

Serving the communities in Jo Daviess County

the Scoop Today

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YOUR FREE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 26, 2025



MOTO JOHNSON PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

State championship winner

Lena-Winslow junior Eli Larson and Richmond-Burton sophomore Blake Livndahl grapple during their Illinois High School Association Class 1A 175-pound state championship match. Larson won the match 14-7 between the two underclassmen. He earned two decision wins, one tech fall win and one pinfall win during the state championships.

River Ridge boys basketball defeats Black Hawk

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT

The River Ridge Wildcats picked up a late victory in the 2024-2025 Illinois High School boys basketball season when they took on the Black Hawk Warriors on Feb. 29. Black Hawk, out of Wisconsin, made the short trip down to Hanover to take on the Wildcats. The Warriors have struggled throughout the

season, and they brought a record of 2-18 with them to Jo Daviess County.

The Wildcats came into the matchup with an overall record of 14-15 themselves. They were fresh off a 67-55 loss to the Warren Warriors just a few days prior. Treyton Pafford had an epic night as he dropped 37 points, leading Warren to the victory. Bryce VanRaalte also had an ex-

ceptional double-double, finishing with 14 points and 15 rebounds in the win. That loss left the Wildcats two games below 50 and had them eager to bounce back into the win column. They made sure to do just that when Black Hawk came to town.

Four different Wildcats scored in the opening quarter. River Ridge especially found success from deep, hitting a

pair of them in the first. David Buck and Camden Flack each hit three-pointers, while Joe Winter added another three points of his own. By the end of the first, River Ridge held a 13-10 advantage.

See WIN, Page 8

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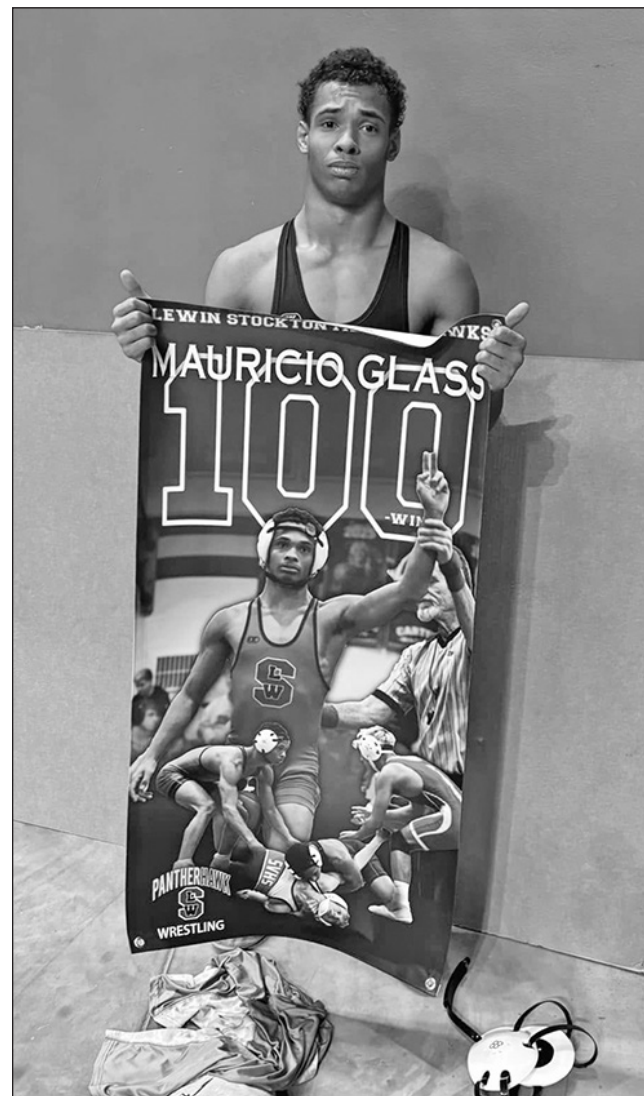
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LE-WIN/STOCKTON PANTHERHAWK WRESTLING FACEBOOK PHOTO
Rock Valley Publishing

Le-Win Stockton wrestler, Glass, joins the 100 club

Mauricio Glass of the Lena-Winslow/Stockton wrestling team is the newest member of the 100 Win Club. Glass earned his 100th win at the IHSA State Tournament. Congratulations, Mauricio!

M P C I

Revenue Protection
Deadline is March 15, 2025

Obituaries

ELSIE HOTS

Elsie Hots, age 105 of Corpus Christi, TX, formerly of Lena, IL, passed away peacefully on Sunday, Feb. 16, 2025. Elsie was born in Emnden, Germany on Jan. 3, 1920, to Guy and Emma (Joseph) Ruter. She came to America, arriving at Ellis Island with her parents when she was 4 years old. She married John D. Hots on Dec. 24, 1949, in Shannon, IL. Most of her years she lived in Northern Illinois. In 2008 she moved to Texas to be closer to more of her children. Elsie loved and was loved by her family, the most important thing to her.

During her life she was a busy homemaker. She babysat for many other children, and worked at a newspaper, at a hotel and in the school cafeteria. She loved gardening with her plants and bingo. She was very involved with her church wherever she was living.

Elsie had six children- Joan (Hank) Johnson of Corpus Christi, TX, Denis Heuerman of Harper, TX, Bob (Diane) Heuerman of Stockton, IL, Elsie (Fred) Tallman of Corpus



Christi, TX, Elma (Bob) Bucher of Freeport, IL; 14 grandchildren; 22 great grandchildren and 1 great-great grandchild. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, a brother and sister, one son, and four grandchildren. She was currently living at the Waterford assisted living in Corpus Christi, TX where she was the oldest resident.

A Christian funeral service will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 28, at the Leamon Funeral Home in Lena, IL. Visitation will take place from 10 a.m. until the time of service on Friday, Feb. 28, at the Leamon Funeral Home. Interment will take place at Chapel Hill Memorial Gardens in Freeport, IL. Reverend Bob Phelps will officiate. A celebration of life will be held at a later date in Corpus Christi, TX. Condolences may be sent to the family at www.leamonfh.com.

GARY TESSENDORF

Gary A. Tessendorf age 72, passed away on Saturday Feb. 15, 2025, at the Lena Living Center. He was born on Dec. 28, 1952, in Monroe, WI to Frank and Violette (Jacobson) Tessendorf.

Gary was a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Warren, Lena Lions Club and the Boy Scouts of America. Gary and his mom sold many tickets for the Lena Lions Car drawing and in 1986, he won the car. He drove it in every Lena parade until five years ago. He also entered a lot of car shows and was so proud of it.

He is survived by a nephew Jeremy Tessendorf of Normal, a great nephew Nathan Tessendorf and many cousins and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents, broth-



er Don, and sister-in-law Judy. Funeral services were held on Monday, Feb. 24 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Warren. Pastor Matt Smith officiated the service. Burial will be at Elmwood Cemetery. A memorial has been established in his memory for the Lena Lions Club and St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Warren. The family would like to thank the Lena Living Center, St. John's Lutheran Church for prayers and transportation, the Pretzel bus and Unity Hospice for their care. Condolences may be sent to the family at www.leamonfh.com.

SIERRA DAWN HOFF, 46

Sierra Dawn Hoff, age 46 of Lanark, IL went home to be with her Lord and Savior, with her family by her side, on Thursday, Feb. 20, 2025, after a courageous battle with breast cancer. The daughter of Robert and Cathy (Peterson) Graham Jr. she was born on June 8, 1978, in Monroe, WI.

Sierra was the owner of CiCi's Salon in Freeport, IL where she proudly served the surrounding Freeport area for 15 years. She was passionate about her career and loved being able to be a friend and listening ear to so many of her clients.

Sierra was an artist, whether that was doing hair, drawing, singing, playing the piano or bassoon she enjoyed it all. She passed down her love of music to her kids as well. Her daughters had fond



memories of her sketches, especially her horse sketches she had done in her younger years. You could find Sierra hunkering down at times to watch Game of Thrones or Harry Potter. Her love of these series was evident in her many tattoos dedicated to them.

Sierra was an animal lover, her love started with goats and dogs and grew to horses, chickens, guinea pigs, frogs, well if you could name it, she loved it. She had a strong faith and attended various churches throughout her life, where she gained many friends in Christ. If you knew Sierra, you knew she was a friend to everyone she would meet. Her greatest passion in

life though was her family and was so incredibly proud to be a grandma.

Sierra is survived by her 3 daughters- Shelby (Raymond) Rodriguez of Lena, IL, Adisyn (Cam Telfer) Hoff of Dodgeville, WI, and Nevaeh (Brice Miller) Gross of Lena, IL; 1 granddaughter- Sophia; parents- Rob and Cathy Graham of Lena, IL; 3 siblings- Tiffany (Jeff) Rothstein of Elburn, IL, Zachary Graham of Monticello, WI, and Ariel (Nickolas) Pontnack of Shannon, IL; uncle- William Peterson of Lena, IL; aunt- Barbara Roddy of West Covina, CA; nieces and nephews- Rachel (Ray) Ortiz, Paige Turner, Emily Turner, Kayla Coch, Piper Graham, Alex Graham, Destiny (Conner DeGroot) Pontnack, Keenan Pontnack, Angeline Pontnack, Elleona Pontnack, and Sarie Pontnack; as well

as many beloved friends.

She is preceded in death by her grandparents- William and Vivian Peterson and Robert and Beulah Graham.

A visitation will take place from 4 - 7 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 28, at the Evangelical Free Church of Lena, IL.

A service will take place at 10 a.m. on Saturday, March 1, at the Evangelical Free Church of Lena, IL with a visitation from 9 a.m. until time of service.

Pastor Casey Dwyer of the Evangelical Free Church of Lena and Pastor Glenn Scott of the Simply Free Church in Shannon, IL will be co-officiating the service.

Burial will take place at the Lena Burial Park in Lena, IL.

A memorial has been established in her memory.

Condolences may be sent to the family at www.leamonfh.com.

KATHY GAHM

Kathy R. Gahm, 59, of Lena, IL passed away peacefully with family by her side on Sunday, Feb. 16, 2025. She was born to Merlin and Juanita (Sager) Watson on March 7, 1965, in Freeport, IL. Kathy married the love of her life, Greg Gahm, on July 19, 1986, and together they raised four children.

In childhood, Kathy's favorite pastime was running around the family farm with her siblings in Forreston, IL. While attending Forreston High School, she developed a love for basketball and played on the first girls basketball team that advanced to the state tournament.



degree.

Early in marriage, Kathy enjoyed traveling the world with Greg, especially around Europe. When they settled in Lena, Kathy cherished her role as a devoted mother. Whether watching her kids play in the backyard or cheering them on at various sporting events, Kathy always supported and was

present for her family. When her kids moved away from Lena, Kathy loved visiting and creating memories with them and her beloved grandchildren.

Above all, Kathy's unwavering faith in the Lord was the foundation of her life. In her final days, Kathy expressed to her children and grandchildren her dream: "That they have a true relationship with God, and that no matter what they go through, go to Him in prayer."

Kathy is survived by her husband Greg of Lena, IL, four children - Dylan (Angelica) Gahm of Colorado Springs, CO, Heidi (Ryan) Hoepner of Indianapolis, IN,

Heather (Trevor) Sexton of Knoxville, TN, and Victoria Gahm of Colorado Springs, CO; four grandchildren - Josiah, Gracelynn, and Gabriel Gahm and Ashton Hoepner; mother - Juanita Watson of Freeport, IL; siblings - Doug (Monica) Watson, Wendy (Chris) Klaas, Mike (Sherry) Watson, sister-in-law Dawn, and numerous nieces and nephews. She is preceded in death by her father, Merlin Watson, and brother, Jerry Watson.

A private family service will be held at a later date. Cremation rites have been accorded. Condolences may be sent to the family at www.leamonfh.com.

MARILYN J. HARDEL, 95

Marilyn J. Hardel, age 95, formerly of Lena, IL, passed away on Wednesday Feb. 19, 2025, in Middleton, WI. She was born on Sept. 2, 1929, in Waddams Township, IL, the daughter of David and Mildred Altenbern. She married Paul Hardel on Dec. 25, 1950, in Lena.

Marilyn and Paul farmed outside of Lena for 30 years. She also worked in the cafeteria for the Lena-Winslow School District. Marilyn was a lifelong member of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. She enjoyed crocheting, nee-



dlepointing, and making quilts for family. After moving from the farm, Marilyn and Paul enjoyed traveling and visiting family. They began the tradition of family vacations "Up North" which will be continued by their family. Marilyn loved her family, especially her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Marilyn is survived by 3 children- David (Ann) Har-

del of Madison, WI, Sharon (Richard) Moore of Milwaukee, WI, and Deborah (Keith) Iborg of St. Charles, MO; daughter-in-law- Rita Martin of Verona, WI; 8 grandchildren- Michael (Tracey) Hardel, Melanie (Jedd) Axford, Jennifer (Michael) Chapman, Eric (Ahna) Hardel, Rachel (Evan) Croen, Allison (Joe) Plazyk, Nicholas (Tamara) Iborg, Amanda (Joshua) Zeller; 14 great-grandchildren- Emilie, Zoe and Tristan Hardel, Troy and Caleb Axford, Megan and Brinlee Chapman, Asher and Payton Hardel, Adira and Isaac Croen, Rainer Plazyk, Kearse

and Annistyn Iborg, and two on the way.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 68 years Paul, son Jeffrey Hardel, brothers Robert and Duane.

Visitation will take place from 11:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. on Saturday, March 22, at the Leamon Funeral Home in Lena.

Private family graveside service to be held.

In lieu of flowers a memorial has been established in her memory.

Condolences may be sent to the family at www.leamonfh.com

A Springtime Concert with Kristina Castañeda and Shawn Healy

American Legion
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Apple River United Methodist Church and JDLF to offer gardening presentation

As part of its sponsorship of the Apple River Community Garden of Life, Apple River United Methodist Church (102 E. Baldwin St.) proudly presents experts Erin Keyser and Andrew Stewart of Jo Daviess Local Foods, who will lead a learning session about vegetable gardening at home. This eve will be held on Thursday, March 6 at 7 p.m. at Apple River UMC.

The presentation will cover everything from planning a garden all the way through to harvesting vegetables. The Apple River Community Garden of Life will be located behind the church parsonage (105 E. Baldwin St.) and will have approximately 16 raised beds filled with soil and compost and automatically irrigated. These raised beds are offered first to Village residents for \$25 for the growing season. This project is supported by generous grants from the Community Foundation of Jo Daviess County and the Midwest Methodist Foundation.

Erin Keyser has been the manager of the Jo Daviess Local Foods online market since 2018. She is now the Executive Director of the newly formed JDLF Collective non-profit. She loves eating local food and helping farmers find their inner rockstar. Andrew Stewart is a Farm Educator for JDLF Collective. He has been working in agriculture for over a decade across the country, learning different natural approaches and disciplines in farming and gardening. The mission of JDLF Collective is to build a strong local food system by supporting producers, increasing access to healthy local food, educating the community, and using eco-friendly practices.

There is no charge for this event. Please contact Pastor Libby Rutherford at 815-990-1428 or rutherford.libby@gmail.com with any questions.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Little Blackhawks

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

News briefs

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.

Stephenson County VA Pantry

Current needs for the Stephenson County VA Pantry include:

Paper Towels
Kleenex

Cans of fruit
Cans of Soup
Chewy Granola Bars
Jello and Pudding
Cans of Tuna/Chicken
Hamburger Helper
Crackers

Donations are always appreciated and 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, IL. This list includes immediate needs, however other items will always be accepted. Please call 815-369-4684 with any questions.

McConnell Soup and Sandwich Lunch

McConnell Community Church will host a Soup and

Sandwich Lunch on Sunday, March 2 from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Lunch is all you can eat chili and veggie beef soup with cheese sandwiches,

desserts, and a beverage. Donations are appreciated. The church is located at 211 N. Hulbert Rd, McConnell, IL.

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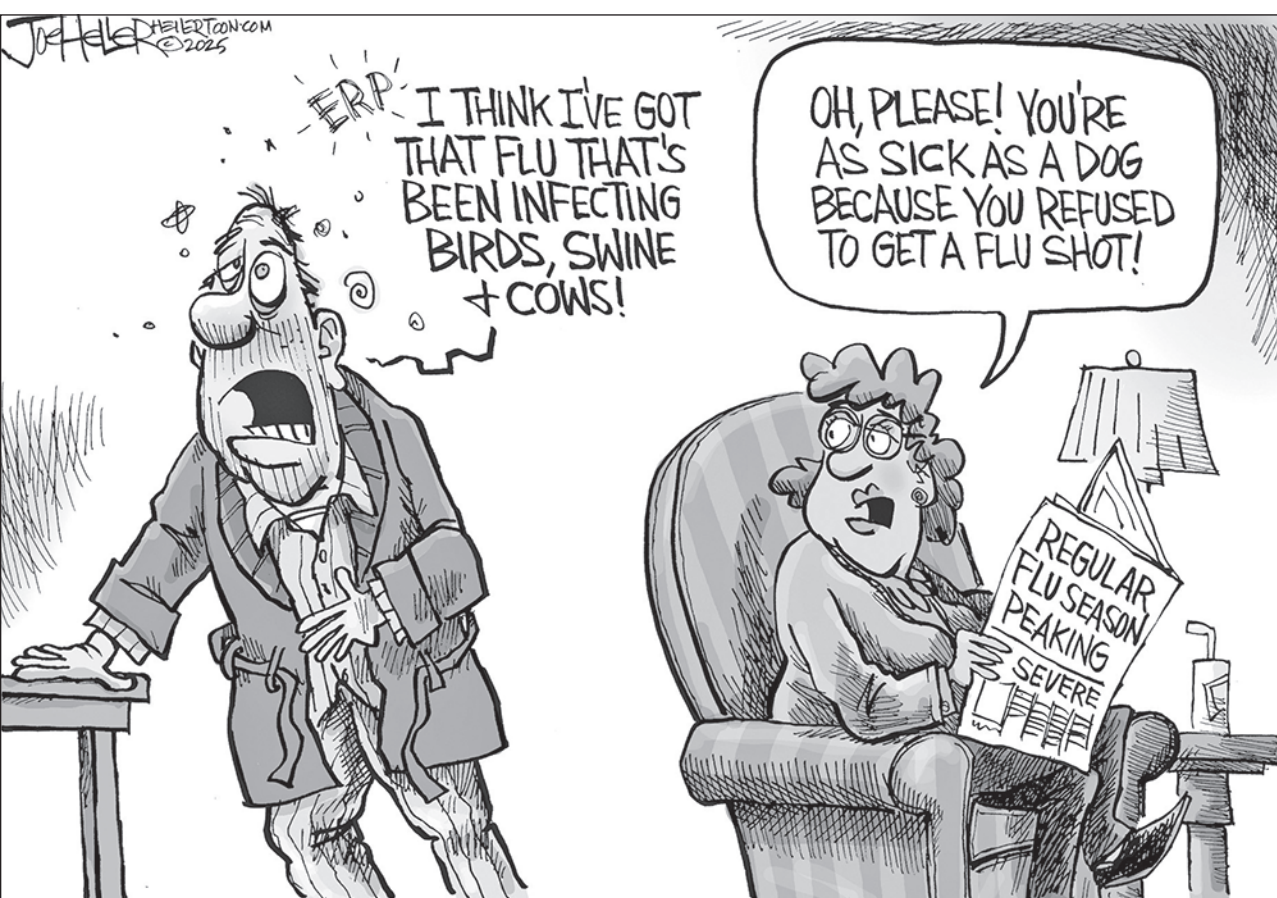
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OPINION



Weekly connection

Calves and the open gate

We finally got some snow last week. Winter decided to make an appearance before we rolled right into spring, and I'm sure the snow mobile enthusiasts appreciated it. I think we got three snows in five days dropping about a foot of the white stuff here in these parts. One of those snowy mornings, I took my four-wheeler out to the back pasture to feed my feeder calves a couple buckets of grain like I do every day. The wind was



By
SCOTT CERNEK
Columnist

really blowing, and the snow was flying in my face and eyes. When I got to the pasture gate, I unchained it and drove right through. Now usually the calves all come running after me and my buckets of grain and

I just leave the gate open while I drive to the bunk to feed them. This time I drove right by the calves and they just kind of stood there not wanting to walk into the driving wind and snow in order to follow me to the bunk. I stopped and called them and then went a little farther waiting for them to start walking my way. Still, they just stood there and stared so I drove a little further and called them again. All of a sudden, a couple of the older leaders of the pack turned their back to the wind and started heading away from me right for the wide open gate. Now you have to understand that these calves had never shown me this behavior before and I was in an immediate panic. I knew if I turned around and tried to beat them to the gate it would cause them all to run right through and out into the open field. I quickly made my decision, and I gave the ATV full throttle straight ahead. My plan was to try and get to the fence downstream a little and quickly climb over the fence in order to cut off the leaders and stop them from walking out through the gate. I flew over the creek on a bridge and raced toward the fence. The drifts were so deep that I buried my machine deep in the snow, so I hopped off and

raced to the fence on foot. I quickly climbed over the fence and ran up into the field. By this time three or four of the bigger calves had walked through the gate and out into the field. I knew that I didn't have a moment to spare so I circled high up into the field on foot "no, no, no!!" I yelled as I ran hoping that they would just turn around and go back into the pasture. I did not have time to chase calves all morning and I prayed desperately, "Lord, please don't let them take off into the field". Well, all at once the younger ones in the back did not like all my yelling and they turned and ran back into the pasture and sure enough the older leaders who had already stepped through the gate turned and ran back into pasture following the younger ones. I ran to the gate with a shout of praise for the Lord who had helped me avert a huge headache. By the time I had dug my four-wheeler out of the drift all the calves were standing at the bunk eating their grain with a look of complete innocence on their faces.

Of course, a million sermon illustrations popped into my head immediately as I stood there I thought how the gate is the

See CERNEK, Page 5

Around the Northern Hills

Attention Illinois Registered Nurses! If you are enrolled in a University Nurse Practitioner Program, you could qualify for a \$4,000 scholarship to support your education. This opportunity requires a commitment to serve as a primary care nurse practitioner in an approved rural Illinois community for two years. For more details and to apply, visit RIMSAP.com.



By
ANNETTE EGGERS
Jo Daviess County Farm Bureau

Foundation's scholarship

Time is running out to apply for the Jo Daviess County Farm Bureau Foundation's scholarship program. The farm bureau awards scholarship(s) to students who are majoring in agriculture, agribusiness, vocational or an agriculture related course of study. The scholarship(s) are awarded on the basis of exceptional scholastic ability.

A copy of the application can be found at www.jodavinesscfb.com. Click on the foundation tab.

Farm Fun Fact

One-third of the U.S., or 750 million acres, is covered with trees.

Farm toys needed

We need to replenish our farm toys used at Farm Fun Days this summer and thought who better to ask than our members. If you have gently used farm toys that are no longer being used, we would love to put them to good use. We would rather bring new life to old toys than buy new. If you can help, please drop toys off at our office. Thank you in advance.

Farm Bureau

American Legion Auxiliary Girls State session

The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) in all 50 states proudly hosts an ALA Girls State session. This is a week of learning focused on responsible citizenship, leadership, and love for God and country. Female high school students who have completed their junior year are selected and sponsored by ALA units for this program, where they learn about the political process by electing officials for all levels of state government and actively running a mock government.

The delegates are assigned to mock cities and either the "Federalist Party" or the "Nationalist Party." Assistance from dedicated ALA volunteers ensures the program's nonpartisan governmental, patriotic, and civic objectives are carried out through interactive learning. Though the week is filled with many learning opportunities, there is always time for fun and the formation of long-term friendships.

Candidates should be interested in government and current events, have high moral character, and show strong leadership abilities. Because the structure of state and local government varies, ALA Girls State programs may vary in content and method of procedure, but each adheres to the same basic core values.

Two outstanding delegates are selected from each ALA Girls State session to attend ALA Girls Nation. These "senators" meet for a week in Washington, D.C., where they run for political office, campaign and debate for the passage of legislation, and meet with their real-life counterparts on Capitol Hill. Capping off the week of ALA Girls Nation is a possible meeting at the White House with the President of the United States.

Local businesses and community organizations ensure maximum participation by contributing to the ALA Girls State program, ultimately benefitting their communities and ensuring educated leaders for future generations. www.ALAforVeterans.org/ALA-Girls-State.

The dates for this year's session in Illinois are June 15 through June 22, 2025. If interested, contact a local American Legion Auxiliary unit or email: jamcps54@yahoo.com and put ALA IGS in the subject line.

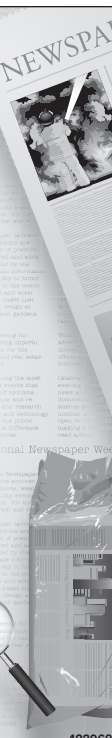
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The Scoop and Shopper's Guide





LENA ILLINOIS LIONS CLUB FACEBOOK PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Lena Lion of the Year

Dan Erner has been awarded Lion of the Year by the Lena Illinois Lion Club. Erner's work and dedication is much appreciated. He assists with the Fall Festival, making sure his team of electricians has everything set, and he keeps the lights on at the Lions Club. Thank you, Dan for all you do!

Illinois Student Assistance Commission congratulates Pearl City students for academic accomplishments

Pearl City Principal Mike Schiffman is pleased to announce that four students from the Pearl City graduating class of 2025 have been designated as Illinois State Scholars. The Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC), the state's college access and financial aid agency, confers this important recognition of academic achievement to exceptional Illinois high school students annually.

This year, more than 16,500 honorees join the other outstanding students who have been honored since the designation was first introduced in 1958. It is with great honor that Pearl City Schools recognizes our State Scholars. These students truly represent academic excellence as well as perseverance and dedication.

The following Pearl City students were named 2025-

26 Illinois State Scholars:
Natalie Greene- Freeport, IL

Jaxsyn Kempel, Pearl City, IL

Kendra Kuhlemeier, Pearl City, IL

Talia Stewart, Pearl City, IL

"On behalf of ISAC, congratulations to all our Illinois State Scholars for their hard work and persistence in achieving this academic honor," said ISAC Executive Director Eric Zarnikow. "The efforts and engagement of these students can pay off not only as they embark on their post-secondary journeys, but also later in their approach to a job and career. As we recognize our honorees, we also acknowledge the invaluable support of families, counselors, teachers, principals, and communities in helping our students succeed."



Talia Stewart



Jaxsyn Kempel



Kendra Kuhlemeier



Natalie Greene

Stephenson and Carroll County Farm Bureau news

By Victoria Hansen

An often-asked question this week is, "What are you doing for Valentine's Day?" Since college my husband and I have celebrated the holiday by making dinner at home and testing our limited culinary skills with an elaborate dessert. This year we will be traveling, so we are going to let the culinary experts do what they do best.

Everyone celebrates this day differently, but most means of celebration have a relation to agriculture. Maybe you plan to treat yourself with a themed specialty coffee at the local shop on your way to work. The milk used to prepare that beverage comes from our dairy farmers. The beans for that morning pick me up came from coffee farmers. Does your significant other send a dozen roses to your office? Those roses come from rose gardens and farmers who raise flowers. It is estimated that this year over 100 million roses valued at over 18 million dollars will be sold for Valentine's Day. Imagine that number if it included all the other flowers that will also be given on that day! Will you join the 92% of Americans that plan to celebrate with chocolate and candy? That is a lot of cocoa. I hope you will remember a farmer in your Valentines Day wishes.

•CerneK (Continued from page 4)

temptation we face to leave God's pasture and enter into a life of our own pleasure and sin. The farmer with the grain is God bringing us the promises of blessings if we follow Him. The snow and wind in the face is the resistance a Christian feels from the world around him or her when we choose to live for Christ. The calves turning and walking toward the gate was easier than walking into the snow and wind. God tells us to resist temptation and follow His plan for our lives and we will be blessed. He doesn't force us to follow Him. In

fact, He leaves the gate open for us to choose. Sometimes we get tired of the wind and snow in our face, and we think there's an easier way. God warns us when we are going the wrong way and He calls out for us to change our course. His Word lets us know not to leave the pasture, but He gives us the free will to turn back to Him. All I know is that I was sure glad those calves turned around at the last second and went back into the pasture. It saved me a ton of time and struggle. I think the next time I will close the gate. Until next week, God bless.

Rules for the Road meeting

Save the for a March 11 Rules for the Road meeting hosted by Whiteside County Farm Bureau. This meeting will begin at 8 a.m. at the Sauk Valley Community College Riverview Conference Center, Dixon IL. Learn more about CDL and Trucking Regulations to help you stay legal and safe when you hit the road. Registration opens on Feb. 1 and can be completed by reaching out to your county Farm Bureau Carroll, 815-244-3001 and Stephenson 815-232-3186.

Freeze Meal Fundraiser

Orders are now being accepted for Spring Freezer meals. Those who order will get 10 meals each serving four people. The menu includes Hickory Smoked Pulled Pork, Hickory Smoked Pulled Chicken, Pulled Pork, Mac N Cheese, Chicken and Biscuits, Smoked Meatloaf, Chicken Fajitas w/ Peppers and Onions, Cheesy Ham and Potatoes, Cowboy Baked Beans, Beef Mostaccioli, and Soup (flavor to be determined).

Each set costs \$190 if paying with cash or check and \$195

if paying with credit card. Orders are due before Feb. 26 at 12 p.m. with pickups taking place Monday, April 7 in Carroll County from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and in Ogle County from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. To place an order online visit www.carrollcfb.org/events/

Carroll County Scholarship applications due soon

Scholarships for Carroll County Farm Bureau members and their dependents are due on or before Monday, March 3 at 1 p.m. Scholarship applications can be found at <https://form.jot-form.com/243473949501159> or at www.carrollcfb.org/events/



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McCombie introduces legislation to support young women in STEM education

Illinois House Minority Leader Tony McCombie has filed a package of new legislation to fund initiatives encouraging young women to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and math through mentorships and scholarships. STEM is the acronym used to refer to the four distinct but related technical disciplines in education.

Leader McCombie's legislation includes:

HB 2801 - Directs the Illinois State Board of Education to create a resource for K-12 STEM teachers to inform young women pursuing STEM careers about externship/volunteer opportunities with Illinois organizations in STEM.

HB 2802 - Allows girls in STEM classes to have one school day long

absence per school year to pursue STEM externships if approved by school administration.

HB 2806 - Adds women to the list of demographics eligible for the STEM higher education scholarship program (currently only racial minorities are eligible).

"Opportunities for girls and young women in science, technology, engineering and math fields in Illinois are boundless, but we can do a much better job of connecting these students with every available resource they need to succeed," said McCombie.

According to data from the National Science Foundation, 39% of STEM graduates in 2021 from Illinois universities were women. While that percentage represented the highest composition of female

STEM graduates in state history, there remains significant room for improvement statewide. Leader McCombie's legislation aims to accelerate the number of young women graduating with a degree in a STEM field by increasing opportunities for them both inside and outside the classroom.

"My legislation will help keep Illinois at the forefront of STEM education and give young women from every part of our state the opportunities they need to earn their degree and embark on a fulfilling career in fields critical to Illinois' economy," continued McCombie.

For questions or more information, contact Leader McCombie's district office at 815-291-8989 or email McCombie@ilhousegop.org.

Church news

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

All are invited to worship at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 118 E. Mason St. Lena, IL. Join on Sunday, March 2, 2025, for Worship Service at 9:30 a.m. This week will be the Last Sunday after Epiphany. This week's gospel reading is from the Gospel Luke 9:28-36 [37-43a].

On Wednesday, March 5 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.

On Wednesday, March 5 Good Shepherd will offer Ash Wednesday Services at 7 p.m. Service will include prayer, scripture reading, and imposition of ashes.

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 eight Sunday after Epiphany at worship on Sunday, March 2 at 9 a.m. There will be a Children's Message during the service and the Chancel Choir will be singing.

Everyone is welcome to come play cards and dominoes on Thursday, Feb. 27 at 1 p.m. and to play dominoes on Tuesday, March 4 at 9 a.m.

All kids in grades K-5 are welcome to come to St. John's in Pearl City on Wednesday, March 19 from 3:15 p.m. to 5 p.m. and be a part of the Kids Klub. Kids Klub is a monthly adventure supported by the Pearl City area churches and offers a safe and supportive environment where children can hear bible stories, do crafts, play games, and enjoy delicious snacks. 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 next Men's Breakfast will be on Wednesday, March 5 at 7:30 a.m. at the Beltline Restaurant in Freeport.

The Healthy Wolves group will be packing backpacks on Thursday, Feb. 27 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.

Stockton Community Christmas Committee

The Stockton Community Christmas Dinner Committee would like to thank all those who helped prepare food for the dinner at Wesley UMC last year on Dec. 25, 2024. The committee would like to extend a big thank you to all those who prepared pies and raspberry salads ahead of time, and to all the workers on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day who set up the tables and decorations, worked hours in the kitchen Christmas Day morning, helped pack up the carryouts, made deliveries, served, and were still available for the cleanup.

Over 160 people were served, with approximately 82 eating in. The many donations included table centerpieces and two cooked turkeys given by the Hermann Funeral Home, carryout containers and plates by Elaine Schlichting's daughter Jerilyn, and carryout bags by Sullivan Foods. In addition, Sullivans provided turkeys at cost to the Committee.

With the donations given, the Committee was able to put aside for the 2025 Community Dinner which will be a Christ Lutheran this year, and was still able to give back to the community with \$300 given to the police department for aiding transients, \$300 to the Stockton Museum, and \$150 to the Karli Weltzin memorial.

Lastly, the committee would like to thank Elaine Schlichting for her many years of heading up the committee and keeping us all on track.



Local students earn Dean's List recognition

Augustana College

Kari Conklin

Jacob Zeal

Payton Meier

Georgia Shallenberger

Madysen Stephan

Kaylee Luke

Bailey Thede

Daisy Timp

Padric Timp

Madalyn Fitzanko

University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh

Nevaeh Peterson

Iowa State University

Madeline Harbach

Ashley Carroll

Owen Gilbertson

Andrew Kempel

Odin Stabenow

Ella Wolfrom

Marianna Brenner

Ripon College

Caleb Mammoser

Upper Iowa University

Gage Dunker

Benjamin Werner

University of Rhode Island

Hazel Moon

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse

Benjamin Vandigo

Hayley Johnson

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Lila Rudisill

Kirkwood Community College

Katherine Crome

Jack Curtiss

Loras College

Taylor Ditzler Amill

Two FHN nurses receive Ferguson ADN Scholarships

Kiley Weltzin and Paige Gallentine are the recipients of the 2024 Mildred F. Ferguson Nursing Scholarship. The scholarship was

endowed in 2003 by Ferguson's daughter, Nancy Ferguson Seeley, in honor of her mother's contributions during her decades of nursing.

service to the people of Freeport. Recipients receive full tuition as they pursue an associate's degree in nursing.

Including Weltzin and Gallentine, 53 FHN team members have received scholarships since 2003. One of the original scholarship recipients still serves as a nursing supervisor at FHN.

Applications from FHN team members interested in advancing their nursing career are accepted each spring. For more information on nursing careers at FHN, visit www.fhn.org/careersOp-Pride.



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NUIC-West girls basketball All-Conference team announced

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT

With the 2024-2025 Illinois High School girls basketball regular season coming to an end, the NUIC-West conference announced its All-Conference teams for this year. To no surprise, Galena's Gracie Furlong was named the NUIC-West Player of the Year for the 2024-2025 season. Furlong led Galena to a conference championship as they went 7-1 in conference play and 21-12 overall.

The River Ridge-Scales Mound Wildcats came in at second place in this year's NUIC-West standings. They finished the regular season with an overall record of 25-6, while being 6-2 in conference play. Both conference losses came against Galena.

RR-SM was led by a pair of first team all-conference players in Laiken

Haas and Sarah Winter. Haas, a senior, was a unanimous selection to the first team list. Winter, just a junior, was the second Wildcat named to the First Team. RR-SM had a strong junior class this year. They also had juniors Berkely Mensendike and Kaci Patterson earn Second Team All-Conference selections. The Wildcats had the most All-Conference players in the NUIC-West, with four on the first and second teams.

The Stockton Blackhawks finished their season with an overall record of 17-13. They finished third in the NUIC-West with a conference record of 3-4. All four conference losses came against Galena and RR-SM.

Stockton was led by their veteran leader, Madie Mammoser. The senior averaged almost 15 points-per-game this season, and she earned a

unanimous First Team All-Conference selection for her play. Fellow senior, Dylann Broshous, earned a Second Team All-Conference selection. Junior, Katelyn Winters, joined Broshous as a Second Team All-Conference selection.

Games played against the Warren Warriors did not count toward conference standings for the 2024-2025 season. The Warriors finished the season with an overall record of 8-18. For the second straight season, the Warriors have failed to finish above 500, but there is an exciting player who aims to change that next season. Freshman Lizzy Hartzell was a bright spot for this year's Warriors, and she earned a Second Team All-Conference selection for her play. Warren also earned this year's Sportsmanship Award.

Lena-Winslow boys basketball bounces back from loss to Pecatonica

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT

The Lena-Winslow boys basketball team had to play the top ranked Illinois 1A basketball team not once, but twice, this season. In both games, the Panthers put up a great fight, including taking the number one ranked team into overtime in their late-season matchup.

The Panthers held an overall record of 18-8 when they traveled to take on the Pecatonica Indians on Feb. 17. The Indians were 26-1, having just lost to an impressive Neuqua Valley school. Despite being on the road as underdogs, the Panthers went to Pecatonica looking for a win.

From the very start, Le-Win kept pace with the Indians. Jaylen Rakowska and Miles Mahon combined for nine

points in the opening quarter, which helped give the Panthers some early confidence. By the end of the first quarter, the Panthers were trailing by just two points.

Rakowska would hit his second three-point shot of the night early in the second quarter. By halftime, Rakowska had already put up 10 points. Aiden Wild put up five points of his own in the second quarter after going scoreless in the first. At halftime, Le-Win was trailing 32-28.

Coming out of the break, the Panthers knew they would have to slow down Pecatonica's top scorer, Cooper Hoffman. In the first half, Hoffman put up 19 points, including a couple of late three-pointers.

See BASKETBALL, Page 15

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•Win (Continued from front page)

The Wildcats stepped things up in the second quarter. Nate Haas, who went scoreless in the first quarter, exploded for eight points in the second. Buck added another three-pointer.

River Ridge really managed to separate themselves from Black Hawk on the defensive end. After allowing 37 points to Pafford just days

before, and then allowing a struggling Black Hawk squad to keep pace in the first quarter, the Wildcats were looking to lock in. They managed to hold Black Hawk to just five points in the second quarter, allowing them to expand their lead.

Coming out of the halftime break, River Ridge held a 24-15 advantage. In the second

half, it was another breakout performance that helped propel the Wildcats even more. Logan Keleher, who went scoreless in the first half, put up nine points in the third quarter alone. Joe Winter added four points as the Wildcats outscored Black Hawk 13-9 in the third.

The fourth quarter was much of the same. Four different Wildcats scored in the quarter as they went on to beat Black Hawk by a final score of 48-32. Winter led the team in scoring with 11 points. Haas was the only other Wildcat in double figures with 10 points. Keleher was next up with nine points, and Buck added eight in the victory.

River Ridge went on to fall to the Scales Mound Hornets 72-64 on Feb. 21. With that, the Wildcats finished the year with an overall record of 15-16 before beginning postseason play.

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What to know about avian flu in wild birds, poultry, and pets in Illinois

By Emily Steele
MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS
MANAGER, ILLINOIS EXTENSION

The nationwide spread of highly pathogenetic avian influenza, HPAI, also known as avian or bird flu has many in Illinois concerned about livestock, pets, wildlife food safety, and public health.

HPAI is an extremely contagious and frequently deadly respiratory disease for domestic birds; it can kill entire flocks in a matter of days. One strain, H5N1, has spread from wild birds to commercial and backyard poultry flocks as well as mammals, including dairy cattle and pets, raising concerns about how the virus might be mutating.

University of Illinois scientists, experts, and Extension specialists weigh in on avian flu's impact and provide safety recommendations to help prevent further spread.

Bird flu safety precautions

- When outdoors: Do not handle sick or dead wildlife. Report five or more sick or

dead wild birds in an area to an Illinois Department of Natural Resources District Wildlife Biologist or USDA Wildlife Services at 1-866-487-3297.

- Farm workers: Apply biosecurity measures to protect flocks and wear personal protective equipment. The Illinois Department of Public Health has specific guidelines for H5N1. Report suspected infections to the Illinois Department of Agriculture at 217-782-4944.

- Pet owners: Monitor pets and keep them on a leash when outside. Do not let them come into contact with dead wildlife. Avoid raw pet food products.

- Waterfowl hunters: Cook game meat to an internal temperature of 165 degrees. Find more information on hunters and bird flu.

- Questions? Connect with your local University of Illinois Extension office for more guidance.

Has avian flu been found in Illinois?

A northern Illinois farm lost 3,000 chickens to what is sus-

pected to be avian flu, according to a Jan. 22 news report. Commercial poultry in Indiana and Missouri have tested positive in the past 30 days, according to USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. No cases have been reported in dairy cattle.

Bird flu was detected in a wild goose in Tazewell County on Jan. 16, and in a captive hawk in DuPage County on Dec. 27, according to USDA APHIS. Chicago's Lincoln Park Zoo reported a flamingo and seal both died from HPAI in early January.

How does bird flu infect so many species?

Dr. James Lowe, professor of veterinary clinical medicine, studies viral transmission in farm animals. He said scientists theorize the virus has transferred from birds to mammals from exposure to bird feces. The impact of the virus also varies by species. "The virus interacts with specific sialic acid receptors on the surfaces of cells, and those receptors

may be more prevalent in different parts of the body in different groups of animals," said Dr. Lowe in an interview with

the U of I News Bureau. In some carnivorous mammals, the virus affects the brain and causes neurological problems.

In humans, the virus affects the lungs.

See AVIAN FLU, Page 12

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Level: Advanced

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						6		

Level: Intermediate

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DENTIST OFFICE WORD SEARCH

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

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

WORDS

- ALGINATE
- AMALGAM
- BRUSH
- CAVITY
- CHECKUP
- CLEANING
- CROWN
- CURING LIGHT
- DAM
- ELEVATOR
- EXPLORER
- EXTRACTION
- FILLINGS
- FLUORIDE
- GLOVES
- IMAGES
- MASK
- MIRROR
- PANORAMIC
- RESIN
- SEALANT
- SPRAY
- SUCTION
- XRAYS

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Greek mythological figure
- 5. Small amount
- 8. Play a role
- 11. River in Georgia and Alabama
- 13. Water in the solid state
- 14. Ancient Greek sophist
- 15. Having a strong sharp smell or taste
- 16. Fleece
- 17. Writer/actress Dunham
- 18. Behave in a way that belittles
- 20. Comedienne Gasteyer
- 21. Zoroastrian concept of holy fire
- 22. Conceits
- 25. Slowed down
- 30. Nourishment
- 31. Midway between east and southeast
- 32. Fights
- 33. Comedienne Tyler
- 38. Standing operating procedure
- 41. Locks
- 43. Old
- 45. Song sung to one's lover
- 47. Whale ship captain
- 49. Moved quickly on foot
- 50. Volcanic craters
- 55. Large musical instrument
- 56. Liquefied natural gas
- 57. Ethiopian town
- 59. Not closed
- 60. A team's best pitcher
- 61. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
- 62. Disfigure
- 63. Prefix denoting "in a"
- 64. Sleep

CLUES DOWN

- 1. S. American plant
- 2. Soul and calypso song
- 3. Fruit of the service tree
- 4. Continent

1	2	3	4				5	6	7			8	9	10	
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- 5. Albania's capital
- 6. Poisonous plant
- 7. Argues
- 8. Assists
- 9. Town in Galilee
- 10. Russian leader
- 12. Promotional materials
- 14. Wings
- 19. Not odd
- 23. Expression of creativity
- 24. Conceptualize
- 25. A digital tape recording of sound
- 26. Peyton's little brother
- 27. Cost, insurance and freight (abbr.)
- 28. Difference in potential
- 29. Owner
- 34. I (German)
- 35. Chinese conception of

- poetry
- 36. The world of the dead
- 37. Sign language
- 39. Coincide
- 40. Religious observance
- 41. Confined condition (abbr.)
- 42. Polite interruption sound
- 44. Texas ballplayer
- 45. Type of sword
- 46. Abba __, Israeli politician
- 47. Basic unit of a chemical element
- 48. Native American people in California
- 51. Swiss river
- 52. Hebrew calendar month
- 53. Easily swindled person
- 54. One point south of southwest
- 58. Small island (British)

Pritzker calls \$55.2 billion budget 'responsible and balanced'—but warns Trump policies could upend it

Proposal shaves \$1.2 billion from November spending estimate, doesn't include new income or sales tax

CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

An improved revenue forecast is helping ease pressure on state finances as Gov. JB Pritzker calls for tightened spending to balance the budget without tax increases on everyday Illinoisans.

During his annual state of the state and budget address last week, Pritzker called for a roughly 3 percent spending increase to \$55.2 billion in fiscal year 2026 that will be supported by a similar increase in state revenue to \$55.5 billion.

The plan factors in a better-than-expected economic outlook for the coming fiscal year after the governor's office originally projected a multi-billion-dollar shortfall in November. Pritzker also proposed a significant spending reduction compared to the November estimate while still increasing spending over current-year levels.

But administration officials also warned that the state is in large part at the whim of President Donald Trump's onslaught of federal policy changes.

The governor's plan assumes a \$173 million increase in federal funding, though Pritzker named several enacted or feared Trump policies that could alter estimates, including tariffs, food safety deregulation and potential health care cuts.

"Let me be clear, this is going to affect your daily lives," Pritzker said, citing the efforts of Trump advisor Elon Musk via the federal Department of Government Efficiency. "Our state budget can't make up for the damage that is done to people across our state."

The governor called his proposal "responsible and balanced," pointing out that it doesn't raise taxes on Illinoisans, though he did propose a tax hike on certain casino profits.

"If there's one thing I've learned as governor, there are no magic bean fixes," Pritzker said. "And each year there's some difficulty that requires us to work hard to overcome it."

Part of the spending plan includes significant changes to immigrant health care programs, including eliminating a program for low-income non-citizens living in the U.S. without legal permission between ages 42 and 64.

Ultimately, lawmakers and the governor will have to come to an agreement on a spending plan by the end of May. But the governor's opening salvo could meet opposition from Democratic lawmakers in the General Assembly—especially members of the Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus—due to what it

doesn't fund.

"All of us have been hearing that it was going to be a tough budget year. I think that we expected there to be some things in the budget that we weren't going to be happy with," Sen. Karina Villa, D-West Chicago, said. "But I think completely removing a program is not anything that we were expecting."

Tightened spending

Despite the roughly 3 percent spending increase, most areas of the state budget would see little growth under Pritzker's plan. About 75 percent of the spending increase comes from increased funding for education, pensions and growing health care costs.

Outside those areas, spending is up just 1 percent across the board.

The most notable spending change is the elimination of the Health Benefits for Immigrant Adults program that provides Medicaid-style benefits to certain low-income noncitizens ages 42 to 64. Pritzker proposed leaving the Health Benefits for Immigrant Seniors program intact to serve certain low-income noncitizens age 65 and older, which will cost the state \$132 million.

The programs unexpectedly stretched the state budget in spring 2023 when costs were projected to potentially reach \$1 billion. Lawmakers gave the governor authority to control costs by pausing enrollment and enacting copays, and projected program costs are now at \$558 million in the current fiscal year. Enrollment in the programs, meanwhile, has remained paused.

Eliminating the program for middle-aged adults is projected to save the general revenue fund about \$330 million, according to the governor's office. Pritzker told reporters he expects the federal government will stop reimbursing states for costs associated with programs providing services to noncitizens.

While Pritzker signified he's open to working with lawmakers on what programs will ultimately be funded, he said his overarching goal is a balanced budget.

"If you come to the table looking to spend more—I'm going to ask you where you want to cut," Pritzker said. "I have made difficult decisions—including to programs I have championed, which is hard for me, just as I know some of the difficult decisions you will have to make will be hard for you."

One of the priorities Pritzker put on hold is an increase in

spending on the state's Early Childhood Block Grant program. In the past two years, the state has helped more than 11,000 children access child care as part of a multi-year plan. But the governor did not request another \$75 million increase this year that would have helped add more.

Pritzker also proposed redirecting funds previously appropriated for asylum seekers to other services. That includes reducing funding to \$40 million from \$139 million for "welcoming centers" that helped the state handle migrants bused here from Texas and other states.

Pritzker proposed allocating \$282.7 million for Home Illinois, a program that provides services for the homeless and also provided assistance to new arrivals, keeping the program relatively flat from

a year ago despite advocates' calls for \$100 million in new funding. The governor's office said funds that were previously directed toward asylum seekers in Home Illinois would be redirected to homeless shelters and other services for Illinois' homeless populations.

Pritzker's proposal calls for allocating \$2 million toward maintenance in the Department of Corrections, the minimum amount recommended. The move comes a year after the state allocated \$900 million to rebuild the Stateville and Logan prisons after years of deterioration and behind-schedule repairs.

Pritzker also proposed increasing the "rainy day" fund by \$154 million, bringing its balance to \$2.5 billion at the end of FY26.

Notably absent from the proposal, however, was any

new funding for public transportation. Chicago-area transit agencies face a more than \$700 million shortfall in the coming year. Pritzker told reporters there still needs to be negotiations with the agencies about reforms before the state commits to new funding.

Education and human services

One of the few areas of the budget targeted for a substantial increase is PreK-12 education.

Pritzker's plan includes the statutory minimum increase of \$350 million for the Evidence-Based Funding formula, a plan lawmakers enacted in 2017 to focus new education spending on the neediest districts.

That would bring the total funding under the EBF formula to \$8.9 billion, a \$2.1 billion cumulative increase since the

program began. Pritzker credited that funding for helping raise student test scores and improving graduation rates.

"I believe in building on what works," he said. "So, despite the challenge we are facing this year, my budget proposal increases our commitment to Evidence-Based Funding for public education so that we put new resources in underfunded schools first."

His plan also calls for adding \$1.3 million for career and technical education and maintaining spending of \$3 million next year to implement the state literacy plan.

But it also calls for flat funding of \$748 million for Early Childhood Block Grants, which help subsidize the cost of preschool for at-risk and low-income children.

See BUDGET, Page 15



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IN*CI*DENTAL*LY

Changes in American diet linked to rise in scurvy

Most people are aware that eating fruits and vegetables as a regular part of our daily diet is important for both oral and overall health.

However, as consumption of ultra-processed foods, fast foods, and carbonated beverages continues to increase, consumption of fruits and vegetables continue to plummet. The CDC reports that almost 90% of Americans do not eat enough vegetables and 80% do not eat enough fruit. Since 90% of vitamin C in the diet is from fruits and vegetables, a lack of these foods commonly leads to a deficiency.

The medical definition of scurvy is severe, prolonged vitamin C deficiency.

We have known since the eighteenth century that soldiers and sailors developed scurvy because of



By
DR. STEPHEN PETRAS
Illinois Licensed
General Dentist

their lack of access to fresh fruits and vegetables, and that providing them with foods containing vitamin C could prevent scurvy. While the disease has never been fully eradicated, the incidence of Scurvy in the U.S. has previously been so low that it was generally considered a third world issue. Our vitamin C deficiency rates were low and very rarely progressed to scurvy. But scurvy is now being considered as a re-emerging diagnosis. In the span of just five years (2016-2020), the incidence of Scurvy in U.

S. children has more than tripled from 8.2 to 26.7 cases per 100,000. Scurvy takes its toll both on oral health (loose teeth, bleeding gums) and systemic health (easy bruising, fatigue, anemia, loss of appetite, weak brittle bones, limping or refusing to walk due to pain, swelling in the limbs).

Lack of vitamin C from fresh fruits and vegetables is serious because of the many roles that Vitamin C plays in maintaining our overall health. Vitamin C is needed by our body to absorb iron. It enhances the function of our immune system, is essential for the synthesis of collagen (a protein that helps maintain the integrity of connective tissues like skin, blood vessels, bones, teeth, and oral tissues), and promotes wound healing. As an antioxidant, Vitamin C protects cells

against factors that contribute to disease and aging.

Since our bodies do not produce vitamin C, we have to get it from our diet. If your diet does not contain enough fruits and vegetables or you have a medical condition that inhibits the absorption of vitamin C, you are at risk for vitamin C deficiency. Since our bodies do not have the ability to store vitamins, a lack of vitamin C can progress from a moderate deficiency to scurvy in as little as 1 to 3 months.

In the U.S., scurvy most commonly affects babies, children, and older adults. Risk factors include but are not limited to: people who have limited access to or the inability to afford fresh fruits and vegetables, Individuals with gastrointestinal disorders such as inflammatory bowel disease,

diabetes, obesity, eating disorders, psychiatric illness, autism spectrum disorder, cancer, or alcoholism, individuals with poor dietary habits who consume food of poor nutritional value, and people who use tobacco in any form.

Certain conditions increase your body's vitamin C requirement. These include pregnancy. Breastfeeding, hyperthyroidism, fever, and recent surgery. You can prevent scurvy by getting the recommended daily allowance of vitamin C in your diet. Good sources of vitamin C include cruciferous vegetables (brussels sprouts, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, arugula, mustard greens, spinach, kale), citrus fruits, tomatoes, potatoes, sweet peppers, strawberries, blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, and kiwi. Breast

milk is an adequate source of vitamin C for infants (provided that mom does not have a vitamin C deficiency/malnourished)

Talk to your doctor before taking vitamin C supplements. When you consume the fresh vegetable and fruits listed above as a regular part of your diet, almost all of the vitamin C is absorbed. However, high supplement doses may result in an absorption rate of less than 50%. Your doctor will take into account your unique health needs and risk factors for malabsorption of vitamin C and prescribe the amount of vitamin C supplementation necessary to meet your individual needs. He/she will also monitor your blood levels to determine when/if supplementation is no longer needed.

•Avian flu (Continued from page 9)

Joy O'Keefe, associate professor and Extension wildlife specialist in the department of natural resources and environmental sciences, said stressors such as habitat loss create more of a risk of disease spillover and could place humans in closer contact with wild animals. "Healthy wildlife populations are less likely to succumb to pathogens and become sick, so they are less likely to transmit those pathogens to humans," O'Keefe said.

What is the risk for people? Should I change what I eat?

The CDC is currently advising that HPAI is a low risk for public health. The spread

of avian flu from animals to humans is rare but not impossible. Since 2024, 67 cases of HPAI and one fatality have been reported in humans in the U.S. Many are farm workers who contracted it from infected dairy cattle or poultry. Infections have not spread from human to human. The H5N1 virus can present as mild respiratory problems, pink eye, gastrointestinal problems, or no symptoms at all in healthy people, according to Dr. Lowe. Those who are more vulnerable can have severe respiratory distress.

Cooking meat and pasteurizing milk kills viruses, but the risk remains for raw products. "I would say the risk to humans is incredibly small,

at this time, from the dairy products that we've consumed from stores," said Professor of Animal Sciences Jim Drackley in an interview. "I would always recommend that people don't consume raw milk, in which case the virus could still be there."

How could this impact the poultry and dairy industry in Illinois?

About 4,500 commercial farms in Illinois raise 9 million poultry annually, according to 2022 USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service data. Most of these, about 7.2 million, are egg-laying hens, while another 290,000 chickens and 986,000 turkeys are for meat production. Any

flocks that become infected with HPAI would likely need to be culled to prevent further spread. Bird flu is potentially a large economic risk for farmers.

Illinois has more than 600 dairy farms with 73,000 cows or calves, according to USDA NASS estimates. Since the outbreak began, 943 dairy herds across 16 states have been affected, according to the CDC. Dr. Lowe said the virus appears to be self-limiting in cows; they may be infected, but the virus is undetectable or causes only mild disease.

Are there concerns about pets getting bird flu?

Cats, dogs, and other pets can contract HPAI from eating infected wild birds or eating raw meat or unpasteurized milk products from infected poultry or cows, according to Stephany Lewis, a professor of zoological medicine. Some raw pet food products have been linked to fatal HPAI infections in cats.

Do not feed pets raw meat or poultry and unpasteurized milk. When outdoors, leash and monitor pets to keep them away from wildlife and poultry. There is an extremely low risk of infected cats and dogs transmitting bird flu to humans, according to the American Veterinary Medical Association.

How can those with domestic poultry protect birds?

There is no treatment for HPAI in poultry and those with chickens, ducks, and other domestic poultry should

take steps to protect their flocks. The virus is transmitted when one bird ingests fecal matter from an infected bird. It can also be transmitted through contaminated equipment and clothing. Follow biosecurity measures such as keeping birds in a covered enclosure to prevent contact with wild birds. Store food and water away from wildlife and rodents. Change clothing, wash hands before and after working with poultry, and limit visitors. More information about biosecurity measures is available from APHIS at www.aphis.usda.gov/live-stock-poultry-disease/avian/defend-the-flock.

What are the symptoms of bird flu in poultry? What if I suspect an infection?

Infected birds may have low energy or appetite, reduced or altered egg production, nasal discharge, coughing, sneezing, diarrhea, or sudden death with no prior signs. Report suspected HPAI infections to your veterinarian and the IDOA at 217-782-4944 or USDA APHIS Veterinary Services at 1-866-536-7593.

How does bird flu affect wildlife?

Bird flu is not common in wild birds, but it is more likely to be found where there are large concentrations of birds, said O'Keefe. It mostly affects wild aquatic birds such as ducks and geese, but also gulls, crows, and raptors. Songbirds are not as likely to be affected. There are also cases of foxes, bobcats,

skunks, and other carnivores contracting bird flu.

"While avian influenza is unlikely to appear in wild bird populations in backyards, it is always a good idea to regularly clean feeders to prevent the spread of other pathogens, like salmonella," O'Keefe said. As a precaution, anyone with free-roaming poultry should keep flocks separated from areas with wild bird feeders.

What if I find dead or dying birds?

Avoid handling dead or dying wild or domestic birds, and do not send birds to veterinarians or wildlife rehabilitators. Report five or more sick or dead wild birds to a local IDNR District Wildlife Biologist or USDA Wildlife Services at 1-866-487-3297.

Need to remove a dead bird? It is unlikely handling dead birds would lead to an infection, but it is best to follow these guidelines from the Illinois Department of Public Health. Wear gloves, safety goggles, and a mask. Avoid touching the face and wash your hands thoroughly afterward.

Find more information

- Illinois Department of Public Health, H5N1 Avian Influenza: dph.illinois.gov
- Illinois Department of Agriculture, HPAI: agr.illinois.gov
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, H5 Bird Flu: Current Situation: www.cdc.gov
- University of Illinois Extension, local Extension offices: extension.illinois.edu

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Economy

(Continued from page 7)

likely result in a world-record soy harvest this year, Gackle noted in his testimony. At the same time, the world's largest buyer of soybeans—China—continues to face economic woes and increasingly is shifting purchases toward Brazil amid tariff uncertainty.

"This economic downturn results in a diminished demand for U.S. soy at a time of excess supplies," he said.

Both committee leaders appeared in tune with the witnesses' concerns.

"My highest priority for the next farm bill is to improve the farm safety net, whereby every farmer in every region will have access to modernized risk management tools, regardless of the commodity that they grow," Committee Chairman John Boozman, R-Arkansas, said. "If we fail to modernize the safety net, agriculture will see further consolidation as farm families leave the business and the ripple effects to our country will be truly profound."

Ranking member Amy Klobuchar, D-Minnesota, recognized bipartisan agreements on many farm bill priorities, but said there's still work to do.

"There's changes we need to make from the last farm bill to make it even better, and our committee has an opportunity at a time when we've got high input costs, where we've got avian flu, we have an opportunity to pass a bipartisan farm bill and deliver that certainty," she said.

Both the Senate and House ag committees are gearing up for renewed farm bill talks by holding hearings on the farm economy to gauge current conditions as well as educate new committee members. The House Ag Committee held its first hearing on Feb. 11.

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



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Public Notice is hereby given that on Friday, February 7, 2025, a certificate was filed in the Office of the County Clerk of Jo Daviess County, Illinois, setting forth the names and post-office addresses of all the persons, owning, conducting and transacting the business known as: **Country Roots Salon and Spa, 1927 South Simmons Rd., Stockton, IL 61085.**

Dated this 7 day
of February, 2025
DANA TIMMERMAN
County Clerk
by **LISA PRINDLE**
Deputy Clerk
(Published in
The Scoop Today
Feb. 19, 26, Feb. 5, 2025)
467965

**IN THE CIRCUIT
COURT OF THE 15TH
JUDICIAL DISTRICT
JO DAVIESS COUNTY -
GALENA, ILLINOIS
U.S. BANK TRUST
NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION, NOT
IN ITS INDIVIDUAL
CAPACITY, BUT
SOLELY IN ITS
CAPACITY AS
TRUSTEE OF
CITIGROUP
MORTGAGE LOAN
TRUST 2024-RP1**

Plaintiff,
-v.-
**DENNIS C. HAYES,
APPLE CANYON LAKE
PROPERTY OWNERS'
ASSOCIATION**
Defendant

2024 FC 66
**NOTICE OF SALE
PUBLIC NOTICE IS
HEREBY GIVEN** that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on February 13, 2025, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 1:30 PM on April 3, 2025, at the office of Vincent Roth Toepfer & Leinen PC, 11406 U.S. Route 20 W, Galena, IL, 61036, sell at a public in-person sale

to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate:

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Property Index No. 18-006-105-00

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The judgment amount was \$105,617.34.

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Case # 2024 FC 66 I3261317

(Published in
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Feb. 26, March 5, 12, 2025)
468339

**IN THE CIRCUIT
COURT OF THE 15TH
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
JO DAVIESS COUNTY
330 NORTH BENCH
STREET, GALENA,
ILLINOIS
ESTATE OF
Howard Albert Fiedler,
DECEASED.**

25 PR 12

Notice is given to creditors of the death of the above named decedent. Letters of office were issued to Hollie Fiedler Free, 7524 Centenary Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75225, as Independent Executor, whose attorney of record is Theodore Netzký, Netzký Olswang & Hanlon Law Group, LLC, 8605 West Bryn Mawr, Suite 309, Chicago, Illinois 60631.

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

Claims against the estate may be filed with the clerk or with the representative, or both, on or before August 26, 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

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Theodore Netzký
Netzký Olswang &
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454287

Budget

(Continued from page 11)

All told, Pritzker's plan would bring total general revenue fund spending on PreK-12 education to just under \$11.2 billion, or about \$200 million less than the Illinois State Board of Education had requested.

State Rep. Will Davis, D-Homewood, who chairs the House appropriations committee that deals with public schools, said after the speech that he thought Pritzker's plan was insufficient, "for the simple fact that I think we can be better at EBF."

"Last year, I wanted to argue for \$450 million," he said in an interview of the standard yearly increase in EBF funding. "I think that's doable. I mean, if we're ever going to have a real conversation about getting to full funding in K-12, we're going to have to increase the EBF allocation more than what it is right now."

The governor is also continuing his effort to increase the number of employees at the Department of Children and Family Services. Pritzker proposed adding 100 new employees to increase staffing to 4,100 at the department, the most since 2002. Under

his proposal, overall funding for DCFS will have increased by 100 percent since Pritzker took office.

The Department of Human Services would receive \$7.9 billion, including \$20 million to fund 50-cent-per-hour wage increases for direct service providers.

With most of the state's federal pandemic relief funds now spent, Pritzker proposed allocating some state funding to keep up affected programs. That includes appropriating \$40 million from the state's general fund to implement the Reimagine Public Safety Act, a program designed to reduce gun violence.

Revenue changes

The governor's budget office typically makes conservative estimates about revenue. The November forecast from the Governor's Office of Management and Budget had projected revenues to remain flat, driving a deficit of \$3.2 billion.

But it relied on a September economic forecast from the financial services company S&P Global. The governor's office

says S&P has since revised its forecasts, leading the GOMB to increase its estimate by \$1.6 billion. Pritzker's office also now expects strong personal and corporate income tax growth next year in addition to limited sales tax growth.

The revenue outlook for the current FY25 budget was also revised upwards by \$421 million thanks to personal income growth, consumer spending and a stable job market. The governor's office plans to use the extra revenue to introduce \$550 million in additional spending for the current fiscal year.

But Pritzker also proposed spending about \$1.2 billion less than what the GOMB projected in its November estimate.

Another \$469 million in revenue would be raised through other changes to law, including adjusting tax rates on electronic gambling and table games at casinos to generate \$100 million in revenue. The plan also calls for pausing the transfer of \$171 million in sales tax collected on motor fuel to the road fund and raising \$198 million by provid-

ing temporary amnesty for individuals making delinquent tax payments.

But much uncertainty still surrounds how much federal funding Illinois will receive going forward as the Trump administration pledges to cut federal spending. "Only an idiot" would think cutting off critical federal funding is a good idea, Pritzker said.

His proposal still anticipates roughly the same level of federal support in FY26 as the state currently receives. Pritzker's office stressed it's impossible to predict what Trump's administration will do, but they believe the federal government must honor longstanding agreements.

State government efficiencies

Pritzker also emphasized making state government more efficient to save costs during his speech.

The governor announced new site readiness and surplus property programs that are designed to spark economic development, which ultimately could also amount to savings for the

state. Pritzker proposed allocating \$300 million to the Illinois Department of Central Management to repurpose five shuttered state prisons and developmental centers to ultimately attract new private economic development at the sites.

"This proposed budget enacts cost-saving operational efficiencies, improves productivity, curtails new hiring at agencies, consolidates unnecessary segregated funds, eliminates dormant boards

and commissions, and overhauls state purchasing to save taxpayers money," Pritzker said.

This includes studies of CMS and the Department of Transportation to identify better hiring and contracting practices, merging the mental health and substance abuse divisions at the Department of Public Health and reviewing potentially overlapping responsibilities between townships and other units of government.

REAL ESTATE NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 15TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
JO DAVIESS COUNTY -
GALENA, ILLINOIS
U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, NOT IN ITS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY, BUT SOLELY IN ITS CAPACITY AS TRUSTEE OF CITIGROUP MORTGAGE LOAN TRUST 2024-RP1
Plaintiff,
-v.-
DENNIS C. HAYES, APPLE CANYON LAKE PROPERTY OWNERS' ASSOCIATION
Defendant

2024 FC 66

NOTICE OF SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on February 13, 2025, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 1:30 PM on April 3, 2025, at the office of Vincent Roth Toeffer & Leinen PC, 11406 U.S. Route 20 W, Galena, IL, 61036, sell at a public in-person sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate:
Commonly known as 6A105 APPOMATTOX DRIVE, APPLE RIVER, IL 61001
Property Index No. 18-006-105-00

The real estate is improved with a single family residence.

The judgment amount was \$105,617.34.

Sale terms: 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, in certified funds/or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.

Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale.

The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information.

If this property is a condominium

unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1).

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You will need a photo identification issued by a government agency (driver's license, passport, etc.) in order to gain entry into our building and the foreclosure sale room in Cook County and the same identification for sales held at other county venues where The Judicial Sales Corporation conducts foreclosure sales.

For information, contact JOHNSON, BLUMBERG & ASSOCIATES, LLC Plaintiff's Attorneys, 30 N. LASALLE STREET, SUITE 3650, Chicago, IL, 60602 (312) 541-9710. Please refer to file number IL 24 1094.

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Attorney File No. IL 24 1094
Case Number: 2024 FC 66

TJSC#: 45-502

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Case # 2024 FC 66

13261317

(Published in The Scoop Today

Feb. 26, March 5, 12, 2025)

468340

Basketball

In hindsight, Le-Win did just that. They held Hoffman to just 10 points in the third and fourth quarters combined, allowing their offense to erase the deficit. Michael Mowery came out strong with six points in the third quarter, which sparked the comeback. Kobay Kearns hit a three-pointer of his own as the Panthers went into the fourth trailing 42-39.

The game came down to the wire, and it was Rakowska who kept the Panthers' hopes alive. A couple of clutch free throws sent the game into an overtime period, tied 55-55. Le-Win had given it all they had, as Pecatonica dominated the extra period. In the end, Le-Win fell by a score of 64-57.

First-year head coach, Mark Blakely, was incredibly proud of his squad for putting up that fight against the top ranked Indians. Following the loss, Blakely spoke about what the team took from the game, and how it could help them with the postseason quickly approaching. "Even though we fell to [Pecatonica], we thought we had a great team effort. We didn't shoot the ball particularly well, so for us to still be in that game shows the caliber of team we can be," Blakely explained. "Pecatonica is an outstanding team. I think, outside of their Neuqua Valley game, we gave them their closest game of the year, so obviously that gives us some confidence in knowing that we can play with the best teams in the state."

Not only can the Panthers compete with those top teams, but they have the playmakers to come through in the clutch. Rakowska finished the game with 20 points, including eight in the

(Continued from page 8)

fourth quarter. Wild was next up with a hard-fought 11-point performance. Mowery and Mahon each finished the game with 10 points.

Despite that loss, the Panthers have plenty of reason to feel confident as the 2025 postseason begins. Blakely spoke about playing better basketball at the right

time, saying, "We are playing our best basketball as of lately. We've had to overcome some adversity this year and I'm proud that our team is coming together at the right time. I don't think we've played our best basketball yet, so I'm hoping we get there as the postseason starts up. We've shown glimpses of good shoot-

ing and good defense, but it's not at the consistency we need it to be at. If we can figure out a way to do that and keep playing as a team, I think we're going to be a tough team to beat."

Le-Win opened this year's postseason play with a regional matchup against the Orangeville Broncos on Feb. 24.

Answers

PUZZLE 1

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

PUZZLE 2

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

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O	S	S	A		T	A	D		A	C	T
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