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4/3/2025

VOL. 87 • NO. 7

YOUR FREE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 5, 2025



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

2025 Pearl City Spelling Bee

Pearl City Junior High and Elementary schools held their annual Spelling Bee on Thursday, Jan. 30. Pictured is elementary winner, Keziah Parsons-Sierra.

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Lady Panthers win back-to-back games

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT

The 2024-2025 Lena-Winslow Panthers have had about as streaky of an Illinois High School girls basketball season as you could imagine. After 27 games played, the Panthers are yet to win more than two consecutive games at a time. On the other hand, they also haven't lost more than three consecutive games at a time.

The Panthers found themselves in the upswing of things when they closed out the month of January with matchups against Forreston and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Academy, last week. Le-Win was fresh off a tough 56-35 loss to Orangeville just days before playing host to the Forreston Cardinals. While Le-Win was 10-15 overall, Forreston was just 3-17 themselves.

It didn't take long for the Panthers to run away with this one. By the end of the first quarter, Le-Win already held a double-digit advantage over Forreston. Sophie Johnston caught fire from deep as a trio of first quarter three-pointers helped her put up a quick ten points. Aubrey Rodebaugh added six first quarter points of her own.

The Panthers continued to find success from deep in the second quarter. Ava Vlasin hit not one, but two three-pointers, as Le-Win

had combined for six first half threes. Forreston didn't hit a single three-point shot in the first half, which led to an 18-point differential just from three-point territory.

Le-Win was up 34-16 at the half, but their kept their foot on the pedal as they continued to push things out of reach. In the end, the Panthers picked up a massive 61-41 win over Forreston. Rodebaugh and Johnston combined for 30 points in the win as they each finished with 15. Twelve of Johnston's 15 points came from three-point land. Lila Grindrey added eleven. Rachael Setterstrom had eight in the victory.

The Panthers were back in action on their home court just 24 hours later. On Jan. 31 they played host to the Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Academy Guardians. OLSHA came to Lena with an overall record of 7-6. By the time they left the Panther den, the Guardians were no longer above 500 for the year. Le-Win dominated this one from start to finish as they picked up another blow-out victory. The Panthers even went scoreless in the fourth quarter, and they still won by thirty points.

It was the duo of Rodebaugh and Vlasin that helped get the Panthers going. They scored all of Le-Win's first quarter points with Rode-

baugh leading the way with eight. That wasn't a bad thing for the Panthers, who took a 15-5 lead into the second quarter. It was Setterstrom who helped to expand that lead in the second. Setterstrom had eight points thanks to four field goals in the quarter. By the halftime break, Le-Win had already jumped out to a 35-13 lead over OLSHA.

The Guardians would score just seven points in all of the second half. Le-Win would score 15 points in just the third quarter alone. That gave the Panthers a massive 50-17 lead heading into the fourth quarter. Le-Win coasted their way to victory, not scoring a single point in the final quarter, and winning by a score of 50-20.

Rodebaugh led the way in scoring with 14 points. Vlasin was next up with 12. Le-Win had three players finish in double figures as Setterstrom added ten in the win. The Panthers improved to 12-15 on the year with the win.

On Feb. 7, Le-Win plays host to the Pearl City Wolves in what should be an exciting matchup. Pearl City has 10 wins on the season, one of which was a 50-44 victory over Le-Win. The Panthers will be the home team for their second meeting. The Panthers are 5-2 at home this year.

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Illinois House lawmakers file almost 1,800 new bills only two weeks into legislative session

By Jade Aubrey and UIS Public Affairs Reporting

Illinois lawmakers kicked off their spring legislative session in early January, but lawmakers in the House have already filed more than 1,800 bills that could be acted on by the General Assembly adjourns in May.

The vast majority of the ideas won't make it to the desk of Gov. JB Pritzker or become law—last General Assembly, House lawmakers filed 5,929 bills and only passed 564—but the list of proposals offers some insights into the issues members of the lower chamber are concerned about as they kick off their new terms in office.

A new alternative to incarceration

Rep. Rita Mayfield, D-Gurnee, introduced a measure that would allow people convicted of crimes to serve their sentences in “community-based settings” rather than in prison. Mayfield said her proposal would “create a transformative post-conviction model that reduces reliance on traditional incarceration for emerging adults.”

Under House Bill 44, community-based nonprofits that set up alternatives to prison would be required to provide housing, workforce training, mental health counseling and restorative justice programs. People serving their sentences in those community settings would be required to participate in the restorative justice court programs.

The bill would allow judges to decide which defendants would be placed in the community settings instead of prisons.

Single-use plastic and paper bag ban

Rep. Suzanne Ness, D-Crystal Lake, wants to prohibit businesses and grocery stores from providing single-use plastic

bags to customers, as well as prohibit grocery stores from providing customers with single-use paper bags.

If Illinois lawmakers pass House Bill 1146, Illinois would join nine other states that ban both paper and plastic single-use bags. The states with existing bans are California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, New York, Oregon and Vermont.

Single-use plastic foodware item ban

Restaurants would be prohibited from providing customers with single-use plastic disposable foodware items when they dine-in under a bill filed by Rep. Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz, D-Glenview.

House Bill 1600 would allow restaurants to provide customers with single-use plastic items when requested, but the items would not be allowed to be packaged in plastic.

Additionally, restaurants would have to post a sign indicating that single-use plastic items could be made available upon request.

Defining 'domestic assault'

A bill was introduced by Rep. Amy Grant, R-Wheaton, to create the offense of “domestic assault” and make it a Class A misdemeanor.

Currently, Illinois law does not define domestic violence any differently than abuse, which is defined as “physical abuse, harassment, intimidation of a dependent, interference with personal liberty or willful deprivation.”

House Bill 1455 is an attempt to define language surrounding domestic violence. The measure defines domestic assault as when a person “knowingly engages in conduct that places any family or household member

in reasonable apprehension of great bodily harm, or permanent disability or disfigurement.”

Under the bill, if a person arrested for domestic assault is released from custody pending their trial, the courts can prohibit them from contacting or communicating with the victim, as well as entering or remaining at the victim's residence for at least 72 hours.

Legalizing psilocybin

A Chicago Democrat wants to make it easier for people in Illinois to obtain and use psilocybin, the chemical that gives so-called magic mushrooms their hallucinogenic properties.

Introduced by Rep. La Shawn Ford, House Bill 1143 would decriminalize and tax psilocybin and psilocybin products for the use of Illinoisans who are at least 21 years old. People under the influence of psilocybin would not be allowed to drive a vehicle.

The legislation states that Illinoisans “deserve” access to tools that could improve their mental health, including chemical substances such as psilocybin. Ford's proposal notes that several U.S. states and cities have already decriminalized psychedelic plants and fungi or have made these psychedelics the lowest level of law enforcement priority.

But the bill would not change the status of peyote—another intoxicating controlled substance. Ford chose not to add the drug, according to the bill's language, “because of the nearly endangered status of the peyote plant and the special significance peyote holds in Native American spirituality.” Still, Illinois continues to “respect and support” the possession and use of peyote by Native Americans, the bill stated.

End-of-life options

A group of lawmakers are trying again to make physician-assisted suicide, sometimes called “death with dignity,” an option

for adult patients with terminal diseases.

Rep. Robyn Gabel, D-Evanston, introduced House Bill 1328, which would allow qualified, adult patients who request a prescription of aid-in-dying medication “that will allow the patient to end the patient's life in a peaceful manner.”

The patient would have to make both an oral and written request to a physician, wait at least five days, and then make an oral request again in order to be administered the medication. The patient would also have to sign and date the written request with two witnesses present.

Patients making the request would have to possess the mental capacity to make and communicate this request themselves, and it would have to be an informed decision—meaning that their physician has informed them of the potential risks and benefits of the medication, other feasible end-of-life care and treatment options, their right to withdraw their request at any time or to obtain the medication but not take it.

Under the bill, patients diagnosed with a major depressive disorder alone would not be considered terminally ill and wouldn't be able to obtain the medication.

Free community college tuition for disadvantaged areas

Students in areas with high rates of violence and economic disinvestment would be given free tuition at local community colleges under another proposal sponsored by Mayfield.

The Gurnee Democrat introduced House Bill 1170 that would provide free tuition using money collected from marijuana taxes. It would apply to one community college in each Restore, Reinvest, Renew Area (R3 Areas) designated by the state as eligible for grants paid for with marijuana tax revenue

R3 Areas (map) are communities that have been harmed by

violence, excessive incarceration, and economic disinvestment and have higher rates of gun injuries, child poverty, unemployment and incarceration.

DCFS and providing luggage

Foster children who move out of a home would have to be provided with luggage, rather than trash bags, under a bill sponsored by Rep. Margaret Croke, D-Chicago.

House Bill 10 would require the Department of Children and Family Services to provide luggage for any child being removed from home or changing homes.

The bill would also require DCFS to create a system to store and distribute a supply of luggage that will be used to transport belongings of children in the foster care system. The children would own the luggage, and neither their foster parents nor DCFS would be allowed to take it from them.

Croke's bill would also require DCFS to submit an annual report to both the governor and the General Assembly. The report would include how many times a trash bag was used to transport a child's belongings and why DCFS was unable to provide them with luggage.

No marriage for anyone under 18

When filing for marriage, both partners would have to be 18 years old under a measure introduced by Rep. Joe Sosnowski, R-Rockford.

Current Illinois law allows marriage between two partners if they will both be 18 years old when the marriage license is effective or if they are least 16 years old with the consent of both their parents or guardians, or judicial approval. House Bill 1744 would prohibit approval of any underage marriages.

Other bills

A Republican from Millstadt wants employers to give their

veteran employees a paid day off on Veterans Day. Introduced by Rep. Kevin Schmidt, House Bill 1421 would require veteran employees to provide documentation of their status as a veteran and give prior notice to their employer if they intend to take the day off.

If the employer denies the request for the paid day off, the bill requires them to find a different day to allow the veteran employee to take a paid day off.

Drifting and street racing would become a felony under another proposal sponsored by Ford. House Bill 38 categorizes “knowing or reckless” drifting and street racing as a felony if the activities “result in the use of force or violence disturbing the public peace”.

People buying or possessing a flamethrower would be required to have a valid Firearm Owner's Identification Card under a proposal by Rep. Daniel Didech, D-Buffalo Grove. The legislation, House Bill 19, would exclude certain military and law enforcement personnel from the requirement.

Illinois residents would not be able to bring firearms into polling places—even if they have a valid concealed carry permit—under legislation introduced by Rep. Bob Morgan, D-Deerfield. However, the proposal, House Bill 34, allows on-duty law enforcement officials to carry firearms there.

Health insurers would not be allowed to rely solely on artificial intelligence to deny, reduce or terminate coverage for patients, under a separate proposal from Morgan. If companies use AI to make those decisions, the actions would have to be “meaningfully reviewed” by a human with the power to override the computer system, under House Bill 35.

The legislation would also give the Department of Insurance the authority to regulate health insurers' use of artificial intelligence to determine patient benefits.

The Family of Terry Lee

wishes to express their heartfelt gratitude for the outpouring of love and support during this difficult time. Your condolences, prayers and acts of kindness have provided us with solace in our sorrow.

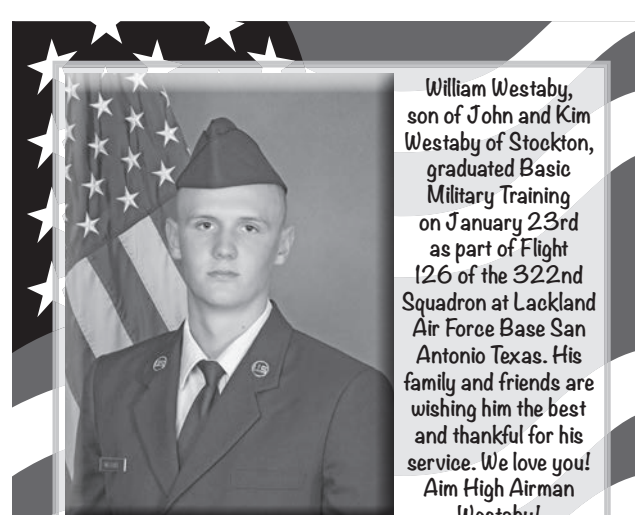
We are especially grateful for those who attended the visitation and memorial service, shared their memories and offered their support.

Terry cherished the time spent with his barbershop customers, swapping stories and watching old movies. Being able to share his love for stained glass with the community brought him much joy. He touched the lives of many and we will treasure the fond moments we shared with him forever.

We would also like to thank Pastor Michele Grove of the Unitarian Universalist Church and Pastor Christy Salsler of Christ Lutheran for phone calls, visits and the beautiful service.

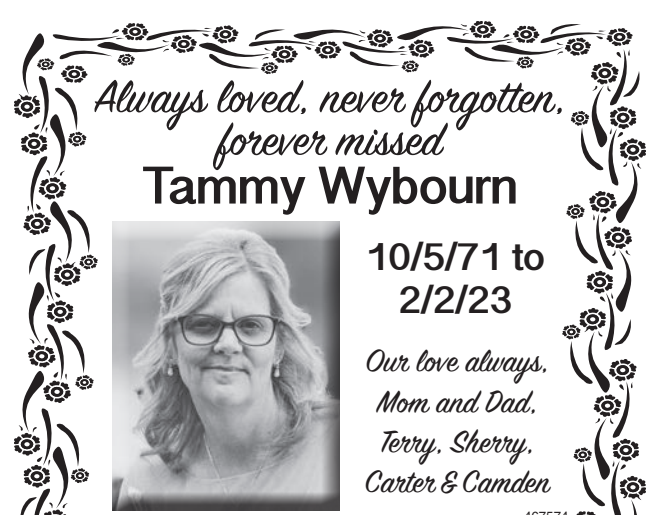
With sincere appreciation,
Sara Abbott & Jen Carpenter and Families

467573



William Westaby, son of John and Kim Westaby of Stockton, graduated Basic Military Training on January 23rd as part of Flight 126 of the 322nd Squadron at Lackland Air Force Base San Antonio Texas. His family and friends are wishing him the best and thankful for his service. We love you! Aim High Airman Westaby!

467502



Always loved, never forgotten, forever missed
Tammy Wybourn

10/5/71 to 2/2/23

Our love always,
Mom and Dad,
Terry, Sherry,
Carter & Camden

467574

Unemployment down in most metro areas in December

Over-the-year, the unemployment rate decreased in nine areas, increased in three and was unchanged in two for the year ending December 2024, according to data released today by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the Illinois Department of Employment Security (DES). Over-the-year, total nonfarm jobs increased in six metropolitan areas, decreased in five, and was unchanged or nearly unchanged in three.

"The Illinois labor force continues to see growth as payroll jobs remain steady and the market is ripe with employment opportunities across industry sectors," said Deputy Governor Andy Manar. "IDES is focused on providing the critical job matching services to employers and businesses who are eager to take advantage of the state's economy."

The metro areas which had the largest over-the-year percentage increases in total nonfarm jobs were the Champaign-Urbana MSA (+3.7%, +4,600), the Carbondale-Marion MSA (+1.9%, +1,100), and the Springfield MSA (+1.7%, +1,800). The metro

areas which posted the largest over-the-year decreases in total nonfarm jobs were the Peoria MSA (-1.2%, -2,000), the Davenport-Moline-Rock Island IA-IL MSA (-0.9%, -1,700), and the Lake County-Kenosha County, IL-WI Metro (-0.8%, -3,600). Total nonfarm jobs were unchanged or nearly unchanged in the Chicago-Naperville-Arlington Heights Metropolitan Division, the Danville MSA and the IL part of the St. Louis MSA. Industries that saw job growth in most of the metro areas included: Private Education and Health Services (fourteen areas); Government (twelve areas); and Other Services (eleven areas).

The metro areas with the largest unemployment rate decreases were the Rockford MSA (-1.0 percentage point to 4.9%), the Kankakee MSA (-0.8 point to 5.0%), and the Champaign MSA (-0.6 point to 3.3%). The metro areas with unemployment rate increases were the Davenport-Moline-Rock Island IA-IL MSA (+0.6 point to 4.5%), the Chicago Metro Division (+0.5 point to 4.3%), and the Peoria MSA (+0.1 point to

4.8%). There was no unemployment rate change in the Bloomington and Danville MSAs.

Rockford MSA

The not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased to 4.9% in December 2024 from 5.9% in December 2023.

Total nonfarm employment increased by +1,800 over-the-year.

The Leisure-Hospitality (+800), Government (+600), Private Education-Health Services (+400) and Mining-Construction (+300) sectors had the largest payroll gains over-the-year. The

Manufacturing (-400) and Financial Activities (-100) sectors recorded employment declines over-the-year.

Stephenson County

The not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased to 4.2% in December 2024 from 4.9% in December 2023.

Total nonfarm employment increased by +225 over-the-year.

The Government (+100), Professional-Business Services (+50), Private Education-Health Services (+50), Construction (+25), Other Services (+25) and Trade-Transportation-Utili-

ties (+25) sectors had payroll gains over-the-year. The Financial Activities (-25) sector recorded the only employment decline over-the-year.

Note: Monthly 2023 unemployment rates and total nonfarm jobs for Illinois metro areas were revised in February and March 2024, as required by the U.S. BLS. Comments and tables distributed for prior metro area news releases should be discarded as any records or historical analysis previously cited may no longer be valid.

Disclaimer: The data contained in the metro area employment numbers press releases are not seasonally

adjusted, and therefore are subject to seasonal fluctuations due to factors such as changes in weather, harvests, major holidays and school schedules. Current monthly metro data should be compared to the same month from prior years (January 2024 data compared to January 2023 data) as data for these months have similar seasonal patterns. Comparisons should not be made to data for the immediate previous month or other previous non-matching months, as any changes in the data within these time periods may be the result of seasonal fluctuations and not economic factors.

News briefs

American Legion Auxiliary meeting

The February meeting of the American Legion Auxiliary will meet on Wednesday, Feb. 12 at the Lena American Legion Home at 6 p.m. Delegates will be selected to attend American Legion Auxiliary Illini Girls State. Dues will be collected. New members are always welcome. Kathy Pignato is in charge of the social hour. Junior members will meet on Feb. 15 at 10 a.m. at the American Legion Home.

Elizabeth Blood Drive

The Red Cross will host a blood drive on Thursday, Feb. 6 from 12:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. It will be held at the Community Building located

at 402 North West Street in Elizabeth, IL. Appointments are encouraged and can be made calling 1-800-733-2767 or by visiting redcrossblood.org. Use sponsor code ElizabethIL.

Lena American Legion Auxiliary

The Lena American Legion Auxiliary will honor female veterans with a brunch on Saturday, March 29, 2025, at 316 W. Main St., Lena. There will be no charge for this brunch. Please join for fellowship and entertainment. Please call 815-369-4684 or email jamcps54@yahoo.com to make reservation or with any questions. Reservations are due by March 20.



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Little Blackhawks

Pictured are Stockton Elementary's Little Blackhawks for the week. These students were recognized for following the Blackhawk Way.

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On Behalf of the Mapes Family

We would like to thank everyone for extending your sincere condolences and offering your support to our family over the past week. Your generous donations, cards and phone calls in memory of Marj were overwhelmingly heart warming. Your kindness and concern for our family means so much to us. We appreciate all the love and support you have extended to us during this period of sadness.

Ron Mapes, Lori Zueger, Brad Mapes

467572

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OPINION



Weekly connection

Out of the ashes



By **SCOTT CERNEK**
Columnist

A little over two years ago one of the three silos on the home farm by the dairy barn came crashing down in the middle of the night and destroyed the milkhouse and about a third of the barn. Thankfully, it happened in the middle of the night and no one or animal was hurt. My brother and his sons who were milking about a hundred cows at that sight moved their herd down to where I live. I had sold my forty cows about five months prior, so my parlor and barn were available. It was about five o'clock in the morning when I got the call that day to see if they could move the cows down to my place immediately. My wife and I agreed, and I ran out to the milkhouse to see what needed to be done to get it ready. After running the vacuum pump, washing the pipeline, and carrying all the junk out of the parlor that had accumulated over the past five months, things were ready to go. It was a chore to get these stanchion and tie stall cows to walk into the parlor, but after a couple weeks they figured it out and everything started to operate smoothly. They culled the herd down to about half the numbers of what they were milking.

Things came alive at our place once again. Immediately there was a great deal of traffic in and out of our drive as the feed needed to be brought over, the milk truck started coming every day, the breeder made his stops, the supply guy and veterinarians were also in and out of the place constantly. As much activity as there was, it was nice to get the barn and parlor back up and running. Things went well for a couple years and then last month my brother and his sons decided that dairying on the neighbor's place was

not the best long-term plan, so they called it quits. The cows and heifers were sold, and things have become very quiet around here once again. It's hard to see the parlor just sitting there, but I now have about thirty-five head of beef taking the place of the dairy cows.

Back at the home farm where the barn was crushed by the falling silo, things have slowly taken shape. Since my dad left the farm to all eight of us kids, it took a little time to decide and agree on what our plan was going to be. Finally, we decided to lift the haymow up in the air and knock the walls of the barn down and get the debris out of the way. While the haymow was suspended in the air, we poured footings at ground level and sat the haymow down on them. Now we no longer have a dairy on the home farm, but we do have what in essence is a new shed to park some of the old antique machinery in.

Since we had some insurance money left after that project, we decided to build a new building on a different site near the main house that we can use for a variety of activities. All of our families are looking forward to putting it to good use. It's funny sometimes how God works to make all things work together for good. In fact, that's exactly what Romans 8:28 says. For we know that all things work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose.

Until next week, God bless.

IN*CI*DENTAL*LY

Tobacco use: One of the leading causes of preventable illness

Use of tobacco-containing products has been associated with both immediate and long-term adverse oral effects, including periodontal disease, bone loss, gum recession, stained teeth, bad breath, decay, tooth loss, canker sores, and mouth, larynx, pharynx, and esophageal cancers.

Although cigarette smoking has declined



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

in America, the CDC estimates that in the year 2025, eleven per cent of Americans (28 million)

still smoke. Unfortunately, twenty percent of those will die from a smoking related disease. Cigarette smoking has been linked to about 20% of all cancers and about 30% of all cancer deaths. Researchers estimate that secondhand smoke contributes to approximately 7300 additional cases of lung cancer annually.

Smoking harms nearly every organ in the body, including your lungs, heart, blood vessels, reproductive

organs, skin, eyes, bones, bladder, and digestive organs. It affects your immune system, making you more vulnerable to pneumonia, diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, and slower wound healing. Smoking increases the risk of cardiovascular diseases, including stroke, heart attack, peripheral vascular disease, and lung disease. Both direct and secondhand inhaled smoke makes asthma harder

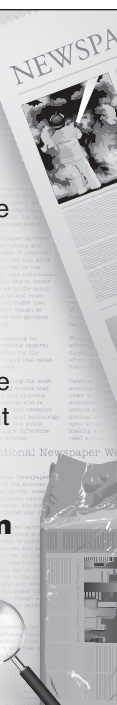
See **ILLNESS**, Page 14

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

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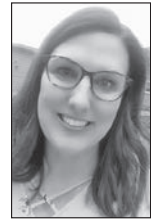


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Around the Northern Hills



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

We are always looking for ways to communicate with our members. Many people read my column in the paper, others follow us on Facebook or Instagram, but would you like to receive Jo Daviess County Farm Bureau news directly to your inbox? Share your email with us and we will make sure to add you to our periodic email newsletter. If you are interested, please share your email with me at jdcfbmgr@gmail.com.

first year of college. This scholarship is only available to Jo Daviess County Farm Bureau members and their children. You can find the application on our website.

IAA Foundation scholarships

The IAA Foundation just announced the lineup for the 2025 IAA Foundation Scholarships. This includes 120 scholarships totaling \$210,251. We have had several winners from Jo Daviess County in the past, so I would encourage anyone interested to not miss this great opportunity. The link is on the IAA Foundation website.

Farm Fun Fact

Americans today consume 17.3 billion quarts of popped popcorn each year. The average American eats about 68 quarts!

Farm Bureau Foundation's scholarship

The Jo Daviess County Farm Bureau Foundation has its scholarship applications available. We again have two different scholarships for those students majoring in an agricultural related field. The first scholarship is geared specifically to Highland Community College Ag students. High School Seniors or those already enrolled at HCC can apply. The second scholarship is a general scholarship for any post-secondary school. For this scholarship, the student needs to be currently in their



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Stockton Quiz Bowl Team

The Stockton Quiz Bowl Team finished second place out of 18 teams at the NUIC tournament in East Dubuque on Saturday, Jan. 25. Team members (left to right) are James Wickler, Ethan Steien, Landon Warner, Kyle Haas, Sam Hille. Warner and Kyle were also selected to the all-tournament team.

Warren boys defeat Stockton and Benton to win third straight

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT

The Warren Warriors improved to 19-5 on this year's boys basketball season when they beat the Stockton Blackhawks and the Benton Zephyrs, last week. It was the third consecutive victory for the Warriors, and their seventh win in their last eight games played.

Warren had three games on the schedule last week. On Monday, Jan. 27, the Warriors traveled to take on the Orangeville Broncos. They came home with an easy 65-37 win over the Broncos, getting the week off to a good start.

After three days off, the Warriors returned to action. They were back on the road, as they made the short trip to take on the Stockton Blackhawks. It was the second time these teams faced off this year. Warren won the first matchup by a score of 68-37.

Stockton put up a much better fight in their second meeting with Warren. Al-

though the Blackhawks have struggled throughout the 2024-2025 season, they came into the matchup on a high note. Just two days earlier, Stockton beat West Carroll 52-38 for just their sixth win of the season. That improved Stockton's overall record to 6-13 ahead of their matchup with Warren.

It looked like Warren was going to run away with another one in the first half. Treyton Pafford and Bryce VanRaalte came out firing as the duo combined for 12 points in the opening quarter. Noah Larson

hit an early three-pointer as he had seven first quarter points for the Blackhawks.

Warren opened the second quarter with a 16-13 lead. That's when the Warriors blew the game wide open, outscoring Stockton 19-8 in the quarter. Alex Niemann hit two big three-pointers in the quarter, helping Warren take a 35-21 lead into the break.

Stockton would claw their way back into this one. The Blackhawks came out strong in the second half as they slowly chipped away at Warren's lead. Brody Gardner

had four points in the third, as did Larson. Jacob Harbach added four third quarter points, but in an unconventional way. Harbach went one for two in two separate trips to the free throw line, in addition to scoring a two-point field goal.

Heading into the final quarter, Warren maintained a double-digit lead as they were up

See DEFEAT, Page 7



Larry Huttenlocher Retirement Auction

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Church news

Good Shepherd Church

All are invited to worship at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 118 E. Mason St. Lena, IL. Join on Sunday, Feb. 9, 2025, for Worship Service at 9:30 a.m. This week will be the Fifty Sunday after Epiphany. This week's gospel reading is from the Gospel Gospel Luke 5:1-11.

On Wednesday, Feb. 12, The Peace Corps Quilting group will meet from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. All are welcome to join and no quilting experience necessary.

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

St. John's Lutheran Church

St. John's Lutheran Church, Pearl City, will celebrate the fifth Sunday after Epiphany at worship on Sunday, Feb. 9 at 9 a.m. There will be a Children's Message during the service.

Everyone is welcome to come play cards and dominoes on Thursday, Feb. 27 at 1 p.m.

All kids in grades K-5 are welcome to come to St. John's in Pearl City on Wednesday, Feb. 19 from 3:15 p.m. to 5 p.m. to be a part of the Kids Klub. All children in the Pearl City community are welcome to come. For more information or to register your child, please contact Pastor Roger Bronkema at rbronkema18@gmail.com or call 815-291-6261.

The February Grace Meal will be on Sunday, Feb. 16. The menu is chili, ham salad sandwich, potato chips, and chocolate pudding. Reservations are due in the church office by Thursday, Feb. 13. Meals can be picked up at the church on Feb. 16 between 11 a.m. and 12 p.m. If you are interested in donating to this ministry, reach out to the church office for more information.

The next Men's Breakfast

will be on Wednesday, Feb. 5 at 7:30 a.m. at the Beltline Restaurant in Freeport.

The Healthy Wolves group will be packing backpacks on Thursday, Feb. 13 at 3:15 p.m. If you are interested in donating to this ministry, reach out to the church office for more information.

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

All are welcome to join for a service led by Pastor Christopher Ham at Salem United Church of Christ, 8491 West Salem Road, Lena, IL, every Sunday at 10 a.m. Sunday School for children five years and older is held during church service, and nursery is available for children under five years.

On Feb. 9 we will be hosting a noisey bucket collection to benefit the Lena Food Pantry with a SOUPer Bowl lunch immediately after services. There will be several soups and sides to enjoy. Make sure to bring your spare change and a big appetite.

Crafternoon will be held on Feb. 9 from 4 p.m. until 7 p.m. in the lower level of the church. This space is handicap accessible, and all are welcome to join. During this event, we enjoy snacks, crafting and good company. There is plenty of space to spread out a large project, or to work on something small.

For more information on any Salem related items, you can contact 815-369-4511 or ruth.dake@gmail.com.

Defeat (Continued from page 5)

44-34. Foul trouble became an issue for the Warriors and some of their top scorers. Pafford would score six points in the fourth, but that was more than half of what Warren would score in the quarter.

Still, it was just enough to hold off a Stockton comeback. The Blackhawks were

led in scoring by Harbach with 15 points, followed by Larson with 14. Gardner added eight points, but Stockton ultimately fell by a score of 55-48. Warren had three players finish in double figures. Pafford led all scorers with 22 points. VanRaalte added 13, 11 of which came in the first

half. Beau Podnar added 10 in the victory.

After closing the month of January with a win, the Warriors didn't have to wait long to get February play started. On Saturday, Feb. 1, Warren took on the Benton Zephyrs. It was a game that saw consistent offensive output as the Warriors ran away with it in the fourth quarter.

It was one of the best offensive games from Warren this season. The Warriors scored over 20 points in each of the four quarters played. It wound up being the highest scoring game to this point of the season for Warren, as they put up 88 points as a team.

Benton was never really out of it until the final quarter. Despite Warren's offensive production, the Zephyrs managed to hang around. After three quarters of play, Warren

held a 66-54 advantage.

By the end of the fourth, it looked like a blowout victory for the Warriors, who won by a score of 88-64. VanRaalte had an excellent game, dropping 27 points, which led all scorers. VanRaalte's lowest scoring quarter was the first, when he hit a lone three-pointer. He then dropped eight points in the second, third, and fourth quarters.

Pafford wasn't far behind VanRaalte as he added 23 points of his own. Niemann was next up with 14, and Podnar added 10 as the Warriors had four players finish in double figures.

With the win, Warren improved to 19-5 on the season. They will be back in action on Wednesday, Feb. 12 when they play host to the River Ridge Wildcats. That game is set to tipoff at 7 p.m.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

MARRS to host Valentine's concert

Musician Garrett Hillary will perform at the Valentine's Concert sponsored by The Music, Arts and Recreational Society (MARRS) of Stockton on Friday, Feb. 14, 2025, at 6 p.m. at Stella's Restaurant.

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Stephenson and Carroll County Farm Bureau news

By Victoria Hansen

Join the Stephenson County Farm Bureau Young Leaders in "going the extra mile" for Agriculture in the Classroom on April 5 for the 8th Annual Bruce Johnson Memorial Farm to Farm 5K/10K Run. Registration is now open for this 80s themed run! Online registration can be found at www.runsignup.com under the Bruce Johnson Memorial Farm to Farm 5K/10K Run. The free kids run will begin

at 8:30 a.m. (shirt not included) with the 10K Run to start at 8:50 a.m. followed by the competitive 5K at 9 a.m. and the fun run 5K at 9:05a.m.

Prior to March 19, registration for the 5K costs \$30, with the 10K costing \$40 and for those under 13 the runs cost \$15. All money raised by this run will be donated the Ag in the Classroom Program in Stephenson County. Registration includes a T-shirt, finisher medal, swag bag and post run

refreshments. For more information contact the Stephenson County Farm Bureau at 815-232-3186 or by email at manager@stephensoncfb.org

From Farm to Wick

Start the new year on a fun note by participating in a fun soy candle workshop. Both Stephenson and Carroll County Farm Bureaus will be hosting these fun two-hour programs. Each program will begin at 6:30 p.m. and end at

8:30 p.m. The Feb. 6 date will be held at the Carroll County Farm Bureau, 811 S Clay Street Mt. Carroll, IL, and the March 25 date will be held at the Stephenson County Farm Bureau, 210 West Spring Street Freeport, IL.

To learn more about pricing and registration details please call the county Farm Bureau that you plan to participate at. Carroll County Farm Bureau, 815-244-3001 and Stephenson County Farm Bureau 815-232-3186.

Improved member experience

The new MyIFB website will make joining and managing your membership easier. On the site you can join Illinois Farm Bureau, renew or reinstate your membership, access member benefits, manager your membership and information, and more. Contact our office if you need assistance with setting up your account. Carroll County Farm Bureau 815-244-3001 or Stephenson 815-232-3186.

Farm Bureau Scholarship opportunities

Illinois Agriculture Association Foundation Scholarships are due Feb. 15, 2025, and can be found at www.iaafoundation.org under the scholarships tab. Carroll County Farm Bureau Scholarships can be found at www.carrollcfb.org and are due on March 3, 2025 at or before 1p.m. Stephenson County Farm Bureau Scholarships are due April 4, 2025, and can be found at www.stephensoncfb.org under the news tab.



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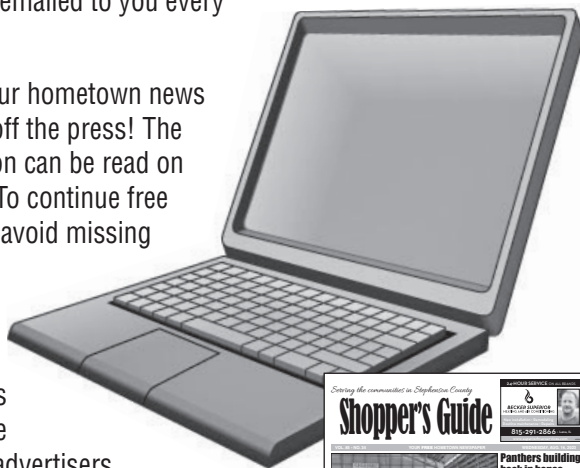
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Panthers bounce back from rough stretch

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT

The Lena-Winslow Panthers and first-year head coach, Mark Blakely, got their new campaign off to a fantastic start. After the first 14 games of the 2024-2025 Illinois High School boys basketball season, the Panthers held an overall record of 11-3.

Blakely's Panthers faced some real adversity in late January. That stretch began on Jan. 21 when Le-Win played host to a solid Pearl City Wolves squad. The game was close at the break, with

Pearl City holding a slim 34-32 halftime lead. The Wolves pulled away in the second half. Tyler Clark had the hot hand from deep as he sunk a trio of three-pointers on the night. Lane Kempel closed the door on a Panther comeback with a 15-point second half.

In the end, the Wolves handed Le-Win their fourth loss of the season. Kempel led Pearl City with 25 points. Clark was next up with 17 points, and Jayce Reed added 12 in the win. That was the start of a tough stretch of

games for the Panthers. After falling to Pearl City, Le-Win returned home to play host to the Forreston Cardinals just two days later. Forreston brought a record of 12-9 with them on their trip to Lena.

It was arguably the Panthers' worst game of the season. Outside of their 47-39 loss to Galena, it was the lowest scoring game by the 2024-2025 Panthers, to this point. Forreston controlled the game from start to finish. The Panthers didn't hold the lead at the end of a single quarter as the Cardinals went on to win by a score of 53-44. It was the first time that Blakely's Panthers had suffered back-to-back losses.

The Panthers weren't quite out of trouble yet. On Jan. 25, Le-Win went to Fulton to compete in this year's Eric Otten's Fulton Shootout. There, the Panthers took on the 15-6 Hinkley-Big Rock Royals. While it was probably their best game of the losing skid, the Panthers fell just short. After the game was tied 39-39 at halftime, things were set

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

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

WORDS

- ALBINISM
- BLINDNESS
- BRILLE
- CATARACTS
- CONTRAST
- DIABETES
- EYES
- GLAUCOMA
- IMPAIRMENT
- LOSS
- LUMINANCE
- MACULA
- MAGNIFIER
- NIGHT
- NYSTAGMUS
- OPTIC
- OPTOMETRIST
- PERIPHERAL
- RETINA
- SENSITIVITY
- SPECIALIST
- STRABISMUS
- TECHNOLOGY
- VISION

CLUES ACROSS

1. "The Las Vegas of the East"
6. Cook
10. Manning and Wallach are two
14. Chameleon
15. A way to fill up
17. What MLBers hope to play in
19. Unhappy
20. Indefinite period of time
21. Excites
22. Males
23. Mongol leader Genghis
24. Turfs
26. Soda comes in them
29. Not nice
31. Professional organization
32. Part of a play
34. Sea eagle
35. Emily Blunt's character in "Sicario"
37. Beige
38. Mental sharpness
39. Valley
40. Alcyone's husband
41. A place to gamble
43. Flightless Australian birds
45. Call out somebody's name over a P.A. system
46. US spy group
47. Pancakes from buckwheat flour
49. Swiss river
50. Disfigure
53. Have surgery
57. Formal withdrawal
58. Early English council
59. Square measures
60. 2,000 lbs.
61. Siskel and ___, critics

CLUES DOWN

1. Mouths
2. Buffalo
3. You plug it in
4. Each
5. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
6. King of Thebes

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

7. English name meaning "mythical hunter"
8. Indicates near
9. More herbaceous
10. Gas-powered cars need one
11. Dishonest individual
12. Systems, doctrines, theories
13. The woman
16. The whole of one's holdings
18. Witnesses
22. Doctor
23. Paul ___, Swiss painter
24. Kids look for him on December 24
25. Single
27. Competitions
28. Predict the future
29. Cage for trained hawks
30. Musician Clapton
31. Frozen water
33. Semiformal men's evening attire

35. Most worn
36. Common soap ingredient
37. Former EU monetary unit
39. Provisions
42. Book parts
43. Republic of Ireland
44. Partner to "Pa"
46. Sammy ___, songwriter
47. Dutch colonist
48. Clare Booth ___, American writer
49. Solar disk in Egyptian mythology
50. Minute arachnid
51. From a distance
52. Monthly apartment cost
53. Young women's association
54. Tourist destination
55. "Woman" in Ojibwe language
56. Pointed end of a pen



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Junior high champs

Pearl City Junior High Spelling Bee champions include Hendrix Feld in first place, Ayden Hayes in second place, and John Barthel (alternate).



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Congressman Darin LaHood meets a student on his Feb. 27 visit to Highland Community College.

Congressman LaHood visits Highland Community College

On Monday, Jan. 27, Congressman Darin LaHood (IL-16) stopped by Highland Community College for an inside look at how the college is preparing students for future success. Highland President Chris Kuberski took the congressman on a tour of the Freeport campus where they discussed the challenges and innovations that accompany

an evolving educational landscape.

"We welcomed the opportunity to show Rep. LaHood how Highland Community College is serving rural communities while meeting the needs of a diverse student population through a wide range of degree and certificate programs," said Kuberski.

LaHood visited the remodeled Welcome Center, where he met members of the Highland Student Senate. Kuberski and LaHood discussed Highland's expanding agricultural program, and they also toured athletic, manufacturing and nursing facilities. The tour ended with a glimpse inside Highland's new mobile medical unit.

"Community colleges are critical to creating a strong workforce, especially in fields like manufacturing and nursing," said LaHood. "It was great to be on campus today with President Kuberski to learn more about their programs and how they've been working to expand their presence in the region. I appreciate President Kuberski and the faculty's investment in their students and the college."

Senior Resource Center offers free tax preparation for older adults

Starting Feb. 5, the Senior Resource Center will offer free federal and state 1040 tax counseling, preparation and filing services for low and middle-income senior taxpayers residing in Stephenson and Jo Daviess counties as well as adults with disabilities. This service is provided through the AARP Tax-Aide program by trained and IRS-certified volunteers and will run through April 15, 2025.

"Thanks to the dedication of our trained and certified volunteers, we are able to offer this service at no cost to low and middle income tax-

payers who need assistance filing their 2024 taxes," explains Amanda Faivre, executive director of the Senior Resource Center. "Last year, we served 435 residents through this program, resulting in total tax savings of more than \$180,000 with an average refund of \$538.41," Faivre added.

Call 815-235-9777 starting Jan. 22 to schedule an appointment. Spots are limited and fill quickly. Please bring a photo ID, social security card for each person on the return, proof of all income (including social security ben-

efits), proof of medical insurance coverage for each person on the return, and your previous year's tax return to the appointment. For joint returns, both persons must be present. Appointments will be held at Senior Resource Center, 206 E. Stephenson Street, Freeport, IL.

Unfortunately, not every person or every return qualifies for the Tax-Aide program. Senior Resource Center tax aides are limited to specific types of tax forms which the aides are allowed to prepare by both the IRS and by the AARP Foundation, which

sponsors the program. If a person's return falls outside the scope of the aides' training, then they will need to go to a professional tax preparer. Examples of returns aids CANNOT prepare include farm income (unless only land rental), military returns, ministerial income, and cancellation of mortgage debt,

business income that involves depreciation, rental income, and K-1 forms with ANY other entries than interest, dividends, or royalties.

For more information about the free tax preparation services or other programs offered by the Senior Resource Center, visit www.srcntr.org or call 815-235-9777.

Freeport police department

Shots fired incident

On Jan. 29, 2025, at 9:43 p.m., an Officer on patrol heard gunshots being fired northwest of his location at Empire Street and Carroll Avenue. This was followed up by a Sound Thinking alert in the area of W. Broadway Street and S. Oak Avenue. Officers responded to the area and when they arrived, they located and collected ev-

idence that showed a firearm had been discharged.

Witnesses reported seeing two suspects wearing dark clothing in a residential yard in the 800 block of S. Oak Avenue. One of the suspects was seen firing gunshots. The two suspects then ran southwest in the 900 block of S. Oak Avenue.

The investigation into this

incident is ongoing at this time. The Freeport Police Department is asking anyone who may have information about this incident to contact either the Freeport Police

Department at 815-235-8222, Staline Area Crime Stoppers at 866-TIPSNOW, through texting at Tip411, or Stephenson County Crime Stop at 815-235-7867.

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▼ Tell us what's happening in the photo

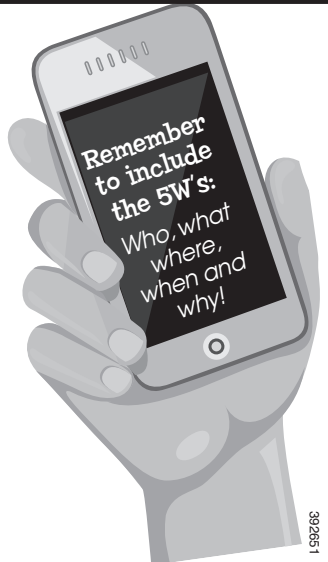
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▼ Tell us who took the photo and we will give them a photo credit

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FROM LENA'S KITCHEN



The not so skinny cook

Last week we had some milder temperatures. We got some heating breaks, people opened some windows, and cars got washed. This week we are back to seasonable weather and the first week of February. January was challenging. We will see what February brings us. This week's recipes center around the Super Bowl and Valentine's Day. Have a great week cooking!

Cranberry and Bacon Swiss Cheese Dip

This Valentine appetizer pairs cranberries, bacon, and Swiss cheese with the usual

ingredients for a cheese ball. If you can't find the cream cheese spreadable, you can use plain spreadable and add dried onion powder or dried chives if you have it. It is festive enough to serve on many holidays.

- 2/3 C. mayonnaise
- 1/2 C. spreadable chive and onion cream cheese
- 1 T. stone ground mustard or Dijon mustard
- 1/4 t. garlic powder
- 3 C. shredded Swiss cheese
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 8 pieces of bacon, cooked, drained, and crumbled
- 1/2 C. sliced almonds, divided
- 1/3 C. dried cranberries, chopped
- Thinly sliced baguette bread, toasted

Preheat the oven to 325. In a large bowl, combine the mayo, cream cheese, mustard and garlic powder. Add Swiss cheese; mix well. Stir in onions, bacon, 1/4 C. almonds and cranberries. Spread into

a greased 1 qt. baking dish. Sprinkle with remaining almonds. Place on a baking sheet. Bake, uncovered, until bubbly, 24 to 30 minutes. Serve warm with bread slices.

Sweetheart Jell-O Salad

If you are having a special Valentine meal, this salad will be a hit. The cherries add a different taste rather than the traditional raspberries or strawberries. Enjoy this fluffy red salad.

- 2 envelopes unflavored gelatin
- 1/4 C. cold water
- 1/2 C. sugar
- 1 can (20 oz.) crushed pineapple, undrained
- 2 T. lemon juice
- 1/4 C. maraschino cherry juice
- 6 oz. cream cheese, softened
- 12 maraschino cherries, quartered
- 3 drops red food coloring (optional)

1 carton Cool Whip, thawed
Soften gelatin in cold water. Meanwhile, in a saucepan, bring sugar and pineapple with juice to a boil, stirring until the sugar dissolves. Remove from the heat. Add gelatin and stir until dissolved. Add lemon and cherry juices. Cool to lukewarm. Whisk in cream cheese until thoroughly combined. Stir in cherries and food coloring. Chill until slightly thickened. Fold in Cool Whip. Pour into a 9 x 13 glass pan or an oiled 8 1/2 inch mold. Serve the mold on a plate or cut squares of salad and place on lettuce leaves to serve.

Pizza Sliders

We aren't all Valentine's recipes this week. This great sandwich is a good one for a Super Bowl party if you want the flavor of pizza but you would like a sandwich.

- 1 medium green pepper, chopped
- 1 C. sliced fresh mushrooms
- 1 T. canola oil
- 1 1/2 C. pizza sauce
- 1 pkg. (12 oz.) Hawaiian sweet rolls
- 1 C. sliced pepperoni
- 2/3 C. chopped ripe olives
- 1 1/2 C. shredded mozzarella cheese
- 2 T. grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 T. Italian salad dressing

Preheat oven to 375. In a large skillet, cook green pepper and mushrooms in oil over medium-high heat until tender, 6 to 8 minutes. Pour in pizza sauce and stir to combine. Set aside. Without separating rolls, cut whole package of rolls in half horizontally, place bottom halves on a greased baking sheet. Spread with pizza sauce mixture and layer with pepperoni, olives and mozzarella cheese; replace the tops of the rolls. Brush dressing over rolls and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Bake, uncovered, until rolls are heated through, and mozzarella is melted, 12 to 15 minutes. Cover with foil if top browns too quickly. Remove and let stand 5 minutes before slicing into sandwiches and placing on a serving platter.

Beef Cabbage Soup

This soup is an easy one to make for a cold day. There are just enough protein elements to make a hearty lunch or dinner. The cabbage adds just the right touch rather than pasta or rice.

- 1 lb. lean ground beef
- 1/2 t. garlic salt
- 1/4 t. garlic powder
- 1/4 t. pepper
- 2 celery ribs, chopped
- 1 can (16 oz.) kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/2 medium head cabbage,

chopped

1 can (28 oz.) diced tomatoes, undrained
1 1/2 C. water
4 t. beef bouillon granules
Fresh parsley for garnish
In a Dutch oven, cook beef over medium heat until no longer pink, breaking into crumbles; drain. Transfer to Dutch oven. Stir in garlic salt, garlic powder, pepper, celery, kidney beans, chopped cabbage, diced tomatoes, water and bouillon granules. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and cover; simmer for 1 hour. Garnish with fresh parsley.

Red Velvet Sheet Cake

If you are looking for a Valentine's Day dessert that will feed a crowd, this sheet cake is a pretty treat for a special meal. It does take a little preparation and can be made the day before.

- 2 1/2 C. cake flour
- 1 t. salt
- 1 C. buttermilk
- 1 t. vanilla
- 1 t. baking soda
- 2 eggs, room temperature
- 1 1/2 t. vinegar
- 1 1/2 t. cocoa powder
- 1 1/2 oz. red food coloring or 1 bottle that is 1 oz. will work
- 1 C. Crisco
- 1 1/4 C. sugar

Frosting:

- 5 T. flour
- 1 C. whole milk
- 1 t. vanilla
- 2 sticks unsalted butter
- 1 C. granulated sugar
- 2 C. raspberries

Cake: Preheat the oven to 350. Thoroughly spray a large sheet pan (18x12) or a jelly roll pan with nonstick baking spray. Be sure to get in all the corners of the pan. Sift together the cake flour and salt. Set aside. In a separate bowl, stir together the buttermilk, vanilla, baking soda and eggs. Add the vinegar and stir. Set aside. In a separate bowl, mix the cocoa and red food coloring. Cream together the Crisco and sugar until fluffy. Alternate adding the flour mixture and buttermilk/egg mixture until all are combined. Pour in the red mixture and beat until combined. Pour the batter into the prepared sheet pan. Use a large offset spatula or knife to even out the surface. Bake for 20 minutes.

Remove the pan from the oven and allow the cake to cool in the pan for 20 minutes. Place a large cutting board on top of the cake pan, then invert the cake, allowing it to turn out onto the cutting board. Allow the cake to cool completely before icing. Flip the cake over before icing.

Frosting: Combine the flour and milk in a saucepan over

medium heat and whisk constantly until thick. Remove from the heat and let cool to room temperature. Add the vanilla once cooled. In the bowl of a stand mixer with the paddle, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add the cooled milk mixture and beat very well. It may look separated, which means you have to keep beating until fully combined. It should be fluffy and light, similar to whipped cream. Frost the cake and top with raspberries. Cut into squares and place on a serving plate. Refrigerate any leftovers.

Red Velvet Brownies

If you want a simpler Valentine's dessert, these brownies will fill the bill. The layers of flavor will be a treat. Note: Bakers has an 8 oz. bittersweet chocolate bar.

- 8 oz. bittersweet chocolate bars, chopped
- 1 1/2 C. sugar, divided
- 1 C. packed brown sugar
- 1 C. unsalted butter, cubed
- 1/4 C. unsweetened cocoa powder
- 6 eggs, room temperature, divided
- 1 (1 oz.) bottle red food coloring
- 1 T. plus 2 t. vanilla
- 1 3/4 C. plus 2 T. flour, divided
- 1/2 t. salt
- 1 C. white chocolate chips
- 12 oz. cream cheese, softened
- 1/3 C. sour cream, room temperature

Preheat the oven to 325. Spray a 9 x 13 baking pan with cooking spray. Line the pan with parchment paper, leaving 2 inches on the long sides. Spray the parchment paper with cooking spray. In a large saucepan over medium-low heat, combine the bittersweet chocolate, 1 C. granulated sugar, brown sugar and butter, stirring until the chocolate is melted, about 3 minutes. Remove from the heat and whisk in the cocoa powder until smooth. Let cool slightly, about 15 minutes. Whisking constantly, add 5 of the eggs, one at a time, mixing until fully incorporated after each addition. Whisk in the red food coloring and 1 T. vanilla. Fold in 1 3/4 C. flour and the salt. Stir until completely smooth. In a small bowl, set aside 1/2 C. of the brownie batter. Fold the white chocolate chips into the remaining batter. Spoon the remaining batter into the prepared pan, using a spatula to spread into an even layer.

In a stand mixer fitted with the paddle, beat the cream cheese, the remaining cup of

See KITCHEN, Page 13

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River Ridge wins tenth game of 2024-2025 boys basketball season

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT

The River Ridge Wildcats have had their fair share of ups and downs throughout new head coach, Jacob Green's first season at the helm. The Wildcats recently suffered a three-game losing streak, including a brutal 64-62 loss to the Scales Mound Hornets. That dropped their overall record to 9-13 on the year.

River Ridge got an opportunity to end January on a high note when they played host to the Galena Pirates on Friday, Jan. 31. Galena came into the game with an overall record of 13-10. Not only did Galena have the better record, but they were part of the reason why. The Pirates had already beaten the Wildcats twice this season. First, Galena beat the Wildcats 59-54 in this year's season opener. Then, the Pirates beat the Wildcats 51-47 on January 7. Both close games, both wins for the Pirates.

It's hard to beat a good

team three times, and River Ridge was determined to avoid the season sweep. Additionally, the Wildcats had the luxury of playing in front of their home crowd for the third matchup.

It was a big day for Green's Wildcats. Not only did they snap a three-game skid, but they managed to flip the script on a team that has been a thorn in their side this year. Suffering two losses by a combined nine points, the Wildcats were eager to get a win over the Pirates. They did just that, beating Galena by a final score of 52-47, defending their home court.

It was the Wildcats' first victory since their Jan. 23 win over the Pearl City Wolves. That was another day that saw the Wildcats come away with a close victory in front of their home crowd. It was also another opportunity for revenge, as Pearl City beat the Wildcats 70-58 back in late November.

Pearl City posed a serious threat to the Wildcats in their second meeting, as well. The

12-win Wolves had already beaten the Wildcats once, and they were riding a four-game winning streak coming into the matchup. That included a 71-63 win over a solid Lena-Winslow squad.

It was River Ridge who came out looking like the team on a hot streak, however. The Wildcats held Pearl City to just six points in the first quarter, which allowed River Ridge to jump out to a double digit advantage. Damon Dittmar had the hot hand early as a pair of three-pointers helped him put up eight first quarter points.

After taking a 16-6 lead into the second quarter, it looked like the Wildcats had a chance to run away with one, but Pearl City doesn't go away so easily. The Wolves exploded for 22-two points in what was a nightmare second quarter for the Wildcats. After holding a 10-point lead to start the second, the Wildcats went into halftime tied 28-28 with the Wolves.

Much like how they opened the game on a strong note, the Wildcats came out ready for the second half. They matched their first quarter total with another 16 points

in the third quarter. Dittmar added five points in the third quarter. Joe Winter had a pair of baskets, giving him four as well. Mason Smith, Sam Rife, and Logan Keleher each added baskets in the third for River Ridge.

The Wildcats won the game in the first and third quarters. They opened both halves on such strong notes that they were able to survive Pearl City's second quarter scoring barrage. In the first and third quarters combined, River Ridge outscored the Wolves 32-15.

Rife wound up leading all

scorers with 20 points, but it was Winter who delivered the final blow to the Wolves. Winter was a consistent force all night, scoring at least four points in each quarter. That includes a six-point fourth quarter as Winter finished the day with 19 points. Rife added seven, including going five for six at the free throw line. Smith finished with six as the Wildcats won by a score of 57-47.

The Wildcats hit the road on Thursday, Feb. 6 as they take on the Stockton Blackhawks. That game is set to begin at 7 p.m.

•Kitchen (Continued from page 12)

granulated sugar and remaining 2 t. of vanilla at medium speed until fully combined and creamy, 1 to 2 minutes. Scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl. Beat in the sour cream and the remaining egg, mixing until fully combined, 30 seconds to 1 minute. Beat in the remaining 2 T. of flour until just combined. Carefully dollop the cheesecake mixture all over the brownie layer. Gently spread into a smooth layer. Dollop the reserved 1/2 C. brownie mixture by the teaspoonful randomly over the top of the cheesecake batter in the pan. Using a toothpick, skewer, or paring knife, swirl the brownie mixture into the cheesecake mixture, being careful not to press too deep to disturb the brownie layer. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in the center comes out clean, 50 to 55 minutes. Cool on a wire rack for 1 hour, then refrigerate for an additional hour before cutting and serving. (If you want, you can add 1/2 t. peppermint extract to the brownie batter for brownie mint flavor.)

will be eating good food.

It is also hard to believe that high school wrestling is coming to a close. Good luck to our area wrestlers as they go through regionals and hopefully sectionals.

Don't forget to check out the local Valentine specials. There are lots of good stores for gifts, flowers, and food. We are fortunate to have such good eating places in Lena, so be sure to support them. Have a great week as we move further into February.

We are searching for recipes for February (and February means red), so send some favorites our way. We would love to feature some soup recipes. If you find some recipes to share, you can contact us by email 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.

Final Thoughts

For those people who live for Sunday football, it comes to a close. I have no interest in the Super Bowl other than watching the clever commercials. I guess if I were a betting person, I would care more, or if a more Midwestern team other than Kansas City were playing, I might also have an interest. However, if I could eat some great things, I always loved to entertain. Hopefully a lot of you

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Illness (Continued from page 4)

to control. About 80% of all deaths from chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases are attributable to cigarette smoking.

These unfortunate and preventable illnesses are not just attributable to cigarette use, but all forms of tobacco use, including smokeless tobacco (chew/dip), electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes/vaping) cigars, pipes, and hookahs.

Because of the negative

impact of tobacco use on oral and overall health, the American Dental Association encourages you to quit any and all tobacco use, and your dentist will support your efforts to quit by providing information about cessation treatment.

This is easier said than done. Long-term brain changes induced by continued nicotine exposure result in addiction. Nicotine withdrawal

symptoms, related to the pharmacologic effects of nicotine, include irritability, cravings, depression, anxiety, cognitive and attention deficits, disturbed sleep, and increased appetite. Physical symptoms may begin as soon as a few hours after the last cigarette. In addition, many behavioral factors (long standing rituals or habits of when, where and with whom

you smoke) can affect the severity of withdrawal symptoms.

If you know someone who is trying to quit, the last thing you want to do is berate them. However, family, friends, and co-workers' support can make a huge difference. Let them know that you will be there for them to lend an ear, avoid situations where people will be smoking, leave with your friend

if he/she starts craving a cigarette or schedule alternate activities to help break long-standing rituals or time habits (such as after meal cigarettes).

If you want to quit, you need to know that most people who try to quit smoking on their own will experience a relapse, most within a month of quitting. Organizations such as the U.S. Public Health Service and The American Lung Association research have found that while counseling and medication are effective when used by themselves for treating tobacco dependence, the combination of counseling plus medication was more effective than either method alone.

The American Lung Association (ALA) has been helping people quit smoking for over 40 years and has helped over one million people quit for good. They believe that everyone can quit smoking, but most people require an individualized plan. They will ask about your unique/individual tobacco use, assist you with counseling and medication and arrange for follow-up support. Their programs utilize evidence-based techniques to assist

you to quit not only cigarettes, but all tobacco products listed above. Their dedicated "quit-line" is 1-800-LUNGUSA (1-800-586-4872).

As you start your journey back to health, it helps to remember the rule of threes: "three days and you're past the very worst; three weeks and you're nearly there; three months and you can start feeling that you're succeeding; three years and you can start bragging." It will also help to focus on the positive changes that are taking place in your body. Increased blood flow means that your skin is getting more oxygen and nutrients. Over time, this will make your pallid complexion look brighter and healthier. This increased blood flow also allows better tissue healing and less inflammation, improving both oral health and overall health and decreasing your risk of cancer. Decreasing inflammation will help dormant cells in the lungs to start to replace some of the damaged lung cells and improve your lung function, giving you more energy to pursue and enjoy activities that previously had been too taxing.

LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT STEPHENSON COUNTY - 15 NORTH GALENA AVENUE, FREEPORT, ILLINOIS
ESTATE OF Mitchell A. Lyp, DECEASED

24 PR 74

Notice is given to creditors of the death of the above named decedent. Letters of office were issued to Kathleen Marie Gruszecki, 6614 North Point Road, Rockford, Illinois 61108, as Independent Executor, whose attorney of record is Kathleen Farrell Duhig, Law Offices of Farrell & Farrell, 4550 West 103rd Street, Suite 202, Oak Lawn, Illinois 60453.

The estate will be administered without court supervision, unless under section 5/28-4 of the Probate Act III. 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 July 22, 2025, 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 provid-

er. 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>.

Kathleen Farrell Duhig
Law Offices of Farrell & Farrell (6296348)
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Oak Lawn, Illinois 60453
(708)448-2500
I3259051

(Published in
The Shopper's Guide
Jan. 22, 29, Feb. 5, 2025)
466821

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT STEPHENSON COUNTY - FREEPORT, ILLINOIS
JPMorgan Chase Bank, National Association
PLAINTIFF

Vs.
Angeline Brechlin; United States of America - Administrator of the Small Business Administration; State of Illinois - Department of Public Aid; Unknown Heirs and Legatees of Gertrude E. Brechlin; Unknown Heirs and Legatees of Channing Brechlin; Unknown Heirs and Legatees of James Brechlin; Shelia Brechlin; Douglas M. Brechlin; Linda M.

Yousou; Angeline Brechlin; Channing Brechlin, Jr.; Eve Brechlin-Harker; Fred C. Brechlin; George Brechlin; Kane Brechlin; Nikki Brechlin; Laura Wells a/k/a Laura Brechlin; William O'Malley; Raymond L. Brechlin; State of Illinois - Department of Revenue; Unknown Owners and Nonrecord Claimants; Kipp Meyers, as Special Representative for Channing Brechlin

(deceased), James Brechlin (deceased) and Gertrude E. Brechlin (deceased); Timothy Kudlacik

DEFENDANTS
No. 2024FC48

NOTICE BY PUBLICATION
NOTICE IS GIVEN TO YOU:

Unknown Heirs and Legatees of Gertrude E. Brechlin
Unknown Heirs and Legatees of Channing Brechlin
Unknown Heirs and Legatees of James Brechlin
Shelia Brechlin
Eve Brechlin-Harker
Fred C. Brechlin
Kane Brechlin
Nikki Brechlin
Raymond L. Brechlin
Unknown Owners and Nonrecord Claimants

That this case has been commenced in this Court against you and other defendants, praying for the foreclosure of a certain Mortgage conveying the premises described as follows, to-wit:

COMMONLY KNOWN AS:
1922 N Farwell Bridge Rd
Ridott, IL 61067
and which said Mortgage was made by:

Channing Brechlin
Angeline Brechlin
James Brechlin
Gertrude E. Brechlin
the Mortgagor(s), to Bank One, Illinois, NA, as Mortgagee, and recorded in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds of Stephenson County, Illinois, as Document No. 9892930; and for other relief; that summons was duly issued out of said Court against you as provided by law and that the said suit is now pending.

NOW, THEREFORE, UNLESS YOU file your answer or otherwise file your appearance in this

case in the Office of the Clerk of this Court,

Shanelle Bardell
Clerk of the Circuit Court
15 North Galena
Freeport, IL 61032

on or before February 28, 2025, A DEFAULT MAY BE ENTERED AGAINST YOU AT ANY TIME AFTER THAT DAY AND A JUDGMENT MAY BE ENTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRAYER OF SAID COMPLAINT.

CODILIS & ASSOCIATES, P.C.
Attorneys for Plaintiff
15W030 North Frontage
Road, Suite 100
Burr Ridge, IL 60527
(630) 794-5300
DuPage # 15170
Winnebago # 531

Our File No. 14-24-06006
NOTE: This law firm is a debt collector.
I3259466

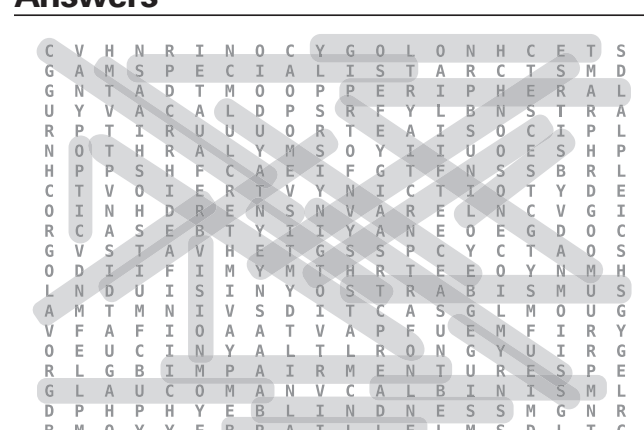
(Published in
The Shopper's Guide
Jan. 29, Feb. 5, 12, 2025)
467115

LIEN SALE

The following self-storage Cube contents containing household and other goods will be sold for cash by CubeSmart Asset Management, LLL as Agent for Owner #4409, 555 W. South Street, Freeport, Illinois 61032 to satisfy a lien on February 20, 2025 at approx. 1:00 PM at www.storage-treasures.com Cube 1023 Willie Glover; Cube 1028 Bobbie Pusateri; Cube 1076 Latrice Allen; Cube 1101 Kayana Alexander; Cube 1112 Kenya Thomlinson; Cube 1171 Lateesha Watkins; Cube 1174 Celara Chatman

(Published in
The Shopper's Guide
Jan. 29 & Feb. 5, 2025)
467114

Answers

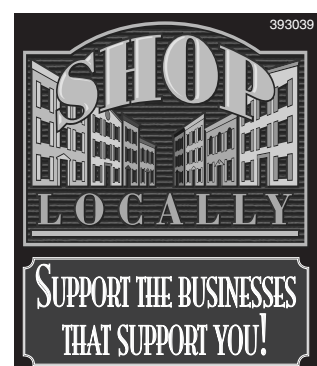


PUZZLE 1

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

PUZZLE 2

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



CROSSWORD

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

Call
815.369.4112
to place your ad

Classifieds

AD DEADLINE:
Friday
at 4 pm

SERVING NORTHERN ILLINOIS AND SOUTHERN WISCONSIN



help wanted

Help Wanted

Part-time Administrative Assistant Lena United Methodist Church

Our church is looking for a candidate to fill our part-time administrative assistant role. Our candidate should be highly organized, have excellent computer skills, have experience in working with finances and accounting, be able to handle calls to the church and pastor. The candidate will work alongside our pastor and committee chairpersons to keep our church running smoothly and effectively.

Responsibilities include: keeping the church's schedule, managing office equipment, coordinating meetings, the weekly bulletin and monthly newsletter, financial duties, maintaining and updating church databases in a confidential manner.

A high school diploma or equivalent is required. Previous experience in administrative roles, is beneficial.

Proficiency in office equipment and software, such as Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook) is required, and familiarity with church management software would be beneficial.

The position is for 14 hours per week and is required to attend 6 evening meetings per year (every other month) to record minutes.

If interested, please send a cover letter and resume by Feb. 14, to umclena@gmail.com or mail to Lena United Methodist Church, PO Box 336, Lena, IL 61048. If you would like a copy of the job description, please email the church at umclena@gmail.com or call 815-369-5291.

467536

River Ridge CUSD - Cafeteria Director

Application Procedure: Send letter of interest and resume to Colleen Fox, Superintendent at 4141 IL Route 84 South; Hanover, IL 61041. Application deadline is February 21, 2025. Email: cfox@riverridge210.org. Phone: (815)858-9005. For further information visit the district website: https://www.riverridge210.org/

467607

ADVERTISING SALES EXECUTIVE

Rock Valley Publishing is looking for a Part-Time Advertising Sales Executive. Approximately 20 hours per week.

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Vicki Vanderwerff, Director of Advertising
Email: vicki@southernlakesnewspapers.com
Fax: (262) 725-6844

444841

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Help Wanted Section
Call (815) 369-4112

for sale

VAN DRIVERS NEEDED.

Must be hard working, reliable and customer service oriented individuals that can provide world-class service experience in a positive and compassionate manner. Drivers must demonstrate a high level of resourcefulness and flexibility. Must be professional with excellent communication skills. Contact ryanshmaltz@gmail.com for more details. 466677

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Announcements

CLASSIFIED IN-COLUMN ADS cannot be credited or refunded after the ad has been placed. Ads canceled before deadline will be removed from the paper as a service to our customers, but no credit or refund will be issued to your account.

DISCLAIMER NOTICE This publication does not knowingly accept fraudulent or deceptive advertising. Readers are cautioned to thoroughly investigate all ads, especially those asking for money in advance.

Burial Needs

7 CEMETERY PLOTS Willing to sell as a group or individually. Located at Roselawn Memory Gardens 3045 WI-67, Lake Geneva, WI 53147. This is a private sale. Contact Randy, the seller at randy@slpublishers.com.

Agriculture

ROUND ALFALFA & GRASS Excellent quality round alfalfa & grass hay bales for sale, stored inside, \$40 each. 815-291-2382 or 815-291-2381.

Auction Deadline is Noon Friday!

Contact Rhonda at
rmarshall@rvpublishing.com
for information on advertising.

for rent

Apartments

NORTH PRAIRIE APARTMENTS - STOCKTON

Managed by CMS Management, LLC

108 Mathilda Drive, Stockton, IL 61085
815-947-2237

1, 2 & 3 Bedroom Apartments
Laundry Facility On-Site • Appliances Furnished

Applications are available in the hallway of
108 building, across from laundry.

This Institution is an Equal Opportunity Provider.

real estate

Other Real Estate

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

transportation

Automobiles

1977 OLDSMOBILE CUTLAS BROUGHAM Mint condition. \$7,000, OBO. Call 262-379-4161.

1999 BUICK CENTURY A/C, AM/FM CD, 165,000 K, looks & runs good. Asking \$1,550 OBO 815-347-0496.

2001 FORD MUSTANG CONVERTIBLE Blk on Brn, 90K miles, new tires, new brakes, mechanically sound throughout, minor scratches on body, leather seats, V-6 engine, premium sound system and ice-cold A/C and hot heat. \$6000. call 262-496-5739.

2004 MONTE CARLO Mint condition. Mechanically sound. \$6,000. OBO Call 262-379-4161.

2005 CHRYSLER LIMITED Mechanically sound with documents. No rust. 141,000 miles, \$6,000. Call 262-379-4161.



Automobiles Wanted

CASH FOR YOUR FULL SIZE JUNK TRUCKS & SUV's. HAUL AWAY 7 DAYS A WEEK! CALL 262-758-1807.

Campers and RVs

2016 FLEETWOOD TERRA 34B MOTOR HOME 35' 27,000 Miles 3 Slideouts 2 New WI-FI TV's 5.5k Generator. \$79,000 262-206-4164.

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For details on placing an ad in our
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Serving the communities in Stephenson County
The Scoop Today Shopper's Guide

Find us online: rvpnews.com



422795

THE SCOOP TODAY / SHOPPER'S GUIDE Wednesday, Feb. 5, 2025

Highland Community College 2024 fall graduates

Highland Community College is pleased to announce the following graduates were awarded associate degrees, associate of applied science degrees, or certificates in the fall of 2024:

Elizabeth: Amber Hupperich, Associate in Early Care and Education-Early Childhood Education-Associate of Applied Science-Level 2 ECE-Level

3 ECE Credential Certificate-Infant/Toddler Level 2-Infant/Toddler Level 3 Credential Certificate, ECE Infant/Toddler Certificate; Lisa Kinder, Associate of General Studies

Freeport: Makayla Aeling, Associate of Arts; Alexis Barr, Associate of Arts; Lauren Fruth, Basic Welding Certificate; Ryan Grebenier, Accounting-Associate of

Applied Science-Accounting Certificate-Account Clerk Certificate-Quickbooks Professional Certificate-Professional Tax Preparer Certificate; Andrea Guevara, Associate of Arts; Teksha Herron, Associate of Arts; Tyler Johnson, Associate of General Studies; Michael Meighan, Associate of Arts; Misty Pommerening Machine Processes-CNC Machinist Certificate; Kelli Ra-

mos, Early Childhood Education-Associate of Applied Science-Level 2 ECE-Level 3 ECE-Infant/Toddler Level 2-Infant/Toddler Level 3 Credential Certificate-ECE Infant/Toddler Certificate-Early Care and Education; Autumn Raymond, Associate of General Studies; Migna Sanchez, Cannabis Studies; Malakai Seal, Welding & Fabrication, Basic Welding Certificate; Carl Seward,

Associate of Arts; Madison Sketo, Associate of Arts; Brianna Stager, Early Childhood Education-Associate of Applied Science, Infant/Toddler Level 2-Infant/Toddler Level 3 Credential Certificate-ECE Infant/Toddler-Early Care and Education; Alexa Tran, Associate of Arts

Lena: Connor Karnatz, Information Systems-Associate of Applied Science;

Taylor Niesman, Associate of Arts; Taylor Robinson, Associate of Science

Pearl City: Kenner Brinkmeier, Accounting-Associate of Applied Science-Accounting-Account Clerk-Quickbooks Professional-Professional Tax Preparer Certificate; Emily Janssen, Associate of Arts

Stockton: Laura Andrews, Nail Technology Certificate; Heather Smith, Nail Technology Certificate

Winslow: Nicole Guetzke Early Childhood Education-Associate of Applied Science-Level 3 ECE-Infant/Toddler Level 3 Credential Certificate; Michaela Keeney, Accounting-Associate of Applied Science-Accounting-Account Clerk-Quickbooks Professional-Professional Tax Preparer Certificate


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the rest!




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