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YOUR FREE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18, 2025



RIVER RIDGE CUSD #210 FACEBOOK PHOTOS Rock Valley Publishing

## Illinois State FFA Degree

Congratulations are in order as Ty Spahn, Bindi Boop, and Sawyer Fry earned their Illinois State FFA Degree. Only the top 2% of all FFA members ever earn this degree. In addition to the degree, Fry was also sworn in and starts his year serving as Section One FFA President.

## NUIC-West All-Stars dominate 2025 NUIC All-Star game

By Trenten Scheidegger  
CORRESPONDENT

The NUIC was loaded with talented baseball players in 2025. The West side of the conference was ultra loaded, especially in terms of pitching talent. Those arms led the way to some very successful seasons in 2025, and they dominated one more time in this year's NUIC All-Star baseball game.

This year's game was held on Wednesday, June 11. The

NUIC North/South squad was comprised of players from Ashton Franklin-Center, Amboy, Dakota, Durand-Pecatonica, Eastland, Forreton, Orangeville, and Morrison. The West side was built off players from East Dubuque, Fulton, Lena-Winslow, Milledgeville, Pearl City, Polo, River Ridge-Scales Mound, and Warren-Stockton. Some of the chosen players were unable to attend due to prior agreements.

From the Scoop-Shopper teams, on the North-South side was Orangeville's Boden Gustafson. On the West side was Lena-Winslow's Cohen Weegens, and Maverick Cass, Pearl City's Myles Freedlund, River Ridge-Scales Mound's Damon Dittmar, Joe Winter, and Mason Smith, and Warren-Stockton's Brady Steitz, Will Steitz, and Treyton Pafford. Forreton's Mike McClellan was head coach of the North-South team, while Le-

Win's Nick Werhane led the West side.

The West had some big bats, but it was their pitchers that stood out. Carver Kamantz opened the game on the mound for West, and he already had three strikeouts by the end of the first inning. Kamantz allowed North-South to load the bases with a walk, a hit-by-pitch, and

a single, but he managed to pitch his way out of the early damage.

Much like Kamantz in the top half, North-South's starter, Carson Barlow, also had control issues in the first. Barlow was unable to pitch himself out of it, as he hit a batter with the bases loaded, allowing the game's first run to come across.

Kamantz was lights out in the first two innings. After recording six outs, five of them were by strikeout. He stifled the North-South squad while the West bats scored more often than not. The West team scored in five of their six appearances at the plate.

See GAME, Page 10

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# Illinois' \$55.2B budget 'incomplete,' Civic Federation president says

## Democrats monitoring Congress for actions that could force changes to budget

By Ben Szalinski  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Illinois' latest budget misses the mark in several key areas, according to one independent nonprofit fiscal analyst.

State lawmakers sent Gov. JB Pritzker a \$55.2 billion budget on May 31 that raises \$1 billion in new revenue and increases spending by more than \$2 billion in fiscal year 2026 compared to the current year.

But the head of one of Chicago's top nonpartisan government research organizations said lawmakers made too many short-term decisions to balance the budget in fiscal year 2026 that could make future fiscal years more challenging.

"It's an incomplete budget," Civic Federation President Joe Ferguson told Capitol News Illinois. "It does not add in any meaningful way to discuss any structural issues the state has. It's a maintenance budget."

Ferguson said a key reason for that is at least \$271 million in fund sweeps used to balance the general revenue fund. Fund sweeps occur when lawmakers dip into lesser-known and underutilized funds outside the main general fund to use as a source

of revenue for the fiscal year. This year's budget also pauses several transfers to keep certain dollars available in the general fund for use this year.

For example, the budget calls for pausing the final transfer of motor fuel sales tax revenue to the road fund. The move would free up \$171 million of general fund spending in FY26, but delays putting that money toward road construction projects.

"It's not balanced on gimmicks," House Speaker Chris Welch, D-Hillside, told Capitol News Illinois for the latest episode of the "Illinois Lawmakers" program. "It's balanced based on revenues and expenditures, and it's based on what we know. We passed a budget based on what we knew at the time, and we weren't going to pass the budget with cuts alone."

The FY26 budget would also suspend the monthly transfer to the "rainy day" fund for one year, freeing up \$45 million for general fund use.

"It's absolutely a mistake," Ferguson said, calling that decision "troubling."

The "rainy day" fund should continue to grow over time, he said, especially "knowing that we are going to need to go to some last-case

resorts in all likelihood when we understand the federal impact and when we approach the transit issues as well, and this was not the moment to go to that well."

The fund is still expected to grow from interest income and cannabis revenue in FY26.

Lawmakers used some of the fund sweeps to give the governor authority over a new \$100 million "emergency" fund to plug unforeseen budget shortfalls.

Pritzker argued at a news conference after the budget passed that the state's "structural" deficit—or the gap between ongoing spending and baseline revenues—has improved since he took office in 2019.

"We're diminishing the one-time expenditures that we have to make," Pritzker said. "So we've gotten, really, much closer than ever before to balancing that structural deficit."

Relying on fund sweeps will only make budgeting more challenging if a crisis arrives, Ferguson said.

"Everyone acknowledges that it is all but certain that there are additional things that are going to need to be attended to in the coming months," Ferguson said.

that punches holes in state budgets, coupled with the state's public transportation fiscal cliff, could be a wake-up call for lawmakers, Ferguson said.

The U.S. House has already passed a domestic policy plan that would shift more cost of government programs to states, cut Medicaid funding and phase out clean energy tax credits. The Senate is expected to make changes to the legislation, but President Donald Trump wants to sign the bill into law by July 4.

While many components may not hit Illinois' budget this year, state lawmakers are watching for any changes that could require them to return to Springfield and adjust the FY26 budget.

"We have told the caucus to stand on the ready," Welch said. State lawmakers boosted spending in the FY26 budget for safety net hospitals and federally qualified health centers, but the state wouldn't be able to absorb major federal cuts to Medicaid.

"We got some room in there to be able to respond, but it's hard to prepare when you don't know exactly what's coming down the pipe," House budget leader Rep. Kam Buckner, D-Chicago, said during a news conference with the Democratic Legislative Campaign Committee.

House Republican Leader

Tony McCombie, R-Savanna, was less worried Congress will cut Medicaid and other key benefits.

"After conversations with the Illinois delegation, I don't feel that there's going to be any concerns with cuts that are important in our Medicaid budget," McCombie told Capitol News Illinois.

### Last-minute budgeting

Democrats unveiled a more than 3,300-page spending plan about 24 hours before it passed the General Assembly, while the \$1 billion tax plan was filed about five hours before lawmakers took a vote.

Ferguson, the Civic Federation president, criticized the legislative process that gives lawmakers and the public little time to review the budget's contents.

"It was chaotic, nontransparent—nontransparent even to the legislators that had to vote on it—and not really the way that we want to go about this business, especially at a sensitive time," he said.

A group of conservative lawmakers also contended the process was illegal in a lawsuit filed recently in Sangamon County. The Illinois Freedom Caucus argues that the budget amendments were not read on three separate days in each chamber of the General Assembly, which they say vi-

olates the state constitution.

The constitution states a bill "shall be read by title on three different days in each house," but does not specify that each amendment to a bill receive the same.

Each of the bills were read on three separate days this spring in both chambers, even though the substantial amendment containing the budget was filed in the final hours. For example, the bill lawmakers used to raise \$1 billion of revenue was originally filed to establish an Emmitt Till commemorative day. The bill met the three readings requirement in both chambers before the Emmitt Till Day provision was removed in the final hours of session in favor of the tax plan.

The constitution also states that it's up to the House speaker and Senate president to "certify that the procedural requirements for passage have been met."

In applying what's known as the "enrolled bill doctrine," the Supreme Court has consistently declined to infringe on the legislature's authority to certify its own bills, due to separation of powers concerns. It has also consistently upheld broad authority for the General Assembly to gut the original contents of a bill and amend it with a new subject, making the lawsuit a long shot.

### An eye on Congress

New action from Congress

## Around the Northern Hills with Annette Eggers

June is Dairy Month — a time to recognize and celebrate the hardworking dairy farmers who bring wholesome, nutritious products to our tables every day. Dairy plays a vital role in a healthy lifestyle. From milk and cheese to yogurt and butter, dairy foods provide essential nutrients like calcium, protein, and vitamin D that support strong bones, healthy muscles, and overall well-being. Whether you're sipping a cold glass of milk, enjoying a slice of cheese, or topping your fruit with creamy yogurt, you're making a delicious and smart choice.

But dairy isn't just good for you, it's also a cornerstone of our local economy. Dairy farms, contribute to rural communities and promote sustainable farming



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

practices that care for animals, land, and people.

This month let's raise a glass (of milk) to the farmers, the families, and the flavor that make dairy so great. Be sure to support your local dairy producers, try a new dairy recipe, or simply enjoy your favorite dairy treat as we celebrate June is Dairy Month!

### Peach orders

Are you already thinking about those fresh Illinois peaches? The more details and order forms will be coming out soon.

### Dairy Month coloring contest

The Young Leaders are excited to announce the winners of the "June is Dairy Month" coloring contest. The contest was open to all children from Pre-K through second grade. A total of 81 entries were submitted and judged by the Young Leaders Committee.

Congratulations to the winners in each grade level.

Pre-K: Luna Dreyer, Elle Puls and Lawson Schwartz  
Kindergarten: Andre Glasgow, Mia McFadden and Bailey Kviesis

1st Grade: Jackson Walter, Izzy Daniels and Jahnessa Norwood

2nd Grade: Eleanor Williams, Skylar Jackson and Myah Lange

Thank you to all the young artists who participated and helped celebrate Dairy Month

through their creativity.

### Local member benefits

Don't forget to take advantage of member-only benefits for Jo Daviess County Farm Bureau members. We have businesses around the County who have partnered with us to offer these discounts. Make sure to have your farm bureau membership card handy when asking for those discounts. For a full listing of the local benefits, go to our website [www.jodaviesscfb.com](http://www.jodaviesscfb.com) and click on membership, then local discounts.

### Farm Fun Fact

Cows tend to produce more milk while listening to classical music. Some dairy farmers may have to change their taste in music!



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# Apple River Fort upcoming events

This year marks the 193<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the Battle of the Apple River Fort. In the spring of 1832, Black Hawk led over a thousand of Sauk and Fox warriors and civilians back into Illinois to try and reclaim their lands. His return caused a panic, and settlers across northwestern Illinois and southern Wisconsin began to build small forts to defend themselves—one such fort was built at the Apple River Settlement, now Elizabeth, IL.

On June 24, 1832, the Apple River Fort was attacked by two hundred Sauk and Fox braves, led by Black Hawk himself. To commemorate this anniversary, the Fort will come alive on Saturday, June 28 and Sunday, June 29. Costumed interpreters will demonstrate hearth cooking, molding lead musket balls,

musket firing demos, militia drills, and more.

This event will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on both days. Attendance is free, but donations are appreciated to help support the Fort's living history program and future special events. For more information visit our website [www.apple-riverfort.org](http://www.apple-riverfort.org) or contact the site at [info@apple-riverfort.org](mailto:info@apple-riverfort.org) or 815-858-2028.

## Fourth at the Fort

The Apple River Fort State Historic Site will be hosting a patriotic picnic on Friday, July 4 from 12 p.m. until 2 p.m. Visitors are encouraged to bring a lunch—or grab takeout from their favorite Elizabeth restaurant—and have a picnic on the lawn by the Fort.

Fort living history volunteers will present a dramatic

reading of the Declaration of Independence, toasts, and other speeches. Visitors may muster into Captain Stone's militia, with one lucky winner receiving a signing bonus. There will also be a wide variety of games and activities.

**Visit Apple River Fort on July 4, 2025, for a historic patriotic picnic. The Apple River Fort was the site of a battle during the 1832 Black Hawk War. About 45 men, women, and children defended the Fort from Black Hawk and 200 of his warriors. Today, the Fort tells the history of both the settlers and the Sauk and Fox tribes through exhibits, a dramatic interpretive film, and living history special events.**



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

## 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, June 22, 2025, for Worship Service at 9:30 a.m. Communion will be served during service. The Gospel will be from Gospel Luke: 8:26-39.

On Wednesday, June 25 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.

Good Shepherd will be gathering for a special worship service on Sunday, June 29 with a folk/rock band at the 9:30 a.m. worship 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 time after Pentecost on Sunday, June 22 at 9 a.m. No Worries Band will be providing special music at this worship service.

Everyone is welcome to come to St. John's to play cards and dominoes on Thursday, June 26 at 1 p.m. and to play

dominoes in Luther Hall on Tuesday, July 1 at 9 a.m.

The next Men's Breakfast will be on Wednesday, July 2 at 7:30 a.m. at the Beltline Restaurant in Freeport. The St. N Sew group will meet on Tuesday, June 17 at 10 a.m. Experience is not needed.

St. John's Lutheran Church of Pearl City is an ELCA parish and is located at 229 First St. in Pearl City. We are handicapped accessible. If you need to contact the pastor or church, you may call 815-443-2215 for information.

### Salem United Church of Christ

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

The Breakfast Bunch meets every Wednesday at 8 a.m. Everyone is welcome to join, please check the newsletter, Sunday bulletin or Facebook page for location information.

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

For more information on any Salem related items, you can contact 815-369-4511 or [ruth.dake@gmail.com](mailto:ruth.dake@gmail.com).

### Water Baptism by Calvary Church

Calvary Church of Stockton will have a water baptism for teens and adults on Saturday, June 28 from 10 a.m. until 12 p.m. at the Stockton Park Pool. If interested, please contact Pastor Scott Hess at 815-291-6239. Participants will be fully immersed in water, symbolizing a new life in Jesus Christ.

Please come prepared with a change of clothing and a towel. This is a joyful celebration, and friends and family are welcome to attend to witness this meaningful moment.

### Scales Mound UMC "Young at Heart" gathering

Scales Mound United Methodist Church is pleased to welcome back the bluegrass band "Pleasant Hope" at its June "Young at Heart" community gathering on Tuesday, June 24 at 1:30 p.m. This Galena-based band is made up of three very talented siblings – Ava, Vivienne and Oliver Mai – and they enjoy sharing their mix of bluegrass, gospel and country music with churches, festivals and more.

Anyone who is "young at heart" is invited to join. There is no charge for this event. Please contact Pastor Libby Rutherford at [rutherford.libby@gmail.com](mailto:rutherford.libby@gmail.com) or 815-990-1428 with any questions.

## News briefs

### Lena Business and Professional Association Sullivan's Cookout

The Lena Business and Professional Association (LBPA) is scheduled to host the cookout at Sullivan's on Friday, June 20 and Saturday, June 21 to help raise money for the Christmas Parade. The cookout times are from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. This event can raise anywhere from \$500 to \$1000 to help cover some of the costs for the Christmas Parade. The association will need three people to work on each day of the cookout. Please contact the LBPA if interested in working the event.

### Stephenson County VA Pantry

The Stephenson County VA Pantry is currently in need of deodorant, hand soap. Laundry soap, paper towels,

toilet paper, mouthwash, all pantry items. Donations can be brought to the Lena American Legion Home on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. at 316 W. Main St., Lena, IL. Donations are greatly appreciated.

### Blackhawk Unit of SCAHCE

The June meeting of the Blackhawk Unit of SCAHCE will meet on Thursday, June 19, 2025, at 1 p.m. at the Pearl City Library. Roll call will be "What is your favorite ice cream flavor?". The major lesson, *Mental Health and Stress for Farmers*, will be given by Jo Wenzel. Raffle items will be donated by Judy Shippee and Colleen Brown. All meetings are open to the public and anyone interested is invited to attend.

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# OPINION



## Slices of life

# Let laughter ring

We are living in serious times. And, while I don't want to demean or diminish the seriousness of all the seriousness, I have one piece of advice that I hope can benefit us all.

Sometimes, the best thing you can do for yourself is laugh.

You read that right. In the midst of the dire, sobering, critical, drastic, desperate and extreme times in which we all live, we perhaps can benefit from something as basic and simple and liberating as laughter. From the belly. The kind that takes your breath away and makes tears flow down your cheeks (the ones on your face).

Life is serious. We are living in serious times. I believe both those things to be true. I am not advocating making light of the seriousness, nor am I suggesting we laugh at it. I'm simply proposing a short, minimal break from it all. A laugh break, if you will.

Yes, life is serious. But I also believe life is short and it is meant to be fun and in that I give you permission.

Not that you need it from me, but it feels good to give it.

I give you permission to laugh. And to be silly. To crack jokes. To giggle.

Not at yourself, but at something beyond yourself. At something that is funny to you, whether that's re-runs of The Office, a hilarious knock knock joke, funny cat videos, a clown slipping on a banana peel, someone pretending to pass gas (loudly) in a crowded elevator or the overall ugliness of your best friend's big toe.

Seek laughter. The reasons are simple:

It feels good. And it does good. Laughter provides physical benefits to your body. It increases your intake of oxygen, which benefits internal organs. It helps you relax, which works to decrease blood pressure and provide possible heart benefits. It reduces stress while increasing energy levels - an oxymoron I'd love to live with.

If you're still struggling,



By  
**JILL  
PERTLER**  
Columnist

I'd like to give you a hands-on exercise to try for yourself at home. This object lesson is not my own. I came across a version of it online, and couldn't hold back a smile (much less laughter.) Then I thought how much others could benefit from the silly laughter it evokes and knew I had to share it with you.

In that vein, please do attempt the following while keeping a frown on your face:

Whisper "beep boop" to yourself while (optional) twirling around three times. If still feeling stress, repeat while hopping on one foot.

Plug your nose. Say "walla walla bing bang" in a high voice. Then say "halla halla fling flang" in a really deep voice.

Say "unicorn" in the angriest voice you can. Next, look in the mirror and in your best David Cassidy voice sing, "I think I love you!" Then say "pickles" three times as fast as you can while puckering your lips.

If you aren't laughing yet, maybe you've lost your sense of humor. In order to find it you can try watching a few more funny cat videos or old reruns of The Carol Burnett Show. Or you can take a peek at your best friends big toe.

We are living in serious times. I guess when you think about it, most times, historically, have been serious times. In that, we aren't alone or unique.

The same can be said for laughter. It's likely humans have been laughing ever since the beginning of time - and since the beginning of seriousness.

Maybe they need each other.

LOL.

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.

## Weekly connection

# A gift from a child is powerful

Well, another school year has come to an end. Last week at my school, the kids cleaned out their lockers and desks. They turned in their missing assignments, took their final tests and said goodbye to all their friends and teachers. Then they lugged their backpacks that were chuck-full of stuff onto the bus and headed home. Since I've been filling in the last couple of months driving the school bus, I asked a bunch of them what they were going to do on Monday when they didn't have to get up and catch the bus to school. Their answers varied from sleeping in and goofing off all day to getting up early and going to work on the farm or for a neighbor. For me, I'm looking forward to getting caught up on some



By  
**SCOTT  
CERNEK**  
Columnist

work around the farm that I have been putting off as we sprinted to the finish line of another school year. I need to thin out my flock of sheep, do some fencing, cut thistles and mow hay to name a few.

I have to say this year was bittersweet as it will be my last year of teaching for half days at my alma mater. It was a blessing to be able to walk the halls of the school where I attended for a number of years growing up. I'll sure miss some of the kids and the staff who were

a joy to be around and work with. There are still some great young people out there who are working hard to get all their work done and do it well. As always, there are a few kids who were a challenge, behaviorally and academically. They say a teacher always remembers their first-year students and their last-year students the best. I do believe this will be the case with me as well. I'll never forget my first year of teaching and the challenges that one student, a sophomore boy, gave me. He wasn't about to listen to a rookie teacher, and he made life very rough. I stuck to my guns though and made it through launching a thirty-three-year career as a public-school teacher. And I'll never forget some of my students this last year either that really made me work to keep their attention and help them learn some things about living a healthy life.

One of my classroom rules was that if I had to kick you

out of class for behavior reasons, you would have to write me a two hundred fifty-word paragraph on what it means to show respect and cooperation in the classroom. Since most of the classes that I taught over the years were gym classes, this was really never an issue. If somebody was acting up in the gym they just had to sit out for a while, and they usually turned their behavior around quick so they could back in the game. However, I did teach the subject of health in the classroom for the past thirty-three years and so there were a few times when I had to enforce my hallway rules. It was important to me that my students showed respect and self-control and when they didn't, they earned a ticket to the hallway to write that paragraph. This seemed to work pretty well over the years.

It's been a good long run in the schools working with

See GIFT, Page 5

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# Market Outlook from Ashley Chambers, Financial Advisor with Citizens Investment Services

After strong gains since April lows, the S&P 500 stands withing 3.3% of February's highs – a 19.2% rally from its April bottom, driven by upbeat Q1 earnings and renewed enthusiasm for Big Tech and AI. This suggests markets will remain resilient despite headwinds.

Core inflation remains sticky at 3.2%, above the Fed's 2% target. Headline inflation may cool slightly due to energy price declines, but shelter and services are still elevated. Retail sales growth is slowing, signaling moderating demand, particularly in discretionary categories like apparel and electronics. Wage growth is decelerating, easing fears of a wage-price spiral, but reducing consumer spending power.

Stay nimble and diversified by balancing growth positions with value plays. Prepare for volatility as headline risks

and labor data fluctuations are likely to trigger rapid swings. Focus on the fundamentals as the earnings season remains strong, companies that beat expectations continue to anchor market confidence.

June 2025 may bring choppy, but upward leaning markets, fueled by strong Q1 earnings, AI momentum, and cautious optimism. Key anchors to watch are labor data, central banker tone, and high-profile headlines. If sentiment steadies, markets could retest or break past April/February highs, but uncertainty remains, warranting a balanced and measured strategy.

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A diversified portfolio does not assure a profit or protect against loss in a declining market. Investors should consider their financial ability to continue to purchase through periods of low levels. S&P 500 – A

capitalization-weighted index of 500 stocks designed to measure performance of the broad domestic economy through changes in the aggregate market value of 500 stocks representing all major industries.

## PAUL FELTON LIVING ESTATE AUCTION SATURDAY, JUNE 22 • 10 A.M. SHARP! 320 E. HURLBUT AVE., BELVIDERE, IL PREVIEW: 8 TO 10 A.M. DAY OF AUCTION

*We are honored to be settling the living estate of Paul Felton with a LIVE, IN-PERSON AUCTION hosted right at the Felton home!*

**FEATURED ITEMS INCLUDE:** Pyrex nesting bowls, Aluminum Christmas trees, Antique & vintage advertising, Jewel Tea dish collection, Blow molds, Antique school cabinets, Chalkware figures & wall pockets, Vintage string holders, Antique bedroom sets, Jewelry boxes, Jewelry, Oil lamps, Curio & display cabinets, Antique oak wall phones, Black Americana, Lawn & garden tools, Grills, Ladders, Vintage trains, General household, Home décor, AND SO MUCH MORE!

**AUCTIONEER'S NOTE:** This is only a partial listing – an amazing, packed estate with something for everyone! We're still unpacking treasures. Visit [www.KitsonAuctions.com](http://www.KitsonAuctions.com) for updates & photos!

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LENA ILLINOIS LIONS CLUB FACEBOOK PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

## Flower delivery day

The Lena Lions Club delivered flowers to community members on Saturday, June 14. Thank you to everyone who bought flowers and thank you to all club members who volunteered their time to sort, prepare, and deliver flowers.

## • Gift (Continued from page 4)

kids. I have really poured my heart into my students and hopefully they knew that I cared about them more than the subject I taught.

One sweet little third grade girl whose grandmother was a senior when I was a freshmen a few years ago asked me a few days ago what my favorite snacks were and what my favorite drink was. I told her that I liked chocolate chip cookies, grape juice and Almond Joy candy bars the best. Well, wouldn't you know, the little sweetie brought me a card and a gift bag full of all three. I think her kindness and love was a special gift from God to say thank you for caring for so many kids over the years. It has truly been a blessing.

In Matthew 18:3 Jesus said, unless you change and become like a little child, you

will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Until next week, God bless.

## ONLINE AUCTION Kristine Grumbach, (Trust) the late Dr. G. E. & Margaret Alzeno

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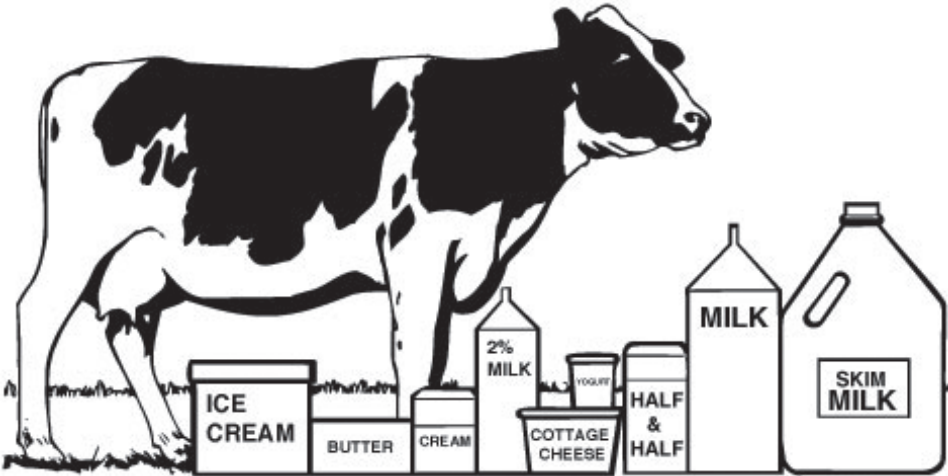

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# Cougar Athletics welcomes back bowling to Highland Community College

Highland Community College is proud to announce the return of bowling to its Cougar Athletics lineup for the upcoming academic year. On hiatus since the 2021–2022 season, bowling is back—this time as a coed team—with practices beginning in early October at 4 Seasons Bowling Center in Freeport.

Leading the charge is Brett Swalve, who currently serves as an Assistant Coach for Cougar baseball. Swalve, who joined Highland in July 2024, is also a Student Success Coach, supporting students academically—many of whom are athletes. “I already work with student-athletes in my current role,” said Swalve. “I help them with classes, study skills, and learning how to wear multiple hats. Coaching bowling is a natural extension of that.” Open to all skill levels, the coed

team already has five bowlers committed, with room for additional students to join.

The return of bowling has been met with enthusiasm. Several students have reached out directly to Swalve through his email, expressing interest in the program. “It’s been a really positive reaction so far,” he noted, although he also acknowledged the challenge of reaching incoming freshmen who may not yet be aware of the opportunity.

In its first season back, the bowling team plans to compete in up to eight week-end tournaments throughout the Midwest region, including overnight travel to larger events with up to 30 teams. While competitive, the sport offers a unique balance. “It’s a nice competitive atmosphere that still feels leisure,” said Swalve. “Bowling isn’t intensely physical,

which may make it easier for students to find balance with their busy lives.”

Swalve also hinted at future growth for the program,

including the potential to split into separate men’s and women’s teams as interest and skills increase. He’s exploring options to bring on

an assistant coach and has already welcomed support from former Highland bowlers and community members.

Interested students can reach out to Coach Brett Swalve at [brett.swalve@highland.edu](mailto:brett.swalve@highland.edu) to learn more.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

**Student Success Center Coach Brett Swalve will coach the revived Cougar Bowling Team. “Bringing bowling back to the Highland and Freeport community is exciting,” Swalve said. “There will be some trial and error, but it’s a great time to get in on the ground level and help build something meaningful.”**

## Lena Historical Society to host kite presentation

The Lena Historical Society will be open on Saturday, June 21 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. A presentation will be given by Denny Roe on “The History of Kite Flying” at 2 p.m.

Roe began flying kites about 1990 and has flown his kites all over the United States. He teaches workshops, gives demonstrations

and builds his own kites. He is a member of the American Kitefliers Association, Kite Trade Association and Wisconsin Kiteers.

This will be an interesting program for all ages. The museum is located at 427 Grove Street, Lena, IL. All the buildings will be open for touring. For more information call 815-369-4094.

## Summer Park Ministry Concerts

Located at  
**Lake Le-Aqua-Na State Park  
Hickory Hills Campground  
Amphitheater**  
Saturdays at 6:30 p.m.

- June 21** Tyger Johnson
- June 28** Ukulele Express
- July 5** Delta II
- July 12** Beloved Church/Rugged
- July 19** New Vocal Blend
- July 26** Evan. Free Church, Lena
- Aug. 2** Delta II
- Aug. 9** Gone Fishin’
- Aug. 16** Steve Sheffey & Co.
- Aug. 23** Finding Grace
- Aug. 30** Deb Leininger

*In case of rain, service will be held in the first shelter-house when entering the park!*

[www.lenafreechurch.org](http://www.lenafreechurch.org)

## Freeport man sentenced to 10 years in federal prison for distribution of cocaine

A Freeport man was sentenced yesterday to 10 years in federal prison for knowingly and intentionally distributing cocaine. Paris Walker, 39, of Freeport, Ill., pleaded guilty earlier this year to one count of distribution of a controlled substance. U.S. District Judge Iain D. Johnston imposed the sentence during a hearing in federal court in Rockford.

Walker admitted that between 2019 and 2022, he knowingly and intentionally distributed cocaine to a confidential informant working for the government. Additionally, Walker possessed cocaine on multiple occasions with the intent to distribute it. The total amount of cocaine involved in the offense of conviction and relevant conduct was at least 30.3

grams.

The sentence was announced by Andrew S. Boutros, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois; and Douglas S. DePodesta, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert S. Ladd.

## Stephenson and Carroll County Farm Bureau news

By Victoria Hansen

Peaches are back by popular demand! We are so excited to announce we will be offering Illinois peaches from Rendleman Orchard in southern Illinois. Farm Bureau members will receive these 25-pound boxes at \$43 per box and non-member price will be at \$48 per box. In addition to the discounted price for Farm Bureau members, we will also be offering the members of the Carroll and Stephenson County Farm Bureaus an extra benefit of \$1 per box when paying with cash or check. Membership must be in good standing through Aug. 31, 2025, to receive member discounts.

For county specific information regarding pickup date

and order deadline please call 815-232-3186 (Stephenson) or visit [www.stephensoncfb.org](http://www.stephensoncfb.org) or 815-244-3001 (Carroll) or [www.carrollcfb.org](http://www.carrollcfb.org).

### New Zealand and Australia Adventure preview meeting

Farm Bureaus in northwest Illinois and Tri-State Travel are hosting a trip to New Zealand and Australia Feb. 23 through March 12, 2026. Stephenson and Carroll County Farm Bureaus will be hosting a travel preview meeting at the Stephenson County Farm Bureau on Tuesday, June 24 from 5 to 6 p.m. Reservations are not required but appreciated call 815-232-3186 to save your seat.

### Farm Bureau members save at theme parks

Illinois Farm Bureau members save at 5 theme parks.

Adventureland: Save up to \$30 on any day admission tickets all season long.

Dollywood (date may vary):

Regular (ages 10 plus) Ticket and tax price for non-members \$103.27 Farm Bureau member price for ticket and tax \$92.05. Children (4-9) Ticket and tax price for non-member is \$92.05 and Farm Bureau member price for ticket and tax \$80.82.

Dollywood Splash Country (dates may vary): Regular (ages 10 plus) Ticket and tax price for non-members \$61.68 Farm Bureau member price for ticket and tax

\$49.39. Children (4-9) Ticket and tax price for non-member is \$50.46 and Farm Bureau member price for ticket and tax \$38.17.

Holiday World: Farm Bureau members will receive exclusive discounts when they purchase admission tickets and season passes for the fun club.

Raging Rivers: Discounts vary

To learn more about these discounts or to receive the code for these discounts please contact your County Farm Bureau Office Carroll at 815-244-3001 or [carrollcfb@gmail.com](mailto:carrollcfb@gmail.com) and Stephenson at 815-232-3186 or office@stephensoncfb.org



# FROM LENA'S KITCHEN



The not so skinny cook

We have had some warm weather to make a lot of things grow. We do need some rain to help things along. This week the recipes feature some good salads, an interesting appetizer, a great main dish and good desserts. Have a great week cooking!

## Ham Pickle Pinwheels

If you are a meat lover, these appetizers use two kinds, salami and ham. The zing of the horseradish and the pucker of the dill, round out a unique appetizer.

1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, cubed

¼ lb. sliced salami  
1 T. prepared horseradish  
7 slices deli ham  
7 dill pickle spears

In a food processor add the cream cheese, salami and horseradish; cover and pro-

cess until blended. Spread over ham slices. Place 1 dill pickle down the center of each ham slice. Roll up tightly and cover. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours. Cut into 1-inch pieces. Place on serving plate.

## Snickers Salad

I had a request for a reprint of this summer salad. It is great because it is a unique way to eat apples for an apple salad. What isn't good about a Snickers bar in anything?

1½ C. cold 2% milk  
1 pkg. (3.4 oz.) instant vanilla pudding mix  
1 carton (8 oz.) Cool Whip, thawed

4 large Granny Smith or Honey Crisp apples (about 6 C.), cut into ½-inch pieces

4 Snickers candy bars, cut into ½-inch pieces

In a large bowl, whisk milk and pudding for 2 minutes. Let stand until soft set, about 2 minutes. Fold in Cool Whip. Fold in apples and candy bars. Refrigerate at least 1 hour before serving.

## Lime Gelatin Salad

This Jell-O salad is a retro salad that is great for summer and pretty too!

2 pkg. (3 oz. each) lime

Jell-O  
2 C. boiling water  
1 qt. lime sherbet  
1 carton (8 oz.) Cool Whip, thawed

In a large bowl, dissolve Jell-O in boiling water. Beat in sherbet until melted. Add Cool Whip and beat well. Pour into an 8-cup ring mold coated with cooking spray. Refrigerate for 4 hours or until set. Unmold onto a serving platter.

## Shrimp Salad

You can use this salad as a lunch meal or use it as a great side to any main dish. The combination of the shrimp, oranges, avocados, and strawberries are paired with a good dressing with a hint of spice with the Old Bay seasoned dressing.

1 pkg (5 oz.) spring mix salad greens

1 lb. cooked medium shrimp, peeled and deveined

1 large navel orange, peeled and sectioned

1 medium ripe avocado, peeled and chopped

1 C. fresh strawberries, quartered

½ C. thinly sliced green onions

## Dressing:

1 C. Miracle Whip salad dressing

1 T. lemon juice  
1 t. dill weed

2 T. Old Bay seasoning

In a large salad bowl, place the salad greens, shrimp, orange sections, chopped avocados, strawberries and green onions. Toss the mixture. Dressing: In a small bowl, mix the salad dressing, lemon juice, dill weed and Old Bay until combined. Drizzle over the salad and toss to coat. You can chop the shrimp up if you want to spread it more evenly.

## Meatballs and Rice

You can use this meatball recipe for a meatloaf recipe and use the tomato sauce as a topping for the meatloaf. You can also substitute rice for the breadcrumbs for a different flavor.

1 egg, lightly beaten  
½ C. seasoned breadcrumbs

2 T. finely chopped onion

1 T. minced fresh parsley  
½ t. salt

¼ t. pepper

1 lb. ground beef

1 can tomato soup

1 C. water

1 t. Worcestershire sauce

Cooked Rice

Preheat oven to 325. Combine the egg, breadcrumbs, onion, parsley salt and pepper. Crumble beef over mixture and mix thoroughly. Shape into 1½ inch balls. Place in an oven-safe baking dish which has been sprayed with cooking spray. Mix the soup, water, and Worcestershire sauce. Pour over meatballs. Bake for 55 to 60 minutes until meatballs are cooked through. Serve over cooked rice.

## Rhubarb Berry Upside-Down Cake

This blending of fruits is a great dessert. The rhubarb, blueberries, strawberries and dried cranberries makes a great combination for a good cake.

2 T. butter

1¼ C. chopped fresh rhubarb

½ C. fresh blueberries

2 T. dried cranberries

2 T. brown sugar

Cake:

6 T. butter, softened

1 C. sugar

1 T. brown sugar

2 eggs

1 T. seedless strawberry jam

1 t. vanilla

1 ¼ C. flour

1 ½ t. baking powder  
½ t. salt  
½ C. 2% milk  
¼ C. orange juice

Preheat oven to 350. Place 2 T. butter in an 11 x 7 baking dish. Place in oven for 5 to 6 minutes until butter is melted; carefully swirl to coat evenly. In a bowl, place rhubarb, blueberries and cranberries; sprinkle with sugar and toss to combine. Transfer to baking dish. In a large bowl, beat softened butter and sugars until blended. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in jam and vanilla. In another small bowl, whisk flour, baking powder and salt. Add to creamed mixture alternately with milk and orange juice, beating well after each addition. Pour over fruit, spreading evenly. Bake 35 to 45 minutes until top is golden brown and a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 10 minutes. Loosen the ends of the cake from the pan with a knife. Invert onto a serving plate. Serve warm or at room temperature. It's great with a scoop of ice cream too!

See KITCHEN, Page 11

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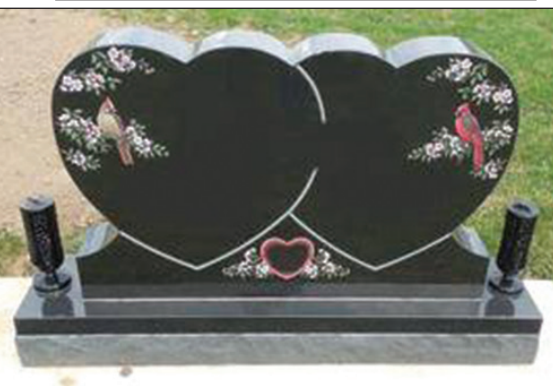
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## Northwest Illinois Aerial Combat Memorial

The Northwest Illinois Aerial Combat Memorial in Lena, Illinois, features a retired F-4E Phantom fighter jet as its centerpiece. The jet, previously located at Rafter's Restaurant, is installed on a 20-foot pylon in downtown Lena to honor veterans. The cement work has been done, and turf has been laid as the memorial is nearing completion. It is not too late to order a paver or to make a donation.

SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

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## • Game (Continued from front page)

The North-South squad didn't crack the scoreboard until the top of the fifth. It came as part of a sloppy inning as multiple errors allowed North-South to bring a pair of unearned runs across, despite having just one hit.

The West team immedi-

ately got those runs back in the bottom half. With two outs, Dawson Foster singled to the right side. Foster's hit allowed Dittmar to score, putting the West up 5-2 with just two innings left to play.

In the end, it was West's pitching that decided this

year's All-Star game. West had four pitchers combine to allow zero earned runs against the best bats on the other side of the conference. Kamentz tossed two innings of two hit baseball with five strikeouts and one walk. Cass threw two innings of no-hit ball with two strikeouts and no walks. Joe Winter matched Cass with two more innings of no-hit, two strikeout baseball. Jacob Huizenga also pitched one inning with two unearned runs scoring off two hits and no walks. Huizenga struck out a pair in his inning.

Cass was named this year's Most Valuable Player at the NUIC All-Star game. Along with his dominant pitching, Cass also went one for one with a walk and one run batted in. The West combined for just six hits in the victory.

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<b>4.45% APY*</b>	<b>4.40% APY*</b>	<b>4.30% APY*</b>

\*Annual Percentage Yield (APY) effective 06/10/25. CDs offered by Edward Jones are bank-issued and FDIC-insured up to \$250,000 (principal and interest accrued but not yet paid) per depositor, per insured depository institution, for each account ownership category. Please visit [www.fdic.gov](http://www.fdic.gov) or contact your financial advisor for additional information. Subject to availability and price change. CD values are subject to interest rate risk such that when interest rates rise, the prices of CDs can decrease. If CDs are sold prior to maturity, the investor can lose principal value. FDIC insurance does not cover losses in market value. Early withdrawal may not be permitted. Yields quoted are net of all commissions. CDs require the distribution of interest and do not allow interest to compound. CDs offered through Edward Jones are issued by banks and thrifts nationwide. All CDs sold by Edward Jones are registered with the Depository Trust Corp. (DTC).

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# Local students make spring 2025 semester Dean's List

**Central College**  
Jason Hermann

**Clarke University**  
Sarah Pratt  
Braden Jacobs  
Addison Roberts  
Sierra Schubert  
Mitchel Coffey

**Grove City College**  
Lauren Williams

**Kirkwood Community College**  
Katherine Crome  
Jack Curtiss

**Loras College**  
Taylor Ditzler Amill  
Gavin Pienkowski  
Lucas Schoaf  
Jacob Zeal  
Georgia Shallenberger  
Madyson Stephan  
Ian Broshous  
Kaylee Luke

**Rockford University**  
Reese Raisbeck

**Southern New Hampshire University**  
Abigail Kriebs

**University of Alabama**  
Jake Schumacher

**University of Dubuque**  
Cameron Kent  
Caden Albrecht  
Riley Finn  
Tayden Patterson  
Ashtyn Brinker  
Kamryn Cain  
Kaytelynn Gable  
Makayla Mock  
Jayden Downs  
Brynn Haas  
Erin Vanderheyden  
Emma Kempel  
Madison Young

**University of Evansville**  
Micaela Mille

**Upper Iowa University**  
Gage Dunker  
Benjamin Werner

**University of Rhode Island**  
Hazel Moon

**University of Wisconsin-La Crosse**

Anne Cocagne  
Benjamin Vandigo  
Braden Freese  
Hayley Johnson

**University of Wisconsin-Superior**  
Jessie Oostenryk

**University of Wisconsin-Whitewater**  
Anthony Bilich  
Whittney Sullivan  
Kylie Wirth

## Tutty Baker Fest returns to Freeport July 11-13, 2025

The highly anticipated Tutty Baker Festival is back for its third year, promising more excitement, entertainment, and community spirit than ever before. From July 11 through July 13, Freeport's downtown will be transformed into a vibrant hub of activity, music, and celebration.

Named in honor of Freeport's founder, the Tutty Baker Festival has quickly become one of the region's premier summer events. This year, organizers are expanding the offerings

to include more attractions, enhanced entertainment, and even greater opportunities for families and visitors to enjoy everything Freeport has to offer.

Festival highlights include carnival with rides and games, live music on Friday and Saturday nights, a fireworks show on Saturday night, a 5K run on Saturday morning, a petting zoo, axe throwing, food trucks, vendors, bingo and much more. For more information please email [info@tuttybakerfest.com](mailto:info@tuttybakerfest.com).

your source for online news: [RVPNEWS.COM](http://RVPNEWS.COM)

## •Kitchen

(Continued from page 9)

### Strawberry Sheetcake

This cake is a Texas style sheet cake, and it starts out easy with a box cake mix and strawberry Jell-O. It is moist and tender with a lot of strawberry flavor.

#### Cake:

1 box (13¼ oz.) white cake mix  
1 pkg. (3 oz.) strawberry Jell-O  
3 T. sugar  
3 T. flour  
1 C. water  
½ C. canola oil  
2 eggs, room temperature, beaten

1 C. finely chopped fresh strawberries

#### Frosting

½ C. fresh strawberries  
1 C. butter, softened  
1 C. mascarpone cheese, room temperature  
¼ t. salt  
½ C. powdered sugar

Preheat the oven to 350. Line the bottom of a 15 x 10 x 1 inch baking sheet with parchment paper; coat with cooking spray. In a large bowl of mixer, combine the cake mix, Jell-O, sugar and flour. Add water, oil and eggs; beat on low speed for 30 seconds; increase speed to medium and beat for 2 minutes. Fold in chopped strawberries. Bake 15 to 16 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Cool completely.

Place strawberries in a food processor; pulse until smooth. Set aside. In a bowl in a stand mixer, beat butter

and mascarpone until fluffy, 3 to 5 minutes. Beat in salt and strawberries. Gradually beat in powdered sugar until fluffy. Spread frosting over cooled cake.

#### Final Thoughts

I was lucky enough to have the strawberry fairies drop some beautiful strawberries off at my house. What a treat to make homemade strawberry shakes in the blender. I also had some beautiful radishes shared with me. The garden produce is coming in. Father's Day has come and gone as well as Taste of Lena. Swimming lessons as well as park district activities are going fast and furious. Don't forget the Saturday and Sunday music concerts. Saturday offers the Park Ministry concerts at the lake and the Music in the Park will feature the Mississippi Man on Sunday. The Freeport Concert Band plays on Sunday nights also. The great Farmer's Markets continue, so be sure to visit them on Saturday mornings and Sunday afternoons. Have a great week.

We are looking for some picnic recipes. We will also be looking for some strawberry recipes because it will be that season. If you find some recipes to share, you can contact us by email at [scoopshopper@rvpublishing.com](mailto:scoopshopper@rvpublishing.com) or by mail at From Lena's Kitchens, *The Shopper's Guide* at Rock Valley Publishing, 1102 Ann St., Delavan, WI 53115. Have a great week.

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**There will be fun things for the kids to do, and everyone will receive a thank you gift.**

**We hope to see you there!**  
**Scott Williamson and Family**





# 'This issue isn't going away': Illinois lawmakers delay pension reform again

*Fiscal year 2026 budget allocates money to address Social Security compliance concerns*

By Ben Szalinski  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Public employees hired since 2011 must continue to wait for pension reform after Illinois lawmakers declined to take up the issue during the spring session.

Lawmakers and labor unions have both expressed concern that benefits for Tier 2 employees—those who entered the public sector after 2011—are inadequate and that some workers in that category are in line to receive benefits out of compliance with federal law.

Tier 2 benefits are less generous than those received by Tier 1 employees, who also had to work only five years to become vested compared to 10 years for Tier 2, but the state constitution prohibits di-

minishing benefits for people to whom they have already been guaranteed.

But problems have arisen from Tier 2, according to a coalition of labor unions seeking reforms, including that the lower level of benefits makes public sector jobs less attractive and hurts recruitment and retention.

## 'Safe Harbor' test

Illinois lawmakers have learned in recent years that Tier 2 benefits for some employees fail the "Safe Harbor" Social Security test, which requires that pension benefits be at least equal to Social Security benefits. If a pension system fails to meet that requirement, the employer must make up the difference.

Officials from pension sys-

tems have said falling short of Safe Harbor would be costly, though exactly how much so is unclear.

Despite more than a year of legislative hearings about pension reform and pushes to get it done in previous sessions, lawmakers left Springfield at the end of May without taking up the issue.

"This issue isn't going away," the We Are One Illinois coalition of labor unions said in a statement. "Public employees are leaving their professions and our state because they can't rely on a pension that ensures dignity in retirement. Public employee shortages have been reported all across Illinois, impacting critical services for our residents. Delaying a fix only makes the problem more cost-

ly and damaging."

The coalition said it was "inexcusable" that a proposal they introduced in the House during the final week of session did not receive a committee hearing.

## Reforms that fell flat

Reforms filed in late May in Senate Bill 1937 would have accomplished several of the unions' goals had they passed. Cost of living adjustments would increase 3 percent annually, and people would have been able to retire as early as age 62 if they had maxed out on their pension. Age 67 is the standard retirement age under Tier 2. Many police officers and firefighters would be able to retire at 52 rather than 55 following 20 years of service under the proposal.

To address the Safe Harbor issue, the bill called for increasing the limit on earnings for people entering the pension system between Jan. 1, 2011, and Jan. 1, 2027, to be equal to the Social Security wage base for that year. Beginning in 2027, the earnings limit could be no more than the Social Security wage base.

The final average salary calculation would also be redefined for Tier 2 employees. The current maximum salary for Tier 2 employees is more than \$40,000 below the Social Security salary base and has increased at half the rate of inflation.

It's not clear how much addressing the Safe Harbor problem or broader pension reform will cost, but prior estimates last year by the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability found it could cost \$5 billion over the next two decades to tie earnings to the Social Security wage base and improve the annual cost of living adjustment. Lowering the retirement age could also cost about \$3 billion over that span.

The bill also would have set a schedule to fully fund pensions by 2049, rather than reach 90% funding by 2045 as required by current law.

## Why it stalled

The bill quickly fizzled out when it was introduced, however, despite garnering more than 40 House Democratic cosponsors. The governor's office said the bill's late in-

troduction left little time for a full analysis, which in turn contributed to the bill's demise.

"While we were provided with a short summary of their ideas, the governor's office cannot and will not conduct any policy due diligence based on only a few bullets," Alex Gough, a spokesperson for Gov. JB Pritzker, said in a statement. "When it comes to the long-term fiscal health of the state and meeting our pension obligations, the governor welcomes these discussions but will not make major financial decisions that impact taxpayers without the opportunity and time to review the details."

The union coalition argued the governor's office was part of discussions throughout the process.

"For more than a year, our coalition has engaged in good faith with lawmakers to address this critical issue," the We Are One Illinois coalition said. "Throughout, we communicated consistently with the governor's office and legislative leaders to develop a comprehensive, fiscally responsible solution that met their legislative criteria."

## Funding provided

Despite the reform's failure, lawmakers sought to address the problem with Safe Harbor in the budget. Part of the budget package created a new Tier 2 reserve fund that can be accessed if there are violations of the Safe Harbor

*See REFORM, Page 20*

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**scoopshopper@rvpublishing.com**  
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PHOTOS MAY ALSO APPEAR ON OUR WEB SITE, **rvpnews.com**

392951



# GAME PAGE

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

Level: Advanced

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

Level: Intermediate

## SUDOKU

### Fun by the Numbers

**Like puzzles?** Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test! **Here's How It Works:** Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

## SPARKLING WORD SEARCH



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

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

### WORDS

- AERIAL
- ASSORTMENT
- BARRAGE
- BRICK
- BROCADE
- BURST
- CAKE
- CANDLE
- COMET
- CONE
- CRACKLE
- DUD
- EFFECTS
- FINALE
- FIRECRACKERS
- FIREWORKS
- FOUNTAIN
- FUSE
- GLITTER
- MORTAR
- NOVELTY
- PYROTECHNIC
- SHELL
- SPARKLERS

### CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Type of bread
- 5. Range of mountains
- 10. Ended
- 12. Musical forms with a recurring theme
- 14. On the nature of being
- 16. Law enforcement agency
- 18. Australian flightless bird
- 19. Subway rodent
- 20. More dried-up
- 22. A beaver might build one
- 23. Suggestive of the supernatural
- 25. Art \_\_\_, around 1920
- 26. American rocker Snider
- 27. Not or
- 28. Earliest human: \_\_\_-Magnon Man
- 30. Firearm
- 31. Tough outer skin of fruit
- 33. Alternative form of a gene
- 35. Low shrub some call "fat pork"
- 37. Plants in the chamomile tribe
- 38. Revolutionary War era spy
- 40. Portion of a book
- 41. Hoover's office
- 42. Title of respect
- 44. Tax collector
- 45. Cool!
- 48. Real estate
- 50. Boy's name
- 52. Airborne (abbr.)
- 53. Strongly recommends
- 55. Hit lightly
- 56. Bar bill
- 57. Atomic #54
- 58. Devotes again
- 63. Fish sauce
- 65. French stock market
- 66. Things that consist of two elements or parts
- 67. Tense

### CLUES DOWN

		1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		
	10	11						12					13
							15						16
18						19				20		21	
22					23			24		25			
26				27				28		29		30	
			31	32					33		34		
35	36									37			
38						39			40				
41				42		43		44				45	46
48			49		50		51					52	
53				54		55						56	
57					58		59			60	61	62	
	63	64							65				
										67			

- 1. Retired game show host Sajak
- 2. Equal (prefix)
- 3. Israeli city \_\_\_ Aviv
- 4. Loved
- 5. A type of analyst
- 6. Ad \_\_\_
- 7. Gasteyer and de Armas are two
- 8. Ran without moving
- 9. Opposite of yes
- 10. Diffuse clouds of gas
- 11. Mentioning one by one
- 13. Instruments used to dilate
- 15. Freshwater fish
- 17. Remotely-manned flying objects
- 18. Doctor of Education
- 21. Renews
- 23. Not the start
- 24. Pitching stat
- 27. Small water buffaloes
- 29. Ceramic jars
- 32. I (German)
- 34. Something to toss on a fire
- 35. The process of flowing in
- 36. A series of acts at a night club
- 39. Egg of a louse
- 40. Inquire too closely
- 43. Travelers
- 44. Drink
- 46. Behave in a way that degrades
- 47. Electronic music style
- 49. Northern Ireland city
- 51. Upset
- 54. Stiff structure resembling a hair
- 59. Father
- 60. North Atlantic fish
- 61. 8th month (abbr.)
- 62. Make an effort
- 64. Commercial



**LENA**  
**IL1770300**  
Annual Water Quality Report for the period of January 1 to December 31, 2024

This report is intended to provide you with important information about your drinking water and the efforts made by the water system to provide safe drinking water.

The source of drinking water used by LENA is Ground Water. For more information regarding this report contact:  
Name: Kory Polhill  
Phone: 815-369-4016

Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre el agua que usted bebe. Tradúzcalo ó hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.

**Source of Drinking Water**

The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally-occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

- Microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.
- Inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be nat-

Source Water Information:			
Source Water Name	Type of Water	Report Status	Location
WELL 2 (11872)	GW	ACTIVE	201 VERNON ST
WELL 3 (11873)	GW	ACTIVE	122 E. MAIN ST
WELL 4 (01904)	GW	ACTIVE	401 E. MAIN ST

**Source Water Assessment**

We want our valued customers to be informed about their water quality. If you would like to learn more, please feel welcome to attend any of our regularly scheduled meetings. The source water assessment for our supply has been completed by the Illinois EPA. If you would like a copy of this information, please stop by City Hall or call our water operator at 815-369-4016. To view a summary version of the completed Source Water Assessments, including: Importance of Source Water; Susceptibility to Contamination Determination; and documentation/recommendation of Source Water Protection Efforts, you may access the Illinois EPA website at <http://www.epa.state.il.us/cgi-bin/wp/swap-fact-sheets.pl>.

Source of Water: LENA To determine Lena's susceptibility to groundwater contamination, the following documents were reviewed: a Well Site Survey, published in 1989 by the Illinois EPA, and a report entitled "Phase 2 and Phase 5 Waiver Application/Vulnerability Assessment" prepared for the Village of Lena by Fehr- Graham & Associates Engineering and Science Consultants in 1994. During the survey of Lena's source water protection area, Illinois EPA staff recorded two potential secondary sources within the minimum setback zone of well #2 and two possible problem sites within the minimum setback zone of well #3. Several other possible problem sites are located outside the minimum setback zone, but within the survey area of both wells. Based on information provided by Lena's water supply officials, the following facilities has changed their status: Lana Farmers' Exchange has been razed and the tanks removed, Stamm Farm Systems Inc. has had the tanks removed, Lena Winslow School District 312 has been changed to Dietz Apartment Building, Stewarts Motor Service has been removed, and Green Country Express is now Werhane Enterprise. The Illinois EPA does not consider the source water susceptible to contamination. This determination is based on a number of criteria including: monitoring conducted at the wells, monitoring conducted at the entry point to the distribution system, and the available hydrogeologic data on the wells. In anticipation of the U.S. EPA's proposed Ground Water Rule, the Illinois EPA has determined that this water supply is not vulnerable to viral contamination. This determination is based upon the completed evaluation of the following criteria during the Vulnerability Waiver Process: the wells are properly constructed with sound integrity and proper site conditions; a hydrogeologic barrier exists that should prevent pathogen movement; all potential routes and sanitary defects have been mitigated such that the source water is adequately protected; monitoring data did not indicate a history of disease outbreak; and a sanitary survey of the water supply did not indicate a viral contamination threat. Because the wells are constructed in a confined aquifer, that could minimize the movement of pathogens into the wells, well hydraulics were not considered to be a significant factor in the vulnerability determination. Hence, well hydraulics were not evaluated for this groundwater supply.

**Definitions:**

**Action Level:** The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

**Action Level Goal (ALG):** The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. ALGs allow for a margin of safety.

Copper Range: 0 ppm to 0.960 ppm

Lead Range: 0 ug/l to <1.0 ug/l

To obtain a copy of the system's lead tap sampling data: Call Village Hall at 815-369-4016

CIRCLE ONE: Our Community Water Supply [has] /has not developed a service line material inventory.

Lead and Copper	Date Sampled	MCLG	Action Level (AL)	90th Percentile	# Sites Over AL	Units	Violation	Likely Source of Contamination
Copper	08/04/2023	1.3	1.3	0.94	0	ppm	N	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Errosion of natural deposits.

**Water Quality Test Results**

Definitions: The following tables contain scientific terms and measures, some of which may require explanation.

Avg: Regulatory compliance with some MCLs are based on running annual average of monthly samples.

Level 1 Assessment: A Level 1 assessment is a study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system.

Level 2 Assessment: A Level 2 assessment is a very detailed study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why an E. coli MCL violation has occurred and/or why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system on multiple occasions.

Maximum Contaminant Level or MCL: The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal or MCLG: The level of a contaminant in drinking water below

Disinfectants and Disinfection By-Products	Collection Date	Highest Level Detected	Range of Levels Detected	MCLG	MCL	Units	Violation	Likely Source of Contamination
Chlorine	2024	0.9	0.66 - 1	MRDLG = 4	MRDL = 4	ppm	N	Water additive used to control microbes.
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5)	2024	5	5 - 5	No goal for the total	60	ppb	N	By-product of drinking water disinfection.
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM)	2024	9	8.85 - 8.85	No goal for the total	80	ppb	N	By-product of drinking water disinfection.

**ANNUAL DRINKING WATER QUALITY REPORT**

urally-occurring or result from urban storm water runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.

- Pesticides and herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban storm water runoff, and residential uses.
- Organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban storm water runoff, and septic systems.
- Radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally-occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the EPAs Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. FDA regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population.

Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer under-

going chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. The drinking water supplier is responsible for providing high-quality drinking water and removing lead pipes, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components in your home. You share the responsibility for protecting yourself and your family from the lead in your home plumbing. You can take responsibility by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk. Before drinking tap water, flush your pipes for several minutes by running your tap, taking a shower, doing laundry or a load of dishes. You can also use a filter certified by an American National Standard Institute accredited certifier to reduce lead in drinking water. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested, contact Village of Lena at 815-369-4016. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

#### 2024 Regulated Contaminants Detected

which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

Maximum residual disinfectant level or MRDL: The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.

Maximum residual disinfectant level goal or MRDLG: The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

na: not applicable.

mrem: millirems per year (a measure of radiation absorbed by the body)

ppb: micrograms per liter or parts per billion - or one ounce in 7,350,000 gallons of water.

ppm: milligrams per liter or parts per million - or one ounce in 7,350 gallons of water.

Treatment Technique or TT: A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.



LEGAL NOTICES

ANNUAL DRINKING WATER QUALITY REPORT - Continued from previous page

Inorganic Contaminants	Collection Date	Highest Level Detected	Range of Levels Detected	MCLG	MCL	Units	Violation	Likely Source of Contamination
Barium	08/07/2023	0.41	0.33 - 0.41	2	2	ppm	N	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits.
Fluoride	08/07/2023	0.896	0.669 - 0.896	4	4.0	ppm	N	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories.
Iron	08/07/2023	0.55	0.49 - 0.55		1.0	ppm	N	This contaminant is not currently regulated by the USEPA. However, the state regulates. Erosion of natural deposits.
Manganese	08/07/2023	7.7	5.2 - 7.7	150	150	ppb	N	This contaminant is not currently regulated by the USEPA. However, the state regulates. Erosion of natural deposits.
Sodium	08/07/2023	10	6.1 - 10			ppb	N	Erosion from naturally occurring deposits. Used in water softener regeneration.
Radioactive Contaminants	Collection Date	Highest Level Detected	Range of Levels Detected	MCLG	MCL	Units	Violation	Likely Source of Contamination
Combined Radium 226/228	2024	3	1.2 - 3	0	5	pCi/L	N	Erosion of natural deposits.
Gross alpha excluding radon and uranium	04/20/2021	3.52	0 - 3.52	0	15	pCi/L	N	Erosion of natural deposits.

Due to favorable monitoring history, aquifer characteristics, and inventory of potential sources of contamination, our water supply was issued a vulnerability waiver renewal. VOCs are monitored once every 6 years and SOC's once every 9 years. We monitored in 2020 and had no detections.

(Published in The Shopper's Guide June 18, 2025)

473375

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COUNTY OF Stephenson - Freeport, ILLINOIS DEUTSCHE BANK NATIONAL TRUST COMPANY, AS TRUSTEE, IN TRUST FOR REGISTERED HOLDERS OF LONG BEACH MORTGAGE LOAN TRUST 2005-WL3, ASSET-BACKED CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2005-WL3 Plaintiff vs. JANET D. BODDIE; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS Defendant

24 FC 18

NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure entered in the above entitled cause Intercounty Judicial Sales Corporation will on July 9, 2025, at the hour 1:30 p.m., Security First Title Company, 205 West Stephenson Street, Freeport, IL 61032, sell to the highest bidder for cash, the following described mortgaged real estate:

LOT 14 IN BLOCK 2 OF BLACKHAWK GARDENS SUBDIVISION ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF, SAID PLAT RECORDED IN THE RECORDER'S OFFICE OF STEPHENSON COUNTY, ILLINOIS, IN BOOK "F"

OF PLATS, PAGE 14; SITUATED IN THE CITY OF FREEPORT, STEPHENSON COUNTY IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS. P.I.N. 18-19-06-128-020. Commonly known as 1442 S. BLACKHAWK AVE., FREEPORT, IL 61032.

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

For information call Sales Department at Plaintiff's Attorney, Robertson, Anschutz, Schneid, Crane & Partners, PLLC, 13010 Morris Road, Suite 450, Alpharetta, Georgia 30004. (708) 668-4410 ext. 52109. 24-186885 INTERCOUNTY JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION intercountyjudicialsales.com I3267176

(Published in The Shopper's Guide

June 4, 11 & 18, 2025) 472627

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT STEPHENSON COUNTY - FREEPORT, ILLINOIS US Bank Trust National Association, Not In Its Individual Capacity But Solely As Owner Trustee For VRMTG Asset Trust PLAINTIFF Vs. Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. as Trustee for First Franklin Mortgage Loan Trust 2006-FFB, Successor to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems Inc.; Eastland Feed & Grain, Inc.; Stephenson Service Company; Rabo AgriFinance LLC; Pro Legal Care LLC; Kipp Meyers, as Special Representative for Shanin J. Solt (deceased); Brynn Solt; Kennedy Solt; Unknown Heirs and Legatees of Shanin J. Solt DEFENDANTS No. 2023FC57

NOTICE BY PUBLICATION NOTICE IS GIVEN TO YOU: Unknown Heirs and Legatees of Shanin J. Solt That this case has been commenced in this Court against you and other defendants, praying for the foreclosure of a certain Mortgage conveying the premises described as follows, to-wit:

COMMONLY KNOWN AS: 504 Breezeway Dr Pearl City, IL 61062 and which said Mortgage was made by: Shanin J. Solt the Mortgagor(s), to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for NationPoint A Division of National City Bank, as Mortgagee, and recorded in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds of Stephenson County, Illinois, as Document No. 200600079290 Book 126 Page 2338; and for other relief; that summons was duly issued out of said Court against you as provided by law and that the said suit is now pending.

NOW, THEREFORE, UNLESS YOU file your answer or otherwise file your appearance in this case in the Office of the Clerk of this Court, Shanelle Bardell Clerk of the Circuit Court 15 North Galena Freeport, IL 61032 on or before July 4, 2025, A DEFAULT MAY BE ENTERED AGAINST YOU AT ANY TIME AFTER THAT DAY AND A JUDGMENT MAY BE ENTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRAYER OF SAID COMPLAINT. CODILIS & ASSOCIATES, P.C. Attorneys for Plaintiff

15W030 North Frontage Road, Suite 100 Burr Ridge, IL 60527 (630) 794-5300 DuPage # 15170 Winnebago # 531 Our File No. 14-23-06280 NOTE: This law firm is a debt collector. I3267307

(Published in The Shopper's Guide June 4, 11 & 18, 2025) 472755

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COUNTY OF Stephenson - Freeport, ILLINOIS U.S. Bank National Association Plaintiff vs. Evan C. Diaz; et. al. Defendant

24 FC 52 CALENDAR NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure entered in the above entitled cause Intercounty Judicial Sales Corporation will on July 16, 2025, at the hour 1:30 p.m., Security First Title Company, 205 West Stephenson Street, Freeport, IL 61032, sell to the highest bidder for cash, the following described mortgaged real estate: LOT NINE (9) IN BLOCK ONE (1) IN PARK HEIGHTS SUBDIVISION OF BLOCK FIVE (5) OF COATES' ADDI-

TION TO THE CITY OF FREEPORT; SITUATED IN THE TOWNSHIP OF FREEPORT, COUNTY OF STEPHENSON AND STATE OF ILLINOIS. P.I.N. 18-19-06-256-019. Commonly known as 1662 S. Chicago Avenue, Freeport, IL 61032.

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

For information call Sales Department at Plaintiff's Attorney, Codilis & Associates, P.C., 15W030 North Frontage Road, Suite 100, Burr Ridge, IL 60527. (630) 794-5300. 14-24-06857 INTERCOUNTY JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION intercountyjudicialsales.com I3267566

(Published in The Shopper's Guide June 11, 18 & 25, 2025) 473021



# LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT STEPHENSON COUNTY, ILLINOIS CARRINGTON MORTGAGE SERVICES, LLC, PLAINTIFF, VS. LINN PERKINS, SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF L BRUCE MCCONNELL, DECEASED; MEDALLION BANK; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS; KELLY MALOUF; LANE MCCONNELL; COLLEEN KLICH; PATRICK MCCONNELL; UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES OF L BRUCE MCCONNELL, DEFENDANTS. NO. 2024FC50 1317 WEST STEPHENSON STREET FREEPORT, IL 61032 NOTICE BY PUBLICATION NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN TO YOU, Unknown Owners and Non-Record Claimants Unknown Heirs and Lega-

tees of L Bruce McConnell defendants, that this case has been commenced in this Court against you and other defendants, asking for the foreclosure of a certain Mortgage conveying the premises described as follows, to wit: LOTS THREE (3) AND FOUR (4) OF ELM PARK SUBDIVISION OF WEST FREEPORT (NOW CITY OF FREEPORT); SITUATED IN THE TOWNSHIP OF FREEPORT, COUNTY OF STEPHENSON AND STATE OF ILLINOIS. Commonly known as: 1317 West Stephenson Street, Freeport, IL 61032 and which said Mortgage was made by, L Bruce McConnell a/k/a Bruce McConnell and Marie K McConnell a/k/a Marie K Krauser Mortgagor(s), to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as nominee for Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC Mortgagee, and recorded in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds of Stephenson County, Illinois, as Document No. 202100182368; and for other relief.

UNLESS YOU file your answer or otherwise file your appearance in this case, on or before July 18, 2025, A JUDGMENT OR DECREE BY DEFAULT MAY BE TAKEN AGAINST YOU FOR THE RELIEF ASKED IN THE COMPLAINT. You have been sued. To participate in the case, you MUST file an official document with the court within the time stated on this Notice called an "Appearance" and a document called an "Answer/Response". The Answer/Response is not required in small claims or eviction cases unless ordered by the court. If you do not file an Appearance and Answer/Response on time, the court may decide the case without hearing from you, and you could be held in default and lose the case. After you fill out the necessary documents, you need to electronically file (e-file) them with the court. To e-file, you must create an account with an e-filing service provider. For more information, go to ilcourts.info/efiling. If you cannot e-file, you can

get an exemption that allows you to file in-person or by mail. You may be charged filing fees, but if you cannot pay them, you can file an Application for Waiver of Court Fees. It is possible that the court will allow you to attend the first court date in this case in-person or remotely by video or phone. Contact the Circuit Court Clerk's office or visit the Court's website to find out whether this is possible and, if so, how to do this. Need help? Call or text Illinois Court Help at 833-411-1121 or go to ilcourthelp.gov for information about going to court, including how to fill out and file documents. You can also get free legal information and legal referrals at illinoislegalaid.org. All documents referred to in this Notice can be found at ilcourts.info/forms. Other documents may be available from your local Circuit Court Clerk's office or website. ¿Necesita ayuda? Llame o envíe un mensaje de texto a Illinois Court Help al 833-411-1121, o visite ilcourthelp.gov para obtener informaciv sobre los

casos de la corte y c/≥mo completar y presentar formularios. PURSUANT TO THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT, THE PLAINTIFF'S ATTORNEY IS DEEMED TO BE A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. McCalla Raymer Leibert Pierce, LLP Attorney for Plaintiff 1 N. Dearborn St. Suite 1200 Chicago, IL 60602 Ph. (312) 346-9088 File No. 24-19563IL-1133757 I3268253 (Published in The Shopper's Guide June 18 & 25, July 2, 2025) 473358

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON TOWNSHIP BUDGET

Notice is hereby given that a Tentative Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for the Township of Rush, 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 at the office of Garrett Toay, Township Supervisor, 115 W Main St, Warren, IL 61087, on or after 8:00 AM on May 1, 2025.

Notice is further given hereby that a public hearing on said Budget and Appropriation Ordinance will be held at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, June 10, 2025 at the Rush Town Hall, 2999 North Canyon Park Road, Stockton, IL 61085, and

that final hearing and action on this ordinance will be taken at this time.

Garrett Toay, Supervisor

Erica Bernhardt, Town Clerk

(Published in The Scoop Today June 18, 2025)

473264

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON ROAD DISTRICT BUDGET

Notice is hereby given that a Tentative Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Road Purposes of the Township of Rush, 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 at the office of Garrett Toay, Township Supervisor, 115 W Main St, Warren, IL 61087, on or after 8:00 AM on May 1, 2025.

Notice is further given hereby that a public hearing on said Budget and Appropriation Ordinance will be held at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, June 10, 2025 at the Rush Town Hall, 2999 North Canyon Park Road, Stockton, IL 61085, and that final hearing and action on this ordinance will be taken at this time.

Erica Bernhardt, Town Clerk

(Published in The Scoop Today June 18, 2025)

473265



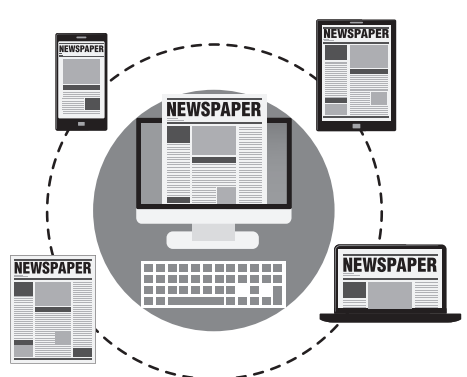
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462656

473400

## Village of Lena Public Notice Zoning Board of Appeals Hearing

A Zoning Board of Appeals Hearing will be held by the ZBA on Monday, July 7, 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



# Despite victories, major higher education policy bills stall in General Assembly

By Peter Hancock  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Gov. JB Pritzker got some of what he requested from the General Assembly in the area of higher education, but some of his biggest requests fell short.

Pritzker's wins include a \$10 million increase in need-based student financial aid and passage of a direct admission program to make it easier for eligible Illinois high school and community college students to apply to public universities.

But lawmakers did not approve the overall funding increase that Pritzker requested at the start of the session, settling on a 1 percent bump in their operational budgets instead of the 3 percent the governor proposed. Pritzker's office, however, has said there are contingencies to provide an additional 2 percent in the event of significant cuts in federal funding.

They also did not pass other major higher education policy initiatives, including Pritzker's plan to allow community colleges to offer four-year bachelor's degrees in certain high-demand career fields, and a long-sought overhaul in the way Illinois funds its public universities.

"You don't get everything done in one year," Pritzker said during a post-session news conference when asked about several of his initiatives that failed to pass this year. "Sometimes they (lawmakers) spend two years, four years, six years, trying to get something big done."

## Community college proposal

In his State of the State address in February, Pritzker called for allowing community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees as a way of expanding access to those programs, especially for older, nontraditional students who may not live close to a four-year university.

"With lower tuition rates and a greater presence across the state—especially in rural areas—community colleges provide the flexibility and affordability students need," Pritzker told the General Assembly. "This is a consumer-driven, student-centered proposal that will help fill the needs of regional employers in high-need sectors and create a pathway to stable, quality jobs for more Illinoisans."

In the legislature, however, the proposal ran into stiff opposition from several sources, including universities that said the plan lacked sufficient safeguards to prevent community colleges from offer-

ing duplicative programs that would siphon prospective students away from their campuses.

Amid that opposition, House Bill 3717, which was carried by Rep. Tracy Katz-Muhl, D-Northbrook, failed to advance out of a key committee before a mid-session deadline in March. And even after amendments were negotiated that led to universities dropping their opposition and the bill was reassigned to a different committee, it still failed to gain enough traction to advance to the House floor.

That was mainly due to opposition from the Legislative Black Caucus, whose members said it still posed a threat to the three universities in Illinois that serve primarily Black and Latino students—Chicago State University; Governors State University; and Northeastern Illinois University—which are all located in the Chicago metropolitan

area alongside multiple community colleges.

"Chicago State is hemorrhaging," Rep. Curtis Tarver, D-Chicago, said during a May 23 House Executive Committee hearing. "And you all, as an administration, are handing them Band-Aids and they need stitches. And then you come in and you provide a bill that's going to be even worse for them, with 11 community colleges within 25 miles of them. And I'm saying as we sit here that the Black Caucus has an issue with the bill."

## Funding overhaul

Another proposal that failed to advance called for establishing a new formula for funding public universities.

House Bill 1581 and its companion Senate Bill 13, known as the Adequate and Equitable Public University Funding Act, called for establishing a funding struc-

ture like the Evidence-Based Funding formula used for K-12 education.

That formula would use objective standards to determine an adequate level of funding for each university. The bills then called for adding as much as \$1.7 billion in new funding for universities over the next 10-15 years, with most of the funding going toward schools furthest away from their adequacy target.

The proposal grew out of a commission formed in 2021 within the Illinois Board of Higher Education. That commission worked for nearly three years to develop a proposal and issued its report and recommendations to the General Assembly in March 2024.

Under the proposed formula, Western Illinois University in Macomb would have earned top priority for new funding because it is currently

See **BILLS**, Page 19

The Scoop Today & Shopper's Guide

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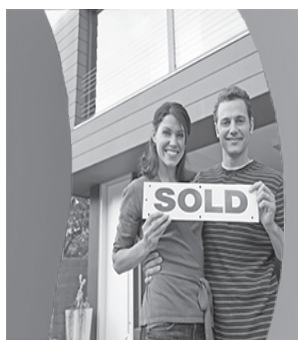
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# Economist: Rural economy softening, but not like 1980s

By Daniel Grant

FARMWEEK

Creighton University's Rural Mainstreet Index shows economic conditions are certainly tightening across America's Heartland.

But the downturn so far has not reached anywhere near what was experienced during the infamous 1980s farm crisis, according to Ernie Goss, chair in regional economics at Creighton's Heider College of Business.

"Farmers have been very judicious in paying back their loans and getting loans. And bankers have been judicious about lending," Goss told DeLloss Jahnke of the RFD Radio Network. "So, right now, the delinquency rates are not that high."

"Now, (delinquency rates) are up, but not as high as I would've expected," he said. "This is not a return of the 1980s (when there was double-digit interest rates and an alarming rate of farm foreclosures)."

The Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago reported the index of repayment rates on non-real estate farm loans declined in the first quarter compared to last year. It was the sixth consecutive quarterly decline.

But farmland values in the Chicago Fed's district increased another 1 percent last quarter compared to the previous year. Meanwhile, average cash rental rates for 2025 dipped 2 percent in the Chicago Fed's district, which marked the first decline since 2020 as commodity prices remain under pressure.

In fact, a majority of bank CEOs (68 percent) surveyed in 10 states, including Illinois, for Creighton's Rural Mainstreet Index named lower commodity prices as the No. 1 threat to ag and rural economies.

"The economic outlook for 2025 farm income remains weak, according to bank CEOs," Goss said.

Overall, the Rural Mainstreet Index fell below growth neutral in May for the 20th time in the past 21 months.

Other key findings in the latest index from around the Midwest showed farmland prices sank below growth neutral for the 12th time in the past 13 months and farm equipment sales dropped below growth neutral for the 21st consecutive month.

Goss believes the current economic challenges make a strong case for the Federal Reserve to lower interest

rates during its next meeting June 17-18. But he admits the likelihood of a move either way is probably a "coin flip" at this point.

"We need to see the Fed reduce interest rates," Goss said. "I'd like to see a half-percentage point cut. That would be somewhat market-moving, and it would signal more reductions to come."

"I do think there's more danger of a slowing and even recessionary economy rather than higher inflationary pressure," Goss said of yet another reason he believes the Fed should reduce interest rates in the months ahead.

*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.*

## •Bills

(Continued from page 17)

funded at only 46 percent of its adequacy target. Northeastern Illinois University and Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, at 47 percent of adequacy, would have been next in line.

But the state's flagship institution, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, currently at 89 percent of adequacy, would rank at the bottom of the priority list. For that reason, the U of I System opposed the plan.

"The University of Illinois System is absolutely dedicated to expanding equitable access, enhancing student success and promoting statewide economic growth," Nick Jones, executive vice president and vice president of academic affairs for the U of I System, told a Senate committee in April. "The proposed legislation penalizes institutions that provide the most support for underrepresented and rural students while failing to ensure long-term access."

Senate Majority Leader

Kimberly Lightford, D-Westchester, who sponsored the Senate bill and was a cochair of the study commission, said she was disappointed it did not pass this year, but vowed working for a more equitable funding formula.

"While it is far past time to pass an equitable funding model, I am reminded that many of the comprehensive plans I've passed have taken years of research, input and negotiations," she said in an email statement. "This legislation is no different."

Robin Steans, president of the education advocacy group Advance Illinois, who also served on the commission, said in a separate statement

that she expects lawmakers to continue discussing the bill over the summer. Action could come during the fall veto session or early in the 2026 regular session, she said.

"Eventual adoption of the Adequate & Equitable Funding bill represents a significant change, one that requires new investment by our state in what remains the surest path to greater mobility and opportunity for Illinois families," she said. "The questions and comments made during legislative committee meetings indicate that Illinois lawmakers get that, and powerful testimony from the state's university leaders drove home the urgency of this issue."

## REAL ESTATE NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COUNTY OF Stephenson - Freeport, ILLINOIS  
U.S. Bank National Association Plaintiff  
vs.  
Evan C. Diaz; et. al.  
Defendant

24 FC 52

CALENDAR

NOTICE OF SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure entered in the above entitled cause Intercounty Judicial Sales Corporation will on July 16, 2025, at the hour 1:30 p.m., Security First Title Company, 205 West Stephenson Street, Freeport, IL 61032, sell to the highest bidder for cash, the following described mortgaged real estate:

P.I.N. 18-19-06-256-019.  
Commonly known as 1662 S. Chicago Avenue, Freeport, IL 61032.

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

For information call Sales Department at Plaintiff's Attorney, Codilis & Associates, P.C., 15W030 North Frontage Road, Suite 100, Burr Ridge, IL 60527. (630) 794-5300. 14-24-06857 INTERCOUNTY JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION intercountyjudicialsales.com 13267566  
(Published in The Shopper's Guide June 11, 18 & 25, 2025) 473022

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COUNTY OF Stephenson - Freeport, ILLINOIS  
DEUTSCHE BANK NATIONAL

TRUST COMPANY, AS TRUSTEE, IN TRUST FOR REGISTERED HOLDERS OF LONG BEACH MORTGAGE LOAN TRUST 2005-WL3, ASSET-BACKED CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2005-WL3 Plaintiff  
vs.  
JANET D. BODDIE; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS Defendant

24 FC 18

NOTICE OF SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure entered in the above entitled cause Intercounty Judicial Sales Corporation will on July 9, 2025, at the hour 1:30 p.m., Security First Title Company, 205 West Stephenson Street, Freeport, IL 61032, sell to the highest bidder for cash, the following described mortgaged real estate:

P.I.N. 18-19-06-128-020.  
Commonly known as 1442 S. BLACKHAWK AVE., FREEPORT, IL 61032.

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

For information call Sales Department at Plaintiff's Attorney, Robertson, Anschutz, Schneid, Crane & Partners, PLLC, 13010 Morris Road, Suite 450, Alpharetta, Georgia 30004. (708) 668-4410 ext. 52109. 24-186885 INTERCOUNTY JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION intercountyjudicialsales.com 13267176  
(Published in The Shopper's Guide June 4, 11 & 18, 2025) 472628

## Answers

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

PUZZLE 1

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

CROSSWORD

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

PUZZLE 2

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



## FREELANCE REPORTERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS NEEDED

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Answers: A. ignite B. flash C. boom D. colorful



## Wise timing for wisdom tooth removal

Wisdom teeth, otherwise known as the third and final set of adult molars, generally emerge between the ages of 17 to 24. These teeth erupt later than any other teeth because the face and chewing muscles require time to grow enough to accommodate them. However, even with this prolonged wait, it is not unusual for this third set of molars to develop and or erupt abnormally.

The jaws of early humans were broader and wisdom teeth, which were essential to provide the powerful pressures necessary to tear and grind raw meat, had plenty of room to emerge and line up with the other molars. In fact, these early wisdom teeth were the largest of the molars. As humankind continued to evolve our jaws and dental arches became shorter, our faces more retracted and our growth slowed as our lifespans



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

increased. Therefore, even with their biologically dictated delayed emergence, there is often simply not enough space in the arch to accommodate this third set of molars.

Wisdom teeth that are healthy, have enough room to grow and emerge fully in the right place and in a functional bite, can be cleaned daily and have bone, gums, and teeth around them that are healthy may not require extraction. Fortunately, advances in dental imaging and monitoring allow your dentist to keep a close eye on wisdom teeth as they

develop. Early detection of impacted wisdom teeth allows intervention before symptoms and damage can occur.

Without adequate space, wisdom teeth cannot develop normally. They may be so crowded in the jaw they are only able to partially immerse (partially impacted) or completely trapped and not capable of erupting at all (fully impacted).

In either situation, these molars can grow at a variety of angles, even perpendicular or lying down with the crown pointing to the second molar. Pressure from these developing molars can cause damage and further crowding to surrounding teeth. Food and bacteria often get trapped around the edges and between or under the gums of a partially impacted wisdom tooth. This not only increases the incidence of decay but can lead to a

painful periodontal infection called pericoronitis.

Impacted wisdom teeth can form a cyst on or near them. This can damage the roots of nearby teeth and the jawbone. For people that do not see a dentist regularly you should be aware that these problems can brew beneath the surface for weeks or months, going from no or mild discomfort to extremely painful quickly and without warning. Warning symptoms, including pain and stiffness in the jaw, persistent bad breath, and/or bad taste in your mouth from decay, sinus congestion, pressure or pain, and pain or sensitivity around the teeth in the back of your mouth when you brush, and gum inflammation, should not be ignored. Schedule an exam with your dentist immediately to avoid an emergency. Depending on the severity of the tooth impaction, your dentist may

refer you to an oral surgeon.

While people of any age can have their wisdom teeth extracted if these teeth are creating problems, the preferred age target is between 18 and 24, when the roots have not fully bonded to the jawbone. If your child's dentist recommends wisdom teeth removal, summer is the perfect time to schedule this procedure. This helps assure that your son or daughter will not experience an avoidable dental emergency when they are far away from home. It also means that your child will be able to relax and recover without the added stress of missing school or practice if they participate in collegiate sports. It is better to avoid doing strenuous physical activities like sports in the first few days after having teeth pulled because that could affect the healing process. This is also true

even if you're already feeling better. Scheduling wisdom tooth removal in the summer also helps avoid the winter cold and flu season when your immune system might be more vulnerable.

## •Reform

(Continued from page 12)

law. Lawmakers appropriated \$75 million for the fund this year, in line with Pritzker's proposal.

Other pension reform was passed for Chicago police officers and firefighters. Lawmakers unanimously passed House Bill 3657 that aligns calculations of Tier 2 benefits for Chicago first responders with those in the rest of the state. Chicago officials warned the plan will cost the city billions, however.

Both the budget and Chicago pension bill still need the governor's signature.

**Big And Meaty Frozen CANADIAN SNOW CRAB CLUSTERS**  
5-8 ct  
**9.99 lb**

**WHOLE SEEDLESS WATERMELON**  
**4.88 ea**

**Certified Angus Beef® brand TOP SIRLOIN FILETS** 8 oz  
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Prices Effective: Wednesday, June 18 thru Tuesday, June 24, 2025

**WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS**

Frito-Lay DORITOS OR SUNCHIPS Select Varieties 7 - 10.75 oz **3/\$9** WHEN YOU BUY 3

Shullsburg BAGELS Select Varieties 5pk **1.49**

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Juicy Juice 100% JUICE Select Varieties 64 oz or 8 ct **2/\$5**

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SATURDAY & SUNDAY  
JUNE 21<sup>ST</sup> & 22<sup>ND</sup>, 2025

US Gov't Insp BONE-IN PORK LOIN HALF **1.59 lb**

US Gov't Insp BONE-IN PORK LOIN HALF **1.79 lb**

Fresh Cryovac Pack PORK BELLIES **3.49 lb**

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Deli Cold Reheat EGG ROLLS Select Varieties 4 ct **2.99**

EVERCRISP APPLES **1.49 lb**

JUMBO CANTALOUPE **2/\$5**

Orv's PIZZERIA THIN CRUST PIZZA Select Varieties 13.35 - 16.1 oz **3.99**

Orv's ULTIMATE RIZER PIZZA Select Varieties 25.45 - 28.45 oz **3.99**

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Wish-bone or Western SALAD DRESSING Select Varieties 15 oz **2/\$4**

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US Gov't Insp BACON WRAPPED CENTER CUT BONELESS PORK CHOPS 8 Oz **2/\$3.99**

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