

THE GAZETTE-DEMOCRAT

The Talk And Cobden Review • Serving Union County Since 1849

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Anna, Illinois

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News Notes

Items of interest from throughout the Union County area, from social media and beyond...

Filing of nominating petitions for 2023 local municipal and school board elections is underway this week in Union County. Filing continues through Dec. 19. A look at those who filed is coming up...

For the third year in a row, the City of Anna will not have an increase in its tax levy.

City officials are continuing to pursue the possible development of a veterans memorial park at the Anna Business Park.

Work also continues on the possible development of a walking/bicycling path in the City of Anna.

A four-way stop has been approved at Douglas and McKinley streets in the City of Anna.

Anna-Jonesboro Community High School's spring musical is scheduled to be "The Wizard of Oz." Cast members have been announced.

Christmas Spirit Week is underway in Anna School District No. 37.

Semester exams are scheduled Dec. 15-16 at Anna-Jonesboro Community High School.

Finals week is underway at Shawnee Community College.

Christmas decorations were created recently by Shawnee Community College Agriculture Club members. Some of the items were raffled.

Dec. 17 is scheduled to be the final day of the season for the Christmas Shop at the Union County Museum in downtown Cobden. Reports are that the shop's 20th season has been a good one.

The first day of winter is Wednesday, Dec. 21.



Union County CEO program continues Christmas Boxes tradition

The Union County CEO program continued a tradition this year by selling local sampler Christmas Boxes. "All I Want for Christmas is...to support local businesses" was the theme for this year's CEO Class of 2023 business. The Christmas Boxes featured a wide range of Union County products, as well as coupons and discounts offered by local retailers. The Union County CEO class continues to work to promote awareness about the items, goods and services which are available from local businesses...at Christmas time and throughout the year. The Christmas Boxes were picked up last Saturday at Anna Junior High/Davie School. CEO students took many of the boxes out to customers who were waiting in their vehicles on a rainy and cold December day.

Union County CEO students who were on hand Saturday to help with the Christmas Boxes project included Sienna Morrison, Reese Reynolds, Marissa Simmons, Jaden Ebberts, Lia Mays, Abigail Smith and Kaylee Hall. CEO students Oregon Dover and Drake Campbell were not able to be present. Those involved with the CEO program voiced their appreciation to all of those who bought one of the Christmas Boxes and supported the project in any way.

COVID-19, other respiratory viruses

Cases continue to rise after Thanksgiving holiday

COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses are continuing to rise across Illinois following the Thanksgiving holiday, with 74 counties in Illinois rated at an elevated level for COVID-19 by the CDC.

The Illinois Department of Public Health, IDPH, on Friday, Dec. 9, said that the anticipated post-holiday surge is a reminder for the public to take action to protect themselves and their loved ones during the remainder of the holiday season.

This is especially important when it comes to members of the family who

are vulnerable to severe outcomes, the department said in a news release.

IDPH is emphasizing these safety reminders as the CDC reported 29 Illinois counties were at a high community level for COVID-19, up from 12 for the previous week.

Forty-five counties were at a medium level, compared to 51 for the previous week.

As of Friday, IDPH was reporting 21,404 new confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 in Illinois since Dec. 2, and 56 deaths.

IDPH statistics showed a total of 54 new cases

in Union County for the period of Nov. 28 through Dec. 9.

The county had 16 new cases Dec. 5-9 and 38 new cases Nov. 28 through Dec. 2.

Union County remained at a low community level as of Friday. Alexander and Pulaski counties also were at a low community level.

Jackson County was at a medium community level. Massac, Johnson and Williamson counties were at a high community level.

"Illinois is experiencing a significant rise in communities at elevated risk levels for COVID-19, including 29 counties at a high risk,"

IDPH director Dr. Sameer Vohra said.

"These elevated COVID-19 community levels, along with rising flu levels, are leading to a surge of respiratory infections and increased hospitalizations.

"I recommend all Illinoisans, and especially those most vulnerable, including young children and individuals over 65, take all preventative steps to protect themselves, their families and friends.

"Preventative measures include COVID-19 testing, especially if visiting someone at risk for severe disease; enhanced ventilation;

good hand hygiene; staying home and seeking treatment if sick; and getting up to date with the COVID-19 bivalent booster and the flu shot," Vohra said.

"A high-quality mask or respirator is also recommended and will protect you from COVID-19, the flu and other respiratory viruses. Our hope is for Illinoisans across our state to have a happy and healthy holiday season."

As of Friday, IDPH was reporting a total of 3,906,801 cases, including 35,550 deaths, in 102 counties in Illinois since the beginning of the pandemic.

Union County Board reorganizes

The Union County Board of Commissioners reorganized at its regular meeting last Friday morning. The meeting was at the Union County Courthouse in Jonesboro.

Max Miller was reelected as chairman of the county board. Kent Pitts was reelected as vice chairman.

Newly elected county commissioner Brandon Bierstedt attended his first regular meeting on Friday. Bierstedt was elected to the

county board in November. Incumbent David Gould was reelected in November.

The county board chairman congratulated both Gould and Bierstedt for the November election victories.

In other business at Friday morning's meeting, board vice chairman Kent Pitts shared the information about activities at the Union County animal control shelter.

During November, 28

animals were brought in; 26 animals were moved out through such actions as adoptions.

For the year, through the end of November, 260 animals had been brought in; 295 had been moved out.

Successful good reports have been received following Illinois Department of Agriculture inspections; some minor violations were reported.

The board approved a request from a resident for the naming of what has been an unnamed rural county road as Heritage Lane. The road is near Anna.

The board approved a resolution appointing members of the Union/Alexander Joint Emergency Telephone System Board, including Grant Capel, David Wilkins, Matthew Lambdin and Steve Hartline.

Commissioner Darryl Harvell voiced concerns he had about potential insurance liability issues related to mowing and cutting of weeds at the animal control shelter. The shelter is located along Kaolin Road, between Anna and Cobden. Commissioner Pitts said mowing and cutting of weeds is done regularly.



Oath of office administered

New Union County Board of Commissioners member Brandon Bierstedt, left, took his oath of office Thursday, Dec. 8. The oath was administered by Union County Clerk Lance Meisenheimer. The ceremony was at the Union County Courthouse in Jonesboro. Bierstedt was not able to be present for an oath of office ceremony on Dec. 1 due to illness. He was elected to the county board in November. Photo provided.



Christmas tree lights in Anna

Christmas tree lights are shining during the holiday season at the four-way stop in downtown Anna. The Christmas trees are among many decorations for the season which are on display in the Union County community.





Promoting Southern Illinois businesses

The Southernmost Illinois Tourism Bureau was glad to have Rolling Oak Alpaca Ranch of Makanda represent the area and promote the Illinois Made Holiday Gift Guide highlighting 38 small diverse businesses around the state. Several businesses from Shawnee Forest Country in Southern Illinois are featured in the guide, including the Rolling Oak Alpaca Ranch, C's Bees Honey & More, Buffalo Bluffs Hemp Farm, 17th Street BBQ, Alto Vineyards and the Chocolate Factory. Morgan Stevenson from Rolling Oak Alpaca Ranch joined Paige Hulseley on News 4 at 4 p.m. on Nov. 22 on KMOV-TV St. Louis. Rolling Oak Alpaca Ranch sits on 10 acres near Makanda, and is a mother and daughter run business. Photo provided.

News from

First Baptist Church, Jonesboro

On Sunday, Dec. 11, during the morning worship service, the Celebration Choir presented its Gift to the Community cantata, "The Glorious Impossible," for the church family.

After the cantata was presented, Pastor Perry Williams addressed "how we can be distracted during the Christmas season and totally miss the wonder of the miraculous birth of Christ. We can also be distracted and miss the signs of His second coming." The message was based on scripture from Matthew in the New Testament.

The service was sent via transmitter for worshippers who stayed in their cars on the church's lower parking lot while tuned in to their radios on station 87.9 FM.

The service also was live streamed on Facebook, where it can be viewed.

The church's Facebook page, Jonesboro FBC, has videos and the latest information about possible closings.

Music director Dee Rose

led the worship. Debbie York was the pianist.

The church thanks everyone who attended this year's Gift to the Community, the cantata "The Glorious Impossible," which was presented Friday and Saturday nights, Dec. 9-10. Great turnouts were reported.

The church appreciates the efforts of the Celebration Choir, which was directed by Dee Rose; as well as the hospitality committee, who fed everyone a meal.

Men's Bible study was planned Monday at 7 p.m.

A Dig-In Children's program Christmas party was planned Wednesday evening, Dec. 14.

Birthdays: Lee Massey,

Dec. 12; Sue Rendleman, Dec. 13; Lucille Eastwood, Dec. 14; Ervina Johnson, Dec. 15.

The regular schedule for worship at Jonesboro First Baptist Church includes Sunday School classes on Sunday at 9 a.m., Sunday morning worship at 10 a.m. and Sunday evening worship at 6 p.m.

Youth are scheduled to meet from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Sundays and from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Wednesdays.

The Dig-In Children's program is planned from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Wednesdays.

Adult Bible study is scheduled at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesdays.

Small Business Bingo underway at Anna, Jonesboro businesses

Small Business Bingo is underway in Anna and Jonesboro.

The holiday season began Dec. 10 and continues

through Dec. 23.

Prizes in the game will include gift certificates and items donated by each participating business with a total value of more than \$200.

Bingo cards can be picked up at any of the participating businesses in Anna and Jonesboro.

Players are encouraged to visit as many of the participating businesses as they can to get their bingo card stamped. No purchase is necessary.

Bingo cards are to be returned to any participating business by Dec. 23.

Wreaths Across America ceremonies set in county

Wreaths Across America ceremonies are planned Saturday, Dec. 17, in Anna and Cobden.

The local events will be joining more than 2,500 other locations across the country which plan to commemorate National Wreaths Across America Day.

The mission of Wreaths Across America is to Remember, Honor and Teach, ensuring that the memory of those who served the nation endures.

A ceremony is planned at 11 a.m. Saturday at the First Baptist Church in Anna. The church is located at 409 Morgan St. in Anna.

The City of Anna has reported that enough wreaths have been sponsored to place a wreath at the graves of all veterans at the Anna City Cemetery. The graves of more than 800 veterans are located at the cemetery.

A ceremony is planned at 11 a.m. Saturday at the Cobden Cemetery.

The Village of Cobden reported that wreaths will

be placed on the graves of more than 400 veterans at the cemetery.

Following the ceremonies, volunteers will lay wreaths at the graves of veterans at the local cemeteries.

Current rural health care environment 'not sustainable'

By Tammie Sloup
FarmWeek

Rural communities are older, sicker and poorer.

"It's a terrible marketing line...but a great elevator speech when trying to communicate the uniqueness of rural communities," said Alan Morgan, chief executive officer of the National Rural Health Association.

Morgan, who has more than 31 years of experience in health policy, spoke during an Arizona Telemedicine Program webinar earlier this month about the state of rural health.

How are rural hospitals faring as they emerge from the height of the pandemic? That's a difficult question to answer, Morgan said.

"We're in a precarious situation where we're seeing almost half of the nation's rural hospitals currently operating at a negative margin," he said.

"We're seeing tremendous Medicare and Medicaid cuts happening across the nation. And this is happening at a time where we're seeing an amazing staffing crisis. ...It's just a tremendously difficult time for rural providers."

Federal funding helped prop up operations during the COVID-19 public health emergency, but much of that assistance was temporary.

Since 2005, 180 rural hospitals have closed across the United States, and a report released in October by the Center for Healthcare Quality and Payment Reform estimates more than 600 rural hospitals, nearly 30 percent of all rural hospitals in the country, are at risk of closing in the near future. The report states 13 rural hospitals are at risk of closing in Illinois but did not name them.

Looking ahead, the immediate challenge within the halls of rural hospitals is a workforce shortage, and in rural communities a lack of rural behavioral health services.

"There's a bipartisan understanding that we have to see some movement in behavioral health and behavioral health legislation," Morgan said.

"I expect that as we move out of the public health emergency there is an understand-

ing among both sides of the aisle that a lot of the flexibilities that the health care system has seen, most notably rural providers, has to continue."

Congress could pass a spending bill before year's end, and rural health advocates hope legislators will incorporate provisions from the proposed Save America's Rural Hospitals Act.

The legislation would eliminate Medicare sequestration for rural hospitals, make Medicare telehealth service enhancements permanent for Federally Qualified Health Centers and extend increased Medicare payments for rural ground ambulance services set to expire Dec. 31.

With the nationwide health care workforce shortage, particularly in rural areas, Morgan points to rural residency training programs as a path to encouraging more students to practice in non-urban communities.

"They go to rural and they stay in rural; we need to have more of that going ahead," he said.

Several medical school and grant programs in Illinois already incorporate that mission.

Morgan also said telehealth usage is "not flourishing" in rural communities, largely due to lack of broadband. "There is no path forward for rural health without telehealth," he said.

The current rural health care environment is not sustainable, Morgan said, adding "we need new reimbursement models and new provider-type models."

During November, federal officials finalized rules for the first new provider type in 20 years: a Rural Emergency Hospital designation.

These facilities must provide 24/7 emergency medical services and observation care, and have the option to provide additional outpatient medical services. However, these facilities would not provide inpatient care.

The designation goes into effect Jan. 1, with facilities likely beginning to come online within the next five years, Morgan said. He estimates between 60 and 100 com-

munities across the U.S. will conduct feasibility studies in the coming year.

The model isn't for every rural community.

"This is a model for a community that maybe has lost a rural hospital recently or just has such a low volume of inpatient beds and really is seeing all of their volume in outpatient and emergency room services," he said. "This is a new tool that we have to move forward to ensure that we have that access to care."

States also must pass laws that establish state-level requirements and regulations to license this provider type. To date, only Kansas, Nebraska and South Dakota have passed such laws.

While rural residents face health care challenges, the environment also has resulted in collaboration and new ideas amongst rural providers.

"Those challenges drive innovation," Morgan said. "And as a result of that...hundreds of small towns all across the U.S. are really serving as innovation hubs for the redesign of our health care system. Some of the most innovative and creative approaches to delivering high quality health care services can be seen in small towns all across the U.S."

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.

Churches plan joint service

Walnut Grove United Methodist Church near Cobden is planning to have a joint Christmas service with Jonesboro Methodist Church on Sunday, Dec. 18.

Coffee, juice and donuts will be available from 9:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. The service is scheduled to start at 10 a.m. All are welcome.

There will not be a Christmas Eve or Christmas Day service so everyone can spend this important time with their families.

Both churches wish everyone a Merry Christmas.



May this holiday season bring us all a little closer together.



The holiday season is a special time of year. Families gather, friends reconnect, meals are shared and presents exchanged. And while we wish this feeling could last all year, we know it's just a fleeting moment in time, something to be cherished and remembered.

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Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays from Anna-Jonesboro National Bank.

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Sports

Illinois State to host IHSA football finals

The Illinois High School Association, IHSA, on Dec. 7 in Bloomington approved a state final hosting contract with Illinois State University and the Bloomington-Normal Area Convention & Visitors Bureau to host the IHSA football state finals at ISU's Hancock Stadium from 2023 to 2027.

Hancock Stadium hosted the inaugural IHSA football state finals in 1974 and hosted over 100 IHSA football state championship games from 1974 to 1998.

Hancock Stadium underwent a \$23 million dollar renovation in 2013.

Northern Illinois University in DeKalb and Southern Illinois University Carbondale each submitted bids to host the IHSA state finals from 2023 to 2027.

The University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana submitted a bid to host in 2024, 2026 and 2028.

Only four venues have ever hosted the IHSA football state finals, which debuted in 1974.

Hancock Stadium hosted the first six years of cham-

ionship games. In 1980, the IHSA expanded from five classes to six classes, at which point the IHSA opted to keep the 1A through 4A games at Hancock Stadium, while moving the Class 5A and Class 6A contests to Dyche Stadium on the Northwestern University campus in Evanston. This arrangement lasted from 1980 to 1984.

All six classes returned to Hancock in 1985 and remained there through the 1998 state championships.

The University of Illinois had hosted the state finals since 1999, with the exception of odd years from 2013 through 2021, when the games shifted to Northern Illinois University's campus in DeKalb.

Illinois State University currently hosts the IHSA girls basketball and girls volleyball state finals, while the IHSA boys golf, dance, cheerleading, journalism, Scholastic Bowl, dual team wrestling and girls individual wrestling state finals are all held in Bloomington-Normal.

A-J outscores Cobden

The host Anna-Jonesboro Community High School boys' basketball team defeated Union County rival Cobden 74-39 Saturday, Dec. 10.

Dylan Harvel and Dawson Trammel had a 3-pointer apiece to help build an early 13-5 first quarter lead for A-J. The Wildcats were ahead 25-15 at the end of the quarter.

Harvel and Evan Hall made a 3-pointer apiece to build a 19-point unanswered run as the Wildcats took a 49-22 lead at the end of the first half. A-J was ahead 63-33 after three quarters.

Harvel led three Wildcat players in double digit scoring with 18 points. Trammel added 17 points and Taj Hodges 12. J.J. Geradi scored 8 points, Drew Page, Payton Denny and Noah Cavins 5 apiece, Tony Guignon 4 and Hall 3.

Tyler Franklin led the Appleknockers with 26 points. Mitchell Howell scored 7

and Jeff Kuhn, Kevin Webb and Aron Funes 2 had each. A-J was 22 of 32 from the floor, 9 of 22 from 3-point range and 3 of 5 from the free throw line.

Cobden was 14 of 26 in shot attempts from the floor, 1 of 10 from 3-point range and 8 of 14 from the free throw line.

Nashville 52, A-J 38: The host Wildcats fell behind 16-6 after one quarter and trailed 23-19 at the half in the game played Friday, Dec. 9.

Harvel led A-J with 14 points. Trammel scored 12, Hodges 4, Page and Denny 3 each and Hall 2.

A-J was 8 of 19 from the field, 6 of 16 from 3-point range and 4 of 9 from the free throw line.

The Hornets were 14 of 22 in shot attempts from the floor, 5 of 8 from 3-point range and 9 of 13 from the charity stripe.

A-J, 4-4, plays at home against Pinckneyville, Friday, Dec. 16.



Anna wins Christmas Bragging Rights Game

The Anna and Jonesboro boys' junior high school basketball teams recently squared off in their first Christmas Bragging Rights Game. Anna scored a 50-30 victory in the game involving the Union County rivals.

The two teams are planning to make the Christmas Bragging Rights Game an annual match up. A trophy is slated to go to the school which wins the game. The trophy will stay at the winning school until the next season's game. Anna Junior High School coach William McKenzie said both schools' coaching staffs and athletic directors were excited to begin a new local sports tradition and to make the game fun for the teams, parents and community members.

Anna Junior High School team members included, from left, Isaiah Lieberman, Kaleb Gore, Landon Boyd, Beckett Thorpe, Blake Williams, Zion Orea, Reid Price, Tyler Haywood, Julian Brust, Jaxon Crus, Dillon Moreland, Xavier Richardson, Lucas Wright, Evan Parks and coach William McKenzie. Photo provided.

Appleknockers face Agape, Elverado

The Cobden High School boys' basketball team faced Elverado and Herrin Agape Christian in recent action.

Elverado 62, Cobden 49: The visiting Appleknockers couldn't hold a first quarter lead in the game played Friday, Dec. 9.

Cobden led 7-6 after one quarter. The game was tied 22-22 at the half. The Falcons came on in the

third quarter to take a 40-38 lead and outscored the Appleknockers 22-11 in the final period.

Tyler Franklin led Cobden with 40 points. Aron Funes scored 7 and Matthew Howell 2.

Herrin Agape Christian 60, Cobden 39: Host Agape led 15-7 after one quarter and 32-17 at the half in the game played Tuesday, Dec. 6.

Franklin led Cobden with 24 points. Matthew Howell scored 9, Jeff Kuhn, Funes and Tommy Quattermous 2 each.

Cobden, 2-6 overall, plays Friday, Dec. 16, at home against Century.

A-J girls in action

The Anna-Jonesboro Community High School girls' basketball team was in action against Carterville and Nashville last week.

Carterville 49, A-J 19: The visiting Lady Wildcats fell behind 16-4 after one quarter in the game played Thursday, Dec. 8.

Savannah Smith led A-J with 6 points. Kansas Craig scored 3, Jayda Shepard, Riley Cruse, Jayci Needling 2 each and Kayleigh Wheaton 1.

Nashville 60, A-J 29: The host Lady Wildcats were behind 15-9 after one quarter and 39-12 at the half in the game played Tuesday, Dec. 6.

Shepard led A-J with 10 points. Smith and Gekhara Harris scored 5 each, Needling 4, Schaefer 3 and Wheaton 2.

A-J is scheduled to play Thursday, today, at Du Quoin.

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DONGOLA PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT	
ANNUAL REPORT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS	
Fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022	
RECEIPTS:	
Real Estate Taxes	\$36,867
Fines and Fees	\$119
Grants	\$33,450
E-Rate Grants	\$6,458
Miscellaneous	\$155
Donations	\$1,160
Interest	\$137
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$78,346
DISBURSEMENTS:	
Salaries Under \$25,000	\$19,468
Advertising	\$518
Insurance	\$1,805
Library Materials	\$2,221
Library Supplies	\$907
Repairs/Maintenance	\$3,167
Memberships/Dues	\$1,385
Utilities	\$4,719
Taxes	\$1,606
Legal/Accounting	\$1,500
Training	\$300
Travel	\$265
Programs	\$434
Banking	\$25
DISBURSEMENTS TO VENDORS \$2,500 OR MORE	
Clearwave Communications	\$3,588
Guthrie Construction Inc.	\$30,114
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$72,022

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County Line News

(Mill Creek and Upper Elco)

Daniel Chapman Chapter Meeting

The Daniel Chapman Chapter of NSDAR met at the Main Street Center on Monday, Dec. 5, to hold the chapter's annual Christmas meeting.

The center was beautifully decorated by hostesses Carolyn Tripp, Linda Hileman, Marilyn

Meisenheimer and Sondra Gould.

The meal was a potluck with the meat, bread, and drinks provided by the chapter.

A program led by Sandra Boaz and Heather Carey focused on the Cherokee and their march on the Trail of Tears from the Ohio River

By Suzan Harvel

to the Mississippi River and Union County's role during the winter of 1838 and 1839.

The conditions of this forced relocation were unimaginably harsh, resulting in thousands of deaths. That winter in particular was labeled as being one of the harshest in history.

More information can be found at the U.S. Forest Ranger Station, located at the Lincoln Memorial Park in Jonesboro.

The next chapter meeting is planned Feb. 13 at the PAST Heritage House in Jonesboro at 11 a.m.

The January meeting is a working meeting for officers and committee chairs. Members may attend if they choose. It will be held at the Vienna Library on Jan. 2 at 10 a.m.

PAST Heritage House Luncheons

PAST Heritage House has completed yet another year of luncheons. The house was beautifully decorated and the meal was delicious and beautifully presented.

Thanks to everyone who contributed their time and resources to helping at the luncheons and, as always, they are ever thankful for those who attended. Your support means so much.

Mill Creek Baptist Church

Mill Creek Baptist has had a lot of folks out ill. This week our numbers came up quite a bit, but folks are still recovering from something or other. It's been so bad nearly every family has had, or still has, a family member on the prayer list.

Our pastor, especially, seeks our prayers on his recovery from two different surgeries in the course of the last two weeks.

Our supply pastor, Bobby Newberry, and his wife, Debbie, also need our prayers as she deals with another outbreak in her immune system.

Cathy Gibson is also recovering from surgery and needs our prayers for a swift and complete recovery.

We also need to remember Lula Belle Tripp, as she has surgery this next week. Gary Rider goes to the doctor again about his back and we need to pray they don't have to do surgery again.

We have our challenges, to be sure, but we know that our church is filled with faithful prayer warriors and they keep

our petitions of healing before God.

A Happy Note

On a happy note, Sam and Bethany Harvel welcomed another daughter this week and Michael Sadler and Salina Hillard will be getting married soon. Our congratulations to both families.

Sunday Message

Brother Bobby Newberry brought our message Sunday with a title of "If Jesus Hadn't Come." That's a terrifying thought. We have free will, as did Jesus. He was born of the flesh. He was tempted by Satan. What if He had chosen a different path?

Jesus is our greatest messenger, the greatest motivator, the best advocate to God, our Blessed Redeemer, and our most divine gift.

He fulfilled every prophesy foretold in the Old Testament and claimed His destiny as "finished."

We should be as bold to claim our destiny. God's plans will be fulfilled. We need to choose how to be a part of that fulfillment.

Village of Mill Creek

The Village of Mill Creek will have a monthly board meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 20, at 6 p.m. All residents are encouraged to attend and take part in these planning meetings.

Illinois travel, tourism celebrated at conference

The 2022 Illinois Governor's Conference on Travel & Tourism kicked off Monday, Dec. 5, at Navy Pier in Chicago, with the 2022 Illinois Excellence in Tourism Awards ceremony.

The ceremony honored Illinois tourism leaders' contributions to the industry.

"The winners of the Illinois Excellence in Tourism Awards reflect the resilience, creativity and passion of Illinois' dynamic tourism industry," said Sylvia I. Garcia, director of the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity, DCEO.

The Illinois Excellence in Tourism Awards were presented to honor the most successful tourism marketing and advertising initiatives, from convention and visitor bureaus and tourism destinations to attractions and innovators throughout the state who make Illinois shine.

Travel and tourism professionals from across the

industry judged submissions in nine categories, ranging from best public relations and social media marketing campaigns to best event or festival, with one exceptional entry receiving best of show.

Each category contained a Budget A for organizations with annual operating budgets of \$750,000 and above, and Budget B for organizations with budgets under \$750,000.

The Illinois Excellence in Tourism Awards program was presented by the Illinois Office of Tourism.

The 2022 Illinois Governor's Conference on Travel & Tourism was scheduled to run Dec. 5-7.

The annual conference brought hundreds of Illinois industry leaders, travel experts and visionaries together to explore the latest industry trends and insights that contribute to Illinois tourism, one of the leading economic drivers in the state.

"WORTHY"
A Night of Worship
Celebrating the birth
of Jesus Christ
in music and song

December 17th at 6 p.m.
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52&1GC

"The Preaching Pen"
A Psalm of Confidence - Chapter 62

The Book of Psalms is the most cited book in the New Testament. Its 150 spiritual songs provide examples and insights into our worship and devotion to God. The purpose in Psalm 62 is to teach men to trust in God.

In verse 1, we witness the Godhead in Salvation. The apostle Peter describes how the Godhead is involved in the Christian's election. **1 Peter 1:2** notes "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit, unto the obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied." This verse highlights that God elects or calls (2 Thessalonians 2:14), Spirit sanctifies (John 17:17), Son redeems (Colossians 1:14). Election is not an arbitrary selection or God's preference of one over the other; we can have confidence knowing the Godhead is fully invested in our salvation. Are we fully invested?

In verse 5, we locate the source of hope. **Ephesians 2:12** explains the horrible condition of those without hope. Spiritual hope comes through righteousness and righteousness comes through the gospel. **Romans 15:4** records how the Old Testaments teaching provided hope, though learning. Today, the New Testament provides us with an assurance of an eternal home with God. But we have a responsibility **1 Peter 3:15**. We must continue in faith by the gospel. We can have confidence knowing that our hope is founded on more than impulses, emotions, and memories.

In verse 7, we view that strength comes from the Godhead. One of the most comforting passages in scripture is **Isaiah 41:10**. God's strength can be seen in his: power and protection. God made this promise to his people and the promise continues to hold true to this day. **Ephesians 3:16**; God's power is viewed through the gospel (Romans 1:16). God's protection consists of the refuge He has prepared for us and His defense of that refuge. In God, both can happen because none can break through, defeat, or steal into the keep. We can have confidence in knowing that our strength and security comes from a Creator who has our best interest always at the forefront of His actions.

Ryan Thornsberry
Anna church of Christ



Village of Cobden honors employee
The Village of Cobden has honored Maria Braden for 20 years of service. She serves as deputy village clerk. From left are Cobden village president Paul "Zee" Tomazzoli, Maria Braden and Cobden village clerk Karen Winzenburger. Photo provided.

Christmas Church Services

St. Joseph's Catholic Church
Cobden

December 25th
Christmas Eve
Midnight Mass
12:00 a.m.

Christmas Day Mass
10:00 a.m.

Anna United Methodist Church
111 W. Monroe
Anna

December 18th
10:45 a.m.
March to the Manger
December 24th
7:00 p.m.
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service w/Communion
December 25th
10:45 a.m.

Seek the True Spirit of Christmas

Attend the church of your choice this holiday season!

St. Mary's Catholic Church
Anna

December 24th
Christmas Eve Mass
5:00 p.m.

December 25th
Christmas Day Mass
8:00 a.m.

January 1
New Year's Day Mass
8:00 a.m.

Salem and Mount Moriah Lutheran Church

Holiday Worship Schedule

December 21st at Mount Moriah - 7 p.m.
Potluck at 5:30 p.m. Service at 7:00 p.m.

December 24th
Salem Worship Service - 5:30 p.m.
Mount Moriah Candlelight Service with Holy Communion at 7:00 p.m.

Salem - 101 E. Market St. • Jonesboro
Mount Moriah Lutheran Church - 102 W. Jefferson • Anna

Anna First Church of the Nazarene
100 Kirk St. • Anna, IL • 833-6702
Randy Wright, Senior Pastor

December 18th
Sunday School for all Ages - 9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship with Special Music from children of the Church and Piano Solo by Brian Thompson - 10:35 a.m.
Evening Worship - 6:00 p.m.

December 24th
Candlelight & Communion Christmas Eve Service with Special Music by Jessica Elkins & Piano Solo by Brian Thompson - 8:00 p.m.

December 25th
Morning Worship - 10:35 a.m.

Janet Marilyn Williams

Janet Marilyn Williams, 77, of Pulaski, died Thursday, Dec. 8, 2022, at 11:49 a.m. at the Lutheran Home in Cape Girardeau.

She was born on Aug. 14, 1945, in St. Joseph, Mo., the daughter of Robert Henry and Vera Lillian Fountain Whan.

She married John Williams Sr. in 1967. They shared 54 years together until his passing on July 21, 2021.

She attended Southern Illinois University Carbondale, where she earned her master's degree in mathematics. She was an SIUC alumna.

She spent her working years as a substitute teacher for Meridian, Cairo, Olmstead, Egyptian and Century schools.

She was a country girl at heart who enjoyed teaching her husband the country way. She enjoyed painting in her spare time. She had a strong belief in God. She loved John with all her heart and he loved her.

Survivors include her daughter, Jennifer Robinson of Memphis, Tenn.; son John Tyler (Stephanie) Williams Jr. of Herrin; grandchildren Jordan Robinson of Memphis, Tenn., John Tyler Williams III of Kansas City, Mo., Joshua (Ali) Lowe of Mt. Vernon, Shane (Cierra) Lowe of Mt. Vernon, Destiny Williams of Columbus, Mo., and Britney Williams of Herrin; six great-grandchildren; nieces Molliette Williams, Sarah Williams and Pam Williams; nephew David Williams; and many other family members and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents and by her husband, John Sr.

Funeral services were at Crain Funeral Home-Egyptian Chapel in Energy on Tuesday, Dec. 13, at 1 p.m., with Kevin Bonifacious officiating. Cremation rites were accorded following the funeral service.

Crain Funeral Home-Egyptian Chapel in Energy was in charge of arrangements.

Memorials can be made to the Lutheran Home.

To view the obituary and/or to leave an online condolences for the family, visit www.crainsonline.com.



Travis Middleton

Travis Middleton, 26, of Cobden, died Friday, Dec. 9, 2022, at home. He was born on Oct. 2, 1996, in Carbondale.

He is survived by his parents, Benjamin (Jacqueline) Middleton of Cobden and Jane (Smith) Brown of Anna; birth mother Valerie Harris of Cobden; maternal grandmothers Geraldine Smith and Betty Eagle, both of Anna; paternal grandmother Angie Middleton of Cobden; siblings Alison Brown of Anna, Ashley (Rustin) Juhl of Du Quoin, Trevor Middleton and Josh Murray, both of Anna; aunts; uncles; nieces and nephews; other relatives and friends.

He was preceded in death by his paternal grandfather, Ernie Middleton, and maternal grandfather Andrew Smith.

There will be no services at this time.

To view the obituary and to leave online condolences for the family, visit www.rendlemanhilemanfh.com.

Rendleman & Hileman Funeral Home in Cobden is in charge of arrangements.

Carolyn Foltz

My sister, Carolyn Foltz, passed away on Nov. 17, 2022, in Marion.

She was the daughter of William H. Casey and Joyce M. Casey.

She is survived by her husband, Mark Foltz; brothers Bill J. Casey and Simon O. Casey; her children, Casey Feldt and Rachel Scogsdell; and seven wonderful grandchildren.

She was born on April 9, 1959, in Ventura, Calif. She was loved and will be missed by all who knew her and loved her.

Two private memorial services will be held with family and friends in Dongola and one in Palmdale, Calif., Friday, Dec. 16, to honor the life so many of us will forever miss.

(This announcement was shared via email by Simon Casey.)

Sandra E. Sanders

Sandra E. Sanders, 77, of Anna, died Tuesday, Nov. 29, 2022, at Integrity Healthcare in Herrin.

She was born on June 6, 1945, in Cairo. She married Norman Russell Sanders on Dec. 12, 1963, in Mound City.

She is survived by her son, Nathan Sanders of Anna; sister-in-law Joyce Sanders of Anna; other relatives and friends. She was preceded in death by her husband, Norman Russell Sanders; and a daughter, Lynn Sanders.

Services will be held privately for her family.

To view the obituary and to leave online condolences for the family, visit www.rendlemanhilemanfh.com.

Rendleman & Hileman Funeral Home in Anna is in charge of arrangements.



Obituaries

Danny Hill Henard

Danny Henard, 71, of Dongola, died on Dec. 7, 2022, at Deaconess Gateway Hospital in Newburgh, Ind.

He was born on Sept. 10, 1951, in Vienna, the son of Doyle and Mary (Hill) Henard.

He graduated from Vienna High School in 1969 and went to college for two years at Eastern Illinois University and for two years at Southern Illinois University.

Throughout his time in college, he received many awards and certificates. He worked for 21 years at SECO as a machine operator.

He loved fishing, movies, traveling, seeing family and tending to his garden. He especially liked picking green beans and keeping critters away from his harvest. He didn't know a stranger, loved his family and was loved by many.

Survivors are his wife, Delta (Adams) Henard of Dongola; daughter Dana (Jason) Stokesbary of Georgetown, Ky.; brother Randall (Gloria) Henard of Golconda; two grandsons, four granddaughters and 13 great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents and by a step-daughter, Michelle Culp.

A celebration of his life will take place and friends may visit with family at 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 18, at 200 Crestview Ln., Dongola.

Condolences can be made online at www.pierrefuneralthome.com.

Elena Marie Kinsey

Elena Marie Kinsey, 23, of Florida, died Monday, Nov. 28, 2022, in Tampa, Fla.

She was born on Aug. 3, 1999, in Kursk, Russia. Elena was the daughter of Russell and Jeanie Kinsey of Missouri.

Elena attended Cobden High School. She was a lover of all animals, especially cats.

Elena is survived by her parents, Russell and Jeanie Kinsey of Missouri; a sister, Inna Kinsey of Florida; a brother, Brennan (Alex) Kinsey of Missouri; numerous aunts, uncles, cousins and one grandmother.

Private family services will be held at a later date. Rendleman & Hileman Funeral Home in Cobden is in charge of arrangements.

To visit her memorial page and to leave online condolences for her family, visit the Rendleman & Hileman Funeral Home website at rendlemanhilemanfh.com.



News from

Anna Nazarene Church

A Sunday morning worship service was held Dec. 11 in the church and on Zoom.

Singing was led by Pastor Randy Wright and the worship team.

A reading for the third Sunday of Advent was given by Jessica Elkins. A candle was lit by the pastor.

The message given by Pastor Wright was titled "Finding Joy." Scripture was from Galatians, the Psalms, Hebrews, Isaiah, John, Acts, 2 Corinthians and 1 Thessalonians.

The message can be listened to on the church's website at annanaz.com and on the Anna First Church of the Nazarene Facebook page.

A Sunday evening worship service was held Dec. 11 in the church and on Zoom.

Singing was led by Pastor Wright. Special music was provided by Tammy Hagler. The evening message brought by the pastor was titled "What is the Church?" Scripture was from Matthew.

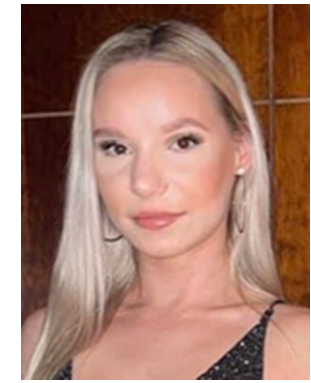
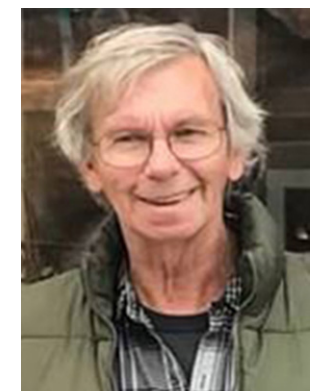
Breakfast will be served at 9 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 18. Sunday School is planned at 9:30 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 18.

A worship service is planned at 10:35 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 18. The children will present Christmas music. Brian Thompson will present a piano solo.

Quizzing is planned at 5 p.m. on Dec. 18.

An evening worship service is planned at 6 p.m. on Dec. 18.

A Wednesday night service is planned at 6:30 p.m. Dec. 21 in the sanctuary and on Zoom. Youth group and



Phil Miller

Phil Miller, 89, of Anna went to be with his Heavenly Father on Wednesday, Dec. 7, 2022. He passed peacefully in his home surrounded by family.

He was born in Thebes on Feb. 19, 1933, and was raised on his family farm in Rock Springs Hollow.

He graduated from Thebes High School in 1952 before being drafted into the U.S. Army in 1953.

The month he was discharged from the Army, Phil met his wife, Wanda Basse, at The Roller Bowl in Cairo. They were married in October. It was a match made in skating rink heaven and the two went on to enjoy a marriage of over 67 years.

During this time, Phil spent over 17 years managing Miller Restaurants in Ware, Anna and Cape Girardeau and then 37 years as a painting contractor.

Known as a man of the Word, his greatest work was his work for the Lord. He spent over 50 years of his life in ministry, including his time with No Greater Love Ministries.

He dedicated his life to telling the good news, and he prayed for thousands of individuals to receive Jesus in countries all over the world, including Austria, England, the former East Germany, Gambia, Germany, Honduras, Kazakhstan, Mexico, the Philippines, Russia, as well as local jails and prisons.

He could often be found doing street ministry at events, fairs and festivals.

The question he would want to ask you today is "If you could be sure you would go to heaven, would you want to?" If your answer is yes, say this prayer, "Jesus, come into my heart. I accept you. Amen" Then tell someone nearby that you have accepted Jesus. Nothing brought Phil more joy than helping others find the love of Christ.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Velma (Jackie) Miller, and father, Lloyd Miller; brother Ralph Miller; brother and sister-in-law Roger and Vida Miller; infant twin siblings; and granddaughter Katianna Miller.

He is survived by wife, Wanda; five children Phillip (Vickie) Miller, Glenn (Beth) Miller, Melissa (Ted) Johnson, Diana (Nick) Kelsch and Randy (Avisi Tshiamalenge) Miller; and 10 grandchildren Aaron Miller, Nathaniel (Christina) Johnson, Jessica (AJ Seiler) Miller, Jennifer Miller, Zach (Paige Standen-FI) Johnson, Kiersten Johnson, Nicholas Kelsch, Noah Kelsch, Grant Miller and Asher Miller.

Funeral services were at 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 11, at the Rendleman & Hileman Funeral Home in Anna.

Memorials can be made to No Greater Love Ministries or to Teen Challenge.

To view the obituary and to leave online condolences for the family, visit www.rendlemanhilemanfh.com.

Rendleman & Hileman Funeral Home in Anna was in charge of arrangements.



SIU honors employees for their years of service

Southern Illinois University Carbondale planned to recognize 278 employees for their service and commitment in a ceremony on Tuesday, Nov. 29, in the SIU Student Center Ballrooms.

A holiday reception for faculty and staff, hosted by SIU chancellor Austin Lane, preceded the ceremony.

The event honored employees with 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35 and 40 years of service to SIU Carbondale.

The employees have a combined total of 4,770 years of service to the university.

Those honored included 47 employees with 20 years of service, 34 employees with 25 years of service, 16 employees with 30 years of service, four employees with 35 years of service, five employees with 40 years of service and one employee with 45 years of service.

Employees from the Union County area were among those who were honored.

They included the following employees, listed by their hometown, name, department and years of service:

Daniel Silver, Alto Pass, School of Justice and Public Safety, SIUC, 20 years of service.

Jennifer Burgess, Anna, Head Start Agency, SIUC, 10 years of service.

Lori Foster, Anna, vice chancellor for administration and finance, SIUC, 10 years of service.

Erik Larsen, Anna, University Farms, 10 years of service.

Eric Massey, Anna, Procurement Services, SIUC, 15 years of service.

Jerry Richardson, Anna, Library Affairs, SIUC, 15 years of service.

Kristen Roberts, Anna, SIU Extended Campus, 10 years of service.

Letitia Simmons, Anna, Head Start Agency, 15 years of service.

Julie Martin, Buncombe, Student Health Services, SIUC, 15 years of service.

Stephanie Wells, Buncombe, Facilities and Energy Management, SIUC, 10 years of service.

Heidi Basler, Cobden, Student Health Services, SIUC, 15 years of service.

Justin Boyles, Cobden, School of Biological Sciences, SIUC, 10 years of service.

Bailey Bunyan, Cobden, University Housing, SIUC, 10 years of service.

Monte Childers, Cobden, Facilities and Energy Management, SIUC, 20 years of service.

Adam Duty, Cobden, Facilities and Energy Management, SIUC, 10 years of service.

John Fraedrich, Cobden, School of Management and Marketing, SIUC, 35 years of service.

Daniel Nance, Cobden, Travel Service, SIUC, 10 years of service.

Kevin Penrod, Cobden, College of Arts and Media, 10 years of service.

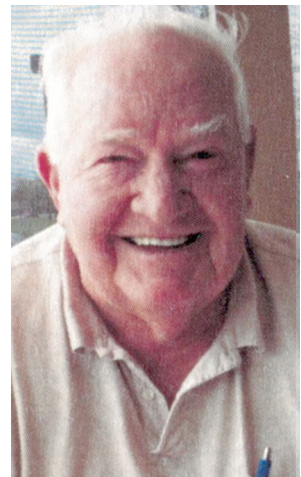
Angela Spicer, Cobden, Alumni Services, SIUC, 25 years of service.

Brent Stevens, Cobden, School of Aviation, SIUC, 10 years of service.

Ryan Stillman, Cobden, Facilities and Energy Management, SIUC, 10 years of service.

Rodney Turner, Jonesboro, Facilities and Energy Management, SIUC, 10 years of service.

Robin Ellis, Pomona, Student Health Services, SIUC, 15 years of service.



News from

Camp Ground Church, Community

Bro. Easton's sermon for the third Sunday of Advent was titled "The Joy of Christ," with scripture selections from 1 Peter, 1 Corinthians and James.

The message shared that "to children, joy means having fun and getting things they want. As adults, how we interpret joy changes. As Christians, our inexpressible joy is in Christ and the salvation He provides.

"The Apostle Paul was constantly bombarded

with earthly trials. But he had an understanding that momentary trouble was strengthening him for his journey through life. He knew the assurance of the reward of eternal life.

"Sometimes it takes God's nudging to slow us down and reconnect with Him. Once we access joy in Him, hold on tight and don't let anyone or anything steal our joy.

"When we are having a rotten day, choose to be joyful inside ourselves and

stay in step with Jesus."

Kayton Crane rang the bell for worship. She and Tymber Roach took up the offering.

LaDonna Miller gave the Advent reading for Joy, reminding everyone to allow their hearts to be filled with the Joy that Jesus' birth brought to the world.

Aldi Gerard was the Advent candle lighter, relighting the candles representing Hope and Praise, and lighting the candle

representing Joy. Vodra Gerard carried the Joy banner.

Birthday wishes this week go to Michaela Boaz, whose birthday was Monday, Dec. 12.

The congregation invites everyone to attend their Christmas open house Saturday, Dec. 17, between 5 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Refreshments will be served.

At 7 p.m. on Dec. 17, Camp Ground Church will be having its annual candlelight service.

Camp Ground Church invites everyone to attend

both, or either, of these events.

Looking ahead, the schedule for Christmas morning at Camp Ground Church will be coffee and fellowship at 9 a.m., followed by morning worship at 9:30 a.m. There will be no Sunday School classes that day.

All are welcome to services each Sunday at Camp Ground Church. A time of fellowship, with coffee and donuts for early arrivals, is followed by Sunday School classes for all ages at 9:30 a.m. Worship is at 10:30 a.m.

Cobden Women's Club to meet

The Cobden Women's Club plans to meet Thursday, today.

Club members will meet at 11:30 a.m. at the First Baptist Church in Cobden. From there, they will go to Giant City Lodge near Makanda for lunch and a meeting.

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The sponsors on this page urge you to attend the church of your choice.

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Praise & Worship

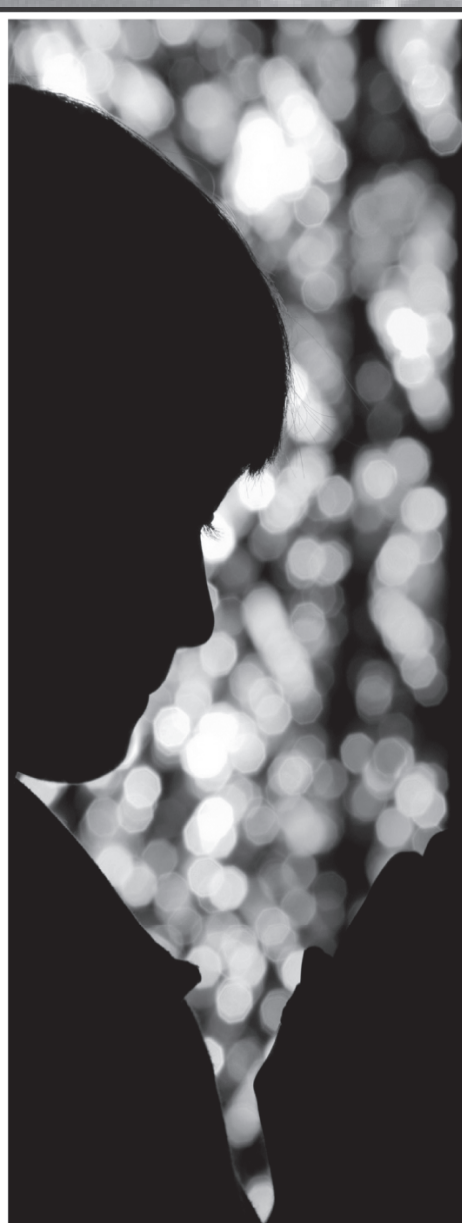


Photo Credit: JLBarranco

THE ULTIMATE CONNECTION

We are more connected than ever before; communication is a basic need, and we expect it to be instant. Consider another, more unearthly form of communication... prayer. Each time we come to God in prayer we can expect to connect with Him, our source of all that is wise and good. Keeping in touch with Him through prayer can have an incredible impact on our lives! As we worship this week, may we remember to thank God for the divine communication of prayer, the ultimate connection.

Daily Bible Reading

Exodus	Exodus	Exodus	Exodus	Exodus	Psalm	Isaiah
15:1-18	15:19-27	16:1-21	16:22-36	17:1-16	75	38:1-20

Scriptures Selected by the American Bible Society X Daily Devotional at DailyBible.AmericanBible.org
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To support your community Church Page, contact Meta for more details at 1-800-293-4709.



Anna-Jonesboro National Bank and other participating merchants join in sponsoring a CASH GIVEAWAY to encourage you to shop locally for the holidays.

Enter at any participating merchant.

There will be a drawing each Friday afternoon, November 25th, December 2nd and December 9th at Anna-Jonesboro National Bank for a \$100.00 winner. **THE GRAND PRIZE DRAWING WILL BE HELD FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16TH, FOR A MINIMUM OF \$500.00.**

Prize winning check(s) will be written to the winners choice of participating merchants (excluding banks). Winners will be notified immediately following the drawings. Individuals and their families only allowed to win once. All entries, other than previous winners, will be entered in the grand prize drawing December 16th.



The winner of the Shop Local drawing on Friday, December 9, was Sue Toler of Alto Pass. Sue chose to use her \$100.00 check at Anna Tire & Auto.


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The accompanying pictures were taken during the Christmas in Downtown Anna celebration in 2022.



Enter at any of the participating merchants for a chance to win a weekly prize of \$100. All prizes awarded as certificates redeemable at participating businesses (excluding banks)



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gptfn

FOR SALE: 2005 PT Cruiser. Runs, 125K miles, needs work. \$750.00 obo. Text 618-999-9655.

tfn

Anna VFW has lots in Anna and Jonesboro cemeteries for sale at a reduced price. Call 618-833-5182 after 1 p.m. for information.

50-1gp

FOR SALE: Standard Red Merle and Red Tri Australian Shepherd puppies. Call/text 618-521-9663 or 618-697-7744 for details. Ready for pick-up the week of December 19. Vet checked and first shots/dewormed.

tfn

FOR SALE: 6' Bush Hog brand bush hog, 6' 3-point hitch blade. Call 618-967-8246.

1gpc

FOR SALE: Upright propane tank, 120 gallon. ALSO, patio table, chairs with cushions and stand, \$175.00. Call 618-833-6438.

1gpc

FOR RENT

Anna VFW back hall available for your event. New lighting, fresh paint, reasonable price. Call 618-833-5182 after 2 p.m. for information.

50-1gp

CAN'T AFFORD UTILITY EXPENSE? We have energy efficient apartments available! Inquire in person at Classic Properties Real Estate, across from Dairy Queen In Anna.

52p-2gc

HELP WANTED

HELP WANTED: Looking for full and part-time Custodians for Shawnee Community College in Ullin. Apply at Main Campus front desk. Phone 618-634-3200, ext. 3436.

51gpc tfn

PAYROLL CLERK (Full-Time/Part-Time):

The City of Anna is accepting applications for the position of Full-Time/Part-Time Payroll Clerk. Applicants must be 18 years of age with a high school diploma or equivalent. The position will average 30 hours a week with a max of 1500 hours per year. Hourly rate is \$17.26 and includes some insurance and retirement benefits. Candidates must have a positive attitude, exceptional organizational and multitasking abilities, and strong interpersonal skills. Previous payroll and/or human resources experience is required. Duties include but not limited to: collect timekeeping information of employees, manage benefit packages with payroll software and accurately calculate pay according to the hours worked, manage any employee questions regarding payroll and investigate and resolve any errors in payroll

in a timely manner, be able to operate basic office equipment, proficient computer skills (including Microsoft Office), and basic accounting knowledge. This position will also manage the Human Resources function at the City of Anna and assist the City Treasurer with accounts payable, journal entries, bank reconciliations and other basic accounting functions. Applications will be available for interested candidates at Anna City Hall or online at cityofanna.org. Please return resume and employment application to the Human Resources Department at Anna City Hall, 103 Market Street, Anna, IL 62906 or by email to dbigler@cityofanna.org. Position will remain open until filled. EOE.

52p-1g

WANTED

ARROWHEADS! Amateur Archeologist is obsessed with the hobby. I am building a museum of artifacts from Missouri & Illinois, and would like to buy individual finds or whole collections. ALSO, looking for sites to buy or lease that have a lot of "flint". Happy to answer any questions! Call Sean, 314-608-2692.

52p-1g tfn

YARD SALE

CHRISTMAS SHOP: 117 S. Appleknocker, Cobden. Weekends, November 5 through December 17. Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sundays, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Animated figurines, trees, wreaths. Historical Society, 618-893-2865.

46p-1gc

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44-3gpc

PUBLIC NOTICE

**PUBLICATION NOTICE:
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:**

Date of Notice: November 17, 2022

You are hereby notified that there is a pending action in the Circuit Court for Union County, Illinois to foreclose

on a certain real estate located at 337 S. Main Street, Anna, Union County, Illinois 62906. The title of the case is The Bank of Missouri v. Billy G. Graves, II, Tamara S. Graves, Capital One Bank (USA), N.A., City of Anna, Illinois, and Unknown Owners and Non-record Claimants, Case No. 2022-CH-005. The parties to be served by publication are Billy G. Graves, II, and Tamara S. Graves. If you fail to appear or plead, a default judgment may be entered against you.

If you have any questions regarding this notice, you should contact the following person:

Deanna L. Litzenburg
Natalie T. Lorenz
Mathis, Marifian & Richter, LTD.
23 Public Square
Suite 300
P.O. Box 307
Belleville, Illinois 62220
Phone: (618) 234-9800
Fax: (618) 234-9876
51-1g

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT UNION COUNTY, ILLINOIS

IN THE MATTER OF AMANDA HARRIS V. TYLER BRANT; A CHILD CUSTODY MATTER. NO. 2017-P-45

NOTICE

Notice is given to Tyler Brant, current address unknown, last known address being 131 S. Messmer, Scott City (Kelso), Missouri, that a Petition to Modify has been filed in the above named matter on August 24, 2022. The Petition is asking the Circuit Court of Union County to modify all orders regarding the custody and care of G.B.

This matter is set for hearing on January 9, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. At this time the Petition to Modify will be heard by the honorable Judge Timothy Denny. Failure to appear can

result in a judgment of default being entered against you. Contact the Union County Circuit Clerk if you have questions regarding this court date.

Daniel Klingemann,
Attorney for
Amanda Harris
Attorney at Law
TEL: (618) 301-6338
danielklingemann@gmail.com
52-2g

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT UNION COUNTY, ILLINOIS

ESTATE OF LARRY C. HOUSTON, DECEASED. NO. 2022-PR-26 IN PROBATE

NOTICE OF DEATH INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION, AND CLAIM DATE

NOTICE IS GIVEN to creditors of the death of Larry C. Houston, of Dongola, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued on November 28, 2022, to Rita Dillow, 141 W. Cross St., Dongola, Illinois 62926, as Independent Executor, whose attorney is Elvis C. Cameron, 205B N. Main St., Anna, Illinois.

Within 42 days after the effective date of the original Order of admission, you may file a petition with the Court to require proof of the Will by testimony of the witnesses in open Court or other evidence, as provided by Section 5/6-21 of the Probate Act (755 ILCS 5/6-21.)

You also have the right, under Section 5/8-1 of the Probate Act (755 ILCS 5/8-1), to contest the validity of the Will by filing a petition with the Court within six (6) months after admission of the Will to probate.

The estate will be administered without Court supervision unless, under Section 5/28-4 of the Probate Act (Ill. Compiled Stat. 1992, Ch. 755, Par. 5/28-4), any interested

person terminates Independent Administration at any time by mailing or delivering a petition to terminate to the Clerk of this Court.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of this court at the Union County Courthouse, 309 W. Market St., Jonesboro, Illinois, or with the Independent Executor, or both, on or before June 8, 2023, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the Co-Executors is required by Section 5/18-3 of the Probate Act of the State of Illinois, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the Executor and to the attorneys within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

Dated: December 6, 2022.

RITA DILLOW,
Executor

CAMERON LAW FIRM,
LLC

ELVIS C. CAMERON
ATTORNEY FOR INDEPENDENT EXECUTOR
205B N. MAIN ST.
ANNA, ILLINOIS 62906
PHONE: 618-833-2220
ARDC# 6244394
52-2g

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN by the Board of Education of Shawnee CUSD #84, in the County of Union, State of Illinois, that an E-Learning plan has been written for the school years 2022 - 2025. This 3 year period will be covered by the E-Learning plan that will be submitted to the state. NOTICE IS FURTHER HEREBY GIVEN that a public hearing on said E-Learning plan will be held at 7:00 P.M. on the 17th day of January, 2023, at the Library of Shawnee Junior-Senior High School, 3665 State Route 3 North, Wolf Lake, Illinois, in this School District #84. Dated this 16th day of December, 2022. Shawnee School Board of School District #84, in

the County of Union, State of Illinois.

Likewise, testimony will be received and considered at the hearing. Anyone with questions or comments may contact the central office at 618-833-5709.

By Order of:
Shelly Clover-Hill
Superintendent
1g

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR CORRUGATED METAL PIPES

Request for Proposal (RFP) packets are available in the Union County Engineer's office and on our website at www.unioncountyil.gov. Questions regarding specifications may be directed to the County Engineer, Jeff Denny via email at jdenny@unioncountyil.gov.

Sealed bids should be submitted to the Union County Engineer by 3PM on Thursday, January 5, 2023, at the Union County Engineer's Office.

The County reserves the right to reject any and all bids received and to waive or not waive any informalities or irregularities in bids or bid procedures, and to accept or further negotiate costs, terms, or conditions of any bid determined by the County to be in the best interest of the County.

Union County Engineer
316 West Mississippi Street
Jonesboro, Illinois 62952
1g

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<p>Business Source Letter Recycled Expanding File</p> <p><i>Accordion-style design provides compact way to hold large amounts of files</i></p> <p>BSN26534</p> <p>Sale Price \$20.99 EA</p> 	<p>Browline Professional Monthly Desk/Wall Calendar</p> <p><i>Offers easy-to-read, monthly references and 1-page-per-month format with ruled daily blocks</i></p> <p>REDC1731</p> <p>Sale Price \$3.49 EA</p> 



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52-3GP

Corn hole tournament, other events planned at Anna VFW post

A corn hole tournament, Taco Tuesday, music and a steak dinner are among the activities which are planned at Veterans of Foreign Wars Carroll P. Foster Post No. 3455 of Anna. The post is located at 70 VFW Ln. near Anna.

Corn Hole Tourna-

ment: Veterans of Foreign Wars Carroll P. Foster Post No. 3455 of Anna is planning to host a corn hole tournament Thursday, today. The tournament begins at 6:30 p.m.

Costs will be \$12 to play in the tournament and \$5 to play the knockout round.

Food will be available for purchase. Dec. 15 will be Thirsty Thursday at the post, so there will be \$1.50 cans.

Taco Tuesday: Taco Tuesday is planned Dec. 20. Serving will be from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Hard shell and soft shell

tacos and taco salads will be served. The public is welcome. Carry outs will be available.

Mystify Music: Mystify Music is scheduled to play from 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 23. An ugly sweater contest also is planned.

Closed for Holiday: The Anna VFW is scheduled to be closed on Dec. 24-25 so employees can spend time with their families for Christmas.

Steak Dinner: A steak dinner will be served at the post on Saturday, Dec. 31. Serving starts at 6 p.m.

The menu will include steak, a baked potato and salad for a \$15 donation.

Reservations for the dinner can be made by calling the post at 833-5182 after 1 p.m.

Star Karaoke is scheduled to be at the post from 7 p.m. until midnight.

An Homage to Hometown Happenings

By Kate B. Jerome

No matter where my travels take me, I always seek out the local newspaper. I know. My smartphone easily provides more detail about a town than I will ever need. But the local paper does so much more. That's because it fits the many pieces of the community puzzle together. Where else can you get a glimpse of what a citizenry most values and fears – all within a few recyclable pages?

In the tiny town where I grew up, the local paper was a powerful tool – no doubt for many reasons beyond my young comprehension. However, I looked forward to the daily delivery for two simple reasons.

First, I loved to read the personal stories – from tragedy to triumph – about the people in my own community. It was the first inkling I had that I might be part of something larger than the family who lived at 12 Parkview.

Second, I couldn't wait to hear the interesting dinner conversations that some tidbit in the paper was bound to spark. Of course, my favorites were the most heated discussions. And when my parents resorted to spelling out words? Well, let's just say the training led to considerable success in my grade school spelling bees!

Decades of educational publishing experience later, I know my hometown paper was just one arrow in the successful child-raising quiver my parents used. But it was an important tool, and the outcomes it helped produce are still of the utmost importance today.

You see, building a strong sense of place plays a key part in a child's social and emotional development. When children connect with the community around them, it helps them develop their own personal identity. An added benefit is the sense of stewardship it often inspires.

And the value of generating meaningful conversations? In my view, it's off the charts. Too often in our busy world, dialogue with our kids tends toward the practical (Did you pick up your toys?) rather than the profound (Keep trying even when it's hard!). So any tool that inspires discussion of such issues as friendship and community should be deeply valued. Why? Because that's when our own stories of personal grit and resilience begin to flow.

And aren't those the kind of Hometown Happenings that we really want our children to remember?

Kate B. Jerome is the author and series creator of two Read Together/Do Together children's book series from Arcadia Kids that are designed to jump-start meaningful conversations between kids and their favorite adults. A publishing executive, an award-winning children's book author, and a recent Fellow in Stanford's Distinguished Careers Institute, Kate is a passionate supporter of intergenerational communication.

The Gazette-Democrat

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Anna News

By Martha Ann Webb

Please have news to me by Sunday night. Email me at marthaannwebb@gmail.com, mail to me at 118 W. Monroe St., leave news in the back of the green box at the right of my front door or call me at 833-5717.

Special Thanks

Thanks to Carol Frick who emailed me. She had paid for two renewals to The Gazette-Democrat and asked them to give me credit for Christine Davis in November and Nancy Brust in December.

Thanks for Serving Our Country

PV1 Blake Mays graduated a three week Army Airborne course in Fort Benning, Ga., on Dec. 9. Blake will be returning to serve in the Illinois National Guard in Marion.

Rhymer News

Willie and Terrie Rhymer have been busy this week. They have been to Paducah and drove through Noble Park to see their Christmas lights display.

They attended the Clear Creek Baptist Association Christmas party and attended the Christmas musical at the First Baptist Church Jonesboro. All activities were wonderful.

Bauer News

Norm and Barb Bauer went to St. Louis to attend the annual Christmas concert of the St. Louis area Ambassadors of Harmony. The Barbershop A capella singing group put on an entertaining and emotional presentation of and about Christmas music.

Brian Black of Carbondale is a member of the Little Egypt Barbershop

Chorus and sings with the Ambassadors of Harmony. It was an exhilarating evening of music.

On Sunday, the Anna Bauers went to church with Lou and Deb Bauer and were pleased to take part in the annual Christmas musical service at King of Kings Lutheran Church in Chesterfield.

It was a pleasure for the Bauers to "stay over" at son Lou and Deb's house and get better acquainted with great-grandson Owen Louis Bauer, who also visited there with his grandparents.

On their way out of St. Louis, Norm and Barb Bauer visited 1 1/2 week old Oscar Paul Bauer, their great-grandchild number 10. Such a blessing.

The Norm Bauers and the Doug Hilemans enjoyed a visit from Norm's brother Charles and Jody Bauer as they passed through Anna on a trip from their home in Tennessee to Decatur.

Anna Heights Baptist Church

Rev. Darryl Williams continued his sermon series, Celebrating Renewal. This week, the Peace God Gives.

Social platforms Facebook and YouTube have dates for Bible studies, services and other announcements.

Upward workers are still needed. Sign up in welcome

center.

Anniversary: Christmas Eve Dec. 24, Bill and Ann Pace.

Birthdays: Dec. 19, Robbie Ralls and Melissa Teske. 20, Jane Miller. 21, Juanita Heisner. 22, Jeanine Schaefer. 23, Caleb Jerrell, David Schlenker, Carolyn Schramka, Rebecca Yates. 24, Christmas Eve, Ann Middleton, Ruby Yates.

United Methodist Church, Anna

Sunday morning there was a fellowship dinner after church.

December birthdays: 2, Ricky Borders. 3, Carolyn Dammann. 9, Wanda Dillow. 11, Jonah Watkins. 12, Rose Nevels. 14, Sue Ann Zimmerman. 16, Olivia Hand. 18, Amber Belcher, Muriel Zachary. 22, Natalie Shasteen. 27, Boyd LaFoon. 31, Leah Goins.

December anniversaries: 12, Don and Elaine Thady, Eric and Cassandra Watkins,

Prayer group will meet today at 4 p.m.. Sunday, Dec. 18, Sunday morning will be March to the Manager.

Loaves and Fishes will be Dec. 20 from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The church thanks Assistant Police Chief Tim Smith and Officer Jake Sanders for providing traffic control during the November

Loaves and Fishes free food give away. One hundred turkeys, 100 adult bags, 50 kids bags and 138 extra food bags were available for distribution in November. Please pray for those who are in need that God will provide for them.

Men's Bible study will meet Wednesday at 7 a.m., Dec. 21 and Dec. 28. Women will meet at 1 p.m. Choir practice meets at 6 p.m.

Christmas Eve candlelight Communion service will be at 7 p.m. Dec. 24. Christmas Day Dec. 25, celebrating Jesus birthday the savior of our world.

Christmas baskets were made and delivered by the Anna United Women of Faith. Jane Bauer gave the program on World Thank offering and told of the mission the money went for all over the world.

UCAC blood drive, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Dec. 16.

Cobden First Baptist Church

Congratulations Matthew Hartline who graduated Ph.D from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

Anna First Baptist Church

Welcome and announcements were by Dale Denny. Special music was led by

Jean Denny singing Christmas songs "Go, Tell it on the Mountain" and "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing." Rev. Daniel Iliff sang special music "Your Majesty, Open the Eyes of My Heart" and "In My Father's House are Many Rooms." Rev. Daniel had special prayers for requests.

A special thanks for all the beautiful Christmas cards.

It was good to have Shirley Vines move back to Anna and back at her home church. Welcome guest David Pedigo Sr.

Rev. Daniel Iliff's sermon was on the coming of the birth of Jesus and the coming of the birth of Jesus' cousin John the Baptist with scripture from Luke.

Please keep Rev. Lupe and Jodi and those who went with them on the mission trip to Mexico in your prayers and prayers for a safe trip home. During the Sunday morning service there was a video chat from Mexico with Rev. Lupe who told about their mission trip and visiting churches in Mexico.

Saturday, Dec. 17, at 11 a.m. will be the Honor Wreaths for Veterans ceremony.

Sunday, Dec. 18, will

be the Christmas fellowship meal after the worship service.

Lottie Moon International missions offering is still being taken.

A special thanks to everyone who donated money for the shoeboxes and postage and all those who volunteered their time to pack them and deliver them.

Honor Wreaths for Veterans

Honor Wreaths for Veterans laying this Saturday, Dec. 17.



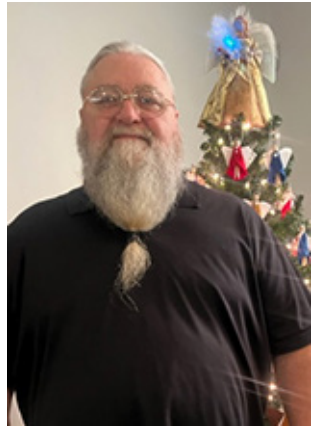
Attorney Elvis Cameron was guest speaker at the Union County Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development dinner and meeting at The Kitchen on Lafayette.



Lana and Randy at the Union County Housing Authority office in front of the beautiful Christmas tree Randy decorated. Reminding everyone if you are looking for a home, please stop by and Randy will help you fill out an application or fill it out online for the affordable housing. 30 percent of your income or a flat rent charge. Get on the waiting list for 2023. Merry Christmas.



Andrea Wheaton celebrated her birthday Saturday, Dec. 10, with a gift giveaway at her store The Closet Ministries next to the Dollar Store in Anna. Many festivities took place. A loyal shopper made a beautiful Christmas cake. Pictured is Andrea giving Marcus Dunbar a gift.



Rev. Daniel Iliff was guest pastor at Anna First Baptist Church Sunday.



A special thanks to Liz Wilkins, coordinator for Jonesboro Cemetery Honor Wreaths for Veterans. They will join coordinator Martha Ann Webb for the Anna Cemetery and coordinator Alyssa Penrod for Dongola cemeteries at the Honor Wreaths for Veterans Ceremony Dec. 17, 11 a.m., at Anna First Baptist Church. Immediately after our ceremony, led by Phil Ray of the American Legion, they and all the volunteers will go to the different cemeteries to lay the Honor Wreaths for Veterans. The picture is at Jonesboro 2021 Wreaths Laying. Honor Wreaths for Veterans is a branch off Wreaths Across America where all the wreaths are laid in the national cemeteries at the same time.



Southern Illinois arts and crafts teacher Marie Samuels is surrounded by folks displaying folded paper ornaments they made with her help. The event was the Christmas Stroll in the Pioneer Village at John A Logan College in Carterville. Marie Samuels belongs to Anna-Jonesboro Women's Club and shares her artistic talents all over Southern Illinois.



Shown with one of her apron holiday creations displayed Sunday, Dec. 11, at the John A. Logan College Historical Village Christmas Stroll is docent Marie Samuel, who was in charge of teaching children's crafts for the event. Also a member of the Little Egypt Red Hat group, a red vintage hat was worn for the Sunday event where most volunteers wore period costumes. She is also wearing a Christmas apron made by the Amish near Marion, Ky.



Carol Hoffman with Southernmost Illinois Tourism Bureau and Brandy Nance with Shawnee Hills Wine Trail were in Chicago to attend a conference on travel and tourism.



Congratulations to Tiffany Bowles and her new business Just Peachy Cleaners LLC, "Because Cleaning Is The Pits." They will clean your whole home, business or other places. Tiffany was a guest at the Union County Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development dinner and meeting. Tiffany plans to become a new member of the Chamber for 2023.

Thanks to Dori Bigler, Anna city administrator and Gary Dahmer, public works manager and all our Anna city employees for your help.

A very special thanks to Jim Koonce, founder of and president of Honor Wreaths for Veterans, a branch off Wreaths Across America. Jim starting Honor Wreaths for Veterans is the reason we are able to lay the Honor Wreaths for Veterans on our local city and country cemeteries.

Ceremony at Anna First Baptist Church 11 a.m., Dec. 17 led by Phil Ray, Vietnam War veteran and

member of American Legion and VFW.

Jonesboro Cemetery Coordinator Liz Wilkins. Dongola St. John's and American Legion cemeteries Alyssa Penrod. The wreaths will be in the cemetery waiting for the families or volunteers to place them on the graves after our ceremony.

From Region 3 Liaison Stephanie Molina

There is so much excitement in the air as we quickly approach National Wreaths Across America Day, this Dec. 17.

We are humbled to share that we have 3,679 locations nationwide, plus 26 American cemeteries overseas, that are participating this year. Thank you for playing such an important role in sharing the mission to REMEMBER, HONOR, and TEACH with your local community. We appreciate you!

There are millions of Americans gathering safely as one nation to Remember, Honor and Teach.

We are all proud to be Americans that live in a free society made up of many people, from many walks of life.

The freedoms we enjoy today have not come without a price. In cemeteries throughout this nation are men and women who gave their lives so that we can live in freedom and without fear.

We can worship as we see fit. We can raise our children to believe as we do. We are free to vote for the leaders of our choosing. And, we have the right to succeed and we have the right to fail at whatever endeavor we wish to pursue.

The United States of America was founded on the ideals of Freedom, Justice, and Equality. Our Nation stands as a shining beacon of liberty and freedom to the world. We thank those who gave their lives to keep us free and we shall not forget you. We shall remember.

Today, more than ever, we reflect on our nation's veterans and active duty service members who have had and continue to fight to protect the innocent and oppressed.

This nation has always been the first to stand up for the freedom of people from around the world. Many of you have answered that call and served your

country well. For this, we say, "Thank you" and we are honored to know you.

There are many men and women serving today in all branches of the military, here at home and in places far away, that most of us have never heard of. These men and women are part of the best-trained, best-equipped force in the world.

We honor them and their families for the sacrifices they make each day to keep our country safe from terrorism, hatred, and injustice.

This year, a new ceremonial wreath to honor the men and women currently serving in the U.S. Space Force along with those Veterans who have served in roles helping to secure our national interests in space.

Quoting our 40th United States President Ronald Reagan, "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States where men



Charles, (brother of Norm) and Jody Bauer along with little dog Cindy from Spring City, Tenn., visited last weekend in Anna. They are pictured with hosts Barb and Norm Bauer during a visit to the home of Doug and Beth Hileman.

were free."

Today, we show a united front of gratitude and respect across the United States of America as we REMEMBER the Fallen, HONOR those who serve and their families, and TEACH the next generation the value of freedom.

Cobden Lions Club Special thanks to the Cobden Lions Club for 33 Honor Wreaths for Veterans for the Cobden Cemetery.

Pets Are Worth Saving A special thanks to Karen M. Sweitzer, facility manager, and all the special

volunteers at PAWS for their dedication and service to save the lives of these wonderful pets and find them their forever homes. This is the fifth year of the anniversary of Penny South going to heaven, their beloved facility manager.

PAST A special thanks to everyone who cooked and served the Christmas meals and all those who came to eat and see the beautiful Heritage Home. Promoting Appreciation of Structural Treasures nonprofit organization.

Reynoldsville News

By Sue Eudy

On Sunday, Dec. 4, Reynoldsville Missionary Baptist Church celebrated their Thanksgiving/Christmas dinner at Cracker Barrel in Cape Girardeau. Those attending were Rev. Jamie, Maria and Clayton Bridgeman of Cape Girardeau, Vera Garrett of Jonesboro, Shirley Miller, Penny and Kerry Hill, all of McClure and Sue and Steve Eudy of Anna.

Kevin and Emma Eudy and Jonathon Bohnert of Cape Girardeau were dinner guests of Sue and Steve Eudy on Saturday, Dec. 10.

Happy birthday to Ervina Johnson of The Voyage on her birthday Thursday, Dec. 15.

Those enjoying bingo night at the home of Russ and Patsy Pender of Olive Branch on Saturday night were Brad and Lori Pender of Jonesboro, Josh, Heather, Chesleigh and Slayton Miller of Tamms, Shelton, Kayde and Ridge Pender of Olive Branch, Richie and Amy King of Anna and Maxine and Fred Pender of Fair City.

Brad and Lori Pender visited Sunday with Fred and Maxine Pender.

Get well wishes to Gary Gibbs of Jonesboro who hurt his leg.

You are invited to attend services at Reynoldsville Missionary Baptist Church. Sunday School is at 9:30 a.m. Sunday morning worship service is at 10:30 a.m. Sunday evening worship service is at 6 p.m. Rev. Jamie Bridgeman is the pastor.

Anna Moose Lodge

Anna Moose Lodge No. 1346 shares the following news:

Administrator Danny Gibbons has tendered his resignation as administrator of the lodge. Gibbons said he has "enjoyed working on behalf of our lodge." He hopes "other members will step forward to continue the good work done by the Anna Moose Lodge."

The lodge recently donated \$250 to four organizations/initiatives: Operation Warm, PAWS, Boy Scout Troop 44 and Shop with a Fireman.

The lodge's anniversary/Christmas dinner is planned at 6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 19.

The lodge is scheduled to be closed Dec. 24, 25 and 26.

New Year's Eve will be celebrated with a New York strip steak meal starting at 5:30 p.m.

The Union County Pool League voted for the Anna Moose Lodge to host the league's tournament Jan. 9-15, 2023.

Becky Swink got her calling card to receive her cap and gown and join the College of Regents next June.

Television Listings

THURSDAY

Table with columns: ABC, CBS, FOX, NBC, ESPN, TBS, USA, DISN, HBO, MAX, SHOW. Rows show programs like 'Beauty and the Beast', 'Ghosts', 'HouseBrok.', 'Baking It', 'Women's College Volleyball', etc.

DECEMBER 15, 2022

THURSDAY

Table with columns: 7:00pm, 8:00pm, 8:00pm. Rows show programs like 'CBS Ghosts', 'USA It's a Wonderful Life', 'USA Despicable Me 2'.

FRIDAY

Table with columns: ABC, CBS, FOX, NBC, ESPN, TBS, USA, DISN, HBO, MAX, SHOW. Rows show programs like 'Shark Tank', 'Reindeer in Here', 'WWE Friday Night SmackDown', etc.

DECEMBER 16, 2022

Table with columns: 7:00pm, 8:00pm, 8:00pm. Rows show programs like 'DISN Frozen 2', 'USA Despicable Me 2'.

SATURDAY

Table with columns: ABC, CBS, FOX, NBC, ESPN, TBS, USA, DISN, HBO, MAX, SHOW. Rows show programs like 'Scoreboard', 'College Football', 'Fire Country', etc.

DECEMBER 17, 2022

Table with columns: 7:00pm, 8:00pm, 8:00pm. Rows show programs like 'CBS Fire Country', 'NBC Dateline', 'ABC Celebrity Jeopardy!'.

SUNDAY

Table with columns: ABC, CBS, FOX, NBC, ESPN, TBS, USA, DISN, HBO, MAX, SHOW. Rows show programs like 'Videos Real comedy', 'NFL (Live)', 'The Masked Singer', etc.

DECEMBER 18, 2022

Table with columns: 7:00pm, 7:30pm, 7:30pm. Rows show programs like 'ABC Celebrity Jeopardy!', 'FOX The Great North', 'CBS Bob Hearts Abishola'.

MONDAY

Table with columns: ABC, CBS, FOX, NBC, ESPN, TBS, USA, DISN, HBO, MAX, SHOW. Rows show programs like 'Local Programs', 'Neighbors', 'Lego Masters', etc.

DECEMBER 19, 2022

Table with columns: 7:00pm, 7:30pm, 7:30pm. Rows show programs like 'NBC Shrek 2', 'CBS Bob Hearts Abishola', 'CBS Mariah Carey: Merry Christmas to All!'.

TUESDAY

Table with columns: ABC, CBS, FOX, NBC, ESPN, TBS, USA, DISN, HBO, MAX, SHOW. Rows show programs like 'Local Programs', 'Celebrity Wheel of Fortune', 'Prep (HD)', etc.

DECEMBER 20, 2022

Table with columns: 7:00pm, 8:00pm, 8:00pm. Rows show programs like 'CBS Mariah Carey: Merry Christmas to All!', 'TBS The Big Bang Theory', 'TBS The Big Bang Theory'.

WEDNESDAY

Table with columns: ABC, CBS, FOX, NBC, ESPN, TBS, USA, DISN, HBO, MAX, SHOW. Rows show programs like 'Local Programs', 'Conners', 'The Price Is Right', etc.

DECEMBER 21, 2022

Table with columns: 7:00pm, 8:00pm, 8:00pm. Rows show programs like 'MAX Love & Mercy', 'TBS The Big Bang Theory', 'TBS The Big Bang Theory'.

Opinion and Commentary

Ag industry producing more with fewer workers

By Timothy Eggert
FarmWeek

Agriculture remains a top employer in rural parts of the U.S. but who worked in the industry has changed during the past three years, according to new data released by USDA's Economic Research Service, ERS.

In its annual report, "Rural America at a Glance," ERS found overall population growth in rural or "nonmetro" areas "took a dramatic upswing" between July 2020 and July 2021 when it increased 0.3 of a percent to 46.1 million total residents.

It marked the first time since the mid-1990s that non-metro areas grew at a faster rate than metro areas and was largely because of the coronavirus pandemic, according to the report.

Specifically, as COVID-19 infection rates increased, more people moved into less densely populated areas at a faster rate than those who were leaving them.

But despite those positive shifts, rural America is becoming older, with people 65 years and older making up more than 20 percent of the nonmetro population in 2021 – the first time in history. The size of the working-age population also declined in 2021, with 58 percent of rural residents aged 18 to 54.

"Declines in the working-age population may make it harder to meet labor demands in some rural industries and local labor markets," the report's authors noted. "At the same time, many rural areas lack sufficient health care capacity, broadband service, community centers and other services to address the challenges associated with an aging population."

While data for 2021 wasn't available, the report found that as of 2019, the strongest rural job gains came in the real estate, administrative services, education, professional services, health care/social assistance and finance/insurance industries.

And in 2019, the four industries in rural America with the highest employment were government, manufacturing, retail and health care/social assistance.

Those industries dovetail with the next highest employed industry – agriculture – as "families on small- to mid-sized farms often depend on nonagricultural jobs in their local economies as off-farm sources of income," the report noted.

Here are three other ways the report found the rural ag industry has changed:

Top Rural Industry

Agriculture remains a primary source of employment for rural America, as 7 percent of all nonmetro jobs in 2019 were related to the industry, compared to 1.1 percent of all metro jobs.

The report said that disparity in employment can largely be attributed to comparative advantages, like the availability of resources and land costs.

Rural Ag Becoming More Diverse

The rural ag industry continues to feature more white workers than workers of color, but the share of minorities employed in the field has improved, the report found.

As of 2019, Hispanic workers performed 14.4 percent of rural jobs in agriculture, while 2.4 percent of the rural ag workers were Black. American Indian and Asian workers each made up less than 2 percent of rural ag jobs.

Jobs Down, Productivity Up

While ag still accounts for a higher share of rural jobs compared to other industries, the total number of jobs in agriculture has gone down, according to the report.

Specifically, the total number of rural ag jobs in 2020 was about 89 percent of the total number that were available in 2001. That long-term decline in industry jobs, however, has aligned with a long-term rise in agricultural productivity.

Since 2012, the labor productivity, or output per worker, and the total output, or gross domestic product, of the ag industry have both increased by at least 50 percent. And both measures have nearly doubled since their 2001 levels.

"Due to advances in technology and capital deepening, the rural agricultural industry has thrived," ERS economist and report co-author James Davis said during a webinar about the report. "This industry produces a lot more with the same or fewer workers."

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.

Extension planning to offer Master Gardener training

University of Illinois Extension has announced plans for Master Gardener training in 2023.

The training will introduce participants to in-depth horticulture content through 10 topics, including soils and fertilizers, plant diseases, entomology, pest management, organic gardening and more.

The training includes videos, a manual, reading materials and quizzes. A strong internet connection is highly recommended.

After completing their training, volunteers participate in educational programs in their communities.

The course includes 11 weeks of hybrid online materials and live sessions, which are scheduled from Feb. 7 to April 18.

Live sessions are planned at the Williamson County Extension office, which is located at 1301 Enterprise Way, Suite 60, in Marion (next to Rural King). Sessions are planned from 9 a.m. to noon.

Registration is open until Feb. 1. The cost for the hybrid option is \$200. To learn more about becoming a Master Gardener volunteer, contact Extension educator Erin Garrett at 618-524-2270 or emedvecz@illinois.edu.

Please read this...

By Geof Skinner

\$45,000 for birds...pipers...drummers...



Four calling birds...actual cost \$600...although we do not think anybody would pay that much for starlings...

The inspiration for this week showed up on the dining room table Monday evening, which, truth be told, was a little bit late. Oh, well.

While making my way through a stack of have-not-been-read-yet copies of USA TODAY, a headline in the December 2-4 edition of "The Nation's News" caught my attention.

"12 Days of Christmas' just got more pricey' the headline declared.

The source for the article, written by Janet Loehrke, was PNC Financial Services. Thanks to that wonder of modern technology and the greatest tool ever invented for wasting time, also known as the internet, your intrepid scribe was able to track down the story behind the story in the form of a press release from the aforementioned PNC National Services.

If you have not found just the right Christmas gift for your true love, we'll offer you a little bit of help. We just hope you've got big bucks to spend...

That's because according to the press release, true love, at least if you are using a classic Christmas carol for your shopping list, "costs a lot more this year, as record-high inflation drives PNC's 39th annual Christmas Price Index (PNC CPI) up 10.5 percent, the third highest year-over-year increase in the index's history. The PNC CPI, a light-hearted take on the Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) Consumer Price Index, measures the average change in prices consumers should expect to pay for True Love's gifts, outlined in the classic holiday carol, 'The Twelve Days of Christmas.'"

The chief investment officer for the PNC Asset Management Group said it's going to cost a record \$45,523.27 to buy the 12 gifts featured in the Christmas carol. Seems that turtle doves, French hens and geese and so on "are not well-insulated from what is being experienced across the broader economy." If you want to give your True Love those birds, you're going to fork over 20.1 percent more than you would have paid last year.

The press release highlighted some of the reasons behind the higher costs for all of those goodies in the Christmas carol, which include:

"Far out fertilizer prices: A key driver of the spike in



One swan a-grazing...estimated cost \$1,875...based on the cost of seven swans a-swimming...

the pear tree is the cost of fertilizer, which saw growth of 28 percent.

"Soaring service costs: Services inflation, driven by increased wages and labor costs, is higher than goods inflation in the PNC CPI, much like the BLS CPI. This year, services in the PNC CPI, represented primarily by the performers, are up 14.5 percent while goods increased just 4.2 percent.

"Gold rings gaining: Given inflation concerns, some investors dashed for store-of-value assets like gold again this year. Gold ring prices are up a whopping 39 percent from 2021, reflecting the surge in the precious metal's price during the year."

The press release reported that the price of Nine Ladies Dancing climbed to new heights (\$8,308), as did the Ten Lords-a-Leaping, (\$13,980), who jumped for joy as they returned to in-person performances. That jumped for joy thing was in the press release. Yours truly did not write that...nor did I come up with what's about to follow regarding pipers and drummers...

Eleven Pipers Piping rose to a new tune (\$3,021), and the 12 Drummers Drumming (\$3,267) found a higher beat.

Although many states and localities across the country have raised minimum wages recently, the federal minimum wage has not increased since July 2009; thus, the Eight Maids-a-Milking haven't seen a pay raise in more than a decade...which doesn't explain the meager \$58 you'll pay for that gift. The Other Half wanted to know why the gifts involving women did not cost as much the gifts involving men...

The press release also noted: "Unfortunately, tech-savvy True Loves will not save by going the e-commerce route. Buying all 12 gifts virtually is 'just' 8.9 percent higher this year, still an eye-popping \$49,663.73. Free shipping on livestock purchases is still not an option."

The annual PNC CPI tradition included calculating the "True Cost of Christmas," which, the press release explained, is the total cost of items bestowed by a True Love who repeats all the song's verses. Purchasing all 364 gifts will cost \$197,071.09, which means that spreading cheer in 2022 costs 9.8 percent more than it did a year ago.

Just in case you are wondering, my True Love won't be getting any partridges, French hens or turtle doves for Christmas. We might go outside and listen for some calling birds in our backyard on Christmas Day...

One last thing...for all of you readers out there, a recommendation... Check out "And There Was Light: Abraham Lincoln and the American Struggle," by Jon Meacham. Great book...and it even mentions Jonesboro and Richard Cobden.



Three (or maybe four) geese a-splashing...estimated cost \$360...based on the cost of six geese a-laying...

Southern 7 Health Department offers program for adolescents in Union County

Living a healthy life starts with establishing good habits in a person's younger years.

Unfortunately, Southern 7 Health Department notes, many adolescents experience a gap in regular doctor visits between their early years and early 20s, a time when many health and behavioral challenges can develop.

In response to increasing rates in cancer, heart disease, obesity, substance abuse and other health crises in Southern Illinois, Southern 7 Health Department offers the Southern Illinois Adolescent Health Program in Union County.

The program encourages young people ages 11 to 21 to get a yearly well-care exam with a healthcare provider.

During the visit, healthcare providers conduct a physical exam that includes a check of height, weight, blood pressure and behavioral and mental health concerns.

The healthcare provider will also offer advice and support on staying healthy, such as getting enough sleep, eating a healthy diet, getting exercise, physical activity, developing and maintaining healthy relationships, healthy coping skills, dealing with stress or anxiety, and update immunizations as needed.

The health department says that parents should note that a sports physical is not the same thing as a yearly well-care exam. A sports physical, is a limited exam that only evaluates health issues that would prevent participation in sports.

"During a well-care exam, young people ages 11 to 21 will develop healthy 'adulting' skills, meaning they will start to practice and develop skills like learning how to advocate for themselves and manage their health, start to learn how to navigate and access healthcare, and begin to learn how to develop a healthy and trusting relationship with their healthcare provider," Southern 7 Health Department health educator Jessica Gruneich said.

"It is an important opportunity to discuss healthy development, encourage open and honest communication and

an opportunity for adolescents and young adults to ask and get answers to their healthcare questions."

The program is supported by a grant from the Department of Health and Human Services.

Southern 7 partners with Union County schools and service agencies to encourage student participation.

The health department says that reasons adolescents have given for not seeking regular healthcare included expense of doctor visit, lack of health insurance, inability to miss work or other activities, not comfortable or familiar with talking with doctors and a lack of awareness that yearly well-care visits are important for overall healthy development.

"Establishing a yearly well-care exam for young people helps promote and sustain preventive care during a time when there may be years without regular healthcare," Gruneich said.

"This is critical in their development of physical and mental health as they continue to mature into adulthood."

More information about the Adolescent Health Program, along with help in finding a healthcare provider, are available by contacting Gruneich in Anna at 833-8561, jgruneich@s7hd.org, by visiting www.southern7.org or by downloading the Southern 7 app.

The Southern Illinois Adolescent Health Program aims to empower adolescents, ages 11 to 21, to adopt healthy behaviors and improve their overall health by increasing the rate of adolescent well-care visits that are assessed in alignment with the American Academy of Pediatrics Bright Futures Guidelines. Funding provided in whole or in part by the Illinois Department of Public Health.

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