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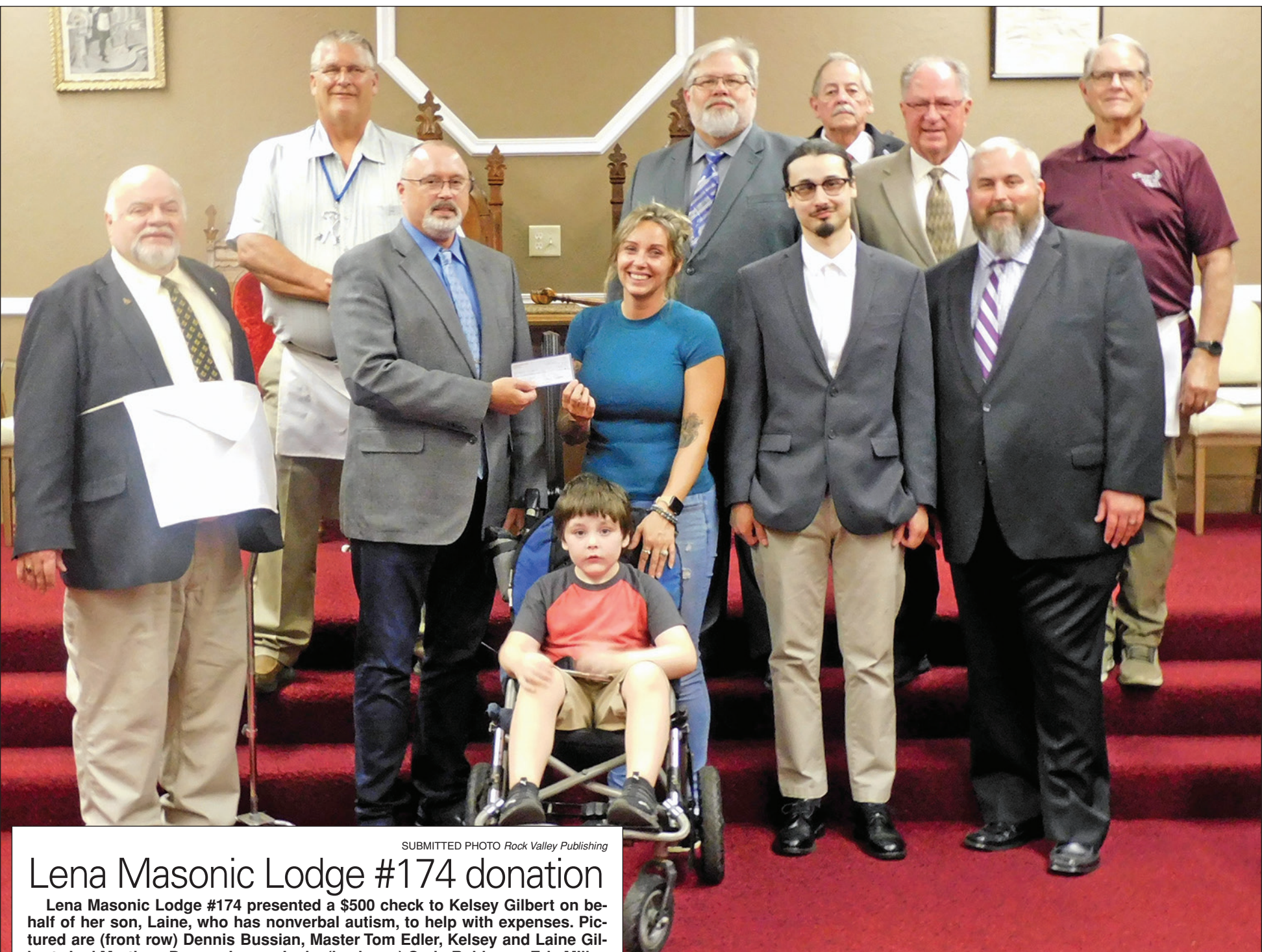
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VOL. 87 • NO. 31

YOUR FREE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

WEDNESDAY, JULY 23, 2025



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

## Lena Masonic Lodge #174 donation

Lena Masonic Lodge #174 presented a \$500 check to Kelsey Gilbert on behalf of her son, Laine, who has nonverbal autism, to help with expenses. Pictured are (front row) Dennis Bussian, Master Tom Edler, Kelsey and Laine Gilbert, Joel Martinez-Brown, Jeremy Irwin, (back row) Craig Robieson, Eric Miller, Roy Grobe, Dean White and Greg Townsend. The donation to Laine Gilbert is designed to be matched by the Illinois Grand Lodge of Masons.

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# Obituaries

## ALBERT SCHEIDER

Albert L. Scheider of Orangeville, IL, local musician, has completed the circle of life and is now making music in Heaven. Albert was born on May 22, 1936, and passed away on July 17, 2025. He was the only child of Lloyd and Lois (Hank) Scheider, and grew up on the family farm near Red Oak, IL.

His education included eight years at Richland Center country school, four years at Orangeville High School being a graduate of the class of 1954, one semester at NIU and one semester at Green County Teachers College in Monroe, WI. Albert married Bonnie (Baker) Scheider on March 24, 1979, in Winslow, IL.

Mr. Scheider was active in Red Cross in his early years and was former chairman of the board of directors for two years and chairman for Stephenson County Red Cross Rural Drive for funds and members. Albert was a charter member of the Freeport Choral Society and former president of that group for two years. Albert was a member of Richland Free Methodist Church having served in many offices of leadership, as a musician, Sunday School teacher, and custodial areas. He was a CYC youth teacher. Other memberships were Cedarville, McConnell and Freeport Historical Societies, Farm Bureau, and Orangeville Senior Citizens.

Albert was an avid piano player and loved music, especially classical music. In the past, he was piano player at McConnell United Methodist Church, Red Oak United Methodist Church, and Richland Free Methodist Church. At times he was serving two churches each Sunday.

Also, Albert was a member of the Richland Center Cem-



etry Association for a long time. He served as historian for the Scheider reunions for about 60 years, since 1964.

One of his favorite times was traveling to private homes to instruct students with piano lessons. He also enjoyed the recitals of his students. Most recitals had a theme, and his favorite was the "Mozart" one in which all music played was composed by Mozart. Albert and Bonnie were dressed in costumes as Mr. and Mrs. Mozart.

Upon Bonnie's retirement, they developed several programs with Albert as the musician and Bonnie the narrator. This comedy program and "School Days" program were enjoyable times for them.

Albert had a large collection of written music, over 100 miniature pianos, hundreds of vinyl LP records, books, posters, and many miniature churches.

Albert Scheider is survived by his wife, Bonnie, a daughter Valerie (Terry) Sweitzer of Lanark, IL and 3 grandchildren: Nicole Sweitzer, Caleb Sweitzer, and Luke Sweitzer. He was preceded in death by his parents and grandparents.

Visitation will be Thursday, July 24 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Cramer-Leamon Funeral Home in Orangeville, IL. Funeral Services will be Friday, July 25 at 11 a.m. at the Richland Free Methodist Church near Red Oak, IL with Pastor Tim Wauchope officiating. Burial will be at the Richland Center Cemetery and luncheon will be held at the Grace Free Methodist Church in McConnell, IL. A memorial fund has been established in his name.

## JEANNE SCHUBERT

Jeanne Marie Schubert, age 92, passed away on Monday, July 7, 2025, at Wesley Willows in Rockford, IL. She was born on June 18, 1933, in Freeport, IL, to the late Harry and Mary (Binz) Eich and grew up on the family farm north of Stockton, IL. Jeanne married her high school sweetheart, Domer Schubert, on Aug. 18, 1956, in a ceremony officiated by her beloved uncle, Leo Binz, Archbishop of Dubuque.

Jeanne graduated from Stockton High School in 1951, where she was the editor of the Arrowhead and degree chairman of the Future Homemakers of America her senior year. She went on to graduate from Mercy School of Nursing in Dubuque in 1954. Jeanne worked at Mercy Hospital of Dubuque, Mercy Hospital of Urbana, and the Freeport Medical Clinic Ltd. in the OB/Gyn department before concluding her career at the Freeport FHN allergy department.

Domer and Jeanne raised their family in Freeport, IL. Jeanne was dedicated to her community, volunteering for hospice and teaching CCD at St. Mary's, where she hosted an annual Seder meal to educate Catholic children about Passover.

Jeanne's day always began with a cup of strong, hot, black coffee, and her family knew not to ask too much of her before she had it. Even the



day before she passed, she awoke from a deep slumber offered coffee. She also requested a beer, but she settled for coffee and watermelon when her daughters hadn't brought a beer.

Jeanne was a tough but loving mother. When any of her five children complained, she would tell them to "offer it up to the poor souls in purgatory." She ensured all her children had swimming and music lessons and attended CCD. If they misbehaved on trips, the entire family had to say the rosary, which was kept in the car's "rosary holder" (an unused car ashtray). Therefore, the children behaved as much as possible on long car trips to South Dakota, Colorado, Wisconsin, and Minnesota.

After becoming empty nesters, Jeanne and Domer enjoyed traveling to China, Japan, Hong Kong, Australia, Germany, England, France, Scotland, and Ireland. Before retiring, they built a log home in the woods of Stockton, where they enjoyed feeding birds, gardening, and walking the timber and surrounding country roads, always carrying a grocery sack to pick up litter or ditch asparagus. They loved to take their grandchildren to the Timberlake

Playhouse, Dairy Queen for ice cream cones, and fishing. Jeanne and Domer also served as mentors for Stockton Elementary School.

Jeanne was a member of Holy Cross Catholic Church in Stockton, where she served as an usher and eucharistic minister and visited the parish priest to escort area nursing homes and shut-ins. She was an avid walker and enjoyed genealogy and quilting. She volunteered with the Stockton Historical Society, which enabled her to learn interesting facts about her beloved hometown and its history. A lifelong Cubs fan, she was thrilled to see them win the World Series in 2016.

Jeanne was preceded in death by her parents, special aunt Hazel Binz, uncle Leo Binz, and brothers David and Leonard Eich. She is survived by her brother William (Virginia) Eich, sister-in-law Mary (Leonard) Eich, and brother- and sister-in-law Karl and Wilma Schubert.

She is also survived by her husband of 68 years, Domer, and their children Christy (Craig) Niemeyer, Thomas (Doris) Schubert, Mark (Renae Bryant) Schubert, Jacqueline (Barry) Gardner, and Holly (William Smith) Schubert. Jeanne is also survived by grandchildren Kiley (Callie Van Oost) Niemeyer; Jon, Jesse, Andrew (Sierra), and Derek (Em Bolens) Schubert; Sarah and Eric Gardner; and Ben Smith, as well as great-grand-

children Kade, Helena, and Gunnar Schubert, and numerous nieces and nephews. She will be remembered by many friends, especially her "card-less card club."

In lieu of flowers, Jeanne had requested that memorials be directed to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital or to Holy Cross Church in Stockton, IL, for masses.

The family extends their gratitude to Mercy Health Hospice, especially Karen, and the kind, caring staff of Wesley Willows Hunt Terrace and E Wing, especially Candie. From the dining room staff to the activities team to the wonderful CNAs and nurses, Jeanne received excellent care and companionship from the Wesley Willows family.

Jeanne read obituaries daily, and her daughters hope she is pleased with this one as she sits with a strong cup of coffee and reads it from heaven, especially as it ends with this quote she wrote in her journal when her health began to decline:

*God is the reason why even in pain, I smile. In confusion, I understand. In betrayal, I trust. And in fear, I continue to fight.*

Family and friends are invited to attend a short wake and memorial mass at Holy Cross Church (220 East Front Street, Stockton, IL 61085) at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Aug. 9, with a burial and luncheon to follow afterwards.

## GERTRUDE TRUDI SCHULER

Gertrude "Trudi" Schuler, 82, of Lena, IL passed away peacefully with her family by her side on Wednesday, July 16, 2025, at UW Hospital in Madison, WI. Trudi was born on Jan. 14, 1943, in Owatonna, MN to Raymond and Bertha (Niespodziani) Busch. She graduated from UW Stevens Point with a degree in Education. Trudi married TJ Gilley on June 12, 1965. Trudi and TJ taught English at Dakota High School for many years. After they owned and operated Gilley's Supper Club in Lena, IL. At Gilley's Trudi worked as a hostess. Her presence was wel-

coming, joyful and contagious. Often it was discovered people had driven for hours to eat there just to see her! That was the impact Trudi had on others. She beheld a fun-loving memorable spirit that drew others near.

In 2001, Trudi was united in marriage to Larry Schuler. At their wedding, Trudi's Matron of Honor wore a Green Bay Packer's hat while Larry's Best Man wore a Chicago Bears hat. Together they did a toast that they were entering into a "mixed marriage". Every Sunday Larry was in one room with the Bears game on and Trudi was another room with the Packers game on. A rivalry blessing united in love.



Trudi was a devoted member of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Lena, IL where she was very active in her

many roles. She was a member of the Delta Mu Women's Sorority, and active in her book club. In her younger years she enjoyed hunting, camping, boating, and bowling. When Trudi and Larry lived in Pearl City, she enjoyed helping on the farm. She also enjoyed attending musicals and socializing with others. She loved nature, feeding the hummingbirds, and planting captivatingly beautiful gardens.

Trudi is survived by her husband, Larry Schuler of Lena, her children; Todd (Jackie Bass) Gilley of South Carolina, Tara Gilley of Louisville, CO, and Tanya Williams of Lena, IL, stepchildren; Carla, Lance, Becky and Jeff, grandchildren; Mitchell (Kyleigh) Mikesell, Alyssa Williams, Paige Williams, step-grandchildren, great-grandchildren; Kenlynn, Kora, Gunner, and Briggs, step-great-grandchildren and her brother Tom Busch.

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# Obituaries

## LAVONNE BURKE

Beloved nurse, mother, sister, and friend.

LaVonne Lynn (Upmann) Burke, age 54, of Lena, IL, passed away peacefully at home in the morning of July 13, 2025. She was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer four months ago, but lived every day to the fullest, even with her diagnosis.

When LaVonne was a child, she would often get close to wild animals. She saved countless birds, bunnies, and raccoons along the way. When she chose nursing as her career, she pursued it with gusto. She loved caring for others, making them laugh, and encouraging them. She made a real difference every day, caring for people who sometimes had no one to care for them.

LaVonne lived a life marked by compassion, perseverance, and deep devotion to people.

She had one son, David Burke, and was proud of the man he became. Their bond was unshakable, and he remained the light of her life. David would often say, "Mom even taught me how to shave. Mom did so much for me."

LaVonne earned her nursing degree from Highland Community College with a perfect 4.0 GPA, all while working full-time and raising David. Her path to nursing was not easy, but she followed her calling with determination and grace. Prior to her nursing career, LaVonne worked at Mitek and Dura from 1993 until 2004. Her journey began as a CNA at the Stockton Nursing Home and continued as an LPN in 2006. From 2006 to 2012, she served at the Lena Nursing Home as a floor nurse, wound



care nurse, and nurse case manager. She later worked at Sterling Nursing Home (2012-2014) and then

served with Stephenson County (2014-2019), before retiring due to her disability. What others might have seen as a setback, LaVonne turned into a new beginning—her strength, resilience, and courage inspired all who knew her.

She served as a deacon at the First Presbyterian Church of Apple River in early adulthood, where she also played the organ for services on occasion. She played five musical instruments and enjoyed singing. During the last few months of her life, she often broke into song, and whoever was near, joined right in.

LaVonne was married to Andy Burke for 21 years. After his passing in 2014, she found true and steady love with Alan Lutz. Over the past 11 years, LaVonne and Alan built a joyful life together in Lena, filled with laughter, partnership, and unconditional support. Together, they shared their home with two beloved English bulldogs, Maizy Mae and Dyna, and made countless cherished memories.

She is survived by her son, David Burke (Laura) of Kansas City, Missouri; her father, Willard Upmann of Warren, and his wife Charlene; her sister, Laura (Upmann) Gallagher of Fitchburg, Wisconsin and Apple River, Illinois; her niece and nephew, Logan Geisking and Tristan Geisking of Madison; and her long-

time partner, Alan Lutz of Lena. LaVonne also leaves behind their two cherished English bulldogs, Maizy Mae and Dyna, and Alan's grandmother, "Grandma" Rosemary Lutz, who held a special place in her heart.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Andy Burke; her mother, Donna Upmann; her maternal grandparents, Laverne, Marian, and Babe (Jules) Gallagher; and paternal grandparents Margaret and Joseph Upmann.

LaVonne will be remembered for her quick wit, sweetness, warmth, and unwavering love and dedication. She found joy in gardening, cooking, playing board games, visiting the zoo, and being with friends and family. She had a lifelong love for animals and loved to travel with Alan, with the Cayman Islands being their favorite destination. Whether it was Colorado, Florida, Sturgis, Branson, or the Wisconsin Dells, LaVonne brought a sense of fun and adventure to every trip—she was always the first one in the pool, even when it was only 50 degrees. Apple Canyon Lake held a special place in her heart.

LaVonne spent her final days at home, cared for with devotion by LaVonne's partner Alan, her sister, Laura, her dad, and countless friends of theirs, including several close friends from her nursing career. So many gave selflessly to LaVonne to allow her to be at home during the last few months. A special thank you to FHN Hospice for their compassionate care, guidance and support. Your care made a difference.

A Celebration of Life will be held at the Lena Community Center on Saturday, July 19, 2025, at 11 a.m. A visitation will be held from 9 a.m. until the time of service. Bring your stories—after the celebration of life a lunch will be served, and we'll honor LaVonne with an Irish toast. Pastor Libby Rutherford will be officiating.

Cremation rites have been accorded. A memorial fund has been established in her honor. *Slán go fóill – goodbye for now*, LaVonne. Bí saor - Be free. You are so loved.

pie. She enjoyed her grandchildren very much and taught them many life lessons. Her and Terry enjoyed traveling and went on many trips, she will be missed.

Surviving are children, Roger (Karen) and Larry (Lisa). Grandchildren, Blake Musser, Autumn Kubatzke, Derek and Ryan Musser, Scott Musser, Ethan Lartz, and Katy Musser. 14 great grandchildren. A sister, Eunice (Stake) Coomber.

Preceding her in death are, her husband, Terry and Son, Randy Musser, and sister, Beulah Earnest.

A funeral service will be held on Saturday July 26, 2025, at 11 a.m., with a visitation at 9 a.m. until time of service, at Salem United Church of Christ in Loran, IL. Interment at Chapel Hill Memorial Gardens in Freeport, IL. Online condolences may be shared at [www.schwarzfh.com](http://www.schwarzfh.com).

# Stockton Heritage Museum to host Singing Bird and the Importance of Native American Women in Illinois

By Kim Sigafus

Award-winning Ojibwa author and presenter Kim Sigafus will offer an immersive and educational experience that honors the legacy of Native American women—spotlighting the "Hidden Half" of Illinois history. Dressed in traditional regalia, Sigafus will share powerful narratives of figures such as Singing Bird, wife of Black Hawk, and Hononegah, exploring their daily lives, relationships, and societal influence.

Through storytelling, hands-on engagement, and music, Sigafus brings depth and visibility to the central role Native women played in shaping both their communities and the history of Illinois.

The event will take place on Tuesday, Aug. 5, 2025, at the Stockton Heritage Museum, 107 West Front Street, Stockton, IL, at 6 p.m. The event is free and open to all audiences. For more information, please visit our website at [www.stocktonheritagemuseum.org](http://www.stocktonheritagemuseum.org), visit us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/StocktonHeritageMuseum/](http://www.facebook.com/StocktonHeritageMuseum/), email us at [info@stocktonheritagemuseum.org](mailto:info@stocktonheritagemuseum.org), or leave a message at 815-947-2220.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Kim Sigafus is an Ojibwa author whose family hails from the White Earth Reservation in Minnesota. She writes acclaimed fiction and non-fiction for all ages, and presents widely on Native American history, culture, food, and music. As owner of Quiet Souls, a Native-inspired gift shop in Freeport, she shares traditional arts like crafting dream catchers and Talking Feathers. Join Kim Sigafus and discover the untold stories of Native women whose strength and spirit resonate through time.

## 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.

### Brudi Family Reunion

The 100<sup>th</sup> Brudi Family Reunion will be held Sun-

day, July 27, 2025, at St. John's Lutheran Church, 625 Country Lane Dr., Lena, IL, at 12:30 p.m. Please bring a dish to share and your own table service. Lemonade and coffee will be available. Call Cindy at 815-369-4744 for more information.

## AUDREY ELAINE MUSSER

Audrey Elaine Musser, age 90, passed away July 16, 2025, at Lena Living Center after a long illness. She was born July 19, 1934, to Martin & Ruth (Pfeil) Kortner. Audrey married Terry Musser Jan. 19, 1953, at EbenEzer Evangelical Reformed Church, Pearl City, IL. She was a lifelong member of the EbenEzer Salem Churches. She was always ready to help any way possible with suppers, Bible School, Sunday School and Christmas Programs.

She was a dedicated farm wife, milking cows, and growing a large garden. Eventually Terry and Audrey built a new house a few miles from the farm. She went to school for training to become a CNA. She then worked at Parkview Home many years. She was known as the Pie Lady because each-she would invite the residents to her home for



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# Around the Northern Hills

**Cover Crop Field Day**

We will again be holding a field day on Friday, Aug. 1 at 11:30 a.m. Please note the changed location: 7979 E Cahill Road, Stockton.

Come see the updates on the multi-year cover crop project. Speakers will include Greg Thoren, owner and host; Bena Pegg, Illinois Farm Bureau; Bob Melcher, retired veterinarian; Bob Recker, Cedar Valley Innovation; Miranda Peters, eShepherd and Rick Bieber, Fields of Sinsinawa.

**Blood drive**

We are hosting a blood drive at the Harvest Fest in Elizabeth on Aug. 16 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. To donate, call ImpactLife at 800-747-5401 to set up a time.

**Jo Daviess County Farm Bureau offering \$250 towards R.O.P.S. purchase**

The Jo Daviess County Farm Bureau would like to offer funds to reimburse farmers for purchasing Rollover Protective Structures (ROPS). Fifty-five percent of farm tractors in Illinois do not have a cab or ROPS. Only 1 in 5 victims will survive a tractor rollover accident. The leading cause of farm related deaths in Illinois is tractor rollover accidents. They account for more than 30% of farm related deaths.

ROPS help protect farmers and family members from being crushed in the event of a tractor turnover or rollover. Safety Chairman, Dan Robbe, states, "Safety is a priority of the farm bureau, and we would like to encourage our members to install ROPS on their tractors." Jo Daviess County Farm Bureau members who purchase a ROPS could receive a reimbursement of \$250 towards the purchase of a ROPS (six rebates are

**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**

Did you know that virtual fencing exists for cattle? Each animal wears a solar powered, GPS enabled, neckband that enables you to simply draw your virtual fence anywhere on your property and your cattle learn to move with and remain within the virtual barrier. Want to learn more, visit our field day on Aug. 1.

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

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# Pritzker signs executive order responding to impact of tariffs on Illinois

## Requires state agencies to draft plans to mitigate effects of tariffs on their responsibilities

By Ben Szalinski  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Gov. JB Pritzker signed an executive order July 14 requiring Illinois agencies to draft recommendations to respond to tariffs being implemented by President Donald Trump.

The order requires seven state agencies to "consider the specific impacts that the U.S. tariffs have had on Illinois and provide draft recommendations of measures to mitigate the impact of these tariffs" within the next 100 days, which would be Oct. 22.

Pritzker said in a statement that tariffs amount to a tax increase on consumers and contribute to economic uncertainty.

"This Executive Order ensures we have a clear-eyed view of the impact the Trump Slump will cause from higher prices at the grocery store to uncertainty in our farms and factories," Pritzker said. "We're working with other states to stand up for working people and protect our economies when we can."

The order cites large tariffs Trump has unilaterally implemented on most countries, including some of Illinois' largest trading partners, saying the tariffs have raised

prices for consumers and businesses and led to supply chain disruptions. The order says tariffs as well as retaliatory tariffs countries have imposed on the United States are hurting "vital sectors of the Illinois economy."

After previously pushing off implementation of some tariffs until Aug. 1 to allow time for negotiations, Trump announced last week many countries will see tariffs take effect. His latest policy includes 35 percent tariffs on Canada, 30 percent on Mexico and the European Union, and between 25 percent and 40 percent on many Asian countries. The president previously imposed 145 percent tariffs on goods from China in the spring, but many of his latest rates are lower than they would have been earlier this year.

Illinois imports more goods from Canada than any other country.

### Order's requirements

Under Pritzker's executive order, state agencies must examine the impact of tariffs on certain sectors of the economy or the agency's operations.

The departments of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and Employment Secu-

rity will evaluate challenges reported by businesses, employment trends since tariffs have been implemented, and industries most affected by tariffs.

The Department of Human Services will evaluate trends in food donations and supply

chain challenges for food assistance programs, as well as the purchasing power of food banks and their ability to meet demand.

The Department of Transportation and the Capitol Development Board will assess the impact of tariffs on con-

struction costs, and the ability to purchase construction materials and complete projects within their timelines.

The Illinois Emergency Management Agency and the Department of Homeland Security will evaluate any impacts to stockpiles and the

ability to obtain supplies, including staying prepared for emergencies within budget constraints.

Pritzker's executive order was part of actions taken by seven Democratic governors to understand the impact of tariffs on their states.

## 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 27, 2025, for Worship Service at 9:30 a.m. The Gospel will be from Gospel Luke 11:1-13.

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

On Sunday, Aug. 3 Hannah Circle will meet after worship in Fellowship Hall.

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 27 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.

Pastor Len will be hosting a bible study on Wednesday, July 23 at 6:30 p.m. The topic will be the Book of Revelation. He will also be hosting a bible study on Sunday, July 27 at 10:15 a.m. The topic will be Living Faith in Daily Life. Come either day or both and bring your bibles. Each bible study will last about an hour.

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 August Grace Meal will be on Sunday, Aug. 17. The menu will be shaved pork on a bun, coleslaw, potato chips, and pudding. Reservations are due in the church office by Thursday, Aug. 14. Meals can be picked up at the church on Aug. 17 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.

Crafternoon 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](mailto:ruth.dake@gmail.com).

### Lena United Methodist Church

Lena UMC is hosting an Ice Cream Social on Aug. 7, 2025, from 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. The menu includes BBQ, hot dogs, baked beans, chips, lemonade, coffee, pie, brownies, and ice cream. The cost is \$12 per adults and \$6 for children 10 and under. Lena United Methodist Church is located at 1188 W. Mason Street, IL and the event will be held in the Fellowship Hall.

## Affordable health screenings coming

Residents living in and around Lena, IL can learn about their risk for cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, diabetes, and other chronic, serious conditions with affordable screenings by Life Line Screening. Lena Community Center will host this community event on Aug. 14, 2025. The site is located at 497 Lions Dr. in Lena.

Screenings can check for: The level of plaque buildup in your arteries, related to risk for cardiovascular disease, stroke and overall vascular health.

HDL and LDL Cholesterol levels

Diabetes risk  
Kidney and thyroid function, and more

Screenings are affordable and convenient. Free parking is also available. Special package pricing starts at \$159, but consultants will work with you to create a package that is right for you based on your age and risk factors. Call 1-877-237-1287 or visit our website at [www.lifelinescreening.com](http://www.lifelinescreening.com). Pre-registration is required.



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## 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**

**Schapville Zion Presbyterian Church**  
635 E. Schapville Road  
Elizabeth, IL 61028 • [www.schapvillezion.org](http://www.schapvillezion.org)

## Summer Park Ministry Concerts

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

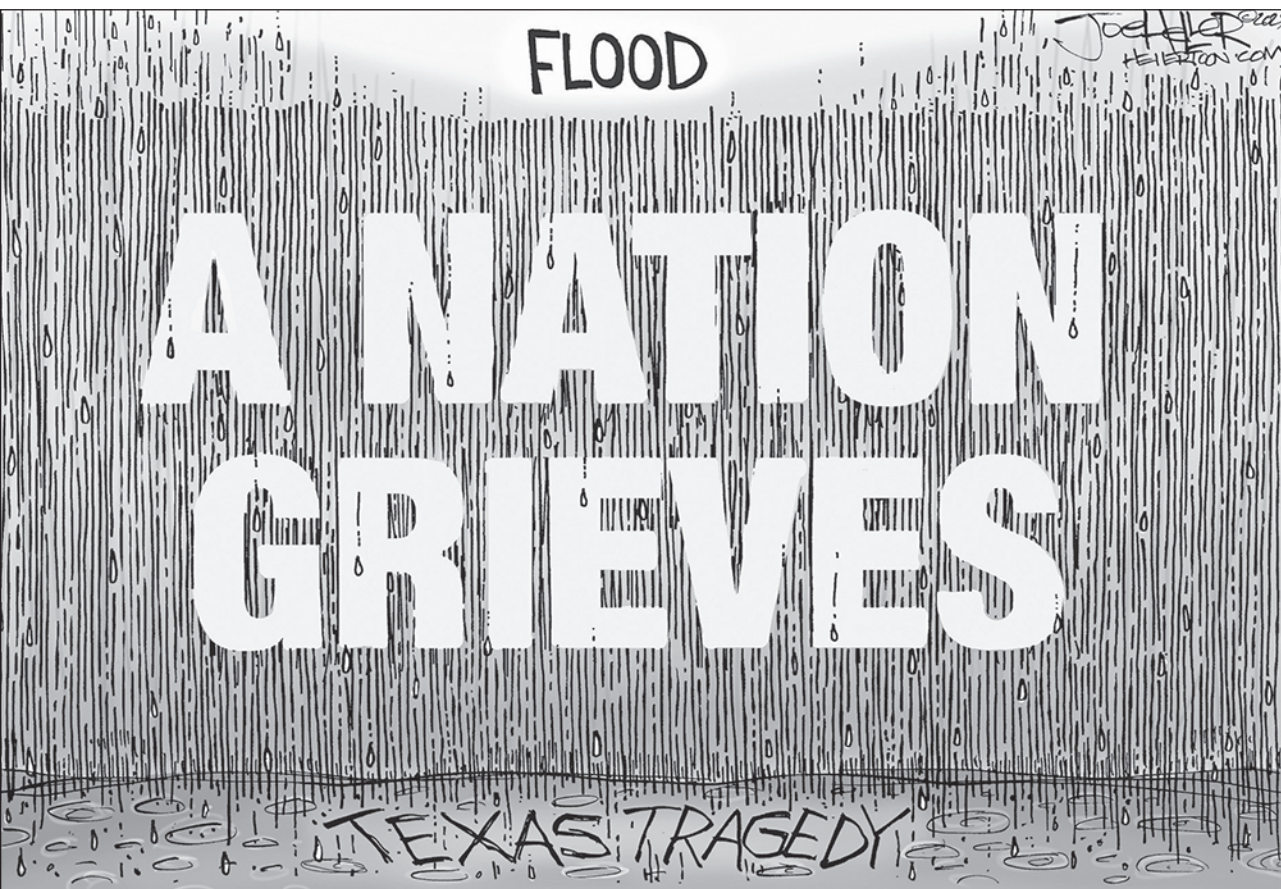
<b>July 26</b>	Evan. Free Church, Lena
<b>Aug. 2</b>	Delta II
<b>Aug. 9</b>	Gone Fishin'
<b>Aug. 16</b>	Steve Sheffey & Co.
<b>Aug. 23</b>	Finding Grace
<b>Aug. 30</b>	Deb Leininger

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

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



# OPINION



## Market Outlook for the month of July

By Ashley Chambers  
FINANCIAL ADVISOR WITH  
CITIZENS INVESTMENT  
SERVICES

July is historically one of the strongest months for U.S. equities, with the S&P 500 averaging a 1.4% gain and the Nasdaq-100 typically rising over 2% during the month. So far, that trend appears to be continuing. Positive momentum is being supported by easing global trade tensions—particularly between the U.S. and China—and strong performance in AI-related sectors such as semiconductors and cloud computing. Long-term bond yields have also been

drifting downward, which helps boost equity valuations by lowering discount rates and easing pressure on interest-sensitive sectors.

Most major investment firms remain bullish. BNP Paribas Exane recently raised its year-end S&P 500 target to 6,700, with a potential upside to 7,100, citing a global capital expenditure “super cycle” and continued support from central banks. Goldman Sachs sees the index reaching 6,600 in the next six months and 6,900 within a year, thanks to expected Fed rate cuts, robust earnings growth, and stable inflation. Other institutions like

Bank of America and Morgan Stanley also project year-end or 12-month targets in the 6,300–6,600 range.

However, risks remain. Some analysts are warning of a potential 10–12% correction in the second half of the year, driven by consumer fatigue, overbought tech valuations, and uncertainty around upcoming tariff deadlines. July could also see spikes in volatility, as earnings season kicks off and geopolitical tensions—particularly in the Taiwan Strait and Middle East—linger. Additionally, while the market has rallied strongly in recent months, some experts caution that this rally lacks breadth, meaning a small number of stocks are driving much of the gains.

Overall, the base case for July is modest further upside—likely in the 1–3% range—accompanied by increased short-term volatility. Investors may want to maintain balanced portfolios, with exposure to both high-growth areas like AI and more defensive sectors. It's also wise to prepare for potential market shake-ups later in the month, particularly around tariff announcements and earnings results. Despite the risks, July remains well-positioned to build on the market's strong first half of the year.

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A diversified portfolio does not assure a profit or protect against loss in a declining market. Investors should consider their financial ability to continue to purchase through periods of low levels. S&P 500 – A capitalization-weighted index of 500 stocks designed to measure performance of the broad domestic economy through changes in the aggregate market value of 500 stocks representing all major industries.

## Slices of life

### A grand visit

I just finished a two-week visit with the three grands. (And two with the three ain't bad.)

Their house is undergoing a refinement and they needed a place to stay.

Me, the effervescent grammy, with hand in the air: “Oh, pick me, pick me!!”

They needed a place to stay. I needed them to stay with me. It was a win-win situation. It was also exhausting, and I'm not even their mom—who for sure was 100% more exhausted than me, especially since she is about 65% done growing grand baby number four.

It was a loud couple of weeks. But it was also a time filled with giggles and laughter and no one wanting to go to bed. Well, except their mom. And me.

But we aren't counting grown-ups in this equation, because it isn't about the grown-ups when there is a candy store in town. We have three of them – candy stores, not grands.

Well, we have three of those, too—until September when the grands will officially outnumber the candy stores.

Imagine a two-year-old entering a building filled with many variations of brightly colored candies in large clear glass cases located at eye level with scoopers and bags for the ready.

His eyes nearly bulged out of his head. I saw it firsthand. His smile rivaled a sunrise crossed with the most exciting roller coaster ever invented, plus maybe a sparkler or two.

We handed him a bag and told him to fill it. With candy!

Life is good when you are a two-year-old at the candy store.

Sweetness aside, It was a time of blanket forts and dancing in the living room, sometimes at the same time. There was pretend play and an unwillingness to share stuffies, despite the fact that we have more of them than there are lakes in Minnesota.

Besides, it's a well-known fact among four-year-olds that the monkey stuffie is twice as valuable as the unicorn stuffie, unless you pair it with the bunny stuffie or (even better) the dinosaur stuffie.



By  
**JILL  
PERTLER**  
Columnist

Stuffed animals (and blanket forts) in the living room weren't the only plethora we experienced.

It was a time of collections – of many kinds. We collected rocks and shells. Oh, and leaves. And twigs. And so many, many ants (not to be confused with aunts, we didn't collect any of those.)

We collected sand in the bed – even on days when we didn't visit the beach. I'm not sure how to explain that, except for the fact that my grands excel at sand collection, most especially between their toes.

We even collected one deer tick, found (thankfully) before he – or she – got the chance to be comfortable. After that, we practiced tick checks every night before showering to wash the day's stickiness (and tickiness) away.

It was a time of loud “pooping” announcements, followed by raucous cheering. Remember the environment: two-year-old, potty trainer in the ready, discovering he could control pooping. You catch my drift.

Yeah, pooping! Let's go! Great job! (Literally)

It was a time of wasted food because who wants to eat meals when you can eat candy? I think we all know that is a facetious question. I made meatloaf one night, but they only wanted bananas and tater tots. I guess two out of three ain't bad. (Did I say that already?)

Thing is, they left most of the bananas uneaten. You'd think bananas grew on trees.

Oh wait. Maybe they do. Grandchildren, however, do not. They are one in a million. Or maybe even one in a billion.

Life is good when you are a grammy spending time with grands. Almost like being in a candy store, only better.

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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The Scoop and Shopper's Guide



# Stephenson and Carroll County Farm Bureau news

By Victoria Hansen

Each month we like to share how Farm Bureau has served its members for the month prior. Below is a list of ways Farm Bureau served our members in June.

An Illinois Farm Bureau-backed bill that addresses nuisance deer unanimously passed both chambers of the General Assembly, giving farmers an avenue to mitigate financial loss from wildlife crop damage.

Eight members of the IFB Resolutions Committee visited Washington, D.C., giving a national perspective to IFB's grassroots policy process.

IFB leaders and staff met with Illinois' congressional delegation in Washington, advocating for the organization's priority issues and ag provisions in the proposed budget reconciliation legislation.

The 29th annual Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom golf outing, hosted by the IAA Foundation, raised \$36,000 for ag literacy.

IFB's Summer Ag Tour gave members an opportunity to develop a broader understanding of Illinois agriculture, touring a barge, a produce and specialty crop farm, potato production equipment, irrigation systems and more.

## Schlachter Farm Flower Tour and Bouquet Making

The Stephenson County Farm Bureau is planning a trip to Schlachter Farm Flower on Aug. 12, 2025, at 6 p.m. Besides touring the farm, participants will have the opportunity to make bouquets. Anyone interested in creating a bouquet should bring a vase – a standard-size vase will suffice! The cost to attend this trip is \$10 for members and \$15 for non-members. The farm is located at 13287 W. Greenbush

Rd., Lena, IL. Pre-registration is required for this event. To register, you can call the office at 815-232-3186.

## Illinois Wheat Association to Host 2025 Summer Wheat Forum

Connect with crop experts and innovators during the Illinois Wheat Association's (IWA) annual Summer Wheat Forum. The forum will be held July 31 from 4-9 p.m. at the American Farm Heritage Museum, 1395 Museum Ave., in Greenville. Industry exhibits will feature seed companies, industry professionals and machinery. "The Summer Wheat Forum is a great opportunity to discuss and hear solutions to a range of production and market issues," said Jolene Neuhauser, Illinois Wheat Association executive director. "From market trends to hearing field experiences from the best wheat producers in Illinois, attendees take home a wealth of knowledge that will help them increase their farms' productivity." This year's guest speakers are Mike O'Dea, Stone X risk management consultant, and Jason Mauck, a farmer and CEO of Constant Canopy.

Registration for the Summer Wheat Forum is available at [www.illinoiswheat.org/025-summer-forum-1](http://www.illinoiswheat.org/025-summer-forum-1). Tickets are \$25 for IWA members and \$50 for non-members. Dinner is included. For more information, visit [www.illinoiswheat.org](http://www.illinoiswheat.org), or email Neuhauser at [jneuhauser@ilfb.org](mailto:jneuhauser@ilfb.org).

## Illinois Farm Bureau and the Illinois Certified Crop Adviser Board are accepting nominations for this year's Illinois Certified Crop Adviser Award

If you know a CCA who has provided superior service in the

areas of nutrient management, soil and water management, integrated pest management or crop production for their farmer-customers, be sure to nominate them. To learn more about the nomination process, including who is eligible to be nominated, click on the CCA Award Description button.

The 2025 CCA Award winner will be submitted to the Illinois CCA Board for consideration for the International CCA Award. Make your nominations here, <https://form.jotform.com/251736030986158>

## Carroll County Farm Bureau Young Leaders Host Ninja Farmer

## Contest

Plan to participate in this year's Ninja Farmer Event on Saturday, Aug. 9 at 11 a.m. The Ninja Farmer is a course set up by our Young Leaders. Each kid will get the opportunity to race through the course in order to win a prize. The course can be messy, so dress accordingly.

The age divisions to compete are 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, and 13-14. All participants get ice cream, and the top three in each division will get an additional prize. This event is completely free, and no pre-registration is required. Registration begins in front of the grandstand on Saturday, Aug. 9 at 10:30 a.m.

Please direct questions to our office at 815-244-3001 or by email at [carrollcfb@gmail.com](mailto:carrollcfb@gmail.com)

## Warrens Cranberry Festival

Join the Carroll and Stephenson County Farm Bureaus as we travel to Warrens, Wisconsin for the Annual Warrens Cranberry Festival. This Festival features over 3 miles of shopping and over 1,200 vendors. This trip will take place on Friday, Sept. 26.

Trip Schedule:

6:30 a.m.: Depart Carroll County Farm Bureau  
7 a.m.: Depart Freeport Walmart

10 a.m.: Arrive at Cranberry Festival

4 p.m.: Depart Festival

5:30 p.m.: Dinner on the way home

6:30 p.m. Depart for Freeport Walmart

8 a.m.: Arrive at Freeport Walmart

8:30 p.m.: Arrive at Carroll County Farm Bureau

The trip cost includes transportation, all gratuities and water on the bus. The Farm Bureau Member price is \$80 and the non-member price \$100. Reserve your spot by calling the county you plan to be picked up at Carroll 815-244-3001 or Stephenson 815-232-3186.

## LENA-WINSLOW ALL SCHOOL REGISTRATION

### ONLINE OR IN-PERSON THIS YEAR!

#### ALL FAMILIES WILL NEED TO PROVIDE PROOF OF RESIDENCY TO REGISTER

Online Registration for all returning students in the Lena-Winslow District will start on July 28 and must be completed by August 14 at midnight.

IN-PERSON registration will be August 6 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and August 7 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

#### Please remember:

1. All families must provide PROOF OF RESIDENCY (3 documents in total) which includes but is not limited to recent property tax bill, mortgage papers, driver's license, vehicle registration, voter registration, etc. Two documents will be required if a Category II document. A more complete list can be found on the [le-win.net](http://le-win.net) webpage.

2. All students entering Pre-K, JK or Kindergarten, Sixth, and Ninth grades, and any student entering from out-of-state must present a completed physical examination form by the first day of school. Completed dental exams for JK or Kindergarten, Second and Sixth grades are also required. Local doctors and dentists have these forms in their offices or they can be found under the registration tab at [le-win.net](http://le-win.net).

**Fees and lunch money:** Fees and lunch money can be paid online through the family access or in-person at any of the building offices. You may also send a check to the District Office, 401 Fremont St., Lena, IL, 61048. Please call Darcy Schierloh at 815-668-0800 if you have any questions.

**Free/Reduced Meal Applications** must be completed annually. You can apply online through Skyward Family Access, download an application off the website, or applications are available in any office. Please Call Darcy Schierloh at 815-668-0800 if you have any questions.

The first day of school will be Monday, August 18, 2025. Dismissal time will be 1 p.m. for the first day.

If you have questions, please call one of the building secretaries at the phone numbers listed below:

Elementary building secretaries: 815-668-0809 or 815-668-0810

Junior High building secretary: 815-668-0818

High School building secretaries: 815-668-0822 or 815-668-0821

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The recently signed federal budget reconciliation bill includes key safety net and tax provisions that help farmers, but the legislation doesn't replace a comprehensive five-year farm bill.

# Approved megabill provides tax certainty for farmers

By Tammie Sloup  
FARMWEEK

The recently signed federal budget reconciliation bill includes key safety net and tax provisions that help farmers, but the legislation doesn't replace a comprehensive five-year farm bill.

President Donald Trump signed the nearly 900-page bill into law on July 4.

Hundreds of provisions are included in the legislation, including updates to key commodity risk management programs.

The funding for farm bill programs is good news for farmers, however, ag groups, including Illinois Farm Bureau, have stressed the inclu-

sion does not replace a five-year farm bill. The ag industry continues to operate under the 2018 farm bill, which has been extended multiple times by Congress.

"This bill addresses key Illinois Farm Bureau priorities, including permanent tax provisions and updates to parts of the farm bill—both critically important to Illinois farm families who've been navigating a tough ag economy for several years," IFB President Brian Duncan said. "There's still work to be done. Several key items could not be included in the reconciliation budget bill due to the Senate rules. We will continue to work with our delegation in

Washington to see these items are addressed in follow-up legislation."

Hard lines were drawn between the two parties, specifically concerning cuts to Medicaid and an overhaul of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which entails pushing some costs onto states for the first time.

## Farm provisions

The bill includes enhancements to the farm safety net with up to \$66 billion provided over 10 years.

These provisions include raising reference prices and commodity loan rates to better reflect today's higher production costs and market con-

ditions.

Crop insurance programs would see about \$6.3 billion in increased spending over 10 years, with higher subsidies for some supplemental area-based plans and other improvements to premium support. Beginning farmers also will receive additional premium assistance. The bill also updates the federal crop insurance program to allow farmers to purchase the Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO) while enrolled in Agricultural Risk Coverage. Historically, SCO was available to only those enrolled in Price Loss Coverage, limiting coverage options.

Payment limits would increase from \$125,000 to \$155,000 for individuals, and then the payment limit would increase based on an inflation index. The bill also removes income caps for farmers or entities that draw 75 percent or more of their income from agriculture or forestry.

The bill also has provisions that would allow USDA to enroll up to 30 million new base acres for farmers based on the production history of that ground. Base acres were established in the 2002 farm bill and, up until the 2014 farm bill, mostly reflected planted acreage from 1998 to 2001.

In conservation, the bill takes back as much as \$16 billion from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and rolls those funds into the 10-year budgets for USDA's main conservation programs.

Other provisions in agriculture would double funding for

USDA trade promotion programs as well.

Many farm bill programs could not be included in reconciliation because they are policy, not budgetary. Those updates and extensions will have to be addressed in what many are dubbing a "skinny farm bill."

## Tax provisions

The 45Z credit was one of the few IRA incentives spared in the reconciliation bill, which terminates or phases out many of the IRA's credits established under the Biden administration. The bill extends the 45Z, or clean fuel production credit, from 2027 to 2029 and prevents the use of foreign feedstocks outside of the U.S., Canada and Mexico. The emissions rate also will be adjusted as necessary to exclude any emissions attributed to indirect land use change.

However, the bill lowers the value of the tax credit for sustainable aviation fuels.

In relation to the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA), farmers and rural businesses will continue to receive tax parity to their corporate counterparts through a permanent Section 199A deduction. The bill makes permanent a 20 percent deduction for qualified business income for smaller businesses. In addition to payment limitation increases, the bill creates new exemptions from the limitations to any qualified pass-through entities, including limited liability companies (LLCs), general partnerships, S corporations

and partnerships.

For the nearly 98 percent of family farms that operate as sole proprietorships, partnerships or S corporations, USDA's Economic Research Service estimates that 199A is the single-most impactful tax provision for farm businesses when evaluated separately from other TCJA provisions.

The legislation also reinstates 100 percent bonus depreciation from 2025-2030 and also increases the Section 179 deduction for smaller businesses to \$2.5 million.

The bill increases the estate tax exemption to \$15 million for single tax filers and \$30 million for married couples starting in 2026 and the exemption would be indexed for inflation, preventing the Death Tax from hitting more than 2 million family farms that otherwise would have seen their exemption cut in half.

For individuals, the bill also increases the standard income deduction as well as the child tax credit for couples and exempts taxes on tips for people through 2028. For the state and local tax deduction, the bill caps itemized deductions for state and local taxes at \$40,000 per household with an annual increase, then reverts to \$10,000 in 2030. The current cap was set to expire next year.

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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▼ Community events, car washes, festivals, lemonade stands, school projects – people at work and at play.

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▼ Just shoot and e-mail!

▼ We need you to ID everyone in the photo *first* and *last* names required

▼ Tell us what's happening in the photo

▼ **Please do NOT crop your photos.**

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

**E-mail your photos at the highest possible resolution to:**

**scoopshopper@rvpublishing.com**

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# GAME PAGE

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Level: Intermediate

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### Fun by the Numbers

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## PROTECT PETS WORD SEARCH

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

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

### WORDS

- CARRIER
- COLLAR
- CORDS
- CRATE
- DANGEROUS
- EMERGENCY
- FENCE
- HARNESS
- HAZARDS
- HEATSTROKE
- HYDRATION
- IDENTIFICATION
- LOCKED
- LOST
- MICROCHIP
- PET-PROOFING
- PREVENTIVE
- RESTRAINT
- SECURE
- SUPERVISION
- TICKS
- TOXINS
- VACCINATION
- VETERINARIAN

### CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Pacific Standard Time
- 4. Extracts through heating and melting
- 10. Express delight
- 11. More curvy
- 12. Expression of uncertainty
- 14. Indicates before
- 15. Daughter of Hera and Zeus
- 16. Southwestern CA city
- 18. Unified
- 22. Less attractive
- 23. Base of jellies
- 24. A large and noisy party
- 26. He was traded for Luka
- 27. Wolverine genus
- 28. "Happy Days" actress Moran
- 30. Root of taro plant
- 31. Student environmental group (abbr.)
- 34. Silk garments
- 36. Unique power
- 37. Ray Liotta cop film
- 39. Leak slowly through
- 40. Notion
- 41. Atomic #55
- 42. Fixed in one place
- 48. About heat
- 50. Type of baseball pitch
- 51. Seedless raisin
- 52. Large wading birds
- 53. Similar
- 54. Time zone
- 55. Atomic #34
- 56. Program
- 58. Old world, new
- 59. Contrary belief
- 60. "To the \_\_\_ degree"

### CLUES DOWN

- 1. Plain-woven fabric
- 2. Classed

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

- 3. Suppositions
- 4. Midway between south and west
- 5. Tropical American trees
- 6. Leveled
- 7. Published false statement
- 8. Adolescent
- 9. Junior's father
- 12. Aurochs
- 13. Not low
- 17. Boxing's GOAT
- 19. Short musical composition
- 20. Small immature herrings
- 21. Eavesdropper
- 25. Parcels of land
- 29. Anger
- 31. Irritations
- 32. Hindu holy man
- 33. Wicker basket for fish
- 35. Natural object
- 38. Transporting in a vehicle
- 41. A dog is one
- 43. Smaller portion
- 44. Sew
- 45. Belonging to a thing
- 46. Horsley and Greenwood are two
- 47. Scottish language
- 49. Producer
- 56. Exclamation of surprise
- 57. Russian river







# FROM LENA'S KITCHEN



The not so skinny cook

We did get a storm last weekend, and I was glad it wasn't as bad as places around us. My heart breaks for the people in Texas and out East. Fair week is coming up, and the temperatures are going to be hot. It seems that hot and humid weather always rears its ugly head during fair week. The hot weather has made a lot of things really grow. One of my farmer friends said that he could hear the corn growing at night. Garden produce is coming in for those people who planted at the right time. This week we have some interesting recipes for you to try. Have a great week cooking.

## Taco Crescent Pull-Apart

At one time Pampered Chef had a crescent roll enchilada that was great. This taco appetizer is built much like that one, but a lot easier. There are not many ingredients, so it is easy to put together. This appetizer is good anytime during the year.

1/2 lb. ground beef  
1/3 C. water  
2 T. Taco Seasoning Mix  
4 oz. cream cheese, softened  
3/4 C. shredded cheddar cheese

2 cans Crescent Rolls (8 count each)

1 T. butter, melted

Preheat the oven to 375. Line large cookie sheet with parchment paper. In a large nonstick skillet, cook beef over medium-high heat 4 to 6 minutes, stirring frequently until thoroughly cooked; drain. Stir in water and taco seasoning mix; heat to boiling. Reduce heat and simmer uncovered 1 to 2 minutes, stirring frequently, until thickened. Transfer to a medium bowl. Cool for 10 minutes. Add cream cheese and 1/2 C. of the cheddar cheese to beef mixture. Stir to combine.

Separate each can of dough into 8 triangles. Place about a rounded tablespoonful of beef mixture in center of each crescent. Bring the three points of the dough triangles together over filling and then pull up sides. Firmly pinch sides of dough so cheese mixture is covered. Press edges and seams of dough to seal completely. Arrange 5 stuffed crescent balls, pinched

side down, in ring on cookie sheet. Arrange remaining 11 stuffed crescent balls in another ring around the first 5. Brush dough with melted butter. Bake 18 to 22 minutes or until deep golden brown. Sprinkle with remaining 1/4 C. of cheese. Bake 1 to 2 minutes or until cheese is melted. Remove parchment paper with crescents and place on a serving plate. Serve warm.

## Shrimp Salad Appetizers

This appetizer is another easy one to make. The hardest part is cleaning the lettuce and preparing the shrimp. You can get shrimp already peeled and deveined and cooked too.

1 lb. peeled and deveined cooked shrimp (31 to 40 per lb.), chopped

6 oz. imitation crab meat chopped finely

2 celery ribs, finely chopped

1/4 C. mayonnaise

1/4 t. Dijon mustard

24 Bibb lettuce leaves

Chopped parsley leaves

In a large bowl, combine shrimp, crab and celery. Add the mayo and mustard; toss to coat. In each leaf put 2 T. shrimp mixture and top with chopped parsley. Place on serving plate.

## Strawberry Arugula Salad

This green salad has a great vinaigrette dressing on pretty greens. If you aren't an arugula fan, you can use baby spinach. The strawberries and almonds add extra flavor to the greens. I have rosemary in my herb garden, but I never plant sage. It tends to take over and get out of control. Enjoy this interesting combination of fruits and vinaigrette.

6 C. Arugula or baby spinach

1 1/2 C. sliced fresh strawberries

1/2 C. slivered almonds

1/2 C. crumbled feta cheese

4 green onions, chopped

Vinaigrette:

1/3 C. olive oil

1 T. Dijon mustard

1 T. red wine vinegar

2 t. lemon juice

1 1/2 t. balsamic vinegar

1 t. fresh rosemary or 1/4 t. dried rosemary

1 t. fresh sage or 1/4 t. dried sage leaves

1/2 t. celery seed

1/8 t. pepper

In a salad bowl, combine the arugula, strawberries, almonds, cheese and green onions. In small bowl, whisk the oil, mustard, vinegars, lemon juice, spices, and seasonings. Drizzle over the salad and toss to coat.

## Crunchy Ramen Noodle Slaw

If you are in the mood for a great priced side, this slaw is perfect. Everyone knows that there is not a food that is cheaper than ramen noodles. You can also find the coleslaw mix on sale this time of the year. If you aren't a cilantro fan, you can substitute flat leaf parsley. Enjoy this economical and tasty side.

2 pkg. (3 oz. each) ramen noodles without seasoning pkgs.

4 C. coleslaw mix (shredded green and red cabbage, and carrots)

1/2 C. sliced toasted almonds

1/3 C. sunflower seeds

4 green onions, thinly sliced

1/4 C. chopped fresh cilantro

1/4 C. olive oil

1/4 C. rice vinegar

3 T. soy sauce

2 T. honey

1 t. sesame oil

Prepare the noodles: Break uncooked ramen noodles into small pieces; place in dry skillet. Over medium heat, cook until lightly golden, 2 to 3 minutes. Let cool. In a large bowl, combine the coleslaw mix, toasted ramen noodles, almonds, sunflower seeds, sliced green onions and cilantro.

Dressing: In a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, rice vinegar, soy sauce, honey, and sesame oil until well combined. Toss and serve by pouring dressing over salad until coated. If desired, garnish with green onions. Chill 15 to 20 minutes before serving.

## Pizza Tater Tot Casserole

This casserole is easy to assemble and makes a great weeknight dinner. Most kids like tater tots and using them in a pizza setting is rather ingenious. You probably have most of these ingredients in your cupboard.

1 1/2 lbs. ground beef

1 medium green pepper, finely chopped

1 medium onion, finely chopped

1/2 lb. sliced fresh mushrooms

1 can (15 oz.) pizza sauce

1 t. dried basil

3 C. shredded mozzarella

1 pkg. (32 oz.) frozen Tater Tots

1 C. shredded cheddar cheese

In a large skillet, cook the beef, green pepper, onion, and mushrooms over medium heat until meat is no longer pink, breaking meat into crumbles, drain. Add pizza sauce and basil. Transfer to a greased 9 x 13 baking dish. Top with mozzarella cheese and potatoes. Bake uncovered at

400 until potatoes are lightly browned, 30 to 35 minutes. Sprinkle with cheddar cheese; bake until cheese is melted, about 5 minutes longer.

## Chicken Veronique

This next chicken recipe is a bit different because it uses orange marmalade spread and nutmeg as ingredients. It also uses green grapes as a side. I think that tarragon is always a good spice to use in flavoring chicken breasts.

6 boneless chicken breast halves (4 oz. each)

1/4 t. salt

1/8 t. nutmeg

4 t. butter

2/3 C. chicken broth

2 T. orange marmalade spreadable fruit

3/4 t. dried tarragon

2 t. flour

1/2 C. half-and-half cream

1 1/2 C. green grapes, halved

Sprinkle chicken with salt and nutmeg. In a large nonstick skillet, cook chicken in butter over medium heat for 3 to 5 minutes on each side or until lightly browned. In a small bowl, combine the broth, marmalade and tarragon. Add to skillet and bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 4 to 5 minutes on each side until a thermometer reads 170. Remove chicken and keep arm.

Combine the flour and cream until smooth. Gradually stir into skillet. Bring to a boil; cook for 2 minutes or until thickened. Stir in grapes. Heat through. Serve with chicken. Serve with rice pilaf.

## Pig Pickin' Cake

This cake is a southern cake for the summer. I am not sure what the pig reference is because I am not from the South. When I did a little research, I learned that Southerners had pig roasts. They often picked off pieces of the pork from the whole hog on a spit. After all the grease and heavy pork, they would serve this light cake. Enjoy this cake which has a lot of light flavor for summer.

1 pkg. yellow cake mix  
1 can (11 oz.) mandarin oranges, undrained  
4 egg whites, room temperature

1/2 C. unsweetened applesauce

Topping:

1 can (20 oz.) crushed pineapple, undrained

1 pkg. small instant vanilla pudding mix

1 carton (8 oz.) Cool Whip, thawed

Preheat the oven to 350. In a large bowl, beat the cake mix, oranges, egg whites and applesauce on low speed for 2 minutes. Pour into a 9 x 13 greased cooking dish. Bake at 350 for 25 to 30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack

Topping: Combine the pineapple and pudding mix. Fold in whipped topping just until blended. Spread over the cake. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour before serving.

## Berry Dump Cake

If you are looking for an easy dessert that will feed everyone and have no leftovers, this cake is one you will love. The use of the cake mix and the easy mixing of the berries makes for a short prep. You can use any kind of mixture of berries.

4 C. mixed berries (blueberries, raspberries, strawberries)

3/4 C. sugar

2 T. cornstarch

1 T. lemon juice

1 t. vanilla

1 vanilla cake mix

8 T. unsalted butter cut into cubes

Vanilla ice cream for serving

Preheat oven to 350. Spray a 9-inch square baking dish with cooking spray. In a bowl, combine the berries, sugar, cornstarch, lemon juice and vanilla. Toss to coat the berries. Pour the mixture into the greased baking dish; spread the cake mix over the top in an even layer. Scatter the butter cubes over the top. Cover the baking dish with

aluminum foil and bake until top is puffed and golden and the fruit is bubbling, about 40 minutes. Remove the foil and bake for 5 minutes more. Let cake cool slightly on a wire rack before serving with vanilla ice cream.

## Final Thoughts

It is Stephenson County Fair Week, and as I said before, the weather is supposed to be hot and humid. I am hoping we won't have our traditional fair storm. I know a lot of people do a lot of preparation for the fair. Anyone who shows any kind of animal has usually been working for weeks to get them ready to show. The people who are growing and baking have been practicing for weeks doing baked goods and tending gardens with fruits, vegetables and flowers. I admire those people who take the time to do these special things. I know that there is a love of tractor pulls in our area, so that is a big draw too.

We have wrapped up the Lena Community Park Concerts and the Freeport Concert Band Sunday night series. You can still catch the Saturday concerts at the lake. I can't believe that next week will signal the end of July. I talked to several moms who are trying to do school supplies early in order to save some money. If you don't have any kids or grandkids to buy for, there are donations at many churches and at the schools for funds for students who need help. I hope you all have a good week checking out all the things in our area which you can find for entertainment. Have a great week cooking and keeping cool.

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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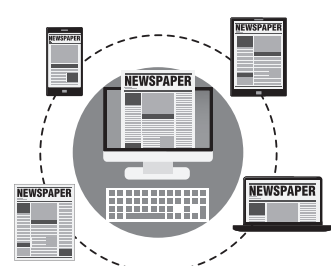
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# Illinois bet on solar to meet its climate goals. Trump has the industry in his crosshairs

## Advocates push state to expand renewables incentives

By Andrew Adams  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

President Donald Trump and congressional Republicans earlier this month curtailed federal tax incentives for the solar energy industry and for individuals and companies that purchase solar panels.

The move sent shockwaves through the industry nationwide, pulling key incentives for major projects and residential rooftop solar alike.

But in Illinois, members of the industry say state policy gives a bit of cover. While they have seen a wave of business before Biden-era tax breaks sunset, solar compa-

nies are left with uncertainty in the long-term.

Others fear Trump's actions will drive up prices by slowing the growth of renewables entering the market as fossil fuels exit for economic reasons.

The spending plan that Trump signed into law on July 4 will end several decades-old tax incentive programs between now and 2027. Those programs, which offer credits for rooftop solar systems and investment in large-scale projects, were expanded under the Inflation Reduction Act, a major initiative of former President Joe Biden.

Trump followed the bill signing with a July 7 executive order aimed at quickly ending any subsidies for "expensive and unreliable energy sources like wind and solar."

Between the spending bill and the executive order, the federal government will also

stop offering a tax credit for the manufacture of wind power components and instead offer a similar subsidy to the coal used in steel production.

The new law also denies incentives to any projects that are owned by certain foreign entities or use a significant amount of supplies from those entities, like the Chinese government and its affiliated businesses.

This is particularly difficult for battery storage and solar projects, which often rely on minerals and components mined in or manufactured in China.

This leaves many consumer advocates and energy experts looking to Illinois to further insulate the industry, which is a key part of how the state plans to replace fossil fuel-generated electricity with carbon-free sources by 2045 as required by state law.

## Energy price increase

The bill will likely result in higher energy prices across the country, according to an analysis from the REPEAT Project, a joint research effort by Stanford Professor Jesse Jenkins' Princeton Lab and Evolved Energy Research.

A separate analysis from think tank Energy Innovation, whose CEO was a senior Biden advisor involved in drafting climate change-related legislation, links the cost increases to a reduction in the number of renewable power plants that will be built under the new law.

This will affect electricity capacity markets directly as well as increase the wholesale price of natural gas due to the power sector's increased reliance on it. Federal data indicates natural gas is currently used for about 17.3 percent of all electricity generation in Il-

linois.

Estimates of the scale of the electric bill cost increase for a typical household vary. REPEAT pegs the increase at \$280 per household per year by 2035 nationwide. Energy Innovation's model suggests \$170 annual increase by 2035 and \$180 in Illinois.

A spokesperson for the Citizens Utility Board, a consumer advocacy group in Illinois, echoed the sentiment and said ending the tax credit programs "is a gut punch to consumers and our economy."

## Solar industry 'uncertainty'

Jon Carson, the managing partner at Trajectory Energy Partners, said the law is another part of the "solar coaster"—an industry euphemism about the ups and downs of solar tax credits. This part of the coaster, Carson said, will result in less

investment.

"This change in law and the uncertainty from the president's executive order, it just means that less projects are going to get built in the short term," Carson said.

Carson, a longtime campaign and White House staffer under former President Barack Obama, founded Trajectory Energy Partners in 2017.

"We fundamentally believe that this is a real bump in the road for solar, it's a bump in the road for individual projects, but that ultimately the United States needs more power, and it's going to come from wind, solar and battery storage," he said, referencing three technologies Trump is against.

Others in the industry have raised flags that the "bump in the road" may be more obtrusive for some companies.

See GOALS, Page 13

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# Goals (Continued from page 12)

The investment tax credit that's ending under the new law offers a credit of 30 percent of project costs, with an optional 10 percent on top of that if a project meets certain labor standards. A similar tax credit exists for both residential and commercial projects.

Brian Haug, president of Oak Brook-based Continental Energy Solutions, said the credit is a "critical" part of Continental's business model. "The investment tax credit is a perfect tool that we use to make these projects financially interesting for larger companies," Haug said.

Continental works on microgrids, rooftop solar and battery storage projects for commercial and industrial customers and claims to be the largest solar installer in the state.

Solar installation companies, customers and individuals still have time qualify for tax credits at the higher, Biden-era rates. Eligible projects must commence construction within the next 12

months or be placed in service by the end of 2027, almost a decade ahead of what was outlined in the IRA.

The rapid sunset has resulted in a short-term boom in requests for solar projects, according to Windfree Solar CEO Eric Heineman, whose Chicago-based company installs solar for commercial and residential projects.

"We don't know how it's going to impact us in the long term. What we know in the short term is that we know we have buyers who have been dragging their feet, they've got proposals for years with us, and now they're just coming out of the woodwork," Heineman said. "They're signing up left and right."

But even for projects started today, there's not a guarantee they will receive any tax benefits from the federal government. Trump's executive order signaled that his administration could revise guidance on what counts as the "beginning of construction."

## Illinois' renewable haven

Illinois has increasingly subsidized the solar industry in recent years, most notably through the 2021 Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, or CEJA. That state law significantly expanded programs like Illinois Shines and Illinois Solar for All, which provide incentives to individuals and solar developers.

At a campaign stop while the Trump-backed spending plan was being considered in Congress earlier this month, Gov. JB Pritzker said Illinois' policy wouldn't be affected by the feds' repeal of Inflation Reduction Act tax credits.

"We put that bill together before the IRA was passed at the federal level, and so we anticipated that we needed to incentivize clean energy, and we did," Pritzker said on July 2.

Industry experts credit the state's policies generally, and CEJA specifically, for positioning the Illinois solar industry well as Trump's policies threaten solar broadly.

Heineman, who was former

Gov. Pat Quinn's director of sustainability, pointed to the state's solar renewable energy credit, or SREC, programs as a driving factor.

"Our sales are our revenue. Sales are driven by SRECs. If we don't have revenue, we go out of business," Heineman said. "Illinois is more insulated than any other state in the country."

Heineman estimated that a typical solar project takes three years to pay for itself with current incentives. After the federal credit is repealed, it might take five years. Without state incentives, though, it could be as much as 10 years.

## Battery credits

Some of the same lawmakers who were involved in passing CEJA are now pushing for a follow-up bill to offer incentives to the battery storage industry. That bill, a version of which was considered in the spring legislative session, could also include regulations of data centers, which are a major contributing factor to

decreasing grid reliability and increasing energy prices.

Some environmental groups are using the federal spending plan as leverage to further push state lawmakers into supporting the initiative.

Illinois Environmental Council senior policy manager Cate Caldwell said the state has "long led" on environmental issues and that lawmakers should act in their shortened October legislative session.

"While this federal budget threatens to reverse that progress, Illinois can instead double down on its climate commitments and invest in real, bold climate solutions that modernize our grid, ensure energy-hungry data centers act as good neighbors, and deliver cost savings to hardworking families across the state," she said in a statement.

## Hiccups in Illinois' climate record

Despite the overall positive sentiments from the renewable energy industry and environmental lobby, the state has

failed to live up to the promises it made in the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, according to a report from the state's auditor general.

That audit report, released last week, found that the state's Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity failed to properly implement requirements for at least four jobs or workforce programs outlined in CEJA, including ones aimed at finding jobs for people returning from prison and to help communities disproportionately affected by climate change and pollution.

In the report, the Department acknowledged its errors and noted that it had hired someone to manage one of the programs in an interim capacity.

A DCEO spokesperson said the department has made "substantial progress on key initiatives" since the audit was conducted, including approving grant recipients in many of the programs listed in the report and launching community-hubs for people seeking jobs in the renewable sector.



















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Page 16 SHOPPER'S GUIDE Wednesday, July 23, 2025

# SSM Health Monroe Hospital's Michele Schiess honored with Rural Health Ambassador Award

Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative (RWHC) has recognized Michele Schiess, Director of Acute Care & Emergency Services at SSM Health Monroe Hospital, with the Rural Health Ambassador Award.

This award honors individuals who go above and beyond in promoting rural

healthcare and fostering community relationships.

Michele was presented with the award by Jeremy Levin, RWHC Director of Advocacy, during a leadership meeting on July 10. She was nominated by the hospital's Administrative Council in collaboration with Rebecca Bordner, Marketing & Communica-

tions Consultant.

"In all aspects of her work, Michele demonstrates a passion for rural healthcare and her teams," the nomination stated. "Her commitment to enhancing healthcare in our communities goes well beyond the expectations of her role. Michele and her teams are continuously reviewing

safety standards and enhancing best practices to provide the highest quality of patient care."

Among her many accomplishments, Michele recently led the implementation of a Post-Birth Alert program across all SSM Health hospitals in Wisconsin. This initiative rollout included standardized workflows and training for both internal staff and EMS partners. The program has been well received and was featured at the Wisconsin Hospital Association's Advocacy Day to showcase a proactive approach to maternal medicine advocacy. Michele has also shared program information with RWHC member hospitals, media outlets, and healthcare systems across the country.

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Michele exemplifies what it means to be a compassionate leader. She is a constant presence at the hospital, day and night, supporting her teams, celebrating successes, and organizing employee appreciation events. Her ability to stay connected with staff and fos-



SUBMITTED PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing  
**Michele Schiess after receiving her Rural Health Ambassador Award.**

ter a positive work culture is testament to her dedication.

Michele's commitment to service extends into her personal life as well. She volunteers as an EMT in her home community of Pearl City, Illinois and plays an active role in supporting local EMS teams.

"Michele exemplifies what it means to be a leader in rural healthcare," said Rebecca Bordner, Marketing & Communications Consultant at SSM Health Monroe Hospital. "Her dedication, innovation, and compassion are truly inspiring."

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