Johnson, "All Things New" by Elaine Hagenberg and more. Highland Youth Choir selections will include the folk songs "Chumbara" and "Kookaburra," Andy Beck's "Shooting Star," "Amazing" by Pinkzebra and a Spanish/

English selection of "Cantar!" The concert will conclude with the groups combining forces to perform Greg Gilipin's "Why We Sing." Tickets are \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors and \$5 for students. Buy tickets at highland.edu/boxoffice or by calling 815-599-3718 Monday-Friday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. For more on this event, visit highland.edu.



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Cost of teaching degree followed by low pay, benefits, seen as obstacles

By Peter Hancock
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Illinois continues to suffer from a shortage of teachers and other education professionals, although recent efforts by the state to ease the strain have made an impact.

That's according to the latest annual survey of school officials from the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools, which has been conducting the survey every year since 2017.

"This matters," IARSS executive director Gary Tipsord said in an interview. "This is an issue that people care

about. They think it is important, and they think it's critical enough that it needs to be addressed."

This year's survey found more than 90 percent of schools responding reported having a "serious" or "very serious" teacher shortage problem.

That percentage has changed very little in the last several years, although the question has been asked in slightly different ways in earlier surveys. In 2021, for example, 88 percent of those responding said they had a "problem" with teacher short-

ages, a percentage that was unchanged from 2019.

Tipsord said the answers school officials give to that question reflect their broad perception of what's happening in the labor market—their sense of whether colleges and universities are producing enough prospective teachers; their ability to hire qualified candidates to fill vacant positions; and whether the pool of candidates they pick from is larger or smaller than it was in the past.

But Tipsord said more fundamental changes need to be made to address the long-term issues facing the teaching profession.

"There are certain things that have been done to soften that immediacy of the burden today," he said. "But I think if you talk to people in the field ... there's still a broad concern that unless we put some concrete things in place, this issue is going to remain per-

vasive for a longer period of time."

Respondents to the survey reported filling a total of 3,694 teacher positions this year using "alternative measures," such as hiring substitutes or retired educators, combining classes, and increasing class sizes, among other short-term remedies, according to the report.

Overall, however, the report found that the supply of teachers is not keeping pace with the demand, and that there are not enough new teachers coming into the profession to replace those who are leaving.

The survey also found that teacher shortages are not distributed evenly throughout the state. They are most severe in urban districts and in more rural parts of the state, along with vocational centers around Illinois. The specialties with the most severe shortages were special educa-

tion and career and technical education. Shortages were also reported in key categories of support personnel, including school psychologists, speech-language pathologists, and nurses.

When asked to identify causes of teacher shortages, 54 percent of the school leaders responding cited burnout from working conditions as a cause of their teacher shortage. Another 49 percent cited the availability of better pay in other professions.

Tipsord said those findings point to a fundamental challenge facing the teaching profession — the cost and benefit of pursuing the career. He said when students in high school and college weigh the cost of earning a college degree against the salary they will earn after graduation and the retirement benefits they can accrue, the idea of pursuing a teaching degree becomes less attractive, especially when

compared to other career options.

"I think across all areas of industry—education just being one—but in every area of industry today, because of the ability to live and work in two different places at the same time, your workforce views career differently," he said. "They have the opportunity to look at career differently."

The report concludes with several recommendations for long-term ways to address the teacher shortage. They include continuing to increase funding for public schools, creating new ways for school support staff to become classroom teachers, and focusing administrative support and financial resources on acute shortage areas.

"As we have said year after year, our shortages are the result of generations of factors that we cannot resolve immediately," Tipsord said in a statement.



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