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YOUR FREE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2025

Black bear observed in Jo Daviness and Carroll counties

*Residents encouraged to
remove food sources*

Bear sightings in Illinois are rare but not unprecedented.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) is reminding residents of Jo Daviess and Carroll counties that a black bear has been observed by multiple landowners over the past several weeks in the vicinity of Mississippi Palisades State Park and, in recent days, frequenting private residences south and east of Galena.

Seeing a bear may be a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and their presence should not necessarily be perceived as a threat to human safety. Nevertheless, it's important to remember bears are wild animals and should be treated as such.

IDNR encourages residents throughout Jo Daviess and Carroll counties to avoid direct encounters with this bear and to check their property for food sources that may attract it to their residences. Through learned behavior, bears often investigate anything that may yield a food reward, such as bird feeders, barbeque grills, garbage cans, and dog food. Once a bear finds a food source, it

will likely return, so prevention is key.

Human conflicts with bears can be prevented by following these Bear Wise basics and by using the BearWise checklist:

- Never feed or approach bears.
- Secure food, garbage, and recycling.
- Remove bird feeders where bears are active.
- Avoid leaving pet food outdoors.
- Thoroughly clean and store grills and smokers after each use.
- Alert neighbors to bear activity.

People who encounter this bear should give it sufficient space while backing away slowly and quietly. If encounters with this animal persist after cleaning up food sources, contact Chris Jacques, IDNR's large carnivore program manager, at chris.jacques@illinois.gov or an IDNR district wildlife biologist for advice.

For more information on how to live responsibly with bears visit IDNR's Wildlife Illinois website.

Go online to report a bear sighting to IDNR.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Lena Lions Club 74th Annual Fall Festival

The Lena Lions Club announces their 74th Annual Fall Festival to be held on Sept. 5 and Sept. 6. This year's Lena Lion's Fall Festival will include entertainment by the Ukulele Express 815 on Saturday, Sept. 6 at 3 p.m. This is a five-piece ukulele and vocal group from Freeport. See inside for more information.

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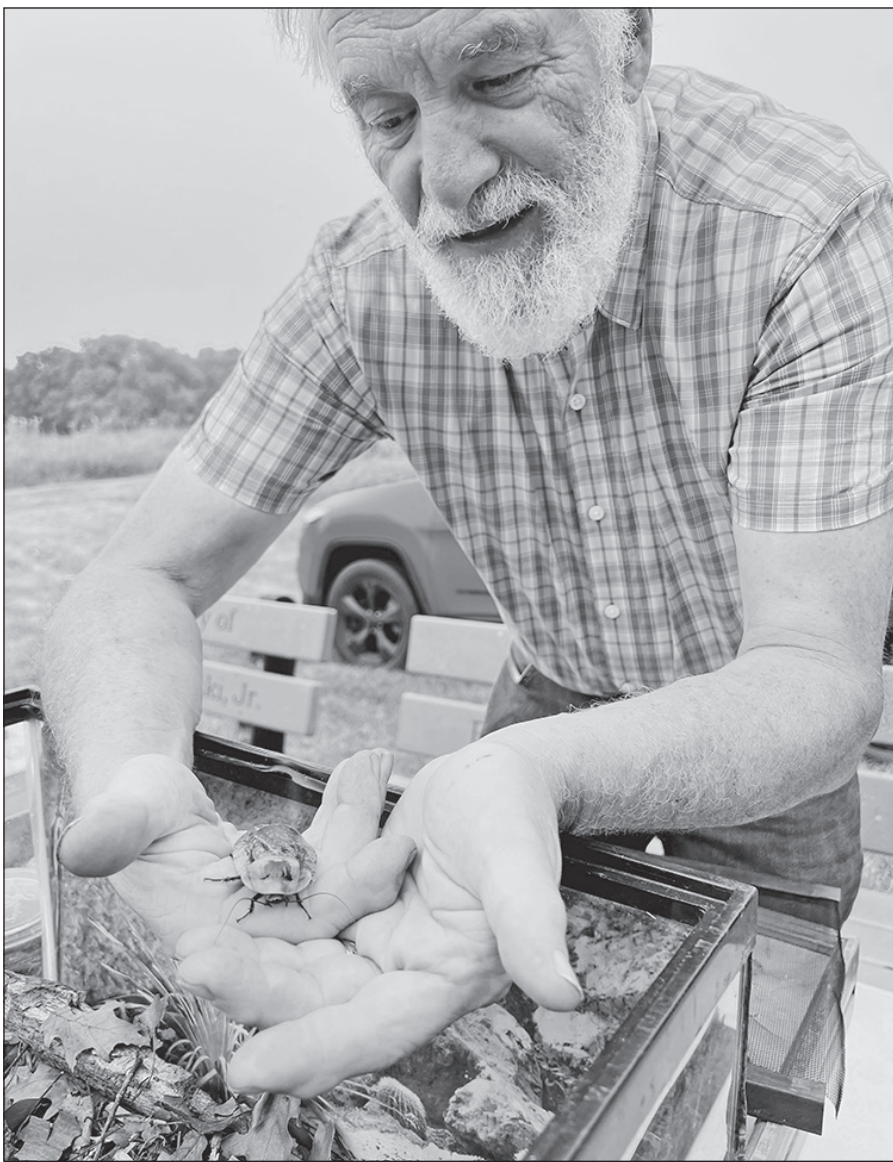
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Weird and Wonderful Insects

All are invited to join Chicago Field Museum insect educators and scientists to see their amazing collections of local, native insects on July 26. This free, family friendly event will be held at the Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation's Casper Bluff Nature Reserve, 870 S Pilot Knob Rd, Galena, IL starting at 6 p.m. There will also be insect displays collected by local entomologists on hand for viewing. Learn how to use a sweep net to see what weird and wonderful insects you can find in the early summer prairie. Stay after the sun goes down to see and learn about the moths and other winged bugs of the night that are drawn to a special lighted viewing sheet. Take away knowledge and wonder of the strange but beautiful biodiversity that calls northwest Illinois home. RSVPs not needed. This event is subject to weather related cancellations. Please check the JDCF website at www.jdcf.org for updates.

Around the Northern Hills

July is celebrated as National Ice Cream Month, a time to indulge in one of America's favorite treats while also recognizing the vital connection between ice cream and agriculture. The creation of ice cream involves a variety of agricultural products, including milk, cream, sugar, and flavorings like vanilla, strawberries, or chocolate. Dairy farmers play a crucial role in providing the milk that forms the base of ice cream. In fact, the entire ice cream industry is rooted in farming, from the cows grazing on pasture to the farm-fresh fruits and ingredients that enhance each scoop. National Ice Cream Month not only gives us a reason to enjoy this delicious dessert but



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

also serves as a reminder of the hardworking farmers who make it possible. Then again, who needs an excuse to enjoy a delicious dish of ice cream?

Elizabeth Community Fair

Make sure to come out to the Elizabeth Community Fair this weekend. The Young Leaders will be at the Fair on Saturday holding the Kiddie Tractor Pull at 1 p.m. Registration starts at 12:30 p.m. at the lower ball

diamond at the fairgrounds.

Peach orders

Peach orders are due by Wednesday, July 23 with payment and order form. Checks should be made payable to the Jo Daviess County Farm Bureau. Price is \$43/box for members and \$48/box for non-farm bureau members. Pick-up will be in the farm bureau basement with an anticipated delivery Aug. 6, depending on weather. Peaches must be picked up the day of delivery to ensure freshness. Order forms are available at our office or on our website.

Farm Fun Fact

July is National Peach Month. Have you ordered your fresh, Illinois grown peaches yet?

Projected ag trade deficit climbs

By Tammie Sloup
FARMWEEK

A USDA trade outlook report forecasts the U.S. ag trade deficit to slightly climb from its previous quarterly projection.

The report, dated May 29 but not released until June 2, puts the ag trade deficit at \$49.5 billion for fiscal year 2025, up from the \$49 billion forecasted in February. The fiscal year runs from Oct. 1 to Sept. 30.

U.S. ag exports are forecast at \$170.5 billion while imports are estimated at \$220 billion, according to the quarterly report.

USDA's quarterly trade outlook did not include a written analysis, which is typically part of the report.

As for the delay, a USDA spokesperson said the report was released later because of internal review.

"The report was hung up in internal clearance process and was not finalized in time for its typical deadline," USDA spokesperson Alec Varsamis said in a statement. "Given this report is not

statutory as with many other reports USDA does, the department is undergoing a review of all of its non-statutory reports, including this one, to determine next steps."

The \$49.5 billion deficit would beat the previous record of \$31.8 billion set in 2024.

The forecast for U.S. ag exports included:

- Grain and feed export values at \$37.9 billion, down from \$38.8 billion in FY 2024 and up slightly from the February forecast for 2025.

- Oilseeds and products exports at \$33.2 billion, down from \$36 billion in 2024 and up slightly from the February forecast.

- Livestock, poultry and dairy exports a bit higher at \$38.8 billion from \$38.7 billion in 2024, but down \$900 million from the February forecast.

- Horticultural products to continue to climb year-over-year to \$41.2 billion in 2025, up from \$40.9 billion the previous year. However, the projection is slightly down from the February forecast.

- Ethanol exports at \$4.3 billion, an increase from \$4.17 billion in 2024 and up slightly from the February forecast.

Earlier this year, President Donald Trump began announcing sweeping global tariffs, of which most have been paused or decreased.

Trump's reciprocal tariffs that he announced in April were prompted by the "large and persistent trade deficit that is driven by the absence of reciprocity in our trade relationships and other harmful policies like currency manipulation and exorbitant value-added taxes perpet-

uated by other countries," Trump said at the time.

Those tariffs have since been challenged in court and lawsuits are making their way through the judicial system.

The U.S. and China have been in a tit for tat with tariffs, but agreed to temporarily pause triple-digit tariffs for 90 days to "establish a mechanism to continue discussions about economic and trade relations."

The 145 percent U.S. levy on most Chinese imports was reduced to 30 percent effective on May 14, while the 125 percent Chinese duties on U.S. goods dropped to 10 percent.

The USDA report forecasts agricultural exports to China at \$18.5 billion, down \$3.5 billion from the February forecast and a decrease of \$7.2 billion from 2024.

The trade outlook also looked at world per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth, which is expected to reach 1.8 percent in calendar year 2025, dipping from 2.7 percent previously forecasted, according to USDA.

In the key emerging markets of Brazil, Russia, India, Indonesia and China, per capita GDP growth is expected to slow to 4.6 percent on average in 2025 from 5 percent in 2024.

The next quarterly trade outlook is scheduled for release on Aug. 28. Read the full report at bit.ly/3Ho-q2eE.

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

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Card Shower

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Lena Lions Club 74th Annual Fall Festival

The Lena Lions Club announces their 74th Annual Fall Festival, known as "The Cadillac of Small-Town Festivals", on Sept. 5 and Sept. 6.

Free entertainment on Friday, Sept. 5 starts at 7 p.m. with Grass Attack. Saturday after the parade the Ukulele Express 815 will perform at 3 p.m. The Stingrays will perform on Saturday at 7 p.m. and 9 p.m.

Back again this year is the 50/50 Cash Raffle. Tickets are available for \$10 each or three for \$20 and can be purchased from Lion members or at the festival. The winning ticket will be drawn on Saturday, Sept. 6 at the close of the festival. A second-place prize of \$250 Lena Money gift certificate and third-place prize of \$100 Lena Money gift certificate will also be awarded.

The Lena Lions will also sell raffle tickets for the 2025 Polaris Zenith Blue UTV SP570 Ranger to be given away on Saturday at approximately 11 p.m. The tickets cost \$10 per ticket or three for \$20. A \$200 Lena

Money gift certificate is the second prize, and a \$100 Lena Money gift certificate will be the third prize.

Skinner's Amusements returns for the 65th year with carnival rides for all ages in the downtown parking lot starting at 6 p.m. on Friday and 2 p.m. on Saturday. Merchandise Bingo and the Ham Stand, Lion's operated favorites, will be in their usual places on Main Street. No pets will be allowed on the midway except for service dogs for people with disabilities. Credit cards will be accepted again this year to purchase ride tickets.

The Lena Lions famous "Pork Chop on a Stick", Le-Win Sports Association Food Stand, and other favorites will be providing food in their usual spots. Favorites like cotton candy, elephant ears, ice cream, and soft drinks will be available.

The theme of this year's parade is "Community Pride" and will step off from the Old School Apartments at 12 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 6. A flyover by the Freeport Pilot's Association will start the parade, taking the same route through town as previous years. High school bands, church floats, Scouts, 4-H groups, antique and classic cars, antique tractors, and area fire trucks will be featured. Kids are encouraged to decorate their bikes and participate in the parade.

Parade entry registration starts at 9 a.m. Please, no 4-wheel drive tractors, du-



The Stingrays will perform at 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 6 at the Lena Lion's Fall Festival. The Stingrays play the greatest 50's, 60's, 70's rock and roll ever written – authentically and passionately at concerts and festivals throughout the Midwest.

SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

News briefs

Stephenson County VA Pantry

The Stephenson County VA Pantry is currently in need of deodorant, hand soap, dish soap, razors, toilet paper, mouthwash, cans of fruits and vegetables, 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.

Lena American Legion Auxiliary Cookout

The Lena American Legion Auxiliary will be cooking the delicious sandwiches at Sullivan's Grill on Friday, July 18 and Saturday, July 19 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Salvation Army of Freeport July events

Christmas in July is on July 18 and July 19. Battle of the Badges will be held on July 18 at the Walmart in Freeport. Family Game Night will be held on July 26 from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

In addition to these events, the Salvation Army is collecting bottled water donations which can be dropped off at 106 W Exchange St., in Freeport.

als, or semis. A valid driver's license will be required to drive tractors in the parade. Look for the "pork chops on a stick" as well

as raffle tickets that will be available during the parade. For parade registration and information, contact Bill Crichton at 815-291-9361.

Illinois Supreme Court amends policy on remote court appearances

Chief Justice Mary Jane Theis and the Illinois Supreme Court announced recently amendments to the Illinois Supreme Court Policy on Remote Court Appearances in Civil Proceedings (Policy) that are intended to give courts and justice partners concrete tools to enhance and improve their existing remote court practices.

"The ability to attend court remotely helps increase access to justice in both urban and rural areas," Chief Justice Theis said. "These amendments will help Illinois' courts continue to improve the remote court experience."

The amended Policy reaffirms the Illinois Supreme Court's commitment to remote court appearances in many different types of circuit court proceedings, particularly for non-evidentiary and uncontested matters, and the various benefits remote court appearances offer judges, court staff, lawyers, litigants, and other court users. These amendments

shorten the Policy in length, reduce redundancies with Supreme Court Rule 45 and its Committee Comments, and expand its applicability to all circuit court proceedings.

"The last five years have shown us that while people want to participate in their court cases, all too often, they must choose between going to court or risk losing their wages or jobs, find alternative childcare, or expend significant resources and time to travel to the courthouse," said Judge Jorge L. Ortiz, Chair of the Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Access to Justice (ATJ). "Remote court appearances make these decisions a little easier, and it is incredible to see people accessing justice from public libraries, workplace break rooms, and hospitals. The Supreme Court's ongoing commitment to meet the community where it is at through remote court appearances is admirable and inspiring."

The Illinois Supreme Court

adopted the current Policy in 2020, with the COVID-19 pandemic significantly accelerating the adoption of remote technologies. Beginning in 2023, the Commission on Access to Justice's Remote Appearance Committee (Committee) started reviewing the Policy with the goal of making it a closer reflection of the current remote court appearance landscape in Illinois circuit courts.

Moreover, the committee updated the bench card on Remote Court Appearances in Circuit Courts. This two-page resource is a helpful reference for judges making decisions about remote appearances from the bench.

The amended Policy was proposed by ATJ. ATJ is focused on helping self-represented litigants, limited English proficient litigants, and litigants with a disability access courts while also supporting the judiciary and other court staff in ensuring justice for all.

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The Scoop Today (USPS #25-737) is published weekly by Rock Valley Publishing, LLC, 7124 Windsor Lake Pkwy., Ste. 4, Loves Park, IL 61111-3802.

Periodical Postage Paid at Rockford, IL.

POSTMASTER: send address changes to The Scoop Today, 7124 Windsor Lake Pkwy., Ste. 4, Loves Park, IL 61111-3802.

Address for payment, correspondence and any other inquiries: 1102 ANN STREET, DELAVAN, WI 53115

EDITOR: Kathleen Cruger

Advertising Sales: Cyndee Stiefel • lenaads@rvpublishing.com

Telephone: 815-369-4112

Email: News/Letters to the Editor and Classifieds: scoopshopper@rvpublishing.com

Ads: ads@rvpublishing.com • **Legals:** legals@rvpublishing.com

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473036

By Victoria Hansen

UV Safety Month is observed in July to raise awareness about the dangers of UV radiation and the importance of protecting our skin from the sun's harmful rays. It's a great time to remind everyone, especially agricultural workers, to take precautions when working outdoors to prevent skin cancer. Remember to wear sunscreen, protective clothing, and seek shade whenever possible. Stay safe in the sun!

1. Wear Sunglasses: Protect your eyes from the sun's harmful UV rays by wearing sunglasses whenever you're outside. Look for sunglasses that have UVA and UVB protection.

2. Apply Sunscreen: Make sure to apply sunscreen with at least 15 SPF to all exposed skin. Reapply every two hours and after swimming or sweating.

3. Check the UV Index: The UV Index is a measure of the strength of the sun's UV radiation at a particular location. Check the index before heading out and if it's high, take extra precautions.

4. Wear Protective Clothing: Cover up with protective clothing such as wide brimmed hats, loose-fitting long-sleeved shirts, and pants when possible. Tightly woven fabrics are best at blocking UV rays.

Volunteers needed

The Stephenson County Farm Bureau is looking for Farm Bureau members to help at the Farm Fun Zone during the Stephenson County fair. Volunteers are needed Tuesday, July 22 through Saturday, July 26. Volunteer times are daily in three shifts: 12 p.m. to 3 p.m., 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Volunteers will be provided with admission to the Stephenson County Fair and coupons for the Beef Corral and Hog House. If you would like to volunteer, please call our office at 815-232-3186 or email office@stephensoncfb.org.

IFB Summer Field Day to highlight nutrient loss research, best practices

Illinois Farm Bureau (IFB) will host nine Nutrient Stewardship Field Days this summer for farmers and industry partners to collaborate and discuss ongoing research and innovative approaches to nutrient stewardship. "Nutrient Stewardship Field Days are a grassroots, community-driven effort to promote farming practices that help reduce nutrient runoff into our waterways," said Bena Pegg, IFB Environmental Program Manager. "Each field day is unique, offering new insights and data that counties are gathering to help us better understand best management practices for effective nutrient use."

Farmers, as well as those interested in learning more about agriculture's role in protecting the environment, are invited to join IFB, its membership and partnering organizations to learn more about past and current Illinois conservation practices and research. A schedule for the 2025 Summer Nutrient Stewardship Field Days is listed below with dates, hosting County Farm Bureau, RSVP phone number, and approximate location. More information and downloadable flyers are available at ilfb.org/FieldDays. Each field day will have a flyer posted about one month prior to their event.

Summer Field Days and topics


Bureau County Farm Bureau, July 29, 9 a.m. to noon, 29053 1500 East St., Walnut. University of Illinois Associate Professor Andrew Margenot and his team, in partnership with Practical Farmers of Iowa, will present findings from a 10-year tile drainage study covering 1,000 acres. The data includes nitrate and phosphorus trends across two major watersheds. RSVP by July 24 to 815-875-6468.

LaSalle County Farm Bureau, July 30, 4 to 7 p.m., Isenmann Farm, 1935 N. 12th Rd., Streator. University of Illinois researchers Andrew Margenot, Luke Bergschneider, Angela Kent and Sarah Leskanich will present their latest developments in nutrient management, genetics and best management practices. Key topics will include legacy phosphorus, water quality monitoring, the NSave corn variety and innovative nutrient management techniques. This event aims to bridge scientific research with practical applications in the field. Dinner provided. RSVP by July 28 to 815-433-0371.

Jo Daviess County Farm Bureau, Aug. 1, 1 to 5 p.m., first driveway south of 4629 IL-78 S., Stockton. This field day invites Greg Thoren, who manages a cattle and fenceless grazing system called "e-shepherd." Thoren will speak on the accessibility of the e-shepherd program, as well as his experience growing non-GMO corn, edamame soy and other grains. He will also discuss a new intercropping system with 60-inch row corn and forage cropping. Dinner provided. RSVP by July 26 to 815-858-2235.

Will County Farm Bureau, Aug. 4, 435 Goodenow Rd., Beecher. This field day will feature visits to several farms across Will County with a focus on nutrient management practices. The day will begin at the home of Will CFB Foundation member Rita Ludtke, where guests will board a hayrack ride to tour the featured sites. University

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Shopper's Guide



Panthers building back in hopes of another postseason run

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Highland Community College announces Spring 2025 Dean's List

Highland Community College proudly announces the dean's list for the Spring 2025 semester. Students who have completed 12 credit hours or more during the semester and have a minimum 3.25 grade point average (GPA), based on a 4.0 scale, are included on the dean's list. The Highest Honors are awarded to students with a perfect 4.0 GPA. High Honors are given to students with a 3.50 to 3.99 GPA, and Honors students have earned a GPA between 3.25 and 3.49.

Highest Honors

Elizabeth, IL: Heather Cenek-Tingle

Freeport, IL: Corissa Baker, Sophie Buzzell, Cesar Castro Rodriguez, Morgan Cox, Kayleigh Cusimano, Dustin Dale, Cameron Dolieslager, Amanda Evon, Pamela Fane, Saige Falconer, Patrick Fowler, Kylene Gillette, Heidi Heck, Kenton Johnson, Lily Johnson, Mi-

chael Johnson, Colin Kuhn, Arazara Lassandro, Alex Lora Matos, Thad Manning, Emrie Martin, Taryn Mathews, Anne Mihm, Nino Munjishvili, James Omarrah, Maria Ortiz, Jorge Pena, Luis Quintero, Michael Roberson, Rachel Salazar, Olivia Schroeder, Evie Stingley, Christopher Suarez, Jesse Suter, Qianyi Wei, Amelia Wenzel, Sharqusha Wright, Natalie Yeoman

Lena, IL: Hailey Carr, Aleeyah Erving, Janessa Esser, Evelyn Karnatz, Casey Klever, Charmae Koch, Pacey Martin, Natalie McNutt, Sarah Plapp, Jenna Ransom, Mallory Sheppard, Xavier

Pearl City, IL: Estrella Ayala Hinojosa, Blane Foulker

Stockton, IL: Emma Cahill, Rebecca Dreyer, Veyah Luke, Sadie Vanderheyden, Kacy Wright

Warren, IL: Arik Kaiser

High Honors

Lena Historical Society presentation

The Lena Historical Society invites the public to a program presented by Jim Meyers featuring the unique stone octagon home that has been in the Meyers family since 1905. Eight-sided octagon homes were popular in the early 1890s in the United States and Canada. The Meyer's home was built in the mid 1800's and is located on Range Road near Lena,

IL.

This presentation will include pictures, books and newspaper articles featuring the home. Jim Meyers and Betty Sherron took ownership of the home in 2018 and have been in the process of renovating the property. The program will take place at the Lena Historical Museum on 427 Grove Street, Saturday, July 19 at 1 p.m.

• News

(Continued from page 4)

of Illinois Research Assistant Professor Connor Sible will discuss conservation strategies being implemented in each field. RSVP by July 31 to 815-727-4811.

Cook County Farm Bureau, Aug. 14, 3437 Sauk Trail, Chicago Heights. Cook CFB is partnering with University of Illinois Associate Professor Andrew Margenot to study the use of struvite as a slow-release phosphorus fertilizer. The multi-year project investigates application rates of struvite on high-value crops and monitors soil and water quality to measure nitrogen and phosphorus losses compared to traditional fertilizers. The study will also evaluate the economic and yield benefits of struvite on specialty crop farms. RSVP by August 7 to 708-354-3276.

Marshall County Farm Bureau, Aug. 19, Koehler Farm, 896 CR 1400 N, Henry, park to the left of the driveway. This field day will highlight a bioreactor installation at Ethan Koehler's farm. Koe-

hler is the newest participant in the Woodchip Bioreactor Partnership, a collaborative effort launched in 2017 by Illinois Farm Bureau (IFB), Land Improvement Contractors of America (LICA), University of Illinois and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). This year's field day will feature a live demonstration of the bioreactor installation. RSVP by August 12 to 309-364-2501.

The 2025 Nutrient Stewardship Field Days are funded through IFB's Nutrient Stewardship Grant Program. Since 2015, IFB has awarded a total of \$1.35 million for more than 156 county Farm Bureau-led nutrient projects. For a third year, IFB has distributed grants for farmer-focused programs and materials to support pollinators and Monarch butterflies. The 2025 grant awards support 15 projects with 18 participating county Farm Bureaus and seven Pollinator Conservation projects with 10 participating county Farm Bureaus.

Elizabeth, IL: Tyson Heidreich

Freeport, IL: Eric Armstrong, Nathaniel Bicksler, Xavier Blakney, Erick Castro Rodriguez, Emerson Coon, Eddy Cruz Olivo, Jordan Fitzpatrick, Jacob George, Ana Flavia Goncalves Chagas, Taylor Griffin, Emanuel Lantigua Paulino, Kerar Malik, Isaac Manthei, Haylee McLain, Quaveon Meeks, Aaron Melvin, Elijah Michael, Violet Micheletto, Mayla Moe, Elise Nottingham, Carson Price, Reina Roderick, Katiana Rodriguez, Ashley Rupnow, Caitlyn Simpson, Oscar Soto Arias, Noah

Summers, Kawon Taylor, Zayvion Thomas, Antoinette Turner, Junior Valdez Herrera, Parma Walker, Jersie Zink, Dionis Zurita Mejia

Lena, IL: Emma Hassan, Kaidynce Lynch, Aspen Roberts, Hailey Smith, Lincoln Stouffer, Trenton Swedlund, Kansas White

Orangeville, IL: Gabriel Blum, Thomas Creuzer, Laney Holland

Pearl City, IL: Ava Bremmer, Skylar Davis, Taytum Mullen, Lakota Scape, Hunter Vick

Stockton, IL: Morgan Blair, Dawson Broshous, Jarred Dvorak, Morgan McPeck,

Lita Schmoll, Hailey Weipert Warren, IL: Eve Moore, Kayden Sperry

Saint Louis, MO: Logan Flynn

Honors

Apple River, IL: Blake LaDow, Hayden Moon, Janel Radaszewski

Freeport, IL: Asha-Dae Alert, Maik Alexander Montero, Evan Anderson, Noah Brashaw, Brant Carlson, Tyson Clingan, Diego Diaz Acosta, Kyleigh Gentz, Anferni Guzman, Katarina Hatelak, Tyler Hintz, Mackenzie Lei, Adonis Luzon Sanchez, Johanna Matuszak, Christian

Miller, Zachary Newcomer, Joseph Nolt, Aidyn Palas, Jasmine Pearson, Joel Peguero, Cameren Plowman, Kennedy Price, Kaitlyn Row, Damon Shiles, India Tinnie, Jace Urish, Daeshon Verner, Colton Veruchi, Lauren Witte

Lena, IL: Morgan Gerber, Nevaeh Gross, Cierra Hatelak, Mila Sheppard, Kyah White

Pearl City, IL: Rayce Mullen

Scales Mound, IL: Garrett Pickel

Stockton, IL: Erica Gallagher, Colby Tucker

Winslow, IL: Corbin Servantez

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, July 20, 2025, for Worship Service at 9:30 a.m. The Gospel will be from Gospel Luke 10:38-42.

On Wednesday, July 23 the Peace Corps Quilting group will meet from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. All are welcome to join and no quilting experience necessary.

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, July 20 at 9 a.m.

Everyone is welcome to come to St. John's to play cards and dominoes on Thursday, July 24 at 1 p.m. and to play dominoes in Luther Hall on Tuesday, Aug. 5 at 9 a.m.

The next Men's Breakfast will be on Wednesday, Aug. 6 at 7:30 a.m. at the Beltline Restaurant in Freeport.

The Summer Gathering of the St. John's Ladies will be on Wednesday, July 16 at 9 a.m. at Karen Bremmer's house. Sign up in the lobby of the church or call the office for more information. Break-

fast will be provided by the Women's Gathering Board.

The Ladies Night Out and Annual Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Aug. 12 at 6 p.m. at St. John's. The theme of the night is "Baskets of Sunshine" and will feature a program by Deb Mather sharing her basket weaving talents. The cost is \$10 and includes a menu of chicken or ham salad croissants, chips, fruit, strawberry, Key Lime, or Lemon Meringue pie, coffee and water. Sign up in the church lobby or contact the office for more information by Aug. 3.

The July Grace Meal will be on Sunday, July 20. The menu will be a brat with bun, chips, baked beans, fruit cup (diced peaches), and pudding. Reservations are due in the church office by Thursday, July 17. Meals can be picked up at the church on July 20 between 11 a.m. and 12 p.m. This meal is partially funded by donations from the Foundation of Northwest Illinois. If you are interested in donating to this ministry, reach out to the church office for more information.

We will be having our annual Outdoor Worship Service on Sunday, Aug. 3. Refreshments will be served at 9:30 a.m. and the service will be at 10 a.m. This will take place at the Pearl City Park District shelter by the tennis courts. Bring your lawn chair. Music will be provided by "The Risches".

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.

Craftersnoon is 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.

Scales Mound UMC "Young at Heart" features the Peace Seekers Music Group in July Gathering

Scales Mound United Methodist Church is pleased to host the Peace Seekers at its July "Young at Heart" community gathering on Tuesday, July 22 at 1:30 p.m. This local musical group whose caretaker is Mark Gallagher, and he was part of the original Peace Seekers in Stockton when he was in high school. The group has gathered musicians throughout the years, and they love to play Gospel, Rock 'n Roll, Folk and more.

Scales Mound UMC is located at 319 Mason St. We invite anyone who is "young at heart" to join us. There is no charge for this event. Please contact Pastor Libby Rutherford at rutherford.libby@gmail.com or 815-990-1428 with any questions.



Homecoming Service



Sunday, July 27 10 a.m.

Please join us for a time of worship, fellowship and food.

Questions? Call Pastor Dottie at 815-845-2272

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OPINION



In my opinion

Illinois must stop undervaluing conservation before it's too late

By Eliot Clay

For the second year in a row, the State of Illinois has chosen to underfund the backbone of its conservation infrastructure. This year's state budget once again provides only \$4.5 million in operational funding for the state's 97 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs)—comparable to levels from the 1990s.



Elliott Clay

It represents a 48 percent cut from Fiscal Year 2024 and leaves each district with just enough to scrape together one staff salary and benefits, if that.

This isn't just a budget issue. It's a public health, environmental, and economic crisis in the making.

SWCDs are boots-on-the-ground conservation partners in every corner of Illinois.

Our mission is to connect farmers and landowners with the tools, science, and technical assistance needed to protect soil health and water quality while maintaining productive agriculture. These aren't abstract goals. Our staff help farmers plant cover crops that prevent erosion, implement no-till practices that improve carbon retention, and design

conservation systems that reduce nutrient runoff into our rivers.

That work is now at risk of disappearing, especially in rural communities where SWCDs are often one of the only technical resources available for land and water management. Some districts might be forced to lay off staff or shut down entirely. Others will reduce services, turning away farmers who are eager to meet environmental goals but can't do it alone.

In the past month alone, we've seen stark reminders

See **OPINION**, Page 7

Slices of life

Why is it?



By **JILL PERTLER**
Columnist

We live in a quirky, weird, sideways, upside-down world where some things just don't make sense—or they make too much sense to be sensible. As humans we often perpetuate the nonsense. We accept things for what they are and go about our business without question. But sometimes I wonder. About small things. Big things. Random things, like:

Why do cats have to race you up the stairs? They can come out of nowhere just to get one step ahead of you. Sometimes my cats pause to let me nearly catch up before bounding upwards to beat me. Again.

When shopping online why are we required to put certain items in our cart in order to see their price while other items have their prices posted prominently?

If it's a seedless watermelon, what did it grow from?

Why do we call them red cabbage and red onions when it's obvious they are purple? Red grapes are more burgundy than red. Purple potatoes are actually purple—score one for the spuds.

When the batteries on the TV remote go dead why do we continue to press the power button over and over hoping they will suddenly come to life? The same phenomenon occurs when our cell phone loses its charge.

Have you ever noticed that abbreviated is an awfully long word?

And big is not?

Other words are worth contemplating—phonetically speaking. Gynecologist is a doctor for women. Hysterectomy is a procedure performed solely on women. Hershey is word made up of two female pronouns coming together to make chocolate. I guess that last one makes perfect sense.

In the same vein, if words like “he” and “she” are pronouns, does that also make them anti-verbs?

Why do we call it the funny bone when bumping it is certainly no laughing matter?

When I am driving somewhere and get lost why do I turn the radio off, thinking it will help me find my destination?

Why do people drive around in convertibles with the top down, but the windows up?

Do they call it falling asleep because of the falling dream that sometimes accompanies the going to sleep process? Is it true you would die if you landed (in your dream) or is that just one of those urban myths?

Who makes up all the urban myths and why aren't they ever rural truths?

Is it possible to eat charred chard? Or chilly chili? Shrimpy shrimp?

If words made sense, hamburger would be made of ham and a hot dog would be made of... Never mind.

Shouldn't a pair of pants be two of something?

Why is it always just one shoe (or boot) lying in the middle of the road, but we never see the person who is walking around with the other one?

Every few years we are required to renew our driver's license. Anyone besides me keep the old ones around lying in the junk drawer—just because? Every so often I glance through them to see how much I used to weigh.

Why is it? I wish I could tell you. Some things deny explanation. It's at the core of the human paradigm; we assume logic in an illogical world.

Sort of like my cat. Who won't come when she's called but will race me up the stairs every time. Go figure.

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

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FROM LENA'S KITCHEN



The not so skinny cook

We had a great Fourth of July and then the heat came back with a vengeance. We certainly didn't get the horrible storms that other parts of the state did and no flash floods. Summer continues as we look for good recipes using the fruits and vegetables of the season.

Shrimp Stuffed Mushrooms

This dish can be used as an appetizer or a main dish. It does require a little preparation, but the combination of the bacon and shrimp with the mushrooms is delicious.

6 uncooked shrimp (16 to 20 per lb.), peeled and deveined; tails removed

6 bacon strips

12 Baby portabella mushrooms, stems removed

2 T. Sweet Baby Rays BBQ sauce

Cut shrimp and bacon strips in half. Place 1 piece of shrimp on each mushroom cap. Wrap each mushroom with a piece of bacon; secure it with a toothpick. Broil 4 inches from the heat until bacon is crisp and mushrooms are tender, 10 to 15 minutes, turning occasionally. Brush with BBQ Sauce and broil for 5 minutes longer. Discard toothpicks before serving.

Coleslaw with Poppy Seed Dressing

People have been harvest-

ing heads of cabbage from their garden. This coleslaw dressing is a little different than the usual one. Try this different approach to use that cabbage for a great side dish.

¼ medium head cabbage, shredded (2¼ C.)

¼ medium head red cabbage, shredded (2¼ C.)

8 large carrots, shredded (4½ C.)

3 green onions, chopped (1 C.)

1 C. poppy seed dressing

1/3 C. sunflower seeds

Poppy Seed Dressing

½ C. white vinegar

1/3 C. sugar

1 t. grated onion

1 t. ground mustard

1 t. salt

1 C. vegetable oil

1 T. poppy seeds

In a large bowl, combine the cabbage, carrots and green onions. Drizzle with dressing to coat. Refrigerate, covered, at least 1 hour. Just before serving top with sunflower seeds.

Dressing: Place vinegar, sugar, onion, mustard and salt into a food processor; process for 20 seconds. With the processor running, gradually add oil in a thin steady stream until combined. Transfer the dressing to a mason jar and stir in poppy seeds.

Honey Lime Berry Salad

This refreshing summer salad melds a great dressing with berries and fruit and adds a touch of mint.

4 C. strawberries, halved

3 C. fresh blueberries

3 medium Granny smith apples, cubed

1/3 C. lime juice

1/3 C. honey

2 T. minced fresh mint

In a large bowl, combine strawberries, blueberries

and apples. In a small bowl, whisk lime juice, honey, and mint. Pour over fruit; toss to coat.

Radish Salad

I know some people have had to pull their radishes because of the heat, but if yours are still good, this radish salad is a great way to serve them up. Honey seems to be the theme for salads this week. If you plant a second crop, the radishes should be good to go in August and September.

24 radishes, quartered

1 t. salt

1 t. pepper

6 green onions, chopped

½ C. thinly sliced celery ribs

6 basil leaves, thinly sliced

¼ C. snipped fresh dill

¼ C. olive oil

2 T. champagne vinegar

2 T. honey

2 garlic cloves, minced

½ C. chopped nuts, toasted

Place radishes in a large bowl; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Toss the radishes to coat with seasonings. Add green onions, celery, basil and dill. In a small bowl, whisk the oil, vinegar, honey and garlic; pour over salad and toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate at least 1 hour. Sprinkle with nuts before serving.

Copypat Olive Garden Chicken Alfredo

This rich Italian entrée sounds hard, but it is easy to make. It requires the patience in thickening the sauce. It is not for the calorie watcher but is great to make for a special occasion. You can substitute shrimp for the chicken.

12 oz. uncooked fettuccine

2 boneless skinless chicken breasts

1 t. salt

2 t. pepper

2 T. olive oil

2 T. butter

½ C. butter

3 cloves garlic very finely chopped

½ t. salt

½ t. pepper

1½ T. flour

2 C. heavy cream

½ C. grated Parmesan

Cook and drain pasta according to package directions. Return pasta back to pan; cov-

er to keep warm. Season both sides of the chicken breasts with 1 t. salt and 1 t. pepper. In a large skillet, heat the oil and 2 T. butter over medium high heat. Add the chicken breasts and cook for 15 to 20 minutes, turning once, until the juice of chicken is clean when center of thickest piece is cut (165 degrees). Place chicken on a plate and cover with foil.

In a large deep-sided skillet, melt ½ C. butter over medium heat. Add garlic to pan, cooking until aromatic, about 30 seconds. Reduce heat to medium-low. Season with ½ t. salt and ½ t. pepper. Whisk flour into butter, stirring until no chunks remain. Slowly whisk in cream. Continue to cook just until sauce is thickened enough to coat the back of a spoon. Whisk parmesan into mixture stirring until smooth. Remove pan from heat and keep warm until ready to serve by covering with a lid or foil. Cut chicken into strips. To serve, place pasta in a serving bowl or on plates. Top with chicken and drizzle with sauce. Garnish with parsley and top with additional Parmesan cheese.

Hot Dog Casserole

We go from the Italian cuisine to the American classic with this casserole. I use a mandolin anytime I am wanting very thin potatoes. It has the hotdogs and potatoes with a creamy sauce for a great weeknight meal.

3 T. butter

2 T. flour

1½ t. salt

½ t. pepper

1½ C. 2% milk

5 medium red potatoes, thinly sliced

1 lb. pkg. all beef hot dogs, halved lengthwise and cut into ½-inch slices

1 medium onion, chopped

1/3 C. shredded cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 350. In a small saucepan, melt butter. Stir in the flour, salt, and pepper until smooth. Gradually add the milk. Bring to a boil; cook and stir until thickened and bubbly about 2 minutes. In a greased 2½ qt. baking dish, layer with a third of the potatoes, half of the hot dogs, and half of the onion.

Repeat the layers. Top with remaining potatoes. Pour white sauce over all. Bake, covered, for 1 hour. Uncover and sprinkle with cheese. Bake until potatoes are tender, 10 to 15 minutes longer. Garnish with parsley if desired.

Honey Berry Sheet Cake

This festive July cake has the taste of a honey cake, a tradition in the South, and the blending of fruit for a great red and blue dessert.

1 C. sugar

1 C. canola oil

1 C. honey

3 eggs, room temperature

½ C. orange juice

1 t. vanilla

3½ C. flour

1 t. baking powder

1 t. baking soda

½ t. salt

1 C. fresh or frozen raspberries

1 C. fresh or frozen blueberries

Glaze

1 C. powdered sugar

2 T. honey

2 T. 2% milk

Preheat the oven to 350. Grease a 9 x 13 baking pan. In a large bowl, beat sugar, oil, honey, eggs, orange juice and vanilla until well blended. In another bowl, whisk flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt; gradually beat into sugar mixture. Transfer to prepared pan. Bake for 15 minutes. Sprinkle top of cake with raspberries and blueberries. Bake until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, 30 to 35 minutes longer. Cool completely in pan on a wire rack. Combine glaze ingredients; drizzle over cake. Serve with additional berries.

Frozen Chocolate Pie

Looking for a dessert for the hottest day of the year? This chocolate frozen pie will be a tasty treat on those steamy hot days. It is easy to make, and you can have it on hand in the freezer for a quick dessert. You can use Hershey's or Ghirardelli Cocoa. You can buy a pie baking shell and bake it for this recipe or use the Pillsbury crust that you blind bake for

the crust.

3 oz. cream cheese, softened

½ C. sugar

1 t. vanilla

1/3 C. baking cocoa

1/3 C. milk

1 carton (8 oz.) Cool Whip, thawed

1 pie shell (9 inch) baked pie pastry

Chocolate curls and semi-sweet chocolate chips for garnish

In a large bowl, beat cream cheese, sugar and vanilla until smooth. Add cocoa alternately with milk; mix well. Fold in Cool Whip. Pour into pie shell. Freeze for 8 hours or overnight. Serve directly from the freezer (pie will not need to be thawed to cut). Top with chocolate curls or chocolate chips and additional whipped topping.

Final Thoughts

The Freeport Concert Band's annual Fourth of July tribute was spectacular. The place was packed, and the patriotic music was beautiful. If you haven't been to one this year, there are a couple of concerts left. Music in the Park continues at the Lena Lake on Saturday evenings and on Sundays at the Splashland Pool and Golf area on Sundays. All of these events are free. Also don't forget the Pet and Bicycle Parade this Saturday, July 19 in downtown Lena. You can get food at most of these events also.

I can't believe that July is half over, and that most summer sporting events are wrapping up. Soon it will be time to think about starting back to school. Visit the Farmer's Markets in the area for lots of great things including fresh produce, plants, flowers, homemade baked goods, home canned goods, and beautiful crafts. Have a great week.

We are looking for some summer recipes with fruits and vegetables of the season. If you find some recipes to share, you can contact us by email at scoopshopper@rvpublishing.com or by mail at From Lena's Kitchen, The Shopper's Guide at Rock Valley Publishing, 1102 Ann St. Delavan, WI 56115.

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ISP investigating non-fatal officer-involved shooting

The Illinois State Police (ISP) Division of Criminal Investigation for Troop 1, Zone 2 continues its investigation into a non-fatal shooting in Savanna at the request of the Carroll County Sheriff's Office.

July 1, the suspect involved in the non-fatal shooting, 59-year-old Mark Feltmeyer, of Freeport, was taken into custody. Feltmeyer was charged with Possession of a Stolen Motor Vehicle (Class 2 Felony), three counts of Criminal Damage to Government Supported Property (Class 3 Felony), Criminal Damage to Property (Class 3 Felony), Aggravated Fleeing and Attempting to Elude a Peace Officer (Class 4 Felony), two counts of Aggravated Assault – Peace Officer (Class 4 Felony), Driving While License Suspended (Class A Misdemeanor) and two counts of Resisting or Obstructing a Police Officer (Class A Misdemeanor) by the Carroll County State's Attorney.

On June 25, around 10:19 p.m., Freeport Police Department officers responded to a report of a suspected stolen vehicle. Officers located the vehicle and attempted a traffic stop, but the vehicle



Mark Feltmeyer

fled. Later that evening, Jo Daviess County Sheriff's Office deputies located the vehicle in Hanover and officers engaged in a short pursuit, but the vehicle fled a second time. The vehicle was located again near Savanna around 3:40 a.m. on June 26, and officers and deputies from the Carroll County Sheriff's Office, Mount Carroll Police Department, and the Savanna Police Department engaged in a pursuit. Feltmeyer came to a stop near the intersection of Webster and Main Street where officers on scene attempted to place Feltmeyer in custody. Feltmeyer resisted arrest, which resulted in squad car damage, officers discharging their weapons, and Feltmeyer being struck by gunfire. The pursuit continued, but later ended near the intersection of Chicago Avenue and Gilbert Street. Feltmeyer was transported to an area hospital, but has since been released and is now in custody at the Stephenson County jail.

This investigation into the shooting is open and ongoing. When complete, ISP will submit all evidence and facts for review to the Carroll County State's Attorney's Office. No additional information is available at this time.

All suspects are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

Man charged with robbing Rockford Post Office

A man was indicted on Tuesday by a federal grand jury for robbing a post office on May 27, 2025, in Rockford, Ill. Anthony M. Johnson, 58, of Rockford, was charged with one count of robbing a person having lawful charge, control, and custody of money of the United States and putting said person's life in jeopardy by the use of a dangerous weapon.

The count carries a maximum sentence of 25 years in prison. If convicted, the court must impose a reasonable sentence under federal sentencing statutes and the advisory United States Sentencing Guidelines.

The indictment was announced by Andrew S. Boutros, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and Ruth Mendonça, Inspector in Charge of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service Chicago Division. The Rockford Police Department assisted in the investigation. The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jonathan S. Kim. The public is reminded that an indictment contains only charges and is not evidence of guilt. The defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

Stephenson County Master Showmanship Contest Set for July 24 at County Fair

The competition will be fierce and the talent on full display as top 4-H exhibitors from across Stephenson County face off in the 2025 Stephenson County Master Showmanship Contest, held on Thursday, July 24, at the Stephenson County Fairgrounds.

The contest kicks off promptly at 3 p.m. in the Swine Show Ring, where contestants will begin by demonstrating their skills in swine showmanship. The action then moves to the Sheep Ring, finishing strong in the Beef Ring.

This prestigious event brings together the best of the best—youth who have already proven themselves in individual species showmanship contests. Contestants will be judged not only on their handling ability but also on their

knowledge of each animal species and their professionalism in the show ring.

The overall winner will be named Stephenson County Master Showman and will go on to represent the county at the Illinois State Fair Master Showmanship Contest this August in Springfield.

The event is proudly sponsored in partnership with the Stephenson County Farm Bureau, whose continued support helps make this experience possible for youth in our community. Cash prizes and special awards will be presented immediately following the contest to recognize the dedication and excellence of participating 4-H members.

A special donation has also been made by the Curt Miller Family in

memory of Curt Miller, a dedicated advocate and longtime volunteer for Stephenson County 4-H. His legacy lives on in this meaningful event, which continues to inspire youth and honor his commitment to agriculture and education.

Youth interested in participating in the contest can learn more by visiting go.illinois.edu/SC4-H or by calling the University of Illinois Extension – Stephenson County Office at 815-235-4125. For more information about Stephenson County 4-H or how to get involved in future service projects, please contact Jen Schultz at the University of Illinois Extension – Stephenson County office by phone at 815-235-4125 or by email at js80@illinois.edu.

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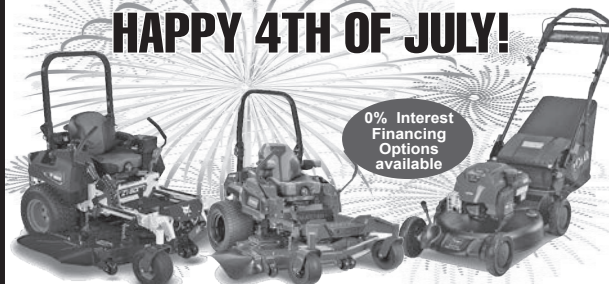
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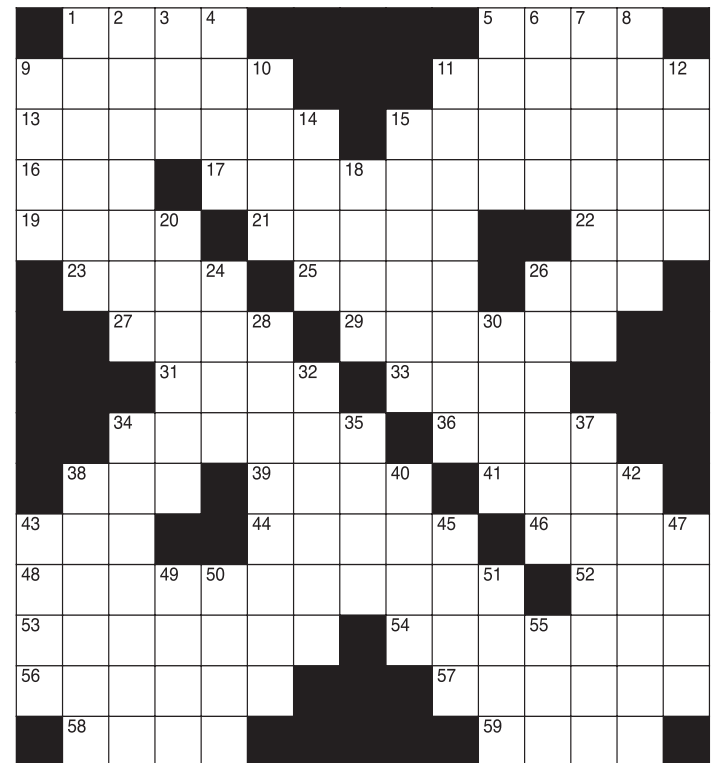
Fun by the Numbers

CLUES ACROSS

1. Resorts
5. One point south of southwest
9. Musical performances
11. Matched
13. Four-footed animal part
15. Express severe disapproval of
16. Type of leaf
17. Preparatory
19. Walk heavily
21. Succulent plants
22. Rectangle of grass
23. Lump in yarn
25. Too
26. Foot (Latin)
27. Afflicts
29. Smoothed
31. Mind (Greek)
33. Tampa ballclub
34. Semitic language
36. Sheltered sides
38. Ocean
39. Electronic point of sale
41. Thrust a knife into
43. 12th month (abbr.)
44. Ringworm
46. Father of Aoris (Greek myth.)
48. Fighting back
52. Cease to exist
53. Insects in adult stage
54. Freestanding sculpture
56. Caps
57. Repents
58. Brown and Wallace are two
59. Moved quickly

CLUES DOWN

1. Goes bad
2. Yard structure
3. They__



- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 4. Marine invertebrate | 28. Guarantees |
| 5. European river | 30. Coloring materials |
| 6. Office supplies firm | 32. Reddish browns |
| 7. Physically abused | 34. Square measure |
| 8. Service stations in Australia | 35. Will not |
| 9. Kills | 37. Canned fish |
| 10. Liquid body substances | 38. Appeared |
| 11. Particular to a given individual | 40. Six (Spanish) |
| 12. Brave or noble act | 42. Took off |
| 14. Sicilian city | 43. Negligible amount |
| 15. Conqueror | 45. Posts in a Greek temple |
| 18. Elected officials | 47. Witnesses |
| 20. Type of "pig" | 49. Phil __, former CIA |
| 24. Drop of viscous substance | 50. Places to park |
| 26. Monetary unit of Spain | 51. Guns |
| | 55. Dance to pop music |

Pritzker signs \$55.1 billion state budget reliant on \$700 million of new taxes

By Ben Szalinski
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Gov. JB Pritzker signed Illinois' fiscal year 2026 budget into law last week, taking shots at President Donald Trump's budget management to defend hard choices state lawmakers were forced to make this year.

The \$55.1 billion spending plan set to take effect July 1 is the largest in state history and is supported by \$55.3 billion in anticipated revenue, including more than \$700 million in new taxes and more than \$500 million in one-time revenues.

Democrats approved the budget shortly before midnight on May 31 with only a handful of Democrats opposing it and all Republicans unanimously voting against it.

The budget's passage came after months of discussion about closing an initially projected \$3 billion deficit and growing concerns about Trump's treatment of state funding in Washington. Pritzker, a possible 2028 presidential candidate, used Monday's budget signing ceremony in Chicago as an opportunity to draw a contrast between his and Trump's budgets.

"While the Trump administration goes on Fox News lying about being fiscally responsible, Illinois is showing a better way: Balancing the budget while maintaining the programs that most people rely on," Pritzker said.

"Congress is about to pass a federal budget that has one of the largest budget deficits ever in a year without a war or a pandemic. By contrast, Illinois is balancing its budget and prudently improving its fiscal condition," he said.

Pritzker and other Democratic leaders acknowledged that crafting the FY26 budget was challenging but continues to make investments Democrats believe are priorities. Discretionary spending will increase by less than 1 percent in FY26, Pritzker said. Despite the minimal increase, the FY26 budget still spends about \$2 billion more than FY25.

Democrats "ace the challenges and uncertainty head on, and the result is a budget that is truly balanced with no gimmicks," House Speaker Chris Welch, D-Hillside, said.

But that's not how Republicans view the budget's fund sweeps and delayed transfers that free up hundreds of millions of dollars that can be used in FY26.

"This approach sets Illinois up for failure by FY27 and continues a pattern of short-term thinking," House Minority Leader Tony McCombie, R-Savanna, said in a statement.

Senate Minority Leader John Curran, R-Downers Grove, condemned lawmakers for failing to deliver significant tax cuts since Pritzker took office in 2019 when Illinois' budget

totaled about \$40 billion.

"You know it's a bad budget when it's based on nearly \$1 billion in tax increases and enhancements," he said in a statement.

The governor also used his broad authority to reduce a pair of technical errors in the budget. The changes lower spending by \$161.2 million from what lawmakers passed.

Tax increases on tobacco and vape products, businesses

The tax plan will raise \$709 million in new revenue through what House Majority Leader Robyn Gabel, D-Evanston, characterized as "smart new sources of revenue." They include new taxes on businesses, sports betting and tobacco and vape products, according to a list provided by the Senate Democratic caucus.

The budget will not raise personal income, corporate income or sales taxes after Pritzker told reporters that he will veto any budget containing "broad-based" tax increases just days before the bill passed.

The largest sum of new taxes, \$336 million, are on businesses outside of Illinois that lawmakers call "leveling the playing field" and will require businesses to pay more income tax to the state on their profits.

Consumers will face new taxes on specific items, including taxes on tobacco, vaping and other nicotine products, which are increasing to 45 percent to raise \$50 million. An existing telecommunications tax will also rise from 7 percent to 8.65 percent and raise \$49 million to fund the statewide 988 hotline.

A new tax on sports bets will charge betting sites 25 cents for the first 20 million wagers and 50 cents for each bet following that. It's projected to raise \$36 million. Sports betting sites FanDuel and DraftKings have both announced they will implement 50-cent transaction fees on Illinois customers in response to the tax.

Short-term rentals will have to begin paying the state's hotel operator's tax. The charge is already applied to hotels in the state, and Airbnb already pays it voluntarily, but more companies like Vrbo will now be required to pay the tax expected to raise an additional \$10 million.

A pair of tax amnesty programs are expected to raise \$228 million. Those programs are meant to incentivize taxpayers to pay overdue taxes.

The budget deploys a series of tactics designed to free up more money for spending in the general fund in FY26 without repeating as a revenue source for the following year's budget.

It suspends the monthly transfer to the "rainy day" fund for one year, freeing up \$45

million for general fund use. Pritzker has taken pride in the fund's increase in recent years as it's grown to a balance of \$2.3 billion, up from less than \$60,000 when he took office. The fund is still estimated to grow by \$161 million from interest and contributions from other funds in FY26.

The state will also pause the final transfer of motor fuel sales tax revenue to the road fund in order to free up \$171 million. That scheduled transfer was set in motion by the state's 2019 infrastructure plan, with the sales tax supporting bond debt taken out to complete road and bridge projects. This year was to be the final year of incremental transfers that took place over the past five years.

The budget package also establishes a new \$100 million BRIDGE fund that the governor can tap into "in the event of unanticipated delays in or failures of revenues." The measure, an apparent nod to the uncertainty of federal funding amid ongoing congressional budget negotiations, will come from money swept from 57 different funds.

When combined with the tax amnesty program, the fund sweeps and delayed transfers add up to at least \$544 million of one-time revenue in this year's state budget that will not be available in FY27.

Health and Human Services

The most notable change to health care funding is the elimination of the Health Benefits for Immigrant Adults, or HBIA, program that provided certain low-income noncitizens between ages 42 and 64 with state health care benefits akin to Medicaid. Eliminating the program saves the state \$330 million, but the \$110 million Health Benefits for Immigrant Seniors, or HBIS, remains in place.

"This was part of the challenge that we had to address," Pritzker said. "It was a program that had been growing significantly in cost. I do believe that everybody should have health care. I also know that we have to live within our means in the state of Illinois."

HBIA's elimination comes after a recent audit found the two programs have cost the state at least \$1.6 billion since their inception, far exceeding original estimates for the program. Last year, the state put new guardrails in place to limit enrollment into the programs and reduce costs through co-pays and other measures.

HBIA's elimination also comes as Congress debates a domestic policy plan that could reduce reimbursements to states that provide health care benefits to noncitizens.

In anticipation of broader reductions to health care and

Medicaid reimbursements to the state, Illinois lawmakers also increased spending on other health care and social service programs:

- \$40 million for Federally Qualified Health Centers. These centers could provide care for people who lose coverage under HBIA turn.

- \$18 million from the General Revenue Fund for five safety-net hospitals in the state's Medicaid managed care program. Another \$100 million from Fund for Illinois' Future will go to support the Medicaid managed care program at 12 other safety net hospitals.

- \$60 million for administrative expenses for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. That's a \$20 million increase from FY25 as Congress has proposed requiring states to cover half of administrative costs.

- \$263.7 million for HOME Illinois, a program created to reduce homelessness in Illinois. Housing advocates calculated that between Home Illinois and other housing line items, the budget includes \$354 million in funding. That's about a \$14.6 million decrease from a year ago, which marks about double of what Pritzker proposed cutting in homelessness funding in February.

- An 80-cent hourly wage increase for direct service professionals who service individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in community care settings. However, overall flat funding for the program means 305 positions in the program will be eliminated, according to the They Deserve More coalition. Community Care Program workers at the Illinois Department on Aging will receive a 75-cent hourly wage increase.

- A new \$25 million Prescription Drug Affordability Fund to support certain pharmacies in Illinois in competi-

tion against larger pharmacy benefit managers.

- \$15 million for the Medical Debt Relief Pilot Program that purchases medical debt from patients at a fraction of the total debt.

- A \$4 million increase for the Department of Children and Family Services aimed at hiring 100 additional staff members.

- A child tax credit created in 2024 at 20 percent of the Earned Income Tax Credit will double to 40 percent.

Education

The state's evidence-based funding model for K-12 schools calls for \$350 million in additional funding each year, with a portion of that going to a property tax relief fund and the rest directly to schools. The proposed budget fully funds the K-12 education increase at \$307 million but does not add \$43 million in property tax relief funds.

Funding for higher education operational expenses is only going up 1 percent. Pritzker had proposed 3 percent. Democrat budget leaders have said the spending plan includes ways to increase funding by an additional 2 percent if there are significant cuts in federal funding for higher education, however.

The budget also includes:

- A \$10 million increase to the Monetary Award Program grants for lower-income college students.

- \$8 million for a minority teacher scholarship program.

- \$2.9 million for the state's Common App initiative to make it easier for high school students to apply to Illinois colleges and universities at one time.

- \$212 million for Pritzker's Smart Start early childhood education program.

- \$21.7 million for the newly created Department of Early Childhood

Others spending areas

Part of the budget package created a new Tier 2 reserve fund that can be accessed if there are violations of what's known as the federal "safe harbor" law. Lawmakers appropriated \$75 million for the fund this year, in line with Pritzker's proposal. Broader reform to Tier 2 was not considered this spring.

"With this fix going into effect, we're protecting our taxpayers and state workers from future shortfalls that could cost the state much more," Pritzker said.

Attorney General Kwame Raoul is receiving a \$15.7 million general fund increase as his office engages in a growing number of lawsuits against the Trump administration. Raoul told lawmakers he needs more attorneys to handle the cases and a generally growing workload in his office. However, because of declining revenue in other funds, total funding for the office largely remains flat in FY26.

The budget sent to Pritzker included a 5 percent pay raise for state lawmakers, to \$98,304. State law sets the pay for legislators to increase annually with inflation, and lawmakers took no action to stop it from occurring in FY26.

The budget also includes:

- \$500 million for the Department of Central Management Services and Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity for the Surplus to Success program to prepare idle state properties for economic development.

- \$17.9 million for the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation to implement a new licensing system

- \$40 million for immigrant Welcoming Centers

- \$6.2 billion for Department of Transportation construction projects, including \$4.5 billion for roads and bridges.

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LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 15TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT JO DAVIESS COUNTY - GALENA, ILLINOIS ROCKET MORTGAGE, LLC F/K/A QUICKEN LOANS, LLC F/K/A QUICKEN LOANS INC. Plaintiff,

-v.-

ANTHONY F. SIERGIEJ et al Defendant

2024 FC 64

NOTICE OF SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on May 8, 2025, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 1:30 PM on August 12, 2025, at the office of Vincent Roth Toepfer & Leinen PC, 11406 U.S. Route 20 W, Galena, IL, 61036, sell at public in-person sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate:

THAT PART OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 34, TOWNSHIP 27 NORTH, RANGE 4 EAST OF THE FOURTH PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

COMMENCING AT THE EAST QUARTER CORNER OF SECTION 34 AND THENCE SOUTH 0 DEGREES, 00 MINUTES AND 00 SECONDS EAST ON THE EAST LINE OF SAID SOUTHEAST QUARTER 1761.42 FEET TO A POINT IN THE CENTER LINE OF EAST PARKER ROAD; THENCE NORTH 73 DEGREES, 51 MINUTES AND 00 SECONDS WEST ON SAID CENTER LINE, 408.72 FEET TO THE CENTER LINE OF STATE ROUTE 78 AND THE PLACE OF BEGINNING OF THIS DESCRIPTION; THENCE CONTINUING NORTH 73 DEGREES, 51 MINUTES AND 00 SECONDS WEST ON THE CENTER LINE OF SAID EAST PARKER ROAD, 535.82 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 12 DEGREES, 55 MINUTES AND 40 SECONDS WEST, 164.70 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 52 DEGREES, 58 MINUTES AND 38 SECONDS EAST, 70.0 FEET;

THENCE SOUTH 16 DEGREES, 22 MIN-

UTES AND 24 SECONDS WEST, 136.80 FEET; THENCE NORTH 61 DEGREES 35 MINUTES AND 04 SECONDS EAST, 256.05 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 65 DEGREES, 47 MINUTES AND 57 SECONDS EAST 225.79 FEET TO A POINT IN THE CENTER LINE OF SAID STATE ROUTE 78; THENCE NORTH 33 DEGREES, 32 MINUTES AND 09 SECONDS EAST ON SAID CENTER LINE, 186.42 FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING IN JO DAVIESS COUNTY, ILLINOIS, AS MORE PARTICULARLY SHOWN ON A SURVEY BY D. B. PERRY OF C. F. SURVEYING COMPANY, REGISTERED ILLINOIS LAND SURVEYOR, AS REVISED JANUARY 7, 1996 AND RECORDED JANUARY 19, 1996 IN PLAN HOLD D OF PLATS AT NO. 43 AS DOCUMENT NO. 242579. SITUATED IN THE COUNTY OF JO DAVIESS, STATE OF ILLINOIS.

Commonly known as 9643, 9715, 9823 E PARKER RD, STOCKTON, IL 61085

Property Index No. 17-000-360-00

The real estate is improved with a residence.

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

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

Where a sale of real estate is made to satisfy a lien prior to that of the United States, the United States shall have one year

from the date of sale within which to redeem, except that with respect to a lien arising under the internal revenue laws the period shall be 120 days or the period allowable for redemption under State law, whichever is longer, and in any case in which, under the provisions of section 505 of the Housing Act of 1950, as amended (12 U.S.C. 1701k), and subsection (d) of section 3720 of title 38 of the United States Code, the right to redeem does not arise, there shall be no right of redemption.

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

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

IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW.

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

For information, examine the court file, CODILIS & ASSOCIATES, P.C. Plaintiff's Attorneys, 15W030 NORTH FRONTAGE ROAD, SUITE 100,

BURR RIDGE, IL, 60527 (630) 794-9876

THE JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION

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You can also visit The Judicial Sales Corporation at www.tjsc.com for a 7 day status report of pending sales.

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E-Mail: pleadings@il.cslegal.com Attorney File No. 14-24-06131

Attorney ARDC No. 00468002

Case Number: 2024 FC 64 TJSC#: 45-1250

NOTE: Pursuant to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, you are advised that Plaintiff's attorney is deemed to be a debt collector attempting to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

Case # 2024 FC 64 I3269595

(Published in The Scoop Today July 16, 23 & 30, 2025) 474314

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

STEPHENSON COUNTY, ILLINOIS GUILD MORTGAGE COMPANY LLC, PLAINTIFF,

VS. MICHAEL A HARNISH; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS, DEFENDANTS.

NO. 2025FC16 1526 WEST STOVER STREET FREEPORT, IL 61032 JUDGE

PRESIDING JUDGE NOTICE BY PUBLICATION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN TO YOU, Michael A Harnish Unknown Owners and Non-Record Claimants 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:

THE EASTERLY 22 1/2 FEET OF LOT TWO HUNDRED-NINETEEN (219) AND ALL THAT PART OF THE VACATED ALLEY LYING NORTH OF AND ADJACENT TO AFORESAID LOT AS VACATED BY ORDINANCE RECORDED MARCH 9, 1976 IN BOOK P-222, PAGE 1044, AS DOCUMENT NO. 91-948 AND RECORDED MARCH 29, 1976, IN BOOK P-222, PAGE 1429, AS DOCUMENT NO. 91-1196, ALL IN SAXBY HEIGHTS ADDITION; SITUATED IN THE TOWNSHIP OF FREEPORT, COUNTY OF STEPHENSON AND STATE OF ILLINOIS.

ALSO, ALL OF LOT TWO HUNDRED-TWENTY (220) AND THE WESTERLY 22 1/2 FEET OF LOT TWO HUNDRED TWENTY-ONE (221), IN SAXBY HEIGHTS ADDITION; SITUATED IN THE TOWNSHIP OF FREEPORT, COUNTY OF STEPHENSON AND STATE OF ILLINOIS.

Commonly known as: 1526 West Stover Street Freeport, IL 61032

and which said Mortgage was made by, Michael A Harnish Mortgageor(s), to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as nominee for Guild Mortgage Company LLC

Mortgagee, and recorded in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds of Stephenson County, Illinois, as Document No. 202300197098; and for other relief.

UNLESS YOU file your answer or otherwise file your appearance in this case, on or before August 1, 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 illinoislegallaid.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 información sobre los casos de la corte y cómo 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. 25-20595IL-1194048 I3269087

(Published in The Shopper's Guide July 2, 9 & 16, 2025)

Maintaining your oral health at college

It's mid-July and many of our recent high school graduates are now preparing for life in a dorm. Starting college is one of life's big steps towards autonomy or being fully on your own. In all of the excitement and change, it can be easy to overlook your dental health. All too often we see young adults who enter college with no cavities and return home for the holidays with gingivitis and multiple cavities.

You do not get a second chance to make a first impression. Make sure your first impressions on campus, whether with roommates, new friends, professors, or potential dates, include a bright, healthy smile and fresh breath. For many students, this might be the first time you're fully in charge of your own dental health, and it's important to get off to a great start. Make



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

sure that your packing list includes all of the tools that you will need to keep that healthy smile. This includes a soft-bristled toothbrush, fluoride toothpaste and floss.

Dorm living involves sharing space with roommates, including the bathroom, so purchase a case for easy storage, portability, and protection against someone else using your toothbrush. Pack your retainer if you have had orthodontic treatment and/or your mouth guard if you play sports. Having these items readily available makes it easier to stick to your oral care routine, as you meet

new people, adjust to your new course load, and learn how to navigate life on your own.

When you oversleep or stay up late studying, it can be tempting to skip brushing and flossing your teeth. This can lead to inflamed, bleeding gums, cavities, and bad breath. This will not only have a negative effect on your oral and overall health, but on your social life as well.

For many new college students, the stress of balancing school assignments, personal care, late-night study sessions followed by early morning exams and/or classes, a part-time job and multiple social events can be completely overwhelming. People react differently when put into stressful situations. This stress can lead to habits like teeth grinding (bruxism), jaw clenching, nail-biting,

chewing on pens or ice or stress-eating (the famous freshmen fifteen). This can cause jaw pain, headaches, TMD, inflamed gums and physical damage to your teeth. Stress can also affect your salivary glands. Dry mouths breed harmful bacteria. Staying hydrated with fluoridated water is one of the body's most reliable defenses against tooth decay and gum disease. Limiting snacking, choosing healthy foods, and swishing water after each snack and meal will help to keep your mouth clean and hydrated.

High stress can also lead to anxiety or depression. Many college students are reluctant to tell someone they are struggling with the stress of college life. A lack of personal hygiene is one of the negative behaviors that accompany overwhelming anxiety and depression. Neglecting your oral health

can lead to tooth decay, bad breath, and swollen, bleeding gums, which can lower your self-esteem and exacerbate depression, and anxiety. Reach out to your RA or your counselor. They have the experience, guidance, and resources to lower your stress and meet your individual needs as you adjust.

Knowing how to respond to dental emergencies can help you protect your oral health and avoid complications that could interfere with your studies. Decayed and abscessed teeth do not resolve themselves on their own, and a chipped tooth or a painful, impacted and/or infected wisdom tooth will need to be seen immediately to evaluate, treat, and prevent further damage. While orienting yourself to the campus, be sure to find out where on-campus health services or

dental clinics are located. The financial aid office at your university can also assist you with resources such as emergency grants or funds if you experience a medical or dental emergency. Dental offices in college towns sometimes provide discounts for college students. If there is a dental school on campus or in the city where your university is located, they provide services at a lower cost.

Being diligent about routine dental exams, daily oral hygiene, and eating a healthy diet will serve you well as you enter this new stage of independence and throughout your life. Schedule your dental exam when you're home for winter or summer break. Most college students live on tight budgets, so it's essential to prevent expensive dental procedures through consistent care.

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real estate

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Burial Needs

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

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Pritzker warns 330,000 Illinoisans could lose Medicaid under Trump's budget plan

By Peter Hancock
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

The U.S. House gave final passage July 3 to a budget bill that will cut federal Medicaid spending by an estimated \$1 trillion over 10 years.

All three Republican members of the Illinois congressional delegation voted in favor of the bill, despite a last-minute plea from Democratic Gov. JB Pritzker who warned the bill will result in more than 330,000 Illinoisans losing Medicaid coverage and have a devastating effect on some rural hospitals.

"As those who are entrusted with protecting the health of all your constituents, I urge you to oppose these harmful Medicaid provisions and work to protect health-care access for rural Illinois families, workers, and veterans," Pritzker wrote in the letter addressed to GOP Reps. Mike Bost, Darin LaHood and Mary Miller.

The cuts would translate to about \$48 billion in Illinois over that period, or about 20 percent of what the state would otherwise receive, according to an analysis by KFF, a nonpartisan health policy research organization.

That would be one of the largest percentage reductions in any state in the nation, according to KFF, a nonpartisan health policy research organization formerly known as the Kaiser Family Foundation. Louisiana and Virginia would each see cuts of about 21 percent, KFF said.

The state-level analysis is based largely on Congressional Budget Office estimates showing the bill would reduce federal Medicaid spending by \$1 trillion nationwide over the next decade.

The KFF analysis does not include estimates of the number of people who would lose Medicaid coverage under the bill, noting how that will depend on how individual states respond to the policy changes contained in the bill. But overall, it estimates the number of uninsured Americans will grow by 11.8 million.

The bill, which includes many of President Donald Trump's domestic policy pri-

orities—including tax cuts and increased spending on border security—passed the Senate on Tuesday by a vote of 51-50, with Vice President J.D. Vance casting the tie-breaking vote. Both senators from Illinois, Democrats Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth, voted no.

The final vote in the House was 218-214.

"The One Big, Beautiful Bill is a once-in-a-generation victory for the American people," Miller said in a statement after the House vote. "It delivers on President Trump's America First agenda with bold, decisive, and immediate action. This is the most pro-worker, pro-family, pro-America legislation I have voted for during my time in Congress, and I was proud to help get it across the finish line for the hardworking Americans across my district."

Medicaid and the health care marketplace

Medicaid, which is jointly funded by states and the federal government, provides health coverage for lower-income individuals and families. It was established in 1965 alongside Medicare, the federally funded health coverage program for people over 65.

Today, according to the Illinois Department of Health-care and Family Services,

the program covers about 3.4 million people in Illinois, or a fourth of the state's population. At a total cost of \$33.7 billion a year, it is one of the largest single categories of expenditures in the state's budget. It pays for about 40 percent of all childbirths in the state, according to KFF, as well as 69 percent of all nursing home care.

But questions about its future loomed over the Illinois General Assembly during the just-completed legislative session as both Congress and the General Assembly were crafting their respective budgets for their upcoming fiscal years.

"This was a difficult year because of the unprecedented changes and cuts that are looming on the horizon in Washington," state Rep. Anna Moeller, D-Elgin, said on the floor of the Illinois House during debate over a Medicaid bill on the final day of the session.

Speaking with reporters at an unrelated event, Pritzker predicted "hundreds of thousands" of people in Illinois will lose Medicaid coverage if the Senate bill is signed into law.

"This is shameful, if you ask me, and it's going to be very hard to recover," Pritzker said. "The state of Illinois can't cover the cost—no state in the country can cover the cost of reinstating that

health insurance that is today paid for mostly by the federal government, partly by state government."

Policy changes under the bill

According to KFF, most of the reductions in Medicaid spending would result from just a few policy changes contained in the bill

Those include imposing a work requirement on adults enrolled in Medicaid through the Affordable Care Act, also known as "Obamacare." That law expanded eligibility for Medicaid to working-age adults with incomes up to 138 percent of the federal poverty level. About 772,000 people in Illinois are enrolled under that program.

The bill also calls for requiring people enrolled through the ACA expansion to verify their continued eligibility for Medicaid twice a year instead of annually. That is expected to filter out enrollees whose incomes rise above the eligibility limit as well as those who simply fail to complete the verification process.

Another provision would limit the ability of states to finance their share of the cost of Medicaid by levying taxes on health care providers. Illinois imposes such taxes on hospitals, nursing facilities and managed care organizations that administer the pro-

gram. Revenue from those taxes is used to draw down federal matching funds that are then used to fund higher reimbursement rates to health care providers.

The final version of the bill does not, however, include a provision penalizing states

like Illinois that also provide state-funded health care to noncitizens who do not have lawful status to be in the United States. That provision, which was included in the earlier House version, was not included in the Senate bill, according to KFF.

REAL ESTATE NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 15TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
JO DAVIESS COUNTY -
GALENA, ILLINOIS
ROCKET MORTGAGE, LLC
F/K/A QUICKEN LOANS, LLC
F/K/A QUICKEN LOANS INC.
Plaintiff,
-v.-
ANTHONY F. SIERGIEJ et al
Defendant

2024 FC 64
NOTICE OF SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on May 8, 2025, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 1:30 PM on August 12, 2025, at the office of Vincent Roth Toepfer & Leinen PC, 11406 U.S. Route 20 W, Galena, IL, 61036, sell at public in-person sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate:

Commonly known as 9643, 9715, 9823 E PARKER RD, STOCKTON, IL 61085
Property Index No. 17-000-360-00

The real estate is improved with a residence.

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

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

Where a sale of real estate is made to satisfy a lien prior to that of the United States, the United States shall have one year from the date of sale within which to redeem, except that with respect to a lien arising under the internal revenue laws the period shall be 120 days or the period allowable for redemption under State law, whichever is longer, and in any case in which, under the provisions of section 505 of the Housing Act of 1950, as amended (12 U.S.C. 1701k), and subsection (d) of section 3720 of title 38 of the United States Code, the right to redeem does not arise, there shall be no right of redemption.
The property will NOT be open

for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information.

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

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

For information, examine the court file, CODILIS & ASSOCIATES, P.C. Plaintiff's Attorneys, 15W030 NORTH FRONTAGE ROAD, SUITE 100, BURR RIDGE, IL, 60527 (630) 794-9876 THE JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION

One South Wacker Drive, 24th Floor, Chicago, IL 60606-4650 (312) 236-SALE

You can also visit The Judicial Sales Corporation at www.tjsc.com for a 7 day status report of pending sales. CODILIS & ASSOCIATES, P.C. 15W030 NORTH FRONTAGE ROAD, SUITE 100 BURR RIDGE IL, 60527 630-794-5300

E-Mail: pleadings@il.cslegal.com Attorney File No. 14-24-06131 Attorney ARDC No. 00468002 Case Number: 2024 FC 64 TJSC#: 45-1250 NOTE: Pursuant to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, you are advised that Plaintiff's attorney is deemed to be a debt collector attempting to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. Case # 2024 FC 64 I3269595

(Published in The Scoop Today July 16, 23 & 30, 2025) 474315

Answers

PUZZLE 1

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

PUZZLE 2

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

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Venison is game changer for fighting food insecurity

By Hannah Spangler
FARMWEEK

Hunters Feeding Illinois is taking a shot at tackling food insecurity throughout the state by connecting hunters, meat processors and food pantries.

During the 2024-25 deer hunting season, the program provided 24,278 pounds of venison to 54 local food pantries. Hunters donated 584 deer to 20 local meat processors, increasing access to lean protein across central and southern Illinois.

"All of the venison that is donated stays local, which we're really proud of, and the funding that is raised also stays local," said Kaitlyn Streitmatter, a senior manager of Illinois Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Education at University of Illinois Extension. "It's hunting that's happening locally, supporting our local families and local meat processors."

The process starts when a hunter donates meat to a local food processor. Streitmatter noted that the program helps address the deer nuisance issue, especially in areas where hunting is popular and venison is relevant to the community.

Hunters who have more meat than they need can donate it to families in their communities.

"This is a way that hunters can use their passion of hunting and then also give back to their community by donating the excess deer that they are unable to use at home," said Meredith Probst, U of I Extension SNAP-Education educator.

Following the donation, Feeding Illinois financially supports the food processors who turn harvested deer into ground meat. Probst explained that in past years U of I Extension would reimburse meat processors, but partnering with Feeding Illinois helps the reimbursement process run smoother.

"With our partnership with Feeding Illinois, they can actually reimburse our meat processors on a monthly basis, a weekly basis or however many invoices the meat processors sent to Feeding Illinois, they were able to reimburse on more of a streamlined and faster process than what our process was the past two years," Probst told FarmWeek.

Streitmatter added that the deer donation program included in Illinois Senate Bill 2160 would further

streamline the reimbursement process. If passed, the legislation would establish the Hunter Food Bank Fund to support grants for food banks to pay processors for donated deer.

Hunters Feeding Illinois also helps food processors find food pantries for partnerships. U of I Extension provides education on venison to the food pantries, including recipes, tastings, food safety instructions and handouts to help clients prepare the meat at home.

The goal is to expand the reach of the Hunters Feeding Illinois program. It has already grown from 11 to 44 counties in three years, but Probst and Streitmatter hope to see it become a statewide program.

"If a county is interested, if there's a meat processor, if there is a food pantry, then we're open to expanding to that county," Probst said, adding that the only stipulation is that deer cannot be accepted from counties facing Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). "If the county does not have CWD, you can donate to a partnering meat processor within the program, in any of the participating counties."



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Ross Osterday, University of Illinois Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program education community worker, is pictured with venison packages.

Hunters, meat processors or food pantries interested in getting involved can visit extension.illinois.edu/food/hunters-feeding-illinois for more information. Donations to the Hunters Feeding Illinois program can also be made through the

website.

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

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