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# the Scoop Today

VOL. 90 • NO. 40

YOUR FREE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 25, 2024



SONYA WILLIAMSON PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

## Sullivan's get a visitor

The Oscar Mayer Wienermobile came to Sullivan's in Stockton as they made the rounds to celebrate their 57<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. It was a fun day and it drew quite the crowd.

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# Obituaries

## EVERETT HAWLEY

Everett E. Hawley, age 75, of Freeport, IL, formerly of Stockton, IL, presumed dead Feb 19, 1976, and verified deceased Sept. 2024

E.E. was born in Greenville, IL, on Dec. 22, 1901 to the late Edwin B. and Carrie (Hilliard) Hawley. E.E. married Etha Teeter on April 26, 1929, in Southern IL. He was a graduate of Greenville high school and a college graduate of University of Illinois with a Bachelor of Science in 1926.

Following graduation he was employed by Purina Feeds in Kalamazoo, MI. Later he came back to farm in Stockton, IL, with his family for many years. He was employed by the Federal land bank as a loan officer and owned E.E. Hawley Realty in Freeport, IL.

He was a man who valued community, family, and the simple joys of life. He spent time on the Mount Juliet school board in Jo Daviess County as their president. He served as the Stevenson County FSA Supervisor for many years, and later as the Secretary-Treasurer of the National Farm Loan Association showing his passion for supporting local farmers and agricultural development. He was a member of the Woodbine church and enjoyed the service with his wife and young son.

At home, E.E.'s true happiness was found on the farm where he worked side by



side with his wife, Etha, and along-side their son Ed and his wife, Florence. He was especially proud to see his grandsons, Andy and Mark, growing up to love the farm as much as he did. He enjoyed taking the entire family out for dinner at their favorite spots, Terrapin Ridge supper club and Bishops, one of Rockford's finest restaurants.

If he wasn't spending time farming, E.E. loved to hunt with his son, Ed while enjoying the quietness of nature. E.E. also had a mischievous streak, especially when it came to his grandsons. He was known to surprise them with bottles of orange soda pop, an unexpected treat that became their little secret. "Don't tell your mother," he would whisper with a wink!

Everett is survived by his son, Edwin (dear friend Marian) Hawley of Freeport, IL; grandson, Andrew (Leslie) Hawley of Stockton, IL; grandson, Mark (Terese) Hawley of Stockton, IL; his great grandchildren, Robert (Amy) Hawley of Stockton, IL; Bridget (Elliott) Peach of Madison, WI; Steven (Kourtney Heun) Hawley of Stockton, IL; Brock (Nichole) Hawley of Columbus, WI; Sara Hawley of Normal IL.; his great, great grandchildren

Alayna, Elizabeth and Violet, Audra and Dean.

He was preceded in death by his parents Edwin B. and Carrie H. Hawley, his wife Etha Hawley, his sister Evelyn Hawley, his baby sister Emily Hawley, and his daughter-in-law Florence Hawley

Services will be held Saturday, Sept. 28, 2024, at Hermann Funeral Home in Stockton, IL. Visitation will be at 2 p.m. with a service at 3 p.m. Following the service there will be a small private family burial at Ladies Union Cemetery in Stockton, IL.

A heart-felt thank-you goes to the fisherman who noticed the car in the Pecatonica River and to the Winnebago County law enforcement agency for the recovery of the bones of Everette and Clarence Owens. Special thank-you to all of our friends, families and strangers who have offered prayers and support over the many years as the search continued for Everette and Clarence. A memorial fund will be set up for a missing persons organization.

## LUANN JORDAN

LuAnn Kay Jordan, beloved wife, mother, grandmother, and friend, passed away on Wednesday, Sept. 18, 2024, surrounded by love. Born on September 26, 1962, to Lewis and Carole (Knauer) Busjahn Jr. LuAnn touched the hearts of everyone who had the honor of knowing her.

On Nov. 30, 1985, she married the love of her life, Mark Wilbur Jordan. Together, they built a life full of joy, adventure, and unwavering love,

## KAREN MACOMBER

Karen L. Macomber, 82, of rural Lena passed away peacefully on Wednesday, Sept. 18, 2024, at Javon Bea Hospital in Rockford, IL after a long battle with cancer and Parkinson's. She was born on May 3, 1942, to George and Edna Obert in rural Orangeville, IL. She graduated high school from Orangeville in 1960 and went on to attend Illinois State University. Karen married David Macomber on June 9, 1963, and together they raised four children.

Karen was proud to be a farmer's wife and to help wherever she could. She was known for her pink hat and pink petunias. She spent many hours tending to her flower beds, lawn and pool. Flower arranging was a passion of Karen's. She worked at DeVoe Floral in her younger years and had her own arrangement area in her house. Karen also enjoyed traveling and got to explore many places, including Alaska and Israel.

Karen was very active in different organizations and her church. She was a member of



the Afolkey Grace Evangelical Congregational Church, where she played the organ for over 50 years and was an adult

Sunday school teacher. She was also a former member of the Freeport Garden Club and Stephenson County Home Extension as well as helped the Harlem Helpers 4-H Club. David and Karen enjoyed going to their card club every month and visiting with their friends. She was also very proud to have hosted the very first Ag Breakfast in Stephenson County in 1986.

She is survived by her husband of 61 years David Macomber of Lena, IL; four children: Jeffrey Macomber of Clarence, IA, Lisa (Jim) Pick of Loves Park, IL, Michael (Doroni) Macomber of Lena, IL, and Stephanie (Jeremy) Flynn of Lena, IL; six grandchildren: Matthew (Alicia Klees) Macomber, McCall (Chris Garcia)

Macomber, Hailey Pick, Austin (Rachel Huwe) Pick, Laurel (Kyle) Wolff and Jace Flynn; three brothers: Gaylon (Jeanne) Obert, Gary (Ann) Obert and Steve (Jan Mitchell) Obert; brother-in-law Bart (Pam) Macomber and numerous nieces and nephews.

She is preceded in death by her parents, two sisters-in-law (Janet Obert and Barb Woessner) and brother-in-law Karl Woessner.

Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Sept. 28, 2024, at the Afolkey Grace Evangelical Congregational Church on Afolkey Road in Dakota, IL. A visitation will be from 4 p.m. 7 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 27, 2024, at the Afolkey Grace Evangelical Congregational Church, and again from 10 a.m. until time of services at the church Saturday morning. Burial will take place at Cedarville Cemetery in Cedarville, IL. Memorial donations may be made to Rock River Bible Camp and Rockford Rescue Mission. Condolences may be sent to the family at [www.leadmonfh.com](http://www.leadmonfh.com).



raising four wonderful children: Stephanie, Dustin, Ben, and Hilary.

LuAnn was a woman of many passions.

She was a lover of dancing, music, and a particular fondness for singing. She reveled in traveling, exploring both local and international destinations with family and friends. Her adventurous spirit was complemented by her deep faith, which she shared readily with those around her.

Her life was deeply enriched by her connections with people. She treasured her

time walking with her YMCA friends, spending time with her sisters, cherishing her grandchildren, and found joy in hosting gatherings, game nights, and movie nights with her Tuesday crew.

A proud and active member of the Lena Lion's Club and a former Jaycee member, LuAnn was dedicated to her community. She selflessly served as a volunteer hospice nurse and worked for over 20 years as a Nurse Practitioner at FHN, where she developed lifelong relationships with her FHN family and wonderful patients

LuAnn was a natural leader, a creative soul, and an advocate for cancer awareness. Her influence touched many,

from her local community to her "bonus" Swedish and French families, whom she loved dearly. She had a special talent for bringing beauty into the world and was a gifted storyteller, always ready to share a tale with enthusiasm and heart.

LuAnn is survived by her husband, Mark Jordan, and her children: Stephanie (Jeff) Kohl, Ben Jordan, and Hilary (Ethan) Fiene as well as her beloved grandchildren: Remy, Waylen, Lily, Declan, Chett, and Arlen and her mother, Carole Busjahn, 5 sisters: Laurene Busjahn, Deb (Jim) Willhite, Diane (Ron) Rimgton, Margaret (Mike) Triem, and Mary (Kevin) Wise, as well as many nieces and nephews.

She is preceded in death by her father, Lewis Busjahn, and her son, Dustin Jordan, who welcome her with open arms.

LuAnn will be remembered as an exceptional caretaker, a devoted wife and mother, and a cherished friend to many. Her legacy of love, leadership, and creativity will live on in the hearts of all who knew her.

A visitation took place on Sunday, Sept. 22, 2024, at St. John's Lutheran Church in Lena, IL. A Memorial Service was held on the same date at St. John's Lutheran Church in Lena, IL. Pastor Christopher Ham officiated the service. Cremation rites have been accorded. A memorial has been established in her memory. Condolences may be sent to the family at [www.leadmonfh.com](http://www.leadmonfh.com)



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# OPINION

## Slices of life

# Guard your thoughts

"A quiet mind makes way for the soul to speak." --Me

The mind is an abundant entity - spewing, spawning, spilling, speaking, squeaking, spraying, saying, replaying, spouting, sprouting, shouting, re-routing, doubting and outing our thoughts, often in ways that seem beyond our control.

Just today, I was about to run to the store, but thought about something I wanted to do beforehand. Then I rinsed out my coffee cup and my mind had already moved onto a whole new topic and I'd forgotten what task, exactly, I needed to do before leaving.

Perplexing. You might say my thoughts got away from me.

It happens quite often. All the time. Especially at night and in the wee hours of the morning.

I fight against it but it is a constant battle.

It's almost as if my mind has a mind of its own. It's working against me - or maybe for me. Or with me.

Or maybe a little of all three. I'm guessing none of you reading this can relate to this phenomenon - written with a wry sense of sarcasm.

All of you, surely, are always and totally in control of every one of your thoughts. They are orderly and they make sense. You never think of pink cotton candy when you are supposed to be considering whether to put orange or yellow cheese sauce atop the green broccoli. Your thoughts are always on point. I wish I could say the same.

The mind is a curious thing. It is part of you, but it seems to operate on its own.

The rest of your physical body doesn't operate under



By **JILL PERTLER**  
Columnist

these terms. Your arms carry the grocery bags home from the store. When you have an itch on the tip of your nose, your fingers scratch that exact spot. Your legs walk, one foot in front of the other to get you from point A to point B.

But your mind? It wanders wherever it wants to go.

That's why awareness is so important. Your mind will tell you things that, in all honesty, it shouldn't. It will tell you people don't like you. Or that you aren't good enough, or nice enough or whatever enough.

It will tell you to judge others for their ugly T-shirt or ugly hair or ugly car. It will lead in you places that are scary, threatening and dire. Your mind accentuates your faults. It dwells upon your weaknesses. It forces you into dark corners. Your mind will tell you things that are not true.

This doesn't always happen. But it can, and it often does when you least expect it. When you aren't aware.

Your thoughts are valuable. They are precious. They are priceless. They can sway off course and go off track without your ever noticing. And they can affect you in the most significant of ways.

That is why it is important to guard them. To guard your thoughts. To protect them like they are a treasured possession, because they are.

See **SLICES**, Page 4



# The end of money bond is facilitating a public health approach to substance use

By Jen Nagel-Fischer

As we mark the anniversary of Illinois' landmark Pretrial Fairness Act, it's essential to recognize how this transformative legislation advances racial equity, especially for black and brown communities disproportionately impacted by money bond, incarceration, and the criminalization of drugs.

For years, the legal system has targeted these communities, trapping individuals in pretrial detention simply because they couldn't afford

bail. Money bond has been a key driver of racial disparities, with black and brown individuals disproportionately incarcerated at staggering rates for minor offenses compared to white individuals. The Pretrial Fairness Act disrupts this pattern, providing much-needed reform.

By eliminating money bonds, the Pretrial Fairness Act removes a barrier that kept thousands—most of whom had not yet been convicted of a crime—detained for months or years simply

due to lacking financial resources to pay a money bond. This reform isn't just about economic justice; it's a victory for racial justice, keeping families together and preserving livelihoods in communities long devastated by over-policing and mass incarceration.

Pretrial reform is especially crucial for people who use drugs, many of whom are black and brown. Jails have served as makeshift treatment centers, though they are anything but therapeutic. People

in jail are eight times more likely to use drugs than the general population, yet less likely to receive proper care. Forced withdrawal and lack of access to medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) make incarceration deadly, particularly for people who use opioids. These individuals are at a much higher risk of fatal overdose upon release, a cycle that disproportionately harms black and brown people.

See **APPROACH**, Page 16

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## Stockton American Legion

Shirley Cook and Landon Warner are given medals by Commander Marcure at the last Legion Meeting for being participants in the Legion programs Girls State and Boys State. At the meeting, Cook and Warner discussed what they learned throughout the event. Other students participating but not in attendance were Kyla Arnold, Margaret Carter, and Sam Hillie. Pictured are (left to right) Mike Beatty, Shirley Cook, Landon Warner, and Commander Ed Marcure.

# RR-SM golf continues to dominate the links

By Trenten Scheidegger  
CORRESPONDENT

The River Ridge-Scales Mound (RR-SM) golf team picked up a couple of victories last week. On Sept. 16 RR-SM faced off with Stockton and Pecatonica at Woodbine Bend. The very next day, they took on East Dubuque at Lacom Golf Club, in East Dubuque. RR-SM came out on top of both matches.

At Woodbine Bend, RR-SM easily walked away with a victory. They beat Stockton and Pecatonica by nearly 40 strokes each. RR-SM com-

bined for a low score of 153, while Stockton shot a 192, and Pecatonica came in at 195.

Joe Winter and Sam Rife led RR-SM as they each shot a 36 on the day, making them co-medalists. Camden Flack came in as the runner-up with a 37. Bode Dittmar hit a 44 for RR-SM. Stockton was led by Blake Zink, who finished with a 43. Ethan Steien shot a 46. Pecatonica's leading scorer was Lucas Rosson with a 37.

Flack turned things up a notch at Lacom. Flack brought home the first-place medal as he shot a 35 on the

day. With the course being a par 35, Flack shot a perfect even on the day. Winter was next up with a 39, and Rife shot a 40 to finish plus-five.

All three of them finished ahead of East Dubuque's top golfer. Ethan Schulting shot a 41 to lead East Dubuque, and the rest of the team was consistent behind him. Nobody shot above a 50, but it still wasn't enough to erase the gap between them and RR-SM. East Dubuque combined for a score of 168, while RR-SM came in at 160 for the team win.

## River Ridge picks up much needed win on the volleyball court

By Trenten Scheidegger  
CORRESPONDENT

The 2024 High School volleyball season has been all but kind to the River Ridge Wildcats. After falling to Warren on Sept. 12, the Wildcats saw their record drop to 3-8 on the season.

The schedule gave River Ridge a break on Sept. 17 when they played host to the West Carroll Thunder. At the time, River Ridge's most previous victory came in a Sept. 7 victory over the Thunder. After losing two straight, the Wildcats got a rematch against a team they knew they could beat.

Senior Laiken Haas stepped

up her game when the team needed it most. Haas proved to be a force along the net all night as she led the way to a sweep of the Thunder. River Ridge took the first set by an eight-point difference, winning 25-17. The Wildcats were even more impressive in the second set, winning 25-15.

Haas racked up double digit kills as she led the team with 11. Junior Ava Ketelsen was next up with five kills. Junior Kaci Patterson added four kills of her own. Gracie Schnitzler ran the offense as she led the way with 13 assists. Haas added seven assists. Defensively, Caylee Allen and Ketelsen each led

the way with three digs apiece. Averil Rolwes added two digs. Haas finished the day with two digs and the only solo block for the Wildcats.

Following the 2-0 victory over West Carroll, the hard times returned for River Ridge. They were swept in three consecutive matches, including a 2-0 loss to the Pearl City Wolves on Sept. 21. Following the losing streak, the Wildcats saw their record fall to just 4-11 on the season. River Ridge has a tough matchup on Oct. 1, when they travel to take on the Stockton Blackhawks. Stockton is off to a 17-1 start this year.

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**HOUSEHOLD:** Maytag Washer; Hotpoint Dryer; Maytag Wringer Washer, the nicest one we have seen; Sony 40" flat screen TV; TV Stand; small upright Frigidaire freezer, like new; Frigidaire microwave; safe with combination; Double bedroom set with chest of drawers & dressing table; Double bedroom set with chest of drawers, dresser with mirror & night stand; Nice gray sofa; blue lift chair; blue rocker/recliner; coffee & end tables; oak mag. Rack; glider rocker with ottoman; lamps; Oak oval dining table with 6-chairs & 2-leaves; nice oak TV stand; oak china cab, very nice; oak pull out trash can; Stainless silverware; steak knives; Singer Sewing Machine in large cabinet; Sewing supplies; braided rugs; card table sets; sm. Kitchen appliances; KitchenAid stand mixer; Corningware casseroles; 2 & 4 cup measuring bowls; knick-knacks; Electrolux vac. cleaners; glass serving & relish trays; Bedding; file cab; fans.

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## • Slices

(Continued from page 3)

You are your thoughts. It seems so simple, but negative thoughts breed negative actions and negative feelings. Positive thoughts have the opposite effect.

It may sound easy to choose positive thoughts. But remember, the mind has a mind of its own.

Choosing our thoughts is a minute by minute, moment by moment endeavor. It is never-ending. 24/7. Even in your sleep.

But you know what? Thoughts can become habits. And habits become easier

with time. Recognizing a negative thought is the first step into turning away from it and finding a positive one. The more you turn negative into positive, the more natural it will become. Say the positive out loud (even a whisper will do) if that makes it easier at first. Soon it won't take any thought at all.

Practice guarding your thoughts, and soon that guard duty won't seem so intensive. Soon it will come naturally.

Negativity is all around us, waiting to pounce and it may

seem overwhelming at times. One of the most valuable possessions we have to fight against any negativity is our own thoughts. Guard yours like the treasure they are and you will find the peace within that has been waiting patiently.

Then your mind will only wonder one thing:

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

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# Around the Northern Hills

As we get closer to harvest going full speed ahead, I thought I would share a few tips for motorists when they come across slow-moving farm machinery on the roads.

Above all, slow down and be patient. Reduce speed when encountering farm equipment on public roads. Flashing amber lights mean "caution." Slow down when you see the Slow Moving Vehicle Emblem - the orange and red reflective triangle warns you that the tractor or combine travels at a slow rate of speed. Keep a safe distance from the farm equipment so the farmers can see you. If you can't see their mirrors, they can't see you. Pass wide, large farm equipment only if you know conditions are safe and you are sure the farmer will not be making a left-hand turn. Be cautious when pulling back in. It is illegal to pass in a no passing lane or within 100 feet of an intersection, railroad crossing or bridge. Be prepared to yield to wide equipment. Always wear a safety belt and heed the road's speed limit. Watch for the farmer's indication of a turn. Newer equipment has one or more amber lights flashing rapidly to indicate a turn. Older equipment is typically not equipped with turn signals to watch for the farmer's hand signals.

Let's do everything that we can to make it a safe and bountiful harvest for everyone!



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

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

### Family Farm Signs

As the seasons are changing, we all start thinking of the fall weather coming soon. There's still time to do some work around the farm and spruce things up a bit. Why not add a "This is a Family Farm" sign to your landscape? The signs are 17.5" X 23" and cost \$30. Stop by our office and pick one up.

### Farm Fun Fact

Each soybean plant grows 60-80 pods, and each pod has 3 to 4 beans inside.

### Benefit platform

Have you taken the time to check out Illinois Farm



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## Little Blackhawks

Pictured are Stockton Elementary's Little Blackhawks for the week. These students are recognized for following the Blackhawk Way. Keep up the good work!

## News briefs

### Lena American Legion

The Lena American Legion Auxiliary will once again be putting up a window display of area veterans and currently serving military during the month of November. Pictures need to be submitted by Oct. 20 and can be sent to PO Box 21, Lena, IL 61048 or dropped off at the Lena American Legion Home on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Pictures will not be returned.

### Lena Historical Society

The Lena Historical Society will offer a presentation by Leooy Blommaert and

Perry Casalino entitled "The Real Photo Postcards by C.R. Childs". Authors Blommaert and Casalino will share their extensive knowledge of real photo during this program. It will be held on Saturday, Sept. 28 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at 420 Grove St. in Lena, IL.

### McConnell American Legion Auxiliary

The McConnell American Legion Auxiliary is preparing for the 5th annual troop care package project and is seeking addresses of active military personnel stateside or deployed. These addresses can be emailed

to [mcconnellauxiliary@gmail.com](mailto:mcconnellauxiliary@gmail.com) or call Pat at 815-266-1165 or Terri at 815-541-6792. Addresses must be received no later than Nov. 8, 2024. All addresses are kept confidential.

### Current needs for the Stephenson County VA Pantry

Items needed include diapers size 5 months, clothing size 12-18 months, baby bottles, and any kind of baby food. Donations can be brought to the Lena American Legion Home on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. at 316 W. Main St., Lena. Donations are great-

ly appreciated. This list is immediate needs; however other items will always be accepted. Please call 815-369-4684 with any questions.

### The McConnell American Legion Auxiliary

The 5th annual troop care package drop off and bake sale will be held on Oct. 19, 2024, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the McConnell Legion. Items for the troop care package and donations of baked goods would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Terri 815-541-6792 or Patty 815-266-1165 with any questions.

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# 2002 Lena-Winslow Volleyball team to be inducted into Northwest Illinois Sports Hall of Fame

By Trenten Scheidegger  
CORRESPONDENT

The 2002 Lena-Winslow Volleyball team is set to be inducted into the Northwest Illinois Sports Hall of Fame this year. The induction ceremony is set to take place at this year's banquet, on October 19, 2024.

The 2002 Panthers were led by current Le-Win head coach, Sue Amendt. On Amendt's staff were Mary Beth Thill, Stephanie Matz,

and Tracy Greiner. They had an experienced roster with five seniors and seven juniors.

Middle hitter, Lana Lobdell, was the only freshman listed on the roster. Right-side hitter, Kaitlyn Hastings, was the only sophomore on the varsity roster. The five seniors who led the way were outside hitter, Stephanie Gerbode, setter, Ann Weston, outside hitter, Tiffany Wollny, middle hitter Janelle Wolff, and middle hitter, Erin Cox.

Their deep class of juniors consisted of setter, Danielle Kempel, outside hitter, Kristen Nesemeier, outside hitter, Deidre Gilbertson, defensive specialist, Abby England, right-side hitter, Heidi Torkelson, setter, Erica England, and defensive specialist, Sam Rogers.

That year, the team would finish in fourth place in the Illinois High School Association Class-A State Finals. That was during a time when

only two classes competed for the state championship. The 2002 Panthers also won that year's Chicago Latin Tournament, and they were named the Upstate Illini Conference champs.



## Wienermobile event

Sullivan's Foods Stockton presented their recent Wienermobile cookout event proceeds of \$902 to the Stockton Community Food Pantry. Pictured are Sue Young from the Food Pantry and Jerry Oppold, Store Director. Thank you to all who helped out!

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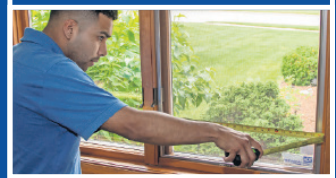
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# Wildcatz with statement win over Forreston

By Trenten Scheidegger  
CORRESPONDENT

The Eastland-Pearl City (EPC) Wildcats have already matched last year's win total of three games, and they did it in just four weeks. After an impressive win over the Forreston Cardinals, the 3-1 Wildcats are off to their best start in six years.

The Cardinals are no push-over. In week three, Forreston gave the now 3-1 Galena Pirates a run for their money. Galena came out on top 19-18, but the Cardinals entered week four with even more pressure to win.

EPC was fresh off a 46-

22 victory over the Fulton Steamers. After getting off to a 2-1 start, the Wildcats have now established a small winning streak with another victory in week four. Dating back to week six of last season, EPC is now 6-2 over their last eight played.

Although the Wildcats were at home, it took a while for them to settle in offensively. A three-and-out drive to start the game told the story of the opening quarter. Both teams went scoreless through the first, but the Wildcats began to drive toward the end.

Early in the second, EPC finally cracked the scoreboard

when Adam Awender found the endzone on a nine-yard run. Draven Zier notched the two-point conversion, and the Wildcats went up 8-0.

The Wildcat defense showed their strength in the first half. Forreston looked to answer with a long drive of their own. They reached the redzone before the EPC defense made a stand, forcing a turnover on downs. That swung the momentum as Awender broke free for an eighty-yard touchdown run, his second of the day.

After a low-scoring first half, both offenses made plays in the third quarter.

EPC came out of the break with a 14-0 lead, but both teams would combine for 14 in the third quarter alone.

It was the Wildcats who scored the first touchdown of the second half as well. This time, Awender took it 51 yards as he tallied the hat trick with his third score of the day. A failed two-point conversion left the Wildcats with a 20-0 lead.

Forreston erased the goose egg late in the third. A seven-yard rushing touchdown and a successful conversion brought the Cardinals within 12 as they trailed 20-8. The 12-point discrepancy would

hold until the end of the third.

The Wildcats quickly took those points back early in the fourth quarter. Shortly after a Jacob Runkle interception, Zier scored his first touchdown of the day. A one-yard plunge into the endzone helped to extend the lead. Zyaqn Haverland capped the drive off with a catch for the two-point conversion. That put the Wildcats up 28-8 with just 10 minutes left to play. Forreston wouldn't go away easily, as another score and conversion would make it a two-score game midway through the fourth.

The player of the game

was on the Wildcats, however, and Awender solidified himself in that spot with his fourth touchdown, a 40-yard dagger to cap off the game. Awender rushed for one 186 yards and the four scores on just seven carries. Zier nearly reached triple digits as he rushed for 91 yards and a score.

With a 36-16 victory, the Wildcats moved to 3-1 on the season. This Friday, EPC faces another challenge as they travel to take on the Stockton Blackhawks. Stockton has proven to be one of the top opponents in the NUIC this year.

## Stephenson County Farm Bureau news

By Victoria Hansen

Can you believe September is almost over? It is hard to believe, that is for sure. During the month of September, the Stephenson County Agriculture in the Classroom program will see roughly 1,200 students. Students have learned about apples, agriculture's role in back to school and football. Students range from preschool to 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

With the increase of students we are seeing on a monthly basis, we are trying something new. On Wednesday, Oct. 2 we are inviting community members to help us prepare for October's presentations by volunteering from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., and at 11:30 a.m. The Farm Bureau will provide lunch for those who have helped. During this hour we will help cut and assemble

activity materials. If you are interested in helping or have questions, please call our office at 815-232-3186.

### 2025 Agriculture Leaders of Tomorrow applications

Are you or is someone you know ready to take the next step in their leadership development? The Illinois Farm Bureau has a program to help with that. The Agricultural Leaders of Tomorrow (ALOT) provides participants with the tools they need to reach their full potential and emerge as a leader in agriculture. Whether you serve on your county Farm Bureau board, county Farm Bureau committee, or a leader in agribusiness or your local community, you will benefit from ALOT just as the over 1,200 previous graduates

have. Classroom studies cover leadership, communication and professional skills, political process, agricultural economics, and global issues, and are taught by experts in a variety of fields. Classes will be conducted over a seven-week period in a different region of the state each year, so there is sure to be one near you. In 2025, there will be seven weekly sessions held across Northwestern Illinois, Springfield, and Bloomington, Illinois. The seven-week program includes four overnight sessions, two single-day sessions, and one virtual session.

The ALOT program is limited to 25 participants who are chosen following interviews conducted on Dec. 3 via Zoom by the ALOT advisory committee. There is an \$800

tuition fee, which includes meals, lodging, and instructional materials. Applications are available online at [www.ilfb.org/alot](http://www.ilfb.org/alot) and are due by Nov. 1. For more information about the program visit [www.ilfb.org/alot](http://www.ilfb.org/alot) or contact Victoria Hansen at Carroll County Farm Bureau 815-244-3001 or at Stephenson County Farm Bureau 815-232-3186 or the IFB Training and Development Department at 309-557-2038.

### Stephenson County Farm Bureau annual meeting

You're invited to the Stephenson County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting on Monday, Nov. 18 at our office, 210 w Spring Street, Freeport, IL 61032 at 7 p.m. Light refreshments provided.

### Orders for nuts and candy

Back by popular demand, both counties will be accepting Terri Lynn Nuts and Candies orders on or before Oct. 18. Popular items available to order include Giant Cashews, Fancy Mammoth Pecans halves, Black Walnut pieces, Milk Chocolate Bridge Mix, Deluxe mixed nuts, fancy colossal pistachios and much more. To view our entire order list visit either county

websites [www.carrollcjb@gmail.com](http://www.carrollcjb@gmail.com) or [www.stephensoncjb.org](http://www.stephensoncjb.org) or either Facebook pages. If you don't see something on our order form that you were looking for let us know. For questions or additional items please call your county Farm Bureau, Carroll at 815-244-3001 or Stephenson at 815-232-3186. Items will be ready to pick up the third week in November. Additional pickup details can be found on the order forms.



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# Bodies found in Pecatonica River identified as missing men from 1976

Earlier this year on March 11, the Winnebago County Coroner's Office responded to a call regarding possible human skeletal remains found in a submerged vehicle in the Pecatonica River. It was suspected that the vehicle might be connected to two missing adults from 1976, Clarence Owens and Everett Hawley.

Recovery efforts, conducted over the following days, involved several local fire department dive teams, the Winnebago County Sheriff's Office, and the Winnebago County Coroner's Office. In total, over 100 pieces of skeletal remains were retrieved from the river and the vehicle. These remains were subsequently re-associated at the Coroner's Office, confirming that they belonged to two separate individuals.

In late March, the skeletal remains were transported to St. Louis, Missouri, where a forensic anthropologist examined them. The forensic analysis,

completed in April, identified the remains as those of two adult males. The examination revealed no evidence of trauma.

The remains were returned to the Winnebago County Coroner's Office, where two long bones from each male were provided to the Winnebago County Sheriff's Office for further analysis. These bones were submitted to the Illinois State Police, Division of Forensic Services, for DNA testing.

Over the next several months, DNA extraction and profiling from the bones were completed. Comparison of the DNA profiles with relatives of Owens and Hawley confirmed recently that the recovered remains were indeed those of Clarence Owens and Everett Hawley.

The Winnebago County Coroner's Office and the Winnebago County Sheriff's Office wishes peace and comfort to the families of Clarence Ow-

ens and Everett Hawley as they prepare to lay their loved ones to rest. After decades of uncertainty, they are honored to have played a role in bringing closure to both families.

Winnebago County Sheriff Gary Caruana stated, "This brings us one step closer to providing closure to the families of Clarence Owens and Everett Hawley, who have waited many years for answers that have been affected by this tragic case. This is a testament to the dedication and perseverance of our detectives and forensic experts. It's a reminder that no case is ever truly closed no matter how much time has passed."

### Backstory on the case

Freeport residents and business partners Clarence Owens, 65, and Everett Hawley, 75, disappeared 48 years ago along with the 1966 Chevy Impala they were driving.

It was reported that Hawley



**This 1966 Impala with skeletal remains inside was hoisted from the Pecatonica River by a crane on March 11. In a press release sent by the Winnebago County Coroner's Office recently, it was revealed the skeletal remains were that of two missing men from 1976.**

and Owens were last seen on Feb. 19, 1976. The pair, a real estate broker/appraiser and a salesman, spent part of the day they went missing at the American Legion in Pecatonica at a rally for former Illinois gover-

nor Jim Thompson, who was just a candidate at the time, and afterwards walked across the street to Rocky's Café. After that, they drove to Owens's son and daughter-in-law's house and showed off the paint job on

SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

the Chevy Impala he was driving. He had just gotten it painted a metallic gold and wanted to show it off. Their next stop was a nearby farm auction.

**See BODIES, Page 12**

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# How social media affects how you feel about your smile

An online survey of 2,000 American social media users that was conducted from March 18 to March 20, 2024, revealed that social media can harm users' confidence in their smile. The survey, which was commissioned by Forbes Health, explored the differences of the extent of pressure it put on appearance across four different generations of users: Baby Boomers (those born between 1946-1964), Gen X (1965-1980), Millennials (1981-1996) and Gen Z (1997-2012).



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

Key findings from the survey include: Fifty-three percent of survey respondents said they compare their smiles to others on social media, but this figure differs greatly when broken down by generation,

with Gen Z coming in at 72% and millennials at 66%. The numbers fall for Gen X (48%) and baby boomers (36%).

Forty-five percent said that social media harms their confidence in their smile, with women feeling this confidence loss more than men, 53% to 35%, respectively.

Over half of those polled (56%) try to hide their smile in a variety of situations, with 34% hiding their teeth in photos. Forty percent of

polled individuals say they hide their smile to avoid being judged or have their smile compared to others. This is most prominently seen among younger generations, though the numbers do not vary significantly, suggesting this is a fairly common feeling among people of all ages. Gen Z and millennials are pretty even, with 43% and 47%, respectively, while 38% of Gen X and 28% of baby boomers say the same. Women are more likely to hide their smiles in photos, while men are slightly more likely to hide their smiles around people.

Fifteen percent of people have edited the appearance of their teeth in a photo before posting it to social media.

The survey revealed a generational agreement that

whenever a comparison is made between one's real-life smile and those on social media, it often does not feel good: 45% of total respondents said their self-esteem was negatively impacted.

While 32% of all respondents feel uncomfortable posting pictures on social media showing their teeth, baby boomers and Gen X feel the most self-conscious, at 38% and 37%, respectively. Meanwhile, only 24% of Gen Z and 27% of millennials felt that same level of self-consciousness.

While this survey clearly shows that social media has the power to harm self-esteem and confidence, it is important to keep in mind that social media plays a big role in promoting images that have been heavily filtered and edited. These altered images can lead people to feel like something is wrong with their appearance. If you are uncomfortable with your smile share this with your dentist.

## •Bodies

(Continued from page 11)  
 That auction was the last place they were seen, between 2:40 and 3 p.m. that day, near the county line of Winnebago and Ogle counties before their disappearance.

Then on March 11 of this year, thanks to an area fisherman, who, through the use of his fishing sonar, located a car submerged in the Pecatonica River near E. First and Washington streets, there was found the remains of what is believed to be the missing men. The car was located and raised by fire protection divers after having been notified by the fisherman.

After so many years, only bones were left of the men's bodies. More were also located in the mud of the river bank after the vehicle was retrieved. Almost half a century later, there can now be a little closure to the mystery of what happened to them.

Around 100 bones or more were found between the car and the riverbank by the conclusion of the majority of the search on March 14.

Speculation still abounds as to why and how the two men ended up in their car in the river. It is still unknown if foul play was involved or not.

Gazette Editor Amy Cushing and correspondent Margaret Downing contributed to this article.

*A Great Big*  
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# FROM LENA'S KITCHEN



The not so skinny cook

## Spaghetti Squash Casserole

Doris Burton is a loyal reader who has often sent me recipes. She shared this spaghetti squash recipe and the apple cake at the end of the column. Thank you, Doris, for reading the column and sharing your good recipes with all of us. Happy cooking!

- 1 medium (8 inch) spaghetti squash
- 1 T. butter
- 1/2 lb. sliced fresh mushrooms
- 1 large chopped onion
- 2 minced garlic cloves
- 1 t. basil
- 1/2 t. oregano
- 1/4 t. thyme
- 2 medium chopped tomatoes
- 1 C. breadcrumbs
- 1 C. ricotta
- 1/4 C. minced parsley
- 1/4 C. grated Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 375. Cook squash in microwave by piercing skin. Microwave for 5 minutes. Let cool and then cut in half. Scoop out and separate the flesh. In large skillet melt butter, add mushrooms, onion, garlic and spices and cook until onion is tender. Add tomatoes and cook until most of liquid is gone. Combine squash with mushroom mixture and add crumbs, ricotta and parsley. Put in 2-quart baking dish sprayed with cooking spray and sprinkle with Parmesan. Bake uncovered 40 minutes until golden brown on top.

## Pasta DaVinci

This Italian dish is often served in restaurants. You can make the wine sauce ahead of time and warm it up and toss with pasta and chicken. It does take some time, so plan ahead. However, it is really worth the trouble.

- 1 pkg. (16 oz.) penne pasta
- 1 large red onion, diced
- 2 T. olive oil
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 1/2 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cubed
- 1/2 lb. sliced fresh mushrooms
- 2 C. dry white wine
- 1 can beef broth
- 1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 C. butter, softened
- 1/2 C. half-and-half cream, room temperature
- 1/2 t. salt
- 1/4 t. pepper
- 1/2 C. grated Parmesan cheese, divided
- Fresh parsley

Cook pasta according to package directions for al dente. In a large skillet, cook onion in oil over medium heat until softened, 4 to 5 minutes. Add garlic; cook for 1 minute longer. Stir in chicken and mushrooms. Cook, stirring frequently until chicken is no longer pink, 5 to 7 minutes. With a slotted spoon, remove mixture and set aside.

In the same skillet, add wine and broth; bring mixture to a simmer. Cook until liquid is reduced by half, 15 to 20 minutes. Reduce heat to low; add cream cheese and butter, whisking until melted. Whisk in cream, salt and pepper. Add chicken mixture to pan; heat through on low. Toss with pasta and 1/4 C. Parmesan cheese. Top with remaining Parmesan cheese and sprinkle with chopped parsley.

## Italian Pasta Bake

It is a Tour of Italy this week. This is an easy pasta bake for a weeknight meal. I am partial to Prego or use your own canned spaghetti sauce. Enjoy a salad and some good garlic bread.

- 2 lbs. ground beef
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 jar (24 oz.) spaghetti sauce

- 1 can (14 1/2 oz.) diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 can (14 oz.) mushroom stems and pieces, drained
- 2 t. Italian seasoning
- 3 C. uncooked medium pasta shells
- 3 plum tomatoes, sliced
- 3/4 C. shredded provolone cheese
- 3/4 C. shredded mozzarella cheese

In a large skillet, cook beef and onion over medium heat until no longer pink. Add garlic and cook 1 minute longer. Drain. Stir in spaghetti sauce, diced tomatoes, mushrooms, and Italian seasoning. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, 20 minutes.

Preheat oven to 350. Cook pasta according to package directions; drain. Add to beef mixture and gently stir in sliced plum tomatoes. Transfer to an ungreased 9 x 13 baking dish. Sprinkle with cheeses. Bake 25 to 30 minutes or until bubbly and heated through.

## Strawberry White Chocolate Cookies

If you are looking for an easy cookie recipe, this strawberry cookie recipe is a good one to keep around. It uses a box recipe as its base and a white chocolate bar.

- 1 box strawberry cake mix
- 2/3 C. oil
- 2 eggs, room temperature
- 1 (4.4 oz) bar white chocolate chopped

In a medium bowl, stir together cake mix, oil and eggs until combined. Fold in chopped chocolate. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. Preheat oven to 350. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Scoop dough by 3 T. and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Bake until edges are set, 10 to

12 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans and let cool completely on wire racks. Store in airtight containers for up to 3 days.

## Doris Burton's Simple One Bowl Apple Cake

- 2 eggs
- 1 1/4 C. sugar
- 1/2 C. oil
- 6 medium apples, peeled and sliced
- 2 C. flour
- 2 t. baking soda

Preheat oven to 350. In a large bowl, mix eggs, sugar and oil. Add apples and coat with sugar mixture. In another bowl, blend flour and baking soda. Add to apples and mix well with a fork. Spray a 9x13 baking pan with cooking spray. Place mixture in baking pan and bake 45 to 55 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Do not overbake.

## Final Thoughts

You might have gone north to celebrate cheese in Monroe. The every other year celebration of all things cheese was last weekend. I remember going to the parade with the marching band. It was a really long parade. I also remember eating the best cheese curds too.

This weekend you can celebrate pumpkins in Warren at their annual festival. There are certainly a lot of good things to do. Several of my friends are getting bumper crops of apples too. I have had some great homemade applesauce. Hopefully you all have been able to enjoy these seasonal treats. We are marching to October after this week's publication. Time just seems to fly.

We will be looking for some good squash and apple recipes, so send some favorites our way. We also will be looking for some pork recipes as well as some soup recipes. If you find some recipes to share, you can contact us by email at scoopshopper@rvpublishing.com or by mail at From Lena's Kitchens, The Shopper's Guide at Rock Valley Publishing, 1102 Ann St., Delavan, WI 53115. Have a great week.

The first day of fall ushered in some fall weather. The very warm weather seems to have gone away, and we are seeing more seasonable temperatures. We are officially in a drought season. Farmers may like the dry weather for their crops, but we really do need some rain. This week we have some seasonal recipes that will help you transition into fall. Have a great week cooking.

## Seafood Cheese Dip

This tasty cheese dip is great for any tailgate party or a holiday party. You can substitute the imitation crab for the lump crab meat. It is great to make because you combine everything and let the slow cooker do the rest.

- 1 pkg. (32 oz.) Velveeta, cubed
- 2 cans (6 oz. each) lump crabmeat, drained
- 1 can (10 oz.) diced tomatoes and green chiles, undrained
- 1 C. frozen, cooked salad shrimp, thawed

Toasted pita or bread chips and assorted vegetables

In a greased 3 qt. slow cooker, combine the Velveeta, crab, tomatoes and shrimp. Cover and cook on Low for 1 1/2 hours or until cheese is melted, stirring occasionally. Serve with bread and/or vegetables.

## Bacon Pear Salad with Parmesan Dressing

There seems to be a bumper crop of pears this year. One of the great ways to use this beautiful fruit is in a green salad.

- 2 C. chopped leaf lettuce
- 2 C. chopped fresh kale
- 2 medium pears, thinly slice
- 1 C. shredded pepper jack cheese
- 4 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled

In a large bowl, combine the lettuce and kale. Top with pears, pepper jack cheese, and bacon. In a small bowl, whisk the mayo, mustard, Parmesan cheese, garlic powder and pepper. Gradually whisk in enough milk to reach a desired dressing consistency. Drizzle over salad; toss to coat.

## LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COUNTY OF Stephenson - Freeport, ILLINOIS Planet Home Lending LLC Plaintiff vs. Kevin J. Nickel; Unknown owners and Non record claimants Defendant

24 FC 6 CALENDAR NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure entered in the above entitled cause the Sheriff of Stephenson County will on October 17, 2024, at the hour 9:30 a.m., 1st floor, Courthouse, 15 N. Galena Ave., Freeport, IL 61032, sell to the highest bidder for cash, the following described mortgaged real estate:

LOT 38 OF THE TOWN OF WINSLOW PART OF THE MILL LOT IN THE REAR OF SAID LOT 38 SAID TRACT LYING WESTERLY AND BEING THE SAME WIDTH OF SAID LOT 38, AND RUNNING BACK TO THE CREEK. SITUAT-

ED IN THE VILLAGE OF WINSLOW, COUNTY OF STEPHENSON AND STATE OF ILLINOIS.

P.I.N. 17-02-22-426-032. Commonly known as 245 Carver St., Winslow, IL 61089.

The real estate is: single family residence. If the subject mortgaged real estate is a unit of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Condominium Property Act. Sale terms: At sale, the bidder must have 10% down by certified funds, balance within 24 hours, by certified funds. No refunds. The property will NOT be open for inspection. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information.

For information call Sales Department at Plaintiff's Attorney, Potestivo & Associates P.C., 223 West Jackson Boulevard, Suite 610, Chicago, IL 60606. (248) 853-4400 ext 1200. 318468 SHERIFF I3251219

(Published in The Shopper's Guide Sept. 11, 18 & 25, 2024)

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The Stephenson County Soil & Water Conservation District is seeking candidates for a full-time Resource Conservationist (RC) position.

The RC position is responsible for administering conservation programs; survey, design, layout, and checkout of soil and water conservation practices; prepares detailed natural resources reports; performs educational programs for both youth and adults; conducts fundraising and grant writing activities; and assists with newsletter creation.

Candidates need to be personable, trustworthy, self-motivated, organized, innovative, willing to accept responsibility, able to work independently, and possess good oral and written communication skills.

This position requires regular exertion due to conservation work, such as walking on rough terrain, jumping ditches, and climbing steep banks.

A pre-employment physical may be required.

A strong agricultural background and a bachelor's degree in agriculture, conservation, or related field are preferred.

Salary is commensurate with education and experience.

Employment will be contingent upon receiving a satisfactory United States of Department of Agriculture background investigation.

The Stephenson County Soil & Water Conservation District is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer.

All interested candidates are asked to send an application, resume, and salary requirements to [trina.orr@stephensonswcd.org](mailto:trina.orr@stephensonswcd.org) by COB Friday, Sept. 27, 2024. Applications are available at the Stephenson County Soil & Water Conservation District office and on the District website: [www.stephensonswcd.org](http://www.stephensonswcd.org).

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# College news

## Highland Community College Summer Graduates 2024

Highland Community College announces the 2024 summer graduates. Graduates were awarded associate degrees, associate of applied science degrees, or certificates.

**Freeport:** Monem Aboud, Associate of Arts; Ginger Arthurs, Nail Technology Certificate; Gonzalo Basterrechea, Associate of Arts; Gage Brewer, Associate of Arts; Evan Broge, Associate of Arts; Kayden Clark, Agricultural Production Certificate; Coretta Cole, Accounting Associate of Applied Science, Quickbooks Professional Certificate, Professional Tax Preparer Certificate, Nail Technology Certificate; Genesis Cole, Associate of Arts; Grace Dailey, Associate of Arts; Katelyn Filipowicz, Medical Assistant Certificate; Kristina Fluegel, Associate of Arts; Vanessa Gastel, Associate of Arts; Jon Ingels, Associate of General Studies, Associate of Arts; Demetrus Johnson, Associate of Arts; Latonia Lacy, Associate of Science; Kait-

lyn Meyerhofer, Associate of Science; Natalija Obradovic, Associate of Arts; Elizabeth Ontiveros, Associate of Arts; Bansi Panchal, Quickbooks Professional Certificate, Professional Tax Preparer Certificate; Leann Spangler, Early Childhood Education, Associate of Applied Science, Level 3 ECE Credential Certificate, Level 2 ECE Credential Certificate, Infant/Toddler Level 2 Credential, Infant/Toddler Level 3 Credential, ECE Infant/Toddler Certificate, Early Care and Education; Anna Tempel, Cosmetology Certificate; Emily Tempel, Cosmetology Certificate; Mazy Trimble, Cosmetology Certificate; Elizabeth Woitynek, Medical Assistant Associate of Applied Science,

Medical Assistant Certificate

**Lenia:** Stefany Arreola, Automotive Service - Level II; Ellie Bower, Associate of Science

**Orangeville:** Kylie Wirth, Associate of Arts

**Stockton:** Charles Breed, Associate in Engineering Science; Matthew Cook, Associate of Science; Ashton Davis,

Criminal Justice Associate of Applied Science; Matthew Ernst, Associate of Arts

**Warren:** Christian Eaton, Criminal Justice Certificate, Criminal Justice Associate of Applied Science;

Brodie Haley, Welding and Fabrication-Cert, Basic Welding Certificate



## REAL ESTATE NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COUNTY OF Stephenson - Freeport, ILLINOIS  
Planet Home Lending LLC  
Plaintiff  
vs.  
Kevin J. Nickel; Unknown owners and Non record claimants  
Defendant

24 FC 6

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Village of Stockton Street Committee  
461233

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# Approach (Continued from page 3)

In fact, drug overdose is the leading cause of death among those recently released from prison. A study found that people recently released from state prison are 129 times more likely to die from an overdose than those in the general public. For those incarcerated who use opioids, the risk is even higher. These tragic outcomes reveal how jails exacerbate, rather than alleviate, the dangers of drug use. And in Illinois, where

sheriffs state there are staffing shortages in facilities like Lake County's correctional division are already severe, providing even minimal care is a challenge, let alone comprehensive treatment.

Critics argue that pretrial release prevents people from getting the help they need, suggesting that incarceration is the best way to force mandatory abstinence or treatment. However, research shows that compulsory treat-

ment fails to produce lasting results. A 2016 meta-analysis found that mandating abstinence-based treatment does not significantly reduce drug use or crime. In fact, it often leads to worse outcomes, including increased rates of fatal overdose following release.

Jails are dehumanizing environments, isolating individuals from the support they need to heal. Forcing mandatory abstinence in such

settings doesn't address the underlying trauma and social conditions that drive drug use. Instead, people need voluntary access to community-based care, which is why the Pretrial Fairness Act—and its companion, the Pretrial Success Act—is so vital.

The Pretrial Success Act represents a crucial investment in voluntary, community-based services for people who use drugs and those with mental health conditions. Rather than subjecting individuals to the dehumanization of incarceration, the Success Act allows for comprehensive care in a community setting by providing wraparound services such as transportation, housing, and childcare. These life-stabilizing resources are key to promoting long-term recovery and stability, particularly for those already marginalized by systemic racism and economic inequality.

This holistic approach acknowledges that true equity cannot be achieved through punishment and incarceration. For too long, black and brown individuals have borne the brunt of prohibitionist drug policies, facing harsher penalties and less access to care than their white counterparts. The Pretrial Fairness Act, combined with investments in community health, offers a new path forward—one that centers harm reduction and public health over criminalization.

Yet, the work is far from over. While Illinois has taken a crucial step, we must continue expanding behavioral health services, overdose prevention programs, and harm reduction initiatives that prioritize those most impacted by the criminal legal system. The state's investment in these services is a model for other states to follow.

As we move into the second year of the Pretrial Fairness Act, our focus must remain on saving lives and addressing the systemic inequities that continue to harm black and brown communities. The elimination of money bond is just the beginning. To achieve real justice, we must continue advocating for lifesaving reforms that invest in people, not punishment.

Justice demands we dismantle systems that criminalize poverty and perpetuate racial disparities. The Pretrial Fairness Act is a critical first step toward creating a more equitable legal system—one that values human dignity and prioritizes health and safety over incarceration.

**Jen Nagel-Fischer, R-CPRS, IL-CRSS**, is a person with lived and living experience and is the founder and executive director of The Porchlight Collective SAP, which serves hundreds of program participants monthly in the greater St. Louis Metro East area. They are an experienced independent consultant, grassroots advocate, and subject matter expert in integrating culturally responsive and trauma-informed harm reduction models. Jen has served as an expert reviewer for UNAIDS, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and the US Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.



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