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VOL. 91 • NO. 17

YOUR FREE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 2025



Illinois Farm Bureau invests \$7,500 in Jo Daviess

Jo Daviess County has a recipient of an Illinois Farm Bureau (IFB) Rural Development Grant aimed at elevating rural communities. Jo Daviess Local Foods was awarded \$7500 for the Local Food Hub project, which will enable them to cover the costs of cold storage, including a display cooler.

Eight of the projects are for emergency services and 15 are for rural development. Projects include grocery access, training for current and potential small business owners, a rural health clinic,

year in 2026. The program provides resources, tools and support to help local communities and counties overcome challenges inherent in rural development projects, such as lack of funding and volunteers, complicated grant applications and others.

Jo Daviess Local Foods Grocery Store is one of 23 projects from across the state that was awarded a rural development grant. IFB awarded \$105,000 in its second year of the grant program, which is anticipated to return for a third

See BUREAU, Page 20

Rural Development Grant

Annette Eggers (right), Manager of the Jo Daviess County Farm Bureau presents Erin Horn a check for the Rural Development Grant. Regarding the grant program, Ryan Tate, IFB Associate Director of Local Government states, "We had an amazing response in the second year of this program. Illinois Farm Bureau is honored to provide funding to move these projects forward in rural communities and excited to see the positive impact these applicants are making in the areas of emergency services, economic and community development and quality of life. We are proud to make this investment, and we are thrilled to see county Farm Bureaus engaged in the program and working to build these local relationships."

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Obituaries

BRETT MUSSER

Brett Raymond "Lumpy" Musser, 42, of Lena, Illinois, passed away on April 5, 2025, in Lena. Born on Sept. 17, 1982, in Freeport, Illinois, Brett lived a life rooted in family, friendship, and a deep appreciation for the simple joys that brought people together.

Brett worked as a heavy equipment operator, a profession that suited his strong work ethic and hands-on nature. He took pride in his work and was known for his reliability and dedication on the job.

Above all else, Brett cherished his role as a father. His children—Lily, Adalyn, and Lincoln Musser—were the center of his world. He found



joy in every moment spent with them and was deeply devoted to their happiness and well-being.

Family was a cornerstone of Brett's life. He is lovingly remembered by his mother Cathy Musser; father Brad (Kim Wild) Musser; brothers Eric Musser and his wife Ashlee, Logan Musser, and Tony Musser; nephew Camden Musser; niece Ava Musser; uncles Vern Broege, Jeff Dennis, Bruce Musser, Karl (Mike) Musser, Brent Musser and Jim Corp; Aunts; Kathy Musser,

Karen Schaible, Joan McKinstry, Brenda Dayton and several cousins who shared many memories with him over the years.

He was preceded in death by his beloved wife Taylor Musser; uncle Tim Broege; grandparents Raymond and Lavonne Broege; Grandparents; Ora and Ellinor Musser, cousin Matt Broege; and uncle Brian Musser; aunt; Janice Corp

Brett had a big heart—a quality that shone through in every aspect of his life. Whether he was cheering at lawnmower races or spending time at the track, he brought energy and warmth to those around him. He had a passion for antique tractors and enjoyed shar-

ing that interest with friends and family alike. His happiest moments were often spent surrounded by loved ones—laughing, reminiscing, or simply enjoying each other's company.

May Brett's memory bring comfort to those who knew him and continue to inspire love and connection among all whose lives he touched.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, April 19, 2025, at Hermann Funeral Home in Stockton at 3 p.m. with a visitation beginning at 1 p.m. A private burial will take place at a later date at Holly Grove Cemetery. A memorial fund has been established for his children at Citizens State Bank.

BETTY MACKEBEN

Betty Ann Mackeben, age 94, and life-long resident of Stockton, IL passed away with family by her side at Winn Prairie Assisted Living Facility, Freeport, IL, on Dec. 29, 2024. She was born in the family farmhouse just outside of Woodbine, IL on April 29, 1930. The daughter of the late John and Anna Jones, Betty learned strength, devotion and love from being raised on the farm with four older brothers. Betty married her high school love, Clifford Mackeben, on Feb. 10, 1952. They were graduates of the Stockton High School Class of 1948.

Betty's life was centered around love for family, and friendships. Her love for "Cliff" never wavered over 68 years of marriage. She missed him immensely after his passing in 2020. Together they raised four children, travelled the country visiting all fifty states, and built many friendships in Stockton. They established a second community of friends having spent winters in Myrtle Beach, SC for 25 years. For many years, she and Cliff were an active team in many euchre and bridge card clubs around town. It's safe to speculate they were considered champions of the once very active bridge club of Stockton.

Following high school grad-



uation Betty attended hair salon school in Rockford, IL earning her credentials in hair styling. From the 1950's until retiring in 1992 she maintained an in-home beauty salon, servicing many Stockton residents.

Betty is survived by her children, Joan Lee Mackeben of Franklin, TN, David Mackeben of Sycamore, IL, Dan (Karen) Mackeben of Lodi, CA, Cathy (Butch) Magee of Stockton. Grandchildren, Mark Mackeben, Melanie (Chris) Stearns, Ben (Cora) Magee, Anna (Alex) Goulart, Dylan Mackeben, and great-grandchildren Audrey and Anthony Goulart, Grant and Colin Stearns, and Owen Magee, whose sister will be born in April 2025. She was preceded in death by her husband, parents, and brothers, Lester, Kenneth, Gerald ("Bud"), and Delmar.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, April 26, 2025, at Hermann Funeral Home at 10:30 a.m. with a visitation beginning at 9:30 a.m. Condolences may be shared with her family at www.hermannfuneralhome.com.

RICHARD VERLAS WOKER

Richard Verlas Woker 84 of Stockton, IL passed away on Monday April 7, 2025, at Ascension Living St Joseph Village in Freeport. He was born February 9, 1941, in Freeport to Clara (Keister) and Verlas Woker.

He married Janice Mapes on Oct 20, 1972, in Stockton. He had attended Calvary Church of Stockton. He had worked at Atwood Manufacturing and Pearl Valley Egg Farm. Richard enjoyed fishing, Dallas Cowboys, Chicago Cubs, watching western movies, listening to Elvis and spending time with family. He was a friend to many always with a smile.

He is survived by his daughters Melisa (Ed) Armistead and Wendy (Chad) Reusch; 3 grandchildren Kelsey (Brian) McDivitt & Kaitlyn (Tyler



Verbeck) & Kyleigh; 3 Great Grandchildren, Abel, Amelia & Anakin; brother, Randy Woker; sister, Charlene (Albert)

Davis; sister-in-law, Carol Woker; and long time friend and mother of his children, Janice Kehl. He was preceded in death by his parents, brother Gene, sister Betty (Bob) Patterson and sister-in-law Harriet Woker.

Visitation was held on Sunday, April 13 and a Funeral service was held on Monday April 14, 2025, at the Hermann Funeral Home in Stockton, IL. A memorial fund has been established. Condolences can be sent to hermannfuneralhome.com.

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In Memory of Eli #love4melon

If we could sit in Heaven, even for a day, the pain in our heart would temporarily go away. We would put our arms around you and whisper words so true, that living life without you is the hardest thing to do. No matter how we spend our time, no matter what we do, there's no morning, noon or night that we don't think of you. We Love and Miss you Very Much.

Grandpa, Grandma, Mom, TK, Mason, Jaylen, Aaron, Tara, Hailee, Huntlee, Alex, Meghan, Lennon, Abby, Gannon and Taylynn

Around the Northern Hills

Tuesday, April 22 is National Earth Day. What is Earth Day anyway and why do farmers care? Farmers are the original environmentalists. Earth Day is very important to the agriculture community. Farmers, simply put, make their living off the land. The land is our most precious resource, and we take care of it. Today's forward-thinking farmers adopt modern technology in order to produce more with less all in an effort to take care of the dirt that takes care of them. Happy Earth Day!



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

Young Leaders Committee

Are you between the ages of 18 and 35 and have an interest in agriculture? Consider joining the Young Leaders Committee. We have a great group of individuals that enjoy promoting agriculture and I would love to see more people join in. The next meeting is Sunday, April 27 at 6 p.m. here at the farm bureau office in Elizabeth. If you have any questions, call our office at 815.858.2235 or email jdcfbmgr@gmail.com.

Farm Fun Fact

During the civil war, soybeans were used in place of real coffee because real coffee was scarce.

Pollinator seed mix

During the week of April 21-25, we will be giving away packets of pollinator seed mix to members. Thank you to Stephenson Service Company for co-sponsoring this giveaway. There are a limited number of seeds available, so stop in that week between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to pick up your pollinator seeds.



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.

Highland celebrates art donation and installation

The entrance to Highland's Student/Conference Center has been transformed into a celebration of the region's natural beauty, thanks to the generosity of David Shockey and the talents of Geoffrey Mikol of River Bend Gallery

in Galena, IL.

"As a long-time supporter of Highland Community College, I am honored to give the gift of the photography of Geoffrey Mikol of River Bend Gallery, which depicts the rural landscape of North-

west Illinois and the Highland Community College district. I hope this donation will serve as an inspiration for years to come and a reminder of the uniqueness of the Highland district," said Shockey.

To mark this stunning installation, the Highland Community College Foundation hosted a special reception on March 25 to celebrate the transformative display.

"Highland is a special place. Northwest Illinois is a special place. This art installation is important because it allows students and community members to see and appreciate the beauty of this region while on our wonder-

ful campus," said Dan Dick, Foundation Executive Director. "It's a privilege for the Foundation to bring visionary ideas together and create something truly inspiring for our community. Thank you to David for supporting this meaningful project!"



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(Pictured front to back) Highland President Chris Kuberski, Geoffrey Mikol of River Bend Gallery, David Shockey and Dan Dick, Foundation Executive Director celebrate the permanent installation from River Bend Gallery, donated by Shockey.



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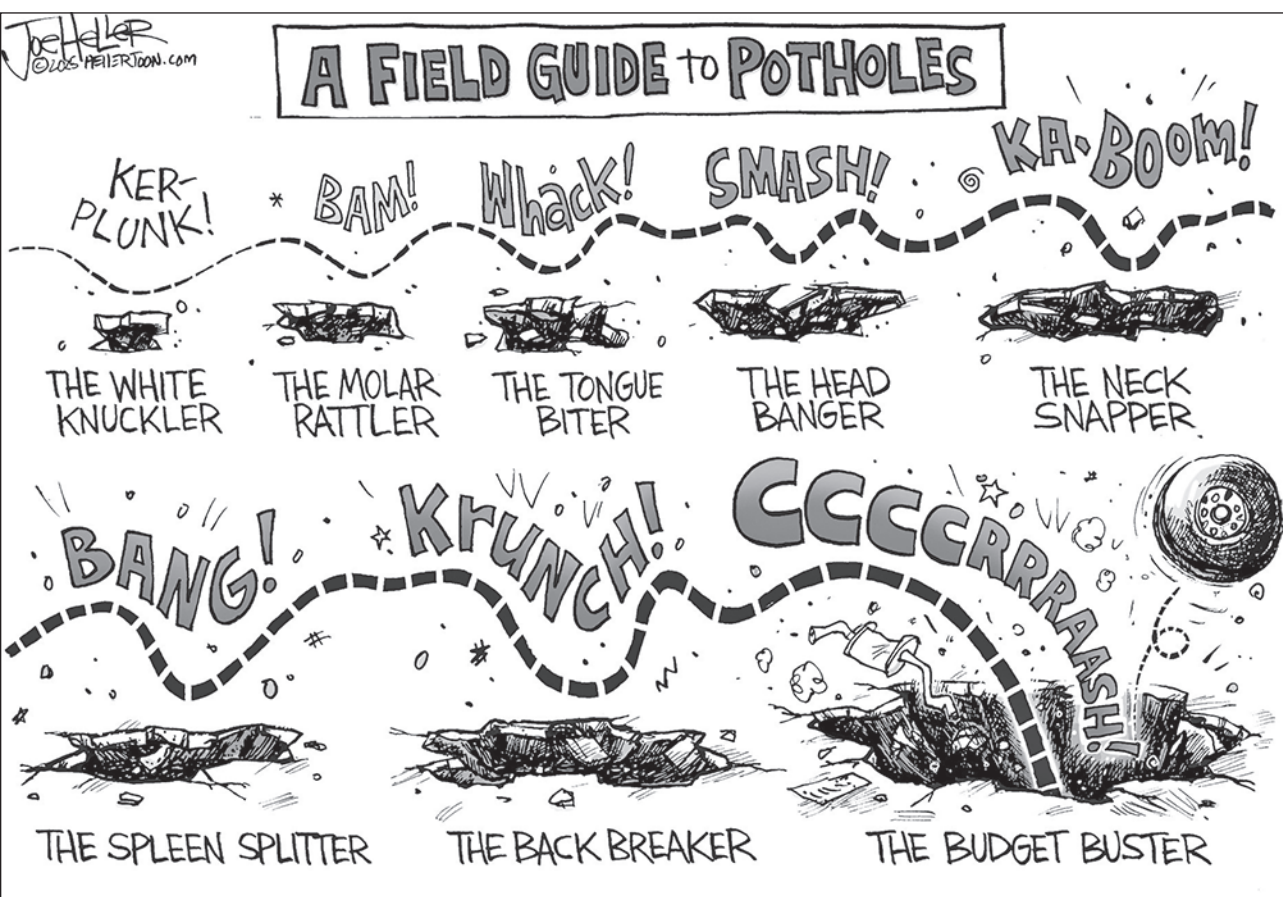
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OPINION



Slices of life

The dichotomy of widowhood



By **JILL PERTLER**
Columnist

As a person who was made a widow much too early (and aren't we all widowed much too early?), I have a confession to those of you not members in our very elite club.

I love seeing photos of you growing old together. But even more, I hate them.

I am so sorry. I wish I felt differently, but life threw me a curve ball and I was supposed to have the photos that you now have. But I don't.

And I wouldn't be honest if I didn't admit that still hurts. It hurts a lot.

So, even though I am happy for you and your travels and cruises and anniversaries and milestones and your growing old together, it hurts to know what I am missing: what I have lost, because it left unexpectedly without my consent.

I hate the feeling I get seeing the photos, but please know I don't hate that you are living out what I hoped I always would—what I thought I always would. What I thought was a guarantee.

It's like I went to Vegas and bet on both red and black during a game of roulette and still, somehow, managed to lose.

So much for guarantees. But on the other hand, you know what they say about when life gives you lemons.

I'm sort of getting used to this new, unexpected, never-would-have-chosen-it life.

There are even parts of it that I like. That I really like. I lived much of my adult life as a chameleon. I changed my colors depending on the needs of the people close to me.

My sons liked playing hockey. I became a fan of hockey. My daughter performed in theater. I became a theater mom. My husband held the remote. I watched the NASA channel with him. (If you know the NASA channel, you know what a gesture of love this truly was.)

I liked what they liked because it was easy and it made life more convenient

for my family. And my family was my life.

And then my children grew up, as they tend to do. And my husband died, as I never intended.

And I found myself in a place I never expected to be. Alone.

It felt pretty foreboding.

Not to mention scary. And overwhelming. It was like I was living in a world where I didn't belong. But I didn't really have a choice. I needed to find a way to belong. I wanted that.

And now, here I am, four-plus years out and away from losing my husband, my very best friend in life, and I am finally finding the end of the rainbow.

I don't need to be a chameleon anymore. I don't want to. I've just recently realized this and it was pretty liberating.

I lived much of my life for others. In that, I sort of acquiesced to their needs, and I wouldn't have had it any other way. I'd still love to be sitting in the living room watching TV, while my husband held the remote.

But that isn't going to happen.

I lost him and was forced into a new life, and with that, gradually, I shed my chameleon skin. And learned to change my own colors according to my own accord.

And you know what? I still mourn the life I lost. But I really like all the new colors of the one I found. You might even say I discovered my own rainbow, and it's quite lovely, if I do say so myself.

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

In my opinion

Illinois must put patients before profits

At a baseball game, grabbing a ball hit into the stands from a kid breaks an unwritten rule—and rightly earns boos. We all agree it's unfair for adults to use their size and strength to snatch a souvenir away from a child.

Yet, this kind of behavior isn't just bad sportsmanship—we see it all the time, even in health care. Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) are



By **JAX KELLY**
Contributor

doing something eerily similar: taking manufacturer discounts on prescription medications—savings intended for patients—and

keeping the money for themselves.

The federal 340B Drug Pricing Program requires drug manufacturers to provide certain prescriptions to eligible health care organizations and covered entities at reduced prices in order to “stretch scarce federal resources as far as possible, reaching more eligible patients and providing more comprehensive services.”

In other words, these discounts are for the benefit of patients. The 340B Drug Pricing Program was established under the Veterans Health Care Act of 1992 and is managed by the Health Resources and Services Administration. It was designed to provide discounted medications to eligible health care organizations, with HIV care being a primary focus.

But now Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs), the middlemen between drug manufacturers and pharmacies along with “covered entities” such as rural hospitals, have found a way to keep these discounts for themselves.

Here's how the scheme works:

Let's say the 340B program provides a \$50

manufacturer discount on a \$100 drug. Instead of passing that \$50 savings to the patient, PBMs and certain hospital systems pocket the full \$100 reimbursement from insurers, keeping the difference as profit.

In fact, this scheme has become a way for health care facilities to realize massive profits all at patient expense. The result is that a program intended to help low-income patients get access to life-saving medicine has now become a vehicle for PBMs and hospitals to make money.

This exploitation of 340B has turned a patient-centered program into a cash cow for corporate interests, diverting critical funding away from those who need it most. Worse yet, now that PBMs and hospital systems see how profitable 340B can be, they want more.

HIV programs have relied on 340B savings since the beginning. The Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program is one of the largest participants, ensuring that HIV service organizations can expand access to HIV medications, provide wraparound services, and help uninsured and underinsured patients stay in care.

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Opinion

Market Outlook from Ashley Chambers with Citizens Investment Services

The U.S. stock market experienced significant turbulence in March 2025, with major indices seeing notable declines as global trade tensions and sector rotations spooked investors. The S&P 500 fell by 1.3% during the month, closing at 5,738.65, its lowest point since November 2024. The Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped 1.4%, ending the month at 41,350.93, while the Nasdaq Composite plunged 3.9%, officially entering correction territory after dropping more than 10% from its record high in December 2024.

Tech stocks, which had driven the market's gains in 2024, were hit hardest. The sector's "Magnificent Seven" — a group of tech giants — fell by 8% in March, contributing to the Nasdaq's overall downturn. Meanwhile, more defensive sectors like healthcare, consumer staples, and financials showed resilience, outperforming the broader market.

Bond markets also saw shifts, with Treasury yields falling to their lowest levels since December 2024 as investors sought safety amid rising uncertainty. The 10-year Treasury yield dropped

significantly, reflecting a flight to safer assets.

On the international front, European equities gained 3.0% in March, buoyed by optimism surrounding increased defense spending, while emerging markets lagged behind, returning only 1.1% for the month.

At the heart of the market instability were concerns over President Donald Trump's announcement of significant tariffs on more than 60 countries, including China and the European Union. The move raised fears of a global recession, leading to a surge in market volatility.

In the UK, investors capitalized on the dip in U.S. stocks, pouring £1.8 billion into North American equities in March, with many seeking tax-saving opportunities and taking advantage of market dips before the full impact of the tariffs was realized.

The combination of escalating trade tensions, fluctuating investor sentiment, and sector shifts resulted in a rollercoaster month for the stock market. As the first quarter of 2025 closed, global economic factors and the future of international trade remained in the spotlight for investors looking ahead.

Opinion (Continued from page 4)

For people aging with HIV, protecting 340B is even more urgent. Today, over 50 percent of people living with HIV in the U.S. are over 50, and many face comorbidities like heart disease, diabetes, and cognitive decline—making uninterrupted access to health care essential.

If PBMs and hospital systems continue hoarding 340B savings, the very programs that support older adults with HIV will be undermined or forced to scale back services. That means more treatment disruptions, fewer support programs, and higher out-of-pocket costs—all because of corporate greed.

This is a crisis that cannot be ignored. If state legislators fail to step in, HIV service providers could

lose critical funding, and patients—especially older adults—will be left behind. Illinois must take a stand and stop PBMs from exploiting 340B at the expense of people's health.

The choice is clear: Either lawmakers protect patients, or they protect corporate profiteers. Without urgent action, more people will struggle to afford life-saving medication. The 340B program was created to save lives, not pad corporate bottom lines. It's time for Illinois to do the right thing and ensure that 340B serves its original purpose—helping those who need it most.

Jax Kelly is founder, president and CEO of the Aging and HIV Institute in Palm Springs, California.

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, April 20, 2025, to celebrate Easter Sunrise worship service will be at Good Shepherd at 7 a.m. The Gospel will be from Mark 16:1-8.

Easter Sunday Worship Service will be held at 9:30 a.m. with special music by choir, and hand bells. Holy Communion will be celebrated in this service. The reading is from Luke 24:13-49.

On Wednesday, April 23 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 April 17, 2025, Good Shepherd will hold Maundy Thursday Service 7 p.m. Holy Communion will be celebrat-

ed in this service. 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 several Holy Week services. Maundy Thursday service will be on April 17 at 7 p.m., Good Friday service will be on April 18 at 7 p.m., and Easter Sunday service will be on April 20 at 9 a.m.

Everyone is welcome to come to St. John's to play cards and dominoes on Tuesday, April 24 at 1 p.m. and

play dominoes in Luther Hall on Tuesday, May 6 at 9 a.m. The next Men's Breakfast will be on Wednesday, May 7 at 7:30 a.m. at the Beltline Restaurant in Freeport.

On Sunday, May 4 St. John's members and friends can go out for lunch at the Legends on Route 26 north of Freeport at 12 p.m. Please sign up on the bulletin board. Members and friends are welcome to attend.

The April Grace Meal will be on Sunday, April 27. It will be a community meal served by St. John's, Faith United Methodist Church, and Zion Church. The menu will be ham, mashed potatoes and gravy, peas and carrots, applesauce, and cherry cobbler. Reservations are due in the church office by Thursday, April 24. Meals can be picked up at the church on April 27 between 11 a.m. and 12 p.m., or you can choose

to dine in Luther Hall at St. John's between 11 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. If you are interested in donating to this ministry, reach out to the church office for more information.

The social ministry committee will be having a collection for the ELCA Good Gifts project from April 27 through June 1. Their goals for this project are one herd of goats, two groups of 10 chicks, one rooster for chicks, seven honeybee hives, four food packages for vulnerable and orphaned children for one month, vaccinations for a child, 10 water filters, two piglets, and one mosquito net. If you would like to donate to this project, please contact the church office.

On Sunday, May 4 St. John's members and friends can go out for lunch at the Legends on Route 26 north

See CHURCH NEWS, Page 6

Stockton Town Garage Sales

Listings and map to run in Shopper's Guide Scoop Today's June 11th Issue

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News briefs

Blackhawk Unit of SCAHCE

The April meeting of the Blackhawk Unit of SCAHCE will be held on Thursday, April 17, 2025, at 1 p.m. at the Pearl City Library. Anita Costello will give the lesson of "Herbs and Spices". Roll call will be, "What is your favorite herb or spice?" Raffle items will be brought by Jo Wenzel and Anita Costella. The meeting is open to anyone who would like to join us.

Stephenson County Association for Home and Community Education

The Stephenson County Association for Home and Community Education (HCE) will be manning the Cub Food Brat Stand on Friday, April 18 and Saturday, April 19 and will be open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. The stand is located at the entrance to Cub Foods, 1512 South West Avenue, Freeport, IL. The funds are used in support of educational lessons and programs, as well as for scholarships. HCE is an all-volunteer organization dedicated to helping individuals and other non-profit organizations in our community.

• Church news (Continued from page 5)

of Freeport at Noon. Please sign up on the bulletin board. Members and friends are welcome to attend.

The Healthy Wolves group will be packing backpacks on Tuesday, April 15 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.

Evangelical Free Church of Lena

Join on Wednesday, April 16 at 1 p.m. at the Evangelical Free Church of Lena to celebrate the Lenten season with music by DELTA II.

The Evangelical Free Church of Lena is sponsoring three opportunities to attend an Easter Egg Hunt for the children in the community.

April 18: 10 a.m. at 493 Lions Drive

April 18: 10:30 a.m. at 503 Locust Street,

April 19: 10:30 a.m. at Polhill Park

Calvary Church

A special Maundy Thursday service will be held on April 17 and a Good Friday Service on April 18. All are invited to any of these services.

Scales Mound UMC "Young at Heart"

Scales Mound United Methodist Church is pleased to headline its first 2025 "Young at Heart" community gathering on Tuesday, April 22 at 1:30 p.m. with the fabulous Accordion Divas. Denise Stadel, Colleen Yonda

and Vicky Barclay will treat the audience to some energetic oldies but goodies, polkas, and even music from Johnny Cash and the Beatles. The Divas will also answer all your questions about accordions.

Scales Mound UMC is located at 319 Mason St., and holds Young at Heart gatherings on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 1:30 p.m. Each month we will have refreshments, entertainment and speakers and great community with one another. There is not charge for this event. Please contact Pastor Libby Rutherford at rutherford.libby@gmail.com or 815-990-1428 with any questions.



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Hornets outhit Warren-Stockton in Warhawk territory

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT
The Scales Mound-River Ridge Hornets won just five games in all of 2025. Now, the Hornets have won five games in just their first 11 games of the 2025 softball season. Recently, the Hornets picked up two blowout victories, including a road win over the Warren-Stockton Warhawks.

Looking back on the 2024 season, two of the five games that SM-RR won came against Warren-Stockton. As it turns out, the Hornets have had the Warhawks' number as of late. They collected their third consecutive regular season victory over the Warhawks when they traveled to take on Warren-Stockton on Tuesday, April

8. The Warhawks came into the matchup with an overall record of 5-2. They were winners of four straight, having just beat Lena-Winslow 2-1 in a low-scoring affair. They picked up back-to-back shut out victories before that. Looking to extend their winning streak and playing some of their best defense, the Warhawks were red-hot coming into this one.

It was the Hornets who got off to the quick start. In fact, the Hornets punched the Warhawks in the mouth with four runs in the top of the first inning. It was a blow the Warhawks never retaliated from. It was Sarah Winter who got the game started with a bang as

she crushed a three-run homer over the center field fence. Before the inning was over, Anna Wachter drove in Anna Weis with a single to the left side.

The Hornets were also bolstered by an electric starting pitching performance from Elizabeth Rife. In a complete game, Rife allowed just three earned runs off of three hits. She went on to strike out 15 Warhawks, while walking just two in the game. Rife's lights out pitching allowed the Hornet bats to get out to a big, eight-run lead before the Warhawks ever scored.

The Hornets put up another four-spot in the top of the fourth inning. This time, Laiken Haas led things off with a home run of her own. Haas crushed one

to center, putting SM-RR up 5-0. Rife followed that up with a double, but two quick outs had the Warhawks on the verge of escaping danger.

That is when another long ball came into play as Alyssa Wentz sent a two-run shot over the left field fence. Home runs can often be rally killers, especially with two outs. That wasn't the case for the Hornets. Weis came around to score before the end of the inning, putting the Hornets up 8-0.

It wasn't until the bottom of the fifth that the Warhawks finally got on the board. They had to earn that run, as it took two walks, a stolen base, and a wild pitch to get a run in. Nonetheless, Sadie Johnson scored the first run of the game

for Warren-Stockton. Madalynn Perry had to eat up some innings for the Warhawks, and she struggled to get the Hornets out. In seven innings of work, Perry allowed 15 hits and seven earned runs. Perry struck out eight, while walking just two batters in her outing.

The combination of the Warhawks' slow offense and Perry's off day in the circle had Warren-Stockton in a tough spot. They trailed the Hornets from start to finish. They managed to draw a bit closer when Adrienne Baker hit a solo homer in the bottom of the sixth. Ireland Mensendike followed that up with a triple, but that was the most excitement the Warhawks had all game.

Eventually, SM-RR collected a 10-3 victory over Warren-Stockton. The Hornets combined for 15 hits at the plate. They were led by Wentz, who went three for four with two runs scored and two runs batted in. Haas went three for five with two runs scored and one RBI. Winter went two for five with one run scored and three RBI. Weis was two for three with a pair of runs scored. Wachter finished the day two for four with two RBI.

The Warhawks had just three hits in the game. Two of those hits came in the sixth inning. Baker led the way going one for three with one run scored and one RBI. Mensendike finished the day one for three with a run scored.

Joe Winter strikes out 10 as Wildcats shutout Amboy

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT
The River Ridge-Scales Mound Wildcats have found their stride in the 2025 baseball season. After getting off to a 1-5 start, the Wildcats have won six consecutive matchups. That includes a pair of victories over the Warren-Stockton Warhawks, last week. Those came prior to a weekend shutout over the Amboy Clippers.

A Friday, April 4 victory over the Orangeville Broncos is where the Wildcats really seemed to get in a rhythm. Since then, they have found ways to win in different situations. High-scoring shootouts, low-scoring pitching duels, on the road, or at home, the Wildcats managed to go from 1-5 to 7-5 in the matter of a couple of weeks.

RR-SM faced off with Warren-Stockton in a couple of close matchups on Tuesday, April 8 and Thursday, April 10.

The Warhawks were the home team for the first matchup, but they saw an early lead disappear when the Wildcats put up five runs in the sixth. RR-SM rallied with two outs, largely in thanks to three walks, two errors, and a hit by pitch in the inning. Nonetheless, RR-SM won the game by a score of 6-4.

When the Wildcats returned home to play host to the Warhawks on Thursday, it was a completely different game. RR-SM held control from start to finish as they jumped out to a lead in the first inning and never surrendered it. Kaden Duerr helped to get the offense going by having three hits out of the leadoff spot. He was the only Wildcat to have a multi-hit day as the team combined for eight hits in a 4-1 victory.

Will Stietz took the loss on the mound for Warren-Stockton. In three innings pitched, Stietz allowed three earned runs off six hits and two walks.

Stietz struck out one batter along the way. Blake Zink also tossed three innings for the Warhawks. Zink was impressive, allowing just two hits, while striking out three and having zero walks.

Damon Dittmar collected the win for the Wildcats. In six and one third innings, Dittmar allowed zero earned runs off five hits and three walks. Dittmar struck out six batters in his appearance. The Wildcat defense played a clean game behind their pitchers with just one error.

Dittmar's solid pitching set the Wildcats up for an exciting weekend matchup with the Amboy Clippers. It was a low-scoring affair that came down to the wire, but with Joe Winter on the mound, the Wildcats weren't going to be beaten.

Winter was efficient. The Wildcat defenders didn't have to wait long before getting back to the dugout in seemingly ev-

ery inning. Winter had a quick one, two, three inning as he threw just seven pitches in the first. His second inning was even more impressive, striking out back-to-back batters to end the inning.

That sparked some energy for the Wildcats as their bats responded in the bottom half. After Dittmar led the inning off with a single to left, he proceeded to steal second and third base. With Dittmar within 90 feet of scoring the game's first run, Winter simply put the ball in play. A groundout to the left side allowed Dittmar to score, putting the Wildcats up early.

Winter was nearly perfect on the day. In six and two third innings, Winter allowed zero hits and two walks, while racking up 10 strikeouts. Aiden Soppe came in to finish the combined no-hitter as he picked up the save. Winter was truly electric on the day. Not only did he have the best pitching perfor-

mance of the 2025 season for RR-SM, but he also drove in all three of their runs in a 3-0 victory.

The Wildcats are set to be back on the road this Thursday,

April 17 as they travel to take on the East Dubuque Warriors. They return home on April 24 to play host to Fulton. Both games have start times of 4:30 p.m.

Animal Control spay and neuter voucher

Jo Daviess County Animal Control has recently implemented a Spay/Neuter Voucher program for Jo Daviess County residents. The voucher is worth \$100 towards the spaying or neutering of a dog. To be eligible, residents must have adopted their dog or present documentation of being enrolled in the Food Stamp Program or Social Security Disability Benefits Program. The pet must have a current rabies vaccination and be registered with Jo Daviess County Animal Control. The intention of this program is to assist with over-population and to encourage dog owners to spay or neuter their animals. Check with Animal Control to see which veterinarians are accepting these vouchers.

Every owner of a dog four months or more of age, who is a resident of the County, is


required to have the dog inoculated against rabies as denoted in the Animal Control Act. Every dog owner shall pay a rabies tag fee. An unaltered dog is \$30 per year or \$85 for a 3-year registration. A spayed or neutered (altered) dog is \$18 per year or \$50 for a 3-year registration. A 3-year license will only be issued when a 3-year vaccination was given within 6 months of the purchase of the

license. Licenses are not valid beyond the expiration of the rabies vaccination.

The money from dog licensing fees is all directed towards Jo Daviess County Animal Control. These funds are an important part of helping animals and owners in Jo Daviess County. The funding allows Animal Control to be dispatched for rescues and provides shelter and care for

lost and abandoned pets. The information received from a registration goes into a database that allows pets to be reunited with their owners as well as tracks vaccination records.

Please contact the Jo Daviess County Animal Control Department at 815-776-0326 or visit www.jodaviesscounty-il.gov with any questions or to register a dog.



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Stockton Heritage Museum news

The Journey of Mollie's War: WACs and WWII presentation
Stockton Heritage Museum

will host a presentation by Illinois Road Scholar Cyndee Schaffer who shares stories of her mother's time

serving in the Women's Army Corps (WACs) in WWII. The presentation, "The Journey of Mollie's War: WACs and

WWI," will take place on Sunday, May 4, 2025, at the Stockton Heritage Museum, 107 West Front Street, Stockton, IL, at 2 p.m.

Schaffer uses excerpts from her mother's letters written home during WWII to provide a romantic yet frightful glimpse into the life of a woman in uniform during this crucial time in history. Mollie Weinstein (now Schaffer) (1916 - 2012) was a shy, retiring young Jewish woman from Detroit who enlisted in the Women's Army Corps (WACs) just months after it was established in 1943. Mollie Weinstein's letters to her sister Beck, brother Jack, and best friend Sarah provide a chronology of her service as a WAC from its beginnings with her train trip to Daytona Beach, Florida for basic training in October 1943 to her first assignments in California and Georgia,

her service overseas in England, France and Germany through her return to the United States on the Queen Mary in November 1945.

The museum invites all current and past women who have served in the armed forces to attend this heartfelt event. Come enjoy the presentation and be honored for your contributions to our nation's freedom and security.

Volunteer Orientation meeting

Stockton Heritage Museum will host a Volunteer Orientation Meeting for the 2025 season on Saturday, April 19, at 9 a.m. The meeting will take place at the Stockton Heritage Museum, 107 West Front Street, Stockton, IL.

This orientation and training session is for all volunteers. Those interested in be-

ing museum hosts for 2025 should check their calendars before coming so they can sign up for hosting dates. Attendees will have the opportunity to take a tour of the museum, see our current exhibits, learn about future programs, and visit with other volunteers. Refreshments will be served.

No experience is required and volunteer training is available. If unable to attend the meeting, call 815-947-2220 or send an email to info@stocktonheritagemuseum.org to discuss volunteer opportunities.

For more information, please visit our website at www.stocktonheritagemuseum.org, visit us on Facebook: Stockton-Heritage-Museum-309324911534, email us at info@stocktonheritagemuseum.org, or leave a message at 815-947-2220.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Mollie with her friends, Johnnie (Goldie Johnson) and Bats, (Maria Batistello) in Valagnes, Normandy, August 1944.

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JDCF to host Annual Frog Walk

One of the first signs of spring is the sound of frogs waking up and calling. Join staff from the Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation (JDCF) at the Meeker Street Footbridge in downtown Galeana on Friday, April 25 at 6 p.m. for JDCF's annual frog walk. The walk travels down the Galena River Trail towards Buehler Reserve, giving families a chance to try to find and catch the frogs themselves. JDCF staff will help identify what frogs and will have some tadpoles on hand to view the frog life cycle in progress. This is a free event open to the public. Please dress appropriately for the weather. A rain date is scheduled for May 3. Check the JDCF website for updates. This is a catch and release event.

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Luke 22-23

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District 89 Drug Take Back Day

Illinois House Minority Leader Tony McCombie is supporting a local Drug Take Back Day to provide residents with an opportunity to safely dispose of prescription drugs. The upcoming event will be held on Saturday, April 26 in line with National Prescription Drug Take Back Day, a movement backed by the federal Drug Enforcement Agency to help prevent medication misuse and opioid addiction. Residents are encouraged to stop by the Drug Take Back Day from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Pearl City Fire Department, 300 Station St, Pearl City.

"This is a great opportunity for residents to safely dispose of any unused or expired medications in their homes," said Leader McCombie. "National Prescription Drug Take Back Day is a useful reminder of how medications and opioids can fall into the wrong hands or be misused. We all need to do our part to keep our community and everyone in it safe."

The upcoming drug take back day is a drive-thru opportunity—residents will not have to leave their vehicles to drop off their materials. With questions about the upcoming event, contact McCombie's district office at 815-291-8989.

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Lena Lions Awards

Jerry Edler is honored as Citizen of the year, presented by Glenn Harman.



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The Foundation Fellow Award is presented to Lion John Keeffer by Lion Gary Meyers.



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Dan Erner receives the Lion of the Year award, presented by Lion Glenn Harman.



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Ryan Buss is presented with the Foundation Fellow Award by Lion Gary Meyers.



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Lion Marcia Meyers is the Melvin Jones Fellow recipient.

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FARM EQUIPMENT: 23' John Deere 5090M Loader Tractor, Cab/A/H, MFWD, 3pt, PTO, 2 Hyd Remotes, 127 Hrs, 14' Case IH 290 Magnum Tractor, MFWD, Frnt & Rear Duals, 4 Hyd Remotes, 2,092 Hrs, Case IH RXM340 24' Rock Flex Disk, 3 Bar Spike Harrow, 2 – J&M 350-SD Gravity Wagons, Glenco 18' Field Finisher, Kent 33' Field Finisher, 5 Bar Spike Harrow, Koehring Max II Self Propelled Chopper, Diesel, 2R Head, John Deere 4020 Tractor, D, WF, 9,000 HRS, John Deere 230 Disk, Hiniker 4836 Grain Drill, Int. 504 Tractor G, NF, Fertilizer Spreader, RoGator 854 Sprayer, Cummins, 90' Booms, EZ Trail Gears

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Pearl City falls to Orangeville in softball thriller

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT

Two of the top NUIC softball teams in the Orangeville Broncos and the Pearl City Wolves faced off last week. Pearl City had the luxury of playing host to the Broncos in their first matchup of 2025. Home field advantage wasn't enough to upset the red-hot Broncos, however.

Orangeville came into the Tuesday, April 8 matchup with an overall record of 7-2. They were 4-1 over their last five games played. The Wolves were 6-4 themselves. They were winners of two straight after suffering a recent three-game losing streak.

After two innings of play,

the Wolves found themselves trailing the Broncos 1-0. Then, a big two-out rally gave the Pearl City bats some life. Natalie Lotz drove in the Wolves' first run when she put a ball in play to the left side of the field. An error by Orangeville's left fielder allowed a pair of runs to score.

The Wolves weren't done there. Anna Dampman followed up with a single up the middle, bringing Natalie in to score. Mackenzie Lotz followed that up with a big shot as she crushed a home run over the center field fence. That gave Pearl City a big 5-1 lead over the Broncos.

The lead didn't last long,

Orangeville responded with a five-spot in their half of the inning. Some sloppy play allowed the run to happen as Pearl City opened the inning with an error and a walk. The Broncos then had four consecutive hits, including a two-run double by Jillian Carlisle. Orangeville had regained the lead before Pearl City's defense could register an out. By the end of the third, the Broncos held a 6-5 advantage.

The Wolves got one run back in the top of the fourth. After Isabella Smith took a walk to lead off the inning, Kylie Campbell singled to the right side. Jorja Johnson eventually walked to load the bases. Addy Wheeler did her best to pitch out of the

jam for Orangeville, but the Broncos' defensive errors continued to bite them. Natalie struck a fly ball to right field, and an error allowed Smith to come in to score, tying the game at 6-6.

Once again, the Broncos were able to quickly regain the lead. Two walks had runners in scoring position with just one out when Abigail Hazzard came to the plate. Hazzard then ripped a double to left field, driving in Wheeler and putting the Broncos up by one. Carlisle then singled to left, driving in a pair to extend the lead.

Orangeville never surrendered the lead again. They held on to beat the Wolves by a score

of 9-7. Carlisle led the way at the plate, going two for four with four runs batted in. Hazzard was right there with her, going two for four with two runs scored and three RBI. Anicka Kraft was two for two with two walks, two runs scored, and one RBI. Aubrey Fryer went two for four with two runs scored and one RBI as well.

The Wolves were led by Campbell, who went two for four with a run scored. Natalie went one for three with a walk, one run scored, and one RBI. Mackenzie was one for four with one run scored and two RBI.

Mackenzie pitched all six innings for the Wolves. In those

innings, she allowed seven hits and just two earned runs, while striking out ten. Wheeler collected the win for the Broncos. In five and two third innings, Wheeler allowed three earned runs off five hits. She struck out five in the win.

The Wolves saw their record fall to 6-5 after the loss. The Broncos went on to shut out Hiawatha by a score of 9-0. That improved their record to 9-2 on the season.

On Thursday, April 17 the Broncos return home to play host to the Durand Bulldogs. At the same time, Pearl City makes the trip to take on the Dakota Indians. Both games have a start time of 4:30 p.m.

Lena-Winslow baseball holds off Dakota's comeback effort

By Trenten Scheidegger
CORRESPONDENT

The Lena-Winslow Panthers won their first home conference game of the 2025 baseball season when they played host to the Dakota Indians on Thursday, April 10. Just two days earlier, the Panthers went on the road and lost to Dakota 2-7. They nabbed their first NUIC victory of 2025 when they returned home, however.

The Panthers had to rely on their defense in this one. Maverick Cass started the game on the mound, and he was the only pitcher the Panthers would need that day. Cass pitched a complete game with zero earned runs allowed.

Cass didn't earn many swings and misses, as he finished the game with just two strikeouts. He allowed eight hits and one walk, but he trusted the defense behind him.

Cass didn't get much support from the Le-Win bats in the early innings. Dakota's starting pitcher managed to keep the Panthers off the board for the first four innings. It wasn't until the bottom of the fifth that the Panthers managed to crack through.

The Panthers scored three runs in the inning, and they all came with one out. Ashton Gerber took a walk to get the rally started. Cohen Weegens followed that up with a double, which put two runners in

scoring position. Miles Mahon then hit the next pitch to right field for a two-run double. Luke Madigan was sure to drive him in with a single up the middle, putting the Panthers up 3-0.

Once the bats got hot, Cass was quick to get them back to the plate. The top of the sixth featured two fly outs and a groundout as Cass continued to draw weak contact. The Le-Win bats gave him some important insurance runs with another three spot in the bottom of the sixth.

The Le-Win defense played a clean game until the top of the seventh. With the Panthers entering the inning with a six-run advantage, they were just

three outs away from a shutout victory. Two errors allowed a pair of runs to come in, giving the Indians some late life.

In the end, Cass wound up getting a pair of groundouts to get out of the inning and claim the victory. The Le-Win defense had three total errors in the game, two of which allowed runs to score, negating the shutout effort from Cass.

Madigan led the way at the plate. In four at bats, Madigan had three hits and two runs batted in. Mahon was right there with him, going two for four with a run scored and three RBI. Weegens also had three hits on the day as he finished with two runs scored and one RBI.

The Panthers went on to have a successful weekend trip Springfield, where they went 2-0-1. The Panthers tied Ashland-Chandlerville Central on Friday evening with score of 3-3. Le-Win rebounded with a pair of close victories on Saturday, April 13.

Le-Win began Saturday's play with a 5-4 victory over Litchfield-Mt Olive. The Panthers were led by another dominant pitching performance. This time it was Gerber who pitched six and two third innings of four-hit baseball. With three strikeouts and

two walks, Gerber allowed three earned runs in the victory.

The Panthers went on to beat Riverton 6-5 in their final game of the weekend. Weegens was hot in the leadoff spot as he went one for four with a run scored and two RBI. Koby Kearns went three for three with a run scored and two RBI as he proved to be a tough out. Landon Grindey went one for three with one run scored and one RBI in the win. The Panthers improved to 8-3-1 with the victory.

Freeport police reports

Felony Ammunition and Firearm arrest

On April 11, 2025, Freeport Police Officers conducted a search warrant at a residence located in the 800 block of S. Walnut Avenue in Freeport. During a search of the residence, Officers recovered a loaded pistol and ammunition.

As a result of the investigation, the resident, 28-year-old Chase Hale was charged with felony Possession of a Weapon by a Felon. Hale was

transported to the Stephenson County Jail where he is being held pending the outcome of a detention hearing.

The public is reminded that the defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial, at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

Felony Narcotics arrest

On April 11, 2025, Freeport Police Officers conducted a search warrant at a residence

located in the 100 block of E. Empire Street in Freeport. During a search of the residence, Officers seized approximately 30 grams of suspected cocaine, and 875 grams of suspected cannabis.

As a result of the investigation, the resident, 28-year-old Christian Munoz, was arrested and charged with felony Possession with the Intent to Deliver a Controlled Substance and felony Possession with the Intent to Deliver Cannabi-

sis. The felony charges were approved by the Stephenson County State's Attorney. Munoz was transported to the Stephenson County Jail where he is being held pending the outcome of a detention hearing.

The public is reminded that the defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial, at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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SATURDAY, April 26, at 9 A.M. SCHRADERS' SPRING CONSIGNMENT AUCTION 5995 IL 75 E, DAKOTA, IL

Sale order: Tools & small items, fencing, lumber, auto, hay, field equip.

EARLY LISTINGS: Nice Farmall Super H; Case 970 w cab; McCormick 64 pull type combine; Ford 5' brush mower; Ford 6' blade; 4 bottom plow; Sears barge wagon w new tires & gd paint; 16' hay wagon w back; bale cage wagon; Vermeer rd. Baler, 7 Shank Glencoe Soil Saver, 10 wheel hay rake; 1500 gal poly water tank; MTM pressure washer, hot water; 600 gal steel cylinder water tank; 4 cf huts; new roll 48" woven wire; deluxe hoof trimming chute w double belly straps; feed buckets; rubber mats; grooming chute and farm gates; Stainless 3 bay steel sink; Duck hunting equip; decoys; 4 hunting blinds; box of duck calls; 2 dog cages; 3 cyclone gate cylinders; Shimano alum mountain bike; Tools & lawn equip; 1450 Cub Cadet (50" deck Hydrostat), Ford 105A 3.0 5 ft. tiller Hay & straw

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Stephenson and Carroll County Farm Bureau news

By Victoria Hansen

This past Saturday I got up bright and early armed with a travel mug of coffee and headed out to Winslow, IL for the 8th Annual Bruce Johnson Memorial Farm to Farm 5K/10K Run. This event is hosted by the Stephenson County Farm Bureau in honor of past Stephenson County Farm Bureau Manager and farm runner, Bruce Johnson. All funds raised for this event are donated to the Agriculture in the Classroom Program in Stephenson County. This year we had over 220 registrations. This event raised over \$10,000 for Ag in the Classroom. A big thank you goes out to our sponsors who made this event possible.

Gold Level Sponsors: Adkins Energy, Brewster Cheese, Citizens State Bank, Compeer Financial, Community Bank, High Plains Pork, Johnson Tractor, Mahon Pioneer Seeds, Nutrien Ag Solutions, State Bank, Stateline Solar, Stephenson Service Company, and Stephenson County Pork

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If you'd like to see photos of this event visit the Bruce Johnson Memorial Farm to Farm 5K/10K Run on Facebook.

Holiday Office hours

Stephenson County Farm Bureau will be closed on Friday, April 18th. Please plan accordingly for any Easter needs.

Trip Spotlight Michigan & More

County Farm Bureaus in Northwest Illinois are partnering with Tri State Travel to host a four-day trip to Michigan. This trip will take place Saturday, August 9 through August Wednesday, August 13, 2025. Trip will include stops in Holland, Lena Meijer Tropical Conservatory, Mackinac Island and More.

Trip cost varies based on the number of individuals staying in your room. Prices start at \$2,409 and decrease from there. This trip has been very popular and has a limited number of seats left. To learn more or to register visit www.stephensoncfb.org under trips or call 815-232-3186.

2024 Crop Marketing Program

The Lee, Carroll, Ogle and Whiteside County Farm Bureaus along with COUNTRY Financial will host a crop marketing outlook on the evening of June 18 at the Days Inn, Rock Falls, IL. "Managing Crop Revenue and Market Price Risks" is a two-hour seminar designed specifically for producers to help them manage risk associated with the current commodity markets and identify market conditions to capture profit margins through this year into next.

Dr. Steve Johnson, Iowa State University Extension Farm Management Specialist, will facilitate the program. Steve has served as the Farm & Ag Business Management Specialist in Central Iowa for Iowa State University Extension and Outreach since 1999. He specializes in topics related to government farm programs, crop insurance, crop marketing, grain contracts, farmland leasing and other crop risk management strategies. During the two-hour pro-

gram producers will examine the following topics:

- Global Supply/Demand & Crop Price Outlook
 - Crop Insurance Coverage Review
 - Impact of Tariffs on US Trade
 - Developing & Implementing a Marketing Plan
 - Understanding Summer Weather Forecasts
 - Pre-Harvest Marketing Strategies & Tools
- Pre-registration is required. To register for the program, call 815-732-2231 or email cfb@ogle.comcastbiz.net The program begins at 7 p.m. on June 18: Days Inn, Rock Falls, IL.

Rural Nurse Practitioner Scholarship applications available

We are pleased to announce that the Illinois Farm Bureau® Rural Nurse Practitioner Scholarship Program is now open for applications. This program offers 15 scholarships, each valued at \$4,000, to support nurse prac-

tioners committed to serving rural communities in Illinois.

Scholarship recipients are expected to practice in an approved rural area within the state for a minimum of two years. Eligibility criteria include being a resident of Illinois and either accepted into or currently enrolled in an accredited Nurse Practitioner Program as a Registered Nurse.

The Rural Illinois Medical Student Assistance Program (RIMSAP) proudly funds this initiative. Interested applicants can obtain application forms from county Farm Bureaus® throughout the state, the RIMSAP website at RIMSAP.com, or by reaching out to Donna Gallivan, Program Manager, at the Illinois Farm Bureau, 1701 Towanda Avenue, Bloomington, IL 61701. Please note that the application deadline is May 1. For additional information or inquiries, please contact Donna Gallivan at 309-557-2350 or via email at dgallivan@iflb.org.

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FROM LENA'S KITCHEN



The not so skinny cook

Apricot Fluff

You need some kind of fluffy salad for Easter. This one uses yogurt and fresh apricots. Enjoy this any time of the year.

1 C. apricot or peach yogurt
1 pkg. (3 oz.) apricot Jell-O
1 carton (8 oz.) Cool Whip
1 pkg. (10 oz.) miniature marshmallows
3 C. cubed peeled fresh apricots

In a large glass bowl, add yogurt to Jell-O; stir for 2 minutes to completely dissolve. Gently stir in Cool Whip, marshmallows, and apricots. Refrigerate until firm at least 4 hours.

Tuna Noodle Cups

We are getting to the end of our Lenten meatless Fridays. This is one last tuna casserole. It is interesting because you make it in muffin cups.

8 oz. cooked egg noodles,
2 cans (5 oz. each) light tuna in water, drained
2 C. frozen peas and carrots, thawed
1 small onion, finely chopped
2 C. shredded cheddar cheese, divided
2 eggs
1 can (12 oz.) evaporated milk
½ C. water
1 t. garlic salt
¼ t. pepper

Preheat the oven to 350. In a large pot, cook the noodles according to package direction; drain and return to pot. Add tuna, peas and carrots, onion and 1 C. of cheese. Whisk together eggs, milk, water and seasonings until combined. Toss with noodle mixture. Spray muffin cups with cooking spray. Divide noodle mixture into 18 muffin cups. Sprinkle with remaining cheese. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until heated through. Cool 5 minutes. Loosen edges with a knife before removing from pans.

Asparagus Stuffed Chicken

This entrée is a good one for a weeknight or a weekend dinner. It is easy to put together once you have all the ingredients gathered. Enjoy the flavors of the asparagus and ham in the chicken. The recipe is for two servings, but it can be easily doubled or tripled to feed more.

8 asparagus spears
2 boneless skinless chicken breast halves (5 oz. each)
1 T. Dijon mustard
4 rosemary sprigs
2 slices provolone cheese
2 slices deli ham, thin enough to roll
¼ C. flour
1 egg, lightly beaten
½ C. unseasoned bread-

crumbs
¼ C. grated Parmesan cheese
½ t. butter
½ t. olive oil
¼ C. chicken broth

Preheat oven to 350. In a large skillet, bring ½ inch of water to a boil. Add asparagus; cover and boil for 3 minutes. Drain and immediately place asparagus in ice water. Drain and pat dry.

Flatten chicken breast to ¼-inch thickness. Spread 1½ t. mustard over 1 side of each chicken breast. Down the center of each place 2 rosemary sprigs, 1 cheese slice, 1 ham slice and 4 asparagus spears. Fold chicken over asparagus and secure with a toothpick.

Place flour and egg in separate shallow bowls. In another shallow bowl, combine the breadcrumbs and Parmesan cheese. Coat chicken with flour, dip in egg, then coat with bread crumb mixture. In a large skillet, melt butter and oil and brown chicken on all sides. Transfer to an 8-inch square baking dish which has been sprayed with cooking spray. Add broth to skillet, stirring to loosen browned bits from pan. Pour over chicken. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until chicken is no longer pink. Discard toothpicks before serving.

Bunny Bark

At St. Patrick's Day, we had Leprechaun Bark. This month we have Bunny Bark. It is a great treat to have sitting around or in zip lock treat bags to add to any Easter basket. You can find the candies in the Easter candy aisle and the melting waters in the baking aisle.

30 oz. white vanilla-flavored melting wafers
Red, yellow, and green gel food coloring
Assorted sprinkles in pastel colors
Chocolate Easter eggs, Easter M & M candies, colored marshmallow Peeps, small pretzels, jellybeans in pastel colors

Line a jelly roll pan with parchment paper; set aside. Add candy melts to the top

pan of a double boiler. Position over a few inches of gently simmering water; melt over low heat, stirring until completely smooth, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from heat. Divide ½ C. melted wafers between three small bowls. Add 1 small drop of different colored food coloring to each. Stir into each portion, adding more dye as needed to get the desired color. Spread remaining melted candy wafers onto prepared parchment lined sheet pan into an even layer about ¼-inch thick. Spoon dollops of each color over the surface. Use a sharp knife to swirl the colors through the initial layer until well marbled. While the candy is still tacky, sprinkle the surface with assorted sprinkles, candies and other toppings. Chill in the refrigerator until fully set, at least 30 minutes. Break into large pieces to serve.

Carrot Spice

Thumbprint Cookies

These are not a traditional thumbprint cookie, but it is a great one for Easter. The recipe calls for margarine. Be sure you buy good margarine. Many margarines have more water than fat. Good margarines are Land of Lakes and Imperial. They are more expensive, but your cookies will be much better. I also am not a big lover of cloves, so I would substitute nutmeg for cloves. You can buy bags of shredded carrots if you don't want to shred your own.

1 C. margarine, softened
1 C. sugar
½ C. packed brown sugar
2 eggs, room temperature
2 t. vanilla
3 C. flour
1½ t. cinnamon
1 t. baking powder
¾ t. salt
½ t. baking soda
1/8 t. ground cloves
4½ C. shredded carrots
2/3 C. chopped pecans, toasted
½ C. dried cranberries
Frosting:
½ C. butter, softened
4 oz. cream cheese, softened
2 C. powdered sugar

1 t. vanilla
Preheat oven to 375. In a large bowl, cream margarine and sugars until light and fluffy, 5 to 7 minutes. Beat in eggs and vanilla. In another bowl, whisk flour, cinnamon, baking powder, salt, baking soda, and cloves; gradually beat flour mixture into creamed mixture. Stir in carrots, nuts and cranberries. Drop dough by rounded tablespoons 2-inches apart onto a parchment-lined baking sheet. Press a deep indentation in center of each with the back of a ½-teaspoon measure. You may need two pans. Bake until edges begin to brown, 10 to 12 minutes.

Reshape indentations as needed. Cool on pans 5 minutes before removing to wire racks to cool completely.

Frosting: Beat butter, cream cheese, powdered sugar and vanilla until blended. To serve, fill each cookie with about 1½ teaspoons of frosting. Sprinkle additional powdered sugar. Refrigerate cookies when storing in a airtight container.

Final Thoughts

There have been lots of Easter Egg hunts this past weekend. I know that families have them too. Most

See KITCHEN, Page 19

LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON TOWNSHIP BUDGET PLEASANT VALLEY TOWNSHIP

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Tentative Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for the Township of Pleasant Valley, in the County of Jo Daviess, State of Illinois, for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2025 and ending March 31, 2026, will be on file and conveniently available to public inspection by appointment from Town Clerk upon request after 8:00 p.m., the 8th day of May, 2025.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN HEREBY that a public hearing on said Budget and Appropriation Ordinance will be held at 7:00 p.m., the 12th day of June, 2025 at the Town Hall in this Township of Pleasant Valley and that final hearing and action on this ordinance will be taken at a meeting to be held at the Town Hall following the public hearing.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON ROAD DISTRICT BUDGET PLEASANT VALLEY TOWNSHIP

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Tentative Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for the Road Purposes of the Township of Pleasant Valley, in the County of Jo Daviess, State of Illinois, for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2025 and ending March 31, 2026, will be on file

and conveniently available to public inspection by appointment from Town Clerk after 8:00 p.m., the 8th day of May, 2025.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN HEREBY that a public hearing on said Budget and Appropriation Ordinance will be held at 7:00 p.m., the 12th day of June, 2025 at the Town Hall in this Township of Pleasant Valley and that final hearing and action on this ordinance will be taken at a meeting to be held at the Town Hall following the public hearing.

(Published in The Scoop Today April 16, 2025)

470460

NOTICE

The regular monthly business meeting for the West Point Township County of Stephenson and State of Illinois for the fiscal year 2025-2026 will be held at 7:00 PM at the West Point Township Building, 6890 N Five Corners Rd, Lena, on the following dates:

April 8, 2025
May 13, 2025
June 10, 2025
July 8, 2025
August 12, 2025
September 9, 2025
October 14, 2025
November 11, 2025
December 9, 2025
January 13, 2026
February 10, 2026
March 10, 2026
William Staton, Clerk
(Published in The Shopper's Guide April 16, 2025)

470376

Village of Lena Public Notice Zoning Board of Appeals Hearing

A Zoning Board of Appeals Hearing will be held by the ZBA on Monday, May 5, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. at the Village Hall, 122 E. Main St., Lena, IL.

The ZBA Hearing meeting shall be for the purpose of granting a variance regarding set backs for 11-07-32-284-007 commonly known as 615 Oak St, Lena, IL 61048

Anyone wishing to appear and be heard on the above matters should appear at the meeting time. You are also invited to send letters on these matters to the Village Hall, 122 E Main St, P.O. Box 607, Lena, IL 61048

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National Oral Facial Protection Month

You are all familiar with the saying, "There is no I in team." When one team member isn't one hundred percent it affects the whole team. In honor of National Oral Facial Protection Month, this week's column will focus on how mouthguards reduce the risk of injury and infections that can hurt not only you but your whole team.



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

It has been reported that up to 39 percent of orofacial injuries are related to trauma from sports activities. While many mistakenly believe that this only pertains to football, blows to your face in many other sports have resulted in injuries to the teeth, gums, lips, cheeks, and tongue. The American Academy of Pediatrics reports that in seven through 12-year-olds, baseball and softball account for the most injuries.

In athletes 13 years and older, basketball has the highest rate of dental injuries. This is no coincidence as studies confirm that requiring mouthguards decreases the percentage of orofacial injuries. While high school and college football players are mandated to use mouthguards, most baseball and basketball players are not. While mouthguards are not mandatory for baseball, the potential for injuries from balls, bats, and collisions with other players, make mouthguards a wise choice for players. Basketball, with its fast-

paced dynamic, crowding and collisions (especially elbow jabs to the face) also puts its player's teeth at risk for a blow to the mouth, and mouthguards can help mitigate this damage. They also absorb the energy from the impact of falls which force the lower teeth into the maxillary teeth.

A properly fitted mouthguard is a crucial piece of athletic gear that protects a player from injury in a number of ways. First, it provides a barrier to soft tissues that helps prevent cuts and bruises during impact. It also absorbs the shock vibration that can cause fractures and damage to the neck and jaw joints, as well as injuries to the brain. A mouthguard helps prevent tooth fractures, periodontal ligament trauma, partial tooth displacement, and tooth loss. Since it provides

a barrier between opposite teeth, it offers protection from opposing forces. This protection extends to more than just contact sports. Mouthguards can help protect your child in gymnastics, in-line skating, skateboarding, soccer, volleyball, bicycling, and any other athletic activities that pose a risk for orofacial injuries.

Please note that the key

phrase in that sentence is "properly fitted." A mouthguard that does not cover all of your teeth and some of your gums will leave you at risk of injury. Mouthguards that fit loosely will not distribute collision forces as well as those that are custom fitted. A mouthguard that is too big or bulky, uncomfortable, and/or impedes your child's ability to breathe properly

will most likely not be worn at all. The more comfortable the mouthguard, the more likely that your child will wear it. Whether your child uses a boil and bite mouthguard from a store or a custom mouthguard from his or her dentist, make sure that they bring their mouthguard to each dental checkup to be evaluated for damage and effectiveness.

•Kitchen (Continued from page 17)

people don't hide hard boiled eggs; they fill plastic eggs with candy or in some cases money. This year hiding hard boiled eggs would probably cost you a fortune.

There are a lot of opportunities for worship in our surrounding communities. Take advantage of the different times and services. I have several friends who have April

birthdays, so they are celebrating both holidays together.

Track and ball games continue, although the cold weather has been challenging for pitchers, hitters, runners, and field event participants. I give the athletes a great deal of credit for not giving into the horrible weather we have had. We are moving into the Kentucky Derby, Cinco de Maya

and Mother's Day. Hope you are all going to have a great Easter holiday!

We are looking for some May 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.

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Neighborhood Grants app now open with new rolling deadline

Attend info webinar April 17 to learn more

As of April 1, the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois (CFNIL) will now accept applications for the Neighborhood Grants Program on a rolling basis. This program is open to neighborhood-based groups and nonprofit organizations

operating in Boone, Ogle, Stephenson, and Winnebago Counties. A unique feature of this grant program is that while the groups applying should be organized for a charitable purpose, they do not need to be registered 501c3s. CFNIL has operated a neighborhood grants program since 1995, distributing over \$1 million to build better neighborhoods in Rockford and beyond.

The Neighborhood Grants Program funds neighborhood-focused and resident-led projects, including but not limited to beautification, crime prevention, surveys, clean-ups, newsletters, organizing, reforestation, and resident-focused educa-

tion. The maximum award per project is \$2,500. Applications will be reviewed as received throughout the year and available funds awarded until depleted. Applicants may not receive more than one award per calendar year.

CFNIL staff will host an informational webinar to learn more about this grant program and answer questions from attendees on Thursday, April 17 at 5:30 p.m. The webinar will be provided live via Zoom. Please RSVP via the link found at cfnil.org/grants/neighborhood to confirm attendance and receive the webinar link.

Applications must be submitted through CFNIL's online grants application por-

tal. To learn more about the program, view grant guidelines, and start an application, visit cfnil.org/grants/neighborhood.

About the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois

The mission of the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois is to inspire philanthropy and promote philanthropy for the current and future needs of the people of northern Illinois. Since its founding in 1953, CFNIL has granted more than \$90 million for charitable purposes.

Learn more about CFNIL's commitment to grantmaking at www.cfnil.org.

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Broadband survey seeks info on gaps, satisfaction

Fast, reliable, affordable internet is a daily necessity. But coverage across the Northern Illinois region is not consistent. That's why Northern Illinois University and Region 1 Planning Council (RPC) are teaming up to make high-speed coverage a reality across Stephenson, Winnebago, Boone, and Ogle counties.

But first, they need your help to find out where service

gaps are and other factors that would make your broadband use better. Please fill out the survey at Engage R1 to give your perspective on your broadband usage and needs. Even if you don't have service or it is not available in your area, you are invited to complete the survey with that valuable information too.

The survey and details about the project background



are available at engager1.mysocialpinpoint.com/broadband, or by scanning the QR code with this article.

Survey information will be used to put together a regional map of current infrastructure (including the location broadband lines and speed, public wifi sources, and locations of other digital equity resources). R1 will also create a plan that will include existing broadband conditions, a gap analysis, and recommendations for meeting those identified needs.

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• Bureau (Continued from front page)

community center upgrades, an intergenerational Boys and Girls Club, a new water tower, improvements for emergency communications—and much more. In selecting grants, IFB searches for projects that will meet a need in a community, county or rural area and get residents excited about what is

happening in their community. In addition to the grant program, IFB's Local Government team has fostered rural development through conferences, publications and engagement with other organizations, such as the Governor's Rural Affairs Council, Rural Partners, the Illinois Ru-

ral Health Association, USDA Rural Development and the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs.

Applications for the 2026 rural development grants are expected to open in October. For more information on the grant program, visit ilfb.org/rdgrants.

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