

THE GAZETTE-DEMOCRAT

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County board addresses plan for Choate Center

Union County officials want the public to know that they are taking action in response to a recently announced state plan to make dramatic cuts to staff and services at the Choate Mental Health and Developmental Center in Anna.

Capitol News Illinois reported that the Illinois Department of Human Services, IDHS, announced the changes in a July 23 letter to Choate staff.

The three-year plan includes eliminating the state-run facility's entire general residential program for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, reducing the number of civil mental health beds, and laying off about 250 employees by March 2027.

The changes planned at the Choate Center were addressed at last week's regular meeting of the Union County Board of Commissioners.

The meeting was Friday morning, Aug. 14, at the Union County Courthouse in Jonesboro.

County board chairman Max Miller said he reached out to Gov. JB Pritzker by email about the Choate Center.

At Friday morning's meeting, Miller shared the response he received from the governor. The response, which did not mention the Choate Center, read: "Dear Max: Thank you for reaching out to my office about your concerns. I truly appreciate your willingness to help make Illinois a better state by offering your unique perspective."

"As Governor, it's important that Illinois is a place where all our people can thrive, no matter where they call home. I appreciate hearing from you about issues that matter in your life, especially as my administration works to craft laws and policies that will make Illinois stronger for generations to come. Our state's tremendous diversity is our greatest strength, and I will work hard every day for



Supporting Choate Center workers

Signs supporting all workers at the Choate Mental Health and Developmental Center in Anna can be seen throughout the Union County area.

all of Illinois.

"I appreciate you taking the time out to connect with me and help make Illinois a more inclusive and prosperous state for all our residents."

"We've made our voices heard" about the Choate Center, Miller said about the county board. He said county officials are pushing the governor to give further consideration to the future of the Anna facility.

The Choate Center currently serves 58 people across its general and forensic developmental disabilities programs and 75 mental health patients, Capitol News Illinois reported.

The state-run mental health hospital employs roughly 524 people across its Anna campus and is one of the region's largest employers.

IDHS plans to "phase down" all 75 civil mental health beds at Choate while adding beds at Madden Mental Health Center in Chicago.

The agency said the shift, which is scheduled to be completed by March 2027, reflects that the "need for mental health beds is greater in northern Illinois."

Jackson County Assistant State's Attorney Travis Fleming, who handles mental health cases, told Capitol News Illinois that people are already waiting in the county jail for placement in the state's forensic mental health system.

"We do have individuals waiting for transport for fitness sitting in our jail currently," Fleming said.

Fitness restoration is a process for defendants who, because of mental

illness, do not understand the legal proceedings against them or cannot work with their attorneys. Treatment is intended to help them understand the judicial process so they can participate in their own defense.

Union County State's Attorney Tyler Tripp told Capitol News Illinois said that his office repeatedly encounters the lack of available treatment space.

"Illinois is in a mental health crisis, and what I always hear in my office is that we have no more room here," Tripp said.

Tripp said that hundreds of forensic patients across Illinois are waiting in jails for appropriate treatment in a state mental health facility.

"There are hundreds of people sitting in jail with their mental health declining,"

Tripp said. "State operations like Choate should not just remain open – they should be expanded."

"Any loss of a member of staff or any patient is unacceptable," he added.

Tripp rejected the IDHS explanation that demand is greater in the northern part of the state.

"The need for mental health beds is greater than we can currently handle across the entire state – not just Northern Illinois," he said.

Tripp emphasized his concerns about the plan for the Choate Center at Friday's county board of commissioners meeting. He said the plan, which he described as an "absolute failure," is drawing concern throughout the state.

He said the plan is "nonsensical to say the least" and "defies logic, reason and all math." Implementing the plan could place communities and vulnerable people at risk, he said, adding: "This is unacceptable."

The state's attorney said there is a "a major swell of support to push against this decision by the department." All possibilities, including possible legal action, are being considered moving forward.

Tripp also said he hopes the governor and DHS will give further consideration to the future of the Choate Center.

Note: Part of this story originally appeared in an Aug. 5 Capitol News Illinois story written by Jackson Brandhorst and the Saluki Local Reporting Lab. Brandhorst is a journalism student at Southern Illinois University Carbondale and is a member of The Saluki Local Reporting Lab.

The Saluki Local Reporting Lab is a special project of the SIU School of Journalism and Advertising and is designed to give students from diverse backgrounds practical reporting experience while providing news coverage to underserved communities.

News Notes

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

Make plans to attend this year's Union County Fair in Anna. The fair, scheduled Aug. 21-29, once again will take place at the Anna City Park.

The Union County Sheriff's Office is mourning the loss of K9 Kaiser. Kaiser came into the life of those at the sheriff's office in 2016. Kaiser was described as a loyal partner and loved tracking bad guys.

Union County officials are working to ensure that guidelines are followed to secure building permits when they are needed for projects in the county.

A recent Union County animal control program dog wash fund-raising event held in Jonesboro was a big success. The event helped to raise funds to benefit the animals in the program's care.

The Union County Ambulance Service passed a recent public health inspection with flying colors.

Anna-Jonesboro Community High School seniors started the new academic year last week with a Senior Sunrise event. Senior Sunrise celebrated the beginning of the seniors' final year at the Union County school.

Good luck to the A-JCHS football team, which is set to open the 2026 season Friday evening, Aug. 21, at home. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m. at The Pit.

(see Notes on page 8)



Month of July warmest on record since 1895 in contiguous U.S.

July was the warmest month on record in the contiguous United States, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's, NOAA, National Centers for Environmental Information, NCEI, reports.

July averaged 76.9 degrees, which was the warmest reading for the month from 1895 to the present for the contiguous United States, CONUS.

Above-average temperatures covered the entire CONUS, with all states ranking in the warmest third of their July temperature records and none ranking near or below average.

Precipitation, for the most part, was below average during July for the CONUS as a whole; however, several regions experienced heavy rainfall, including major flash flooding events in the Texas Hill Country and

eastern New York.

Temperatures

The average temperature for the CONUS in July, at 76.9 degrees, was 3.3 degrees above the 20th-century average. This was the warmest July, and warmest month, in the 132-year record: 0.1 to 0.2 of a degree warmer than what was recorded in July 1936 and July 2012.

Daytime maximum temperatures averaged 89.5 degrees, which 2.9 degrees above average, which ranked as the sixth warmest month on record for average high temperatures.

Overnight low temperatures averaged 64.2 degrees, which was 3.7 degrees above average, which ranked as the warmest month on record for average low temperatures, surpassing July 2022 by 0.7 of a degree.

Above-average temperatures extended

across the entire CONUS in July, with much-above-average temperatures observed throughout much of the interior West, Southwest, Rockies, northern Plains and Upper Midwest, as well as parts of the Gulf Coast and Southeast.

All CONUS states were at least 1 degree above their 20th-century average, with 13 states ranking among their five warmest Julys.

Precipitation

Total precipitation averaged across the CONUS in July was 2.55 inches, which was 0.23 of an inch below the 20th-century average, ranking in the driest third of the 132-year record.

Precipitation across the CONUS during July reflected a mix of wet and dry conditions.

Below-average precipitation occurred across portions of the northern tier, including parts of the

northern Rockies, northern Plains, Upper Midwest and Northeast, as well as parts of the southern Plains, Mississippi Valley, Central Gulf and Southeast.

In contrast, pockets of above-average precipitation were observed across parts of the West and Southwest, central Plains and Upper Midwest, as well as portions of Texas, the Tennessee and lower Ohio Valleys, Mid-Atlantic and lower Northeast.

Drought

According to the Aug. 4 U.S. Drought Monitor, about 48.5 percent of the CONUS was in drought, an increase of about 0.7 of a percentage point since the end of June.

Drought persisted over much of the interior West, Southwest and Rockies, and expanded or intensified across parts of the Northwest, southern and northern Plains,

Upper Midwest and far Northeast.

In contrast, drought contracted or decreased in intensity across portions of the Lower Mississippi Valley, Tennessee Valley and much of the Southeast and Mid-Atlantic region.

Notable

Weather Events

The nation's notable weather events in July highlighted by NOAA included training thunderstorms in parts of Southern Illinois, Southeast Missouri and Western Kentucky.

The storms produced 6 to 11 inches of rain in some parts of the region, which caused widespread flash flooding. Parts of the region, including Union County and the surrounding area, recorded much above average precipitation in July.

JONESBORO FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH NEWS

On Aug. 9, Pastor Perry Williams spoke in our morning service. His message addressed sin and restoration. His text was found in the New Testament books of 1 Corinthians, chapter 5, also in the 5th chapter of Galatians.

Connor Benbrook led in worship, accompanied by Debbie York on the piano, and the Praise Team: Sharon Morgan, Rodger Goines, David Pedigo and Debbie York. Lucas, Megan and Isabel Tehandón sang the song, "I Made It."

Our service was sent via transmitter station 87.9 FM for those who want to listen via the radio. The service was also live streamed on Facebook, so if you missed it, you still have an opportunity

to view it. Please check our Facebook page, Jonesboro FBC, for the latest videos and info on church events.

Our Children's program, "Dig-In," will resume on Aug. 26 from 6 to 8 p.m. Children ages 3 through 6th grade are invited to attend.

Currently, our regular schedule for worship at Jonesboro First Baptist includes Sunday School classes on Sundays at 9 a.m.; Sunday morning worship at 10 a.m.; Sunday evening worship at 6 p.m. Youth for 6th-12th grades meet also on Sundays at 6 p.m. and Wednesdays from 6-8 p.m. Our Adult Prayer Meeting and Bible Study also meets on Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. All are invited to attend.

ANNA FIRST BAPTIST NEWS

Anna First Baptist Church met for Worship Sunday, Aug. 16 with Perry Wright leading our opening prayer.

Our Call to Worship was on Nurture. "And let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season, we shall reap, if we do not lose heart.

"Therefore, lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.

"Strive for peace with all men, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

"Welcome one another, therefore, as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." This was taken from Hebrews and Romans.

Our Worship Team led us in three Worship songs which included "In the Garden," "I Speak the Name of Jesus" and "Agnus Dei."

Pastor Lupe's sermon title was "Elijah, Who Stood Before God"

Highlights of his sermon included, Elijah was a fearless prophet of God who stood

boldly for truth during a time when Israel had turned toward Baal and idolatry. God miraculously provided for Elijah in the wilderness, commanding ravens to bring him food during a devastating drought. On Mount Carmel, Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal and prayed as God answered with fire from Heaven, proving that the Lord alone is God. Yet Elijah also experienced exhaustion, fear and discouragement, reminding us that even great men of faith are still human and dependent upon God. His life remains a powerful testimony that one person completely surrendered to God can stand against a culture that has turned away from Him.

After our Worship Service we enjoyed a Fellowship Luncheon together.

Our Sunday School begins at 9 a.m. and is for all ages. Our Worship Service and Children's Church begins at 10:15 am.

Our Wednesday evening Bible Study begins at 6 p.m. Our bus runs for all of these services and programs.

Our church is located at 409 Morgan St. in Anna.

ANNA CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE NEWS

The morning worship service was held at 10:35 a.m. on Aug. 9, 2026. Announcements were given by Jessica Elkins. The worship service was led by Pastor Wright and the worship team.

The message "Comprehensive Biblical Learning: Transformed by the Word" from 2 Timothy 3:16-17 was brought by Pastor Wright sharing that Comprehensive Biblical

Learning is not about accumulating biblical knowledge — it is about allowing the Holy Spirit to use God's Word to transform us into the likeness of Jesus Christ, equipping us to make disciples who make disciples.

You may contact the church by calling the church office at 618-833-6702 and leaving a message if necessary or by calling Pastor Wright at 618-534-7103.



Julian, Rice honored with Garden of the Month award

Don Julian and Tim Rice share the joys of plants and the beauty of flowers with the upkeep of their home and gardens on Skyline Drive outside of Alto Pass. In 2011 this couple purchased their land from the Bennetts, who had vegetable gardens on this sunny southern exposure on the north side of the road.

Both were surprised and pleased to be honored as the Anna Jo Garden Club Garden of the Month selection for August 2026. Driving by or dropping in during the month might be expected and even welcomed. Although neither claims to be experts, both demonstrate a true love of gardening.

Over the years Don and Tim added compost and mulch over the original gray gravel to create the beautiful beds which now line the sidewalk entry to their home. Even in August many monarchs and bees were feasting upon tethonia and zinnias while blackberry lily and prairie beardtongue were setting seed. Our native honeysuckle and Indian pinks were still bloom! An entire bank of

Annabelle hydrangeas thrived in the shade of one front yard tree, while well-trimmed cedars and two old dogwoods shade the driveway, which is lined by a row of hibiscus, also in August bloom.

Tim reports that both the passionflower and blackberry lily came as "volunteers," and Don shared a recent project of trellising morning glory on native cedar branches, to increase the height of bloom along their walkway.

Besides flowers and grasses, sculptures by our late local artist Tom Horn grace the home, while other metal sculptures including meaningful finds from travels and local adventures grace the yard. Signs of peace and beauty adorn this beautiful home, and gardens and this lovely couple.



P.A.S.T. NEWS

By Suzan Harvel

On Aug. 9, 2026, P.A.S.T. of Union County presented a "Sunday Talk" on Automobiles and Dealerships in Union County. Norm and Barbara Bauer, along with Steven Burns, and many of the Bauer family gave a very informative on the ways the transition from horse and buggy to automobiles impacted Union County. The Bauers brought in many "show and tell" items to do with Studebakers, and David Eaves even brought three cars from the '50s by and parked them in front of the museum so that we could look them over. There was a lot of input from guests via questions, remembrances and funny anecdotes. The next Sunday Talk on Aug. 23 will see the Bauers and some other folks back at 2 p.m. to talk about Airplanes and the Airport we used to have. Aug. 30 will bring in Darrel Dexter and talk of the role the ferries and boats that plied the Mississippi. Admission is free, so please join in on these important topics.

The Genealogy Society of Southern Illinois (G.S.S.I.) held a Family History Conference at John A. Logan College on Saturday, Aug. 15, 2026, which was well attended. Speakers were Jane Mowery Patterson, from South Carolina, who spoke on the migration of Germans westward into Illinois and via The Great Road which ran from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to present day Rock Hill, South Carolina (Columbia area) where it split with the northern route going to Newberry, South Carolina and the southern branch going to Augusta, Georgia. Many of our local ancestors traveled this route with many settling in Rowan, North Carolina and points between and beyond. The

second speaker, Rick Allen, a former teacher at SEMO, then gave a most informative talk on tracing those ancestors and the many pitfalls there are to watch for in research and what a help DNA has provided. His motto like Winston Churchill was "Never Give Up." The last speaker of the day was Carla Smith, from Cobden, who retired from the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield. She, who not only educated on just what textiles are and what can damage them, demonstrated the proper way to store various textiles to preserve them for future generations. She encourages with that storage you keep a log with photographs and the stories that go with those pieces. Many great resources were imparted to those gathered. G.S.S.I. and the Johnson County Historical Society both had books for sale. G.S.S.I. also had information on the Trail of Tears; P.A.S.T. had information on their organization and also had their collection of Heisner Reproduction houses/businesses in Union County on display and for sale; there was additional booths of information about joining S.A.R. and D.A.R. organizations; and Julia Mowery had a set of plat maps of Rowan County, North Carolina for viewing.

The next meeting of P.A.S.T. will be held on Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026, at 6 p.m. A group photo of board members will be taken at this time to update our files.

P.A.S.T. will be hosting a yard sale at the Heritage House Museum, 102 South Main Street, Jonesboro, on Saturday, Sept. 5, 2026, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. with proceeds going toward building repairs.

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Snake Road Sentinels workshop set

Volunteers are being sought by the U.S. Forest Service/ Shawnee National Forest to assist with the collection of data on Snake Road in Union County.

The volunteers in the Snake Road Sentinels program will help to gather data related to Snake Road's closure for

the fall season. Snake Road is located in the LaRue-Pine Hills Area near Wolf Lake. The road is closed twice each year for the migration of reptiles and amphibians.

Snake Road Sentinels will be responsible for surveying wildlife which is observed and for monitoring visitor usage.

A Snake Road Sentinels fall workshop is set for 10 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 22, at the Mississippi Bluffs Ranger Station in Jonesboro. Training also can be completed online. More information, and registration for the workshop, are available online at <https://go.illinois.edu/SnakeRoad>.

HOSPITAL DISTRICT BOARD MEETING PLANNED

The Union County Hospital District Board of Directors will hold a special meeting on September 10, 2026. Agenda items as follows: Approval of Ordinance to Dissolve the District, Approval of Service Agreement between Union County Hospital District and Deaconess Health Systems to operate the hospital, an update on the sale of property, and CAO Update.

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 6:00 pm in the Deaconess IL Union County Hospital 3rd Floor Conference Room @ 517 N. Main St. Anna, IL.

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CITY OF ANNA, ILLINOIS ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS SOUTH STREET SANITARY SEWER MAIN REPLACEMENT

The City of Anna, Illinois, is accepting sealed bids for the replacement of an existing 8-inch sanitary sewer main located within South Street in Anna, Illinois.

SCOPE OF WORK

The project generally consists of:

- Replacement of approximately 160 linear feet of existing 8-inch sanitary sewer main.
- The existing sewer main is located approximately 10 feet below grade within the roadway of South Street.
- Excavation and removal of the existing sewer pipe, roots, debris, and other obstructions encountered within the project area.
- Installation of a new 8-inch sanitary sewer main, including all necessary connections and appurtenances.
- Proper bedding, backfilling, compaction, and restoration of the excavated area to provide a stable roadway base.
- Removal and disposal of all construction debris and unsuitable materials.
- Restoration and paving of the affected portion of South Street following completion of the sewer replacement.
- All labor, equipment, materials, traffic control, safety measures, and other work necessary to provide a complete and functional sewer main replacement.

Contractors shall be responsible for verifying existing site conditions and shall take all necessary precautions regarding existing underground utilities and infrastructure.

SUBMISSION OF BIDS

Sealed bids shall be clearly marked:

"South Street 8-Inch Sewer Main Replacement Bid"

Bids shall be submitted to:

City of Anna
103 Market Street
Anna, Illinois 62906

Bids must be received no later than 4:00 PM on September 15, 2026.

Bids received after the deadline will not be considered. Bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at Anna City Hall following the submission deadline.

Bidders should provide a lump-sum price for the complete project, including all labor, materials, equipment, excavation, removal and disposal, installation, backfill and compaction, roadway preparation, paving, traffic control, and site restoration.

The City of Anna reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive informalities or irregularities in the bidding process, and accept the bid determined to be in the best interest of the City.

Questions regarding the project or requests to inspect the project location may be directed to the City of Anna at 618-833-8528.

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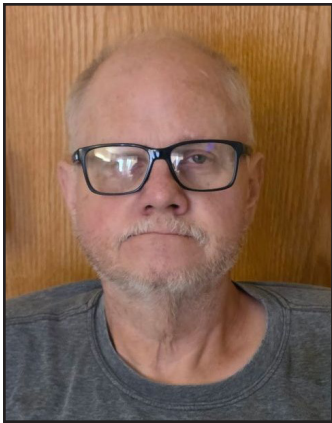
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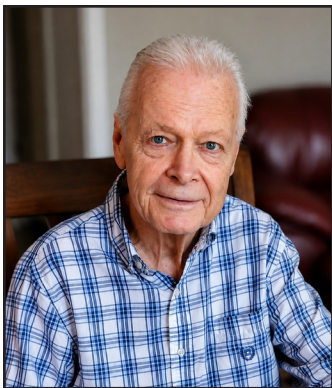
Judith Wilson
Judith Wilson, age 88, of Las Vegas, Nev., formerly of West Covina, Calif., passed away on Saturday, Aug. 8, 2026, at her home in Dongola.
She was born on April 24, 1938, to Attiliov Delboccio and Alberta (Rea) Delboccio. Judith enjoyed sewing collecting things and loved donating to St. Jude, Wounded Warrior Project, and other charities.
Survivors include sons, Joe Vitek and Tony Vitek; and siblings Bernard Delboccio and Theresa (Cookie) Porto.
She was preceded in death by her parents and husband, Wayne Wilson.
There will be no services held at this time.
The cremation of Judith Wilson will be personally handled by the staff of Crain Funeral Home.
Crain Funeral Home in Anna is in charge of arrangements.



Paula Bingaman-Tippy
Paula Bingaman-Tippy, age 59, of Cypress, formerly of Ullin, passed away on Monday, Aug. 10, 2026 at Massac Memorial Hospital in Metropolis.
She was born on June 25, 1967 to Gerald Bingaman, Sr. and Dorothy (Hamblin) Bingaman in Anna.
Paula loved to cook, read, binge-watch television and playing games with her grandchildren.
Survivors include her children, Cody Tippy and Brandi Tash; her siblings, Cindy Simmerman and Jerry Bingaman; along with many grandkids, nieces, nephews and other relatives.
Along with her parents, she was preceded in death by her brother-in-law, Steve Simmerman.
Funeral services will be held on Thursday, August 20, 2026 at 1 p.m. with words and remembrances by the family at Crain Funeral Home in Ullin. Visitation will be held prior to the service at the funeral home from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m.
Interment will follow the service at Ullin Cemetery in Ullin.
Crain Funeral Home in Ullin is in charge of arrangements.
In lieu of flowers, the family requests with gratitude that memorial contributions may be made to Crain Funeral Home to help with expenses. Envelopes will be available at the funeral home, or you can call 1-866-592-7246 to make a donation.



Stacy M. 'Porky' Duke
Stacy M. “Porky” Duke, age 56, of Barlow, Ky., formerly of Cairo, passed away on Thursday, Aug. 13, 2026, at the Ray and Kay Eckstein Hospice Care in Paducah, Ky.
He was born on Nov. 19, 1969 to Alexander James Duke and Patsy Ann (Vaughn) in Detroit, Mich.
He enjoyed watching television, was a Pittsburgh Steelers fan, and loved rock and roll, especially, Guns N’ Roses.
He is survived by his son, Matt Duke; and his brother-in-law, Edward Kearney; along with many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.
Along with his parents, he was preceded in death by his sister, Angela Kearney.
No formal services will be held at this time.
The cremation of Stacy M. “Porky” Duke will be personally handled by the staff of Crain Funeral Home.
Crain Funeral Home in Cairo is in charge of arrangements.
In lieu of flowers, the family requests with gratitude that memorial contributions may be made to Crain Funeral Home to help with expenses. You can call 1-866-592-7246 to make a donation.



Jim Tygett
Jim Tygett, age 82, of Jackson, Mo., formerly of Anna, passed away on Monday, Aug. 10, 2026 at Saint Francis Medical Center in Cape Girardeau, Mo.
Born Glenn Merle Tygett, Jr., on March 18, 1944, in Anna, his parents were Glenn Merle Tygett, Sr. and Dorothy (Pratt) Tygett.
Jim served in the United States Army from 1962 until 1965. He then attended college at Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau, where he earned a Bachelor’s of Science Degree. Jim then went to work for the FBI and was a special agent serving from 1969 until 1994. Jim attended Advance Assembly of God Church.
Survivors include his children, Traci (Steve) Bottom and Ryan Tygett; two grandchildren, Aaron and Miranda; three great-grandchildren, Jade, Payton and Kylie; along with nieces, nephews and other relatives.
Along with his parents, he was preceded in death by his son, Chris Tygett; and his sister, Brenda Stokes.
Funeral services were held on Friday, Aug. 14, 2026, at 1 p.m. with Rev. Brad Moore officiating at Crain Funeral Home in Anna. Visitation took place prior to the service from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. at the funeral home.
Interment followed the service at Green Lawn Memorial Gardens in Villa Ridge with flag presentation by the Illinois National Guard.
Crain Funeral Home in Anna is in charge of arrangements.



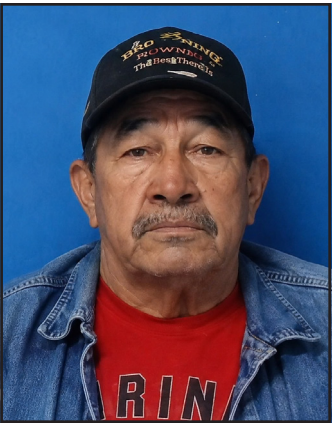
Francis Xavier Scherer
Francis Xavier Scherer, age 91, of Anna passed away on Saturday, Aug. 15, 2026, at Deaconess Illinois Union County Hospital in Anna.
He was born on Nov. 28, 1934, to Felix and Hilda (Hebenstreit) Scherer in Benton. On Aug. 19, 1961, he married Beverly Kraft and they spent over 64 years together until her passing on Feb. 4, 2026.
Francis worked as an Anesthetist for 42 years, 37 of those years at Union County Hospital. He proudly served in the National Guard and was a long-time active member of St. Mary Catholic Church in Anna. He was an avid hunter, fisherman, and outdoorsman and enjoyed American history, especially building and firing black powder muzzle loading rifles.
Survivors include his children, Mark (Charlotte) Scherer, Jeff (Lisa) Scherer, Joan Morgan (Chuck Hunsinger), Jim (Diana) Scherer, Rebecca Elzarad, and Daniel (Veronika) Scherer; grandchildren Amanda (Kyle) Hays, Kalynn (Nathan) Albright, Sydney (Steve) Vasicek, Naser Elzarad (Grayson Longyear), Eli Scherer, Aliya Elzarad, Francesca Scherer, Angelika Scherer, Mark Stankov, Aubre Jean, Harley (Josh) Wolfe, and Josh Kelley; nine great-grandchildren; sister Shirley Guard; nieces and nephews; and his beloved dog, Emily.
Along with his wife and parents, he was preceded in death by his daughter, Karen; son-in-law Ayad Elzarad; sisters Delores Payne, Germain Lynch and Norma Feuerhahn; and brother Owen Scherer.
A funeral mass was held on Wednesday, Aug. 19, 2026, at 1 p.m. with Celebrant Father Larry Lemay at St. Mary Catholic Church in Anna. Visitation was held prior to the mass from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. at the church.
Interment followed the mass at Anna City Cemetery in Anna.
The family requests with gratitude that memorial contributions may be made to the American Heart Association. Memorial contributions envelopes are available at the church and the funeral home.
Crain Funeral Home in Anna is in charge of arrangements.



Delmar Stone
Delmar Stone, born June 8, 1954, in Anna, passed away Aug. 10, 2026, surrounded by the love and memories of those who knew him. He was a longtime resident of Belvidere, Tenn., and a proud military veteran.
Delmar was a man who found joy in the simple things in life — building and working on classic cars, fishing, spending time outdoors and enjoying time with his family and dear friends. He had a passion for shooting and took pride in the things he could build, fix, and create with his own hands. Above all, Delmar cherished the people and animals who were part of his life. His beloved dog, Buddy, was a faithful companion and held a very special place in his heart.
Delmar is survived by his son, Raymond “JR” Stone (April), and his daughter, Tricia Lively (James); his grandchildren, Emma Lively, Alec Lively (Eden), Olivia Loudermilk (Clayton), and Katelyn Stone; and his great-grandchildren, Ashton and Jayce. He is also survived by his brothers, Bon Stone (Cheryl) and Don Stone (Becky); his sister, Janet Vanover (Jack); his dear friend John Dunn; and many extended family members and friends who will miss him dearly.
He was preceded in death by his parents, Ruth Stone and Raymond Stone; his beloved wife, Edith Marie Stone; and his granddaughter, Madison Stone.
Delmar will be remembered for his love of family, his friendships, his passion for classic cars and the outdoors, and the memories he created along the way. His family will carry those memories with them and cherish the time they were blessed to have with him.
Though he is no longer with us, the stories, laughter, lessons, and memories he leaves behind will continue to live on through his family and all those who loved him.
Visitation was Saturday, Aug. 15, 2026, at Moore-Cortner Funeral Home. Funeral services followed at noon in the Chapel of Moore-Cortner Funeral Home. Interment was at Keith Springs Cemetery.



Steven Ronald Foster
Steven Ronald Foster, 63, of Dongola passed away Tuesday, Aug. 11, 2026, leaving behind a lifetime of memories and the people who loved him dearly. He was born on Aug. 28, 1962, in Omaha, Neb., the son of Ronald and Betty (Staskawicz) Foster.
From 1979 to 1982, he proudly served his country in the United States Navy. Following his military service, Steven dedicated more than 20 years of his life to working for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He was a hardworking man who found some of his greatest happiness in the simple things in life. He loved fishing, especially the time spent on the water with his grandchildren. He enjoyed traveling, cooking, and creating memories with his family.
Steven is survived by his daughter, Sammantha Thorson (Dusty); his beloved grandchildren, Lacie and Wyatt Goines and Jaden Thorson; his mother, Betty Foster; sister Jodi Foster Houston; and brother Shawn Foster (Michelle). His family was a special part of his life, and the memories they made together will be treasured forever. He was preceded in death by his father.
Steven will be deeply missed by his family, friends and all who had the privilege of knowing him. His memory will live on through the stories they share, the meals he prepared, the places they traveled, and the countless special moments he shared with those he loved.
Inurnment with military honors will take place at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood at a later date. Rendleman and Hileman Funeral Home in Anna is in charge of arrangements.
Rest peacefully, Steven. You will always be loved, always remembered, and forever missed.
To visit Steven’s memorial page and leave online condolences for his family, please visit the Rendleman and Hileman Funeral Home website at rendlemanhilemanfh.com.



Gary Heller
Gary Heller, age 80, of Anna passed away on Friday, Aug. 7, 2026, at the Illinois Veterans Home in Anna.
He was born on Dec. 24, 1945, to Francis Charles Heller and Ada Catherine (Smith) Heller in Harrisburg, Penn. On Nov. 25, 1966, he married his wife, Donna J. Heller.
Gary was a proud Marine veteran. He had worked in the federal prison system where he retired in 1990. He was a life member of the VA and the VFW and loved spending time taking care of other veterans and going fishing.
Survivors include his daughters, Kelly McDonnell and Janeen Sanders; grandchildren Kristyna McDonnell, Megan McDonnell, Zoey Larsen, Riley Larsen, Joshua, Kaleb, Bethany, Tabitha and Abigail; two sisters, Darlene Mowery and Debra Danley; along with many great-grandchildren.
Along with his parents and wife, Donna, he was preceded in death by his brothers, Elwood Heller, Bob Heller and Kenneth Lee Heller; and sisters, Margaret Smith, Louise Reichenbach, Shirley Mowery, Sheila Arnold, Linda Kipple Patricia Sakowski and Judy Brown.
There will be no services held at this time.
The cremation of Gary Heller will be personally handled by the staff of Crain Funeral Home.
Crain Funeral Home in Anna is in charge of arrangements.

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NEWS FROM VIENNA, ILLINOIS

Make It Do

Tire Rationing in WWII

Save Rubber

CHECK YOUR TIRES NOW

Tire rationing at the Old Johnson County Courthouse

The image of a World War II poster, shown here, was a nationwide campaign to save rubber for military use during that war. Rationing of many items was necessary in order to conduct the war, and everyone, including Johnson County did their part.

Rationing of food was only one part of the ration program conducted from the Rationing Board, located in the old Johnson County Courthouse. It was probably no surprise when tires began to be rationed. Just one month after Japan attacked the United States at Pearl Habor, the following article appeared in the Vienna Times on Jan. 8, 1942:

“The board reports that a strict supervision of sale of tires in this county will be necessary and motorists are warned now to conserve their present tires as much as possible. The county’s quota of new tires for the month of January is only 5 passenger car tires and 4 tubes, 16 truck and bus tires and 13 tubes.

On the priority list for new tires are physicians, surgeons, nurses and veterinarians. The vehicle on which new tires have been issued is not to be used for any other purpose other than professional calls. Others on the list are ambulances, fire fighting equipment, to maintain police protection, public health and safety services, trucks or cars used for transporting garbage, truck or cars used in public utility service, cars used to maintain the mail service, school buses to transport pupils only, and cannot be used to haul pupils to ball games, picnics, etc.”

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A maximum of two weeks per event will be permitted. Be certain to include the location and time of the event. No rummage, garage or yard sales. **ALL activities must be open to the general public.** If not, you are welcome to place an advertisement.

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NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE *By Dixie Terry*

The “Dog Days of August” continue, hot and humid. The less said about the weather, the better, it seems. Thank goodness for central air!

School is in session all over, so watch out for walking students and the big yellow buses.

Tuesday, Aug. 14 was the 17th Honor Flight of Southern Illinois, with a huge crowd welcoming home the plane filled with veterans at the Veterans Airport of Southern Illinois, after their full day in Washington, D.C. to tour the many military memorials. To contact the organization with a request to participate in th next flight, go to veterans honor flight.org.

The Daniel Chapman Chapter National Society Daughters of the American Revolution will hold their first meeting of the new club year on Tuesday, Sept. 8 at 6 p.m. at the Fellowship Baptist Church in Vienna. All members and their guests are urged to attend.

Looking Back: In the Aug. 11, 1993, edition of the Goreville Gazette was this bit of news: “Congratulations to David Gjelsvik, who has been recognized in Midwest Outdoors and River Country Outdoors magazines with articles on his big catch at the Lake of Egypt. The 20-pound, 2-ounce hybrid striper broke not only the lake record, but also the state record.”

At the recent Aug. 10 Goreville Village Board

Meeting, Village Clerk Kaylee Chrisman swore in Erica Goines as Village Treasurer, replacing Michelle Maze, who has retired.

I could hardly believe it, when my daughter, Nancy, arrived from Kroger in Marion, with the news that a robot was seen restocking the shelves. It is hard to believe, but this AI technology seems to be taking over the world.

On Friday, Aug. 21, the Cache River Wetlands Center, south of Cypress, will hold a “Kids’ Water Safety Day” provided by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. This is free and open to all.

Local Johnson County schools held a “Back to School Prayer Walk” on Sunday, Aug. 9, sponsored by local churches. Participating at different times that day were these schools: Buncombe, Cypress, Dongola, New Simpson Hill, Vienna Grade and High School.

Volunteering at the Goreville Ministerial Alliance Thrift Shop on Aug. 18, 20 and 22 will be members of the Community of Christ Church of Tunnel Hill. Shoppers are welcomed on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Saturdays, 9 a.m. to noon. Merchandise is added daily and there is no chance of running out.

The Johnson County Home and Community Education (HCE) of the University of Illinois Extension Tunnel Hill unit will hold their monthly

meeting on Monday, Aug. 24 at 5 p.m. A potluck picnic will be enjoyed at the lakeside home of member, Beverly Bishop, followed by a pontoon excursion around the Lake of Egypt.

My daughter-in-law, Diane, gave me some luscious tomatoes and dandelion jelly (I haven’t tried that yet!) from the Vienna farmers’ market, open each Wednesday at the city park.

Runners! Mark your date book for the “Run For Hope” a 5KM, 10KM, and Fun Run, to be held on Sept. 25 at 6pm, with registration beginning at 4:30pm at the Tunnel Hill State Trail, adjacent to the Vienna City Park. This is sponsored by the Eagle House Ministries of Buncombe.

What is a “gully washer”? A heavy rain shower that carves gullies in dirt roads, especially if they are hilly. Gully washers come quickly, possibly creating flash-flood conditions. There are few, if any, dirt roads around any more, but I remember when there were many.

The new moon arrived on the evening of Aug. 12, riding high in the sky. Take a look!

Your newsy items are needed for this column! Call 618-422-2086 or email to dixieterry85@yahoo.com with your local happenings. Thank you.

Have a great remainder of th week and enjoy all that August has to offer.

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Southernmost Illinois Delta Empowerment Zone
Statement of Activities for the Housing Preservation Grant
Johnson, Pulaski, Alexander, Union and Massac Counties
08/13/2026

(i) Southernmost Illinois Delta Empowerment Zone, SIDEZ, will be applying for the Housing Preservation Grant, HPG, from USDA Rural Development. This grant will allow SIDEZ to make grants to low-very low-income home owners for repairs to the home.

(ii) SIDEZ will select recipients for financial assistance based on income guide lines as defined by USDA Rural Development. Recipients must meet the low to very low-income guidelines. SIDEZ will work with the property owner to determine the housing preservation need by consulting a general contractor for inspection and estimate of needed work. SIDEZ will oversee work to be done and inspect work completed by contractor.

(iii) SIDEZ will follow the agreement between Rural Development, The National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers and The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation in the process of identifying potential environmental impacts and historical places.

(iv) SIDEZ will use Rural Development standards for the housing preservation work.

(v) SIDEZ will complete the program within one years of award.

(vi) SIDEZ staff required to complete the program will be its current staff and board members. The need for additional staff will be evaluated on as needed basis.

(vii) SIDEZ estimates that it will be able to assist three families with this grant. The families that SIDEZ intends to assist will be a combination of low to very low income minority and nonminority persons.

(viii) The proposed grant will serve residence in Alexander and Pulaski County located in Southern Illinois.

(ix) SIDEZ plans to use 15% (\$8,242.20) of the proposed grant for program administration cost over the grant period of one year. The program administration cost includes personnel, travel and supplies for the project. SIDEZ will use 85% (\$46,705.80) for rehabilitation of approved projects over a one-year period. SIDEZ plans to draw grant funds in a lump sum for the program activities. Total grant application of \$54948.00 will be submitted.

(x) None

(xi) The accounting system used by SIDEZ for this proposed grant will be on accrual basis using QuickBooks. The program funds will be audited by an independent auditor on a yearly basis.

(xii) SIDEZ will evaluate the effectiveness of this program on a monthly basis. SIDEZ will look at the number of low to very low minority and nonminority families it has been able to assist. SIDEZ board will evaluate each project monthly. The evaluation will include progress made on each property and expected completion date. SIDEZ will comply with Rural Developments requirements for quarterly reports on the program. SIDEZ will also comply with rental property requirements for the program in accordance with 7 CFR 1944.689 and report activities to Rural Development.

(xiii) None

(xiv) None

(xv) In the event that SIDEZ would lose its legal status it would turn over any and all security instruments related to the HPG to USDA Rural Development, the granting agency or with permission form USDA Rural development the Board of Directors shall dispose of all assets in compliance with Internal Revenue Service guide lines for exempt organization with 501 C(3) status.

(xvi) None

(xvii) SIDEZ will perform outreach in the area the program will serve. SIDEZ will do this in accordance with 7 CFR 1944.671 (B). SIDEZ will reach out to community contacts including but not limited to community organizations and community leaders including minority and nonminority leaders. SIDEZ will also advertise in local paper that covers the entire service area.

Please contact Tabatha Smith, Executive Director with any comments or questions at 618-745-6307 or tsmith@sidezoffice.org.

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145th Union County Fair set

A Union County summer tradition is set to continue this year. The 145th Union County Fair is scheduled Aug. 21-29 in Anna. The fair once again will take place at the Anna City Park.

The schedule for this year's fair follows (information is from the 2026 Union County Fair book):

Friday, Aug. 21

- 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Open show registration at the fair office. Do not bring exhibits, only tags will be given out.
- 8 p.m. Union County Fair queen pageant. General admission tickets: Adults \$10, children \$5.

Saturday, Aug. 22

- 8 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. Entries taken in office for junior horse show.
- 8 a.m. FFA livestock show, junior show arena.
- 9 a.m. Junior horse show, horse arena. Junior rules will be enforced.
- 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Junior entry registration; bring exhibit items.
- 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Open show registration in the fair office. No exhibits are to be placed on this day in open show classes. Only tags will be given. Do not bring exhibits.
- 1 p.m. Harness racing in front of the grandstands. Free admission.
- 3 p.m. Entry office closed for junior entries to prepare for judging. Open registration still open.
- 3:30 p.m. Judging for junior classes N and P and ages 5-8 in the exhibit building.
- 7 p.m. Southbound Reunion concert in front of the grandstands. Adults \$10, children \$5.

Sunday, Aug. 23

- 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Adult entries will be taken in the office and can be placed in the brown exhibit building.
- Noon. Mini tractor pull. Presented. by 618 Mini Tractor Pullers. General admission tickets available: Adults \$10, children \$5.
- 1:15 p.m. Pet parade registration, junior show arena.
- 2 p.m. Pet parade, junior show arena.

Monday, Aug. 24

- 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Junior livestock registration, fair office.
- 3 p.m. Junior tractor operators contest, infield of grandstand.
- 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Junior exhibits in exhibit building open.
- 5 p.m. Sale livestock weigh-in.
- 5 p.m. Open beef, dairy and sheep registration.
- 7 p.m. Meeting for all junior livestock exhibitors in barn area.
- 7:30 p.m. Truck, semi and farm stock tractor pull, in front of the grandstands. General admission tickets are available: Adults \$10, children \$5.

Tuesday, Aug. 25

- 8 a.m. Open class, livestock and exhibit judging.
- 8 a.m. 4-H livestock show.
- 10 a.m. Mule/donkey halter classes, heavy horse and mule barn.
- 10 a.m. Heavy horse show, heavy horse and mule barn.
- 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Exhibit building open.
- 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Carnival open. Family Night. \$15 armbands.
- 6 p.m. Pee wee Showmanship, junior show arena.
- 7:30 p.m. Tractor pull, in front of the grandstands. General admission tickets are available: Adults \$10, children \$5.

Wednesday, Aug. 26

- 9 a.m. Open dairy judging.
- 9 a.m. Junior swine, sheep, goats, dairy and beef judging, junior show arena.
- 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Exhibit building open.
- 6 p.m. 4-H Fundraiser Show, junior show arena.
- 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Carnival open.
- 7 p.m. Heartland Idol Contest. Bandstand location. Free lawn seating.

Thursday, Aug. 27

Thursday is Veteran's Day at the fair. All veterans are admitted free.

- 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Exhibit building open.
- 6 p.m. Junior livestock auction, junior show arena. Free admission.
- 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Carnival open.
- 7:30 p.m. Championship Rodeo, presented by Whippoorwill Rodeo. General admission tickets: Adults \$10, children \$5.

Friday, Aug. 28

- 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Exhibit building open.
- 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Carnival open.
- 7:30 p.m. Demolition derby, in front of grandstands. General admission tickets available: \$20 for adults, \$10 for children.

Saturday, Aug. 29

- 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Exhibit building open.
- 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. Carnival open.
- 7:30 p.m. Demolition derby, in front of grandstands. General admission tickets available: \$20 for adults, \$10 for children.

Sunday, Aug. 30

- 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Exhibits to be claimed in exhibit building.
- 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Exhibitor checks available in fair office.

Admission to Fair

Admission prices to the fair include: Per vehicle, \$5 (no additional charge per person). Per person walking in, \$1. Children under 3 are free. (No charge on Aug. 21-24).

No bicycles are allowed on the fairgrounds during the fair. No pets are allowed. Service animals are welcome.

More information about the fair can be found in this year's fair book, on the fair's website at www.unioncountyfair.net and on the fair's Facebook page.



Miss Union County Fair: From left are Brooke Sheffer, Malayna Korb, 2025 Miss Union County Fair Queen Brooklynn Eastman and Carley Pearson. Daisy Urban and Summer Skelly could not be present for the picture.

Union County Fair queen pageant planned

The Union County Fair queen pageant is set for 8 p.m. Friday, Aug. 21. The pageant is one of the many highlights of the Union County Fair in Anna. The fair is scheduled Aug. 21-29 at the Anna City Park. The accompanying photos feature contestants in this year's pageant and the 2025 queens. Photos provided.



Junior Miss Union County Fair: From left are Jaylyn Stroehlein, Payton Brown, 2025 Junior Miss Union County Fair Eleison Baggott, Katie Stegle, Hayden Dillow-Ellis and Vayda Joles. Kylie Davis and Rylan Norwood could not be present for the picture.



Little Miss Union County Fair: From left are Madilyn Hudson, Jewels Watson, Jaelyn Tite, 2025 Little Miss Union County Fair Maggie Roach, Addysyn Stroehlein, Reagan Ellis and Alaina Murillo. Maci Linton, Harlyn Keller and Karlee Chamness could not be present for the picture.

New entrance at Anna City Park



Visitors to the Union County Fair will see some major changes which have occurred at the Anna City Park. The park is the home of the fair, which is scheduled Aug. 21-29. One of the changes is a new entrance to the fairgrounds from East Davie Street. The entrance is for trucks with trailers or semis. No cars will be allowed through the new entrance. Traffic will be guided on where to go.



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The Union County Fair Exhibition Building at the Anna City Park soon will be a busy place. The 2026 Union County Fair is set to begin Friday, Aug. 21 and runs through Aug. 29. The Exhibition Building traditionally hosts a wide range of exhibits, ranging from crops to school work by area students and more.

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Hebrews 12
The Chastening of the Lord

121 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

4 In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. 5 And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says, "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, 6 because the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son." [1] 7 Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? 8 If you are not disciplined-and everyone undergoes discipline-then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. 9 Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! 10 They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. 11 No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

Warning against Rejecting God's Grace

12 Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. 13 "Make level paths for your feet," [2] so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed. 14 Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. 15 See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. 16 See that no one is sexually immoral, or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son. 17 Afterward, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. Even though he sought the blessing with tears, he could not change what he had done.

18 You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm; 19 to a trumpet blast or to such a voice speaking words that those who heard it begged that no further word be spoken to them, 20 because they could not bear what was commanded: "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned to death." [3] 21 The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, "I am trembling with fear." [4] 22 But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, 23 to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, 24 to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. 25 See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven? 26 At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens." [5] 27 The words "once more" indicate the removing of what can be shaken-that is, created things-so that what cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, 29 for our "God is a consuming fire." [6]



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LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT UNION COUNTY, ILLINOIS LEGENCE BANK, AN ILLINOIS BANKING INSTITUTION, Plaintiff, v. CURTS CLASSICS, LLC, an Illinois Limited Liability Company, ROY CURTIS WALKER, NATIONAL LOAN INVESTORS, L.P., SAMSON MCA LLC, a New York Limited Liability Company, UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS, Defendants. Case No.: 2025FC19 NOTICE OF SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of the above court entered in the above entitled cause on June 22, 2026, the following described real estate will on the 23rd day of September, 2026, at 9:00 a.m., at the Union County Courthouse, 309 West Market Street, Jonesboro, IL 62952, be offered for sale and sold at public venue.

A. The name, address and telephone number of the person to contact for information regarding the real estate is between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Lawler Brown Law Firm, 1600 West Main Street, PO Box 1148, Marion, IL 62959, telephone (618) 993-2222.

B. The common address and other common description, if any, of the real estate is 460 NE Front Street, Dongola, IL 62926.

C. The legal description of the real estate is as follows:

Tract 1:
A part of the Southeast One-Fourth of Section 24, Township 13 South, Range 1 West of the Third Principal Meridian, located in the Village of Dongola, described as follows, to wit: Beginning at a point on the West line of the right-of-way of the Dongola to Cypress Black Top Road a distance of 485 feet Northeast of the Southeast corner of the Dongola Grade School Unit District #66 grounds; thence in a Northerly direction at an angle of 101° a distance of 329 feet to the property line of C.R. Corzine, thence in an Easterly direction along said property line a distance of 218 feet to a point; thence in a Southerly direction a distance of 172 feet to a point on the West line of the right-of-way of the above mentioned road; thence in a Southwesterly direction along the West line of said road right-of-way a distance of 190 feet to the point of beginning. Situated in Union County, Illinois.

Tract 2:
Situated in and a part of the Southeast Quarter of Section 24, Township 13 South, Range 1 West of the Third Principal Meridian, Union County, Illinois. Beginning at an iron pin located 318.96 feet East of the Northwest corner of the Southeast Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of Section 24, Township 13 South, Range 1 West of the Third Principal Meridian, on the North line of said Quarter-Quarter section; thence continuing East along said North line a distance of 150.00 feet to an iron pin; thence deflecting right 126°43'25" a distance of 345.56 feet to an iron pin in the North right-of-way line of the Dongola to Cypress Blacktop Road; thence deflecting right 97°31'00" a distance of 150.00 feet along the said North right-of-way line to an iron pin; thence deflecting right 78°51'53" a distance of 455.82 feet to the point of beginning. Situated in Union County, Illinois.

EXCEPT any interest in the coal, oil, gas and other minerals underlying the land which have been heretofore conveyed or reserved in prior instrument(s)

COUNTY COURTHOUSE, MOUND CITY, ILLINOIS. PIN 03-32-300-036
Improved with Single Family Home
COMMONLY KNOWN AS: 785 S Main St
Grand Chain, IL 62941
Sale terms: 10% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the auction; The balance, including the Judicial sale fee for Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund, which is calculated at the rate of \$1 for each \$1,000 or fraction thereof of the amount paid by the purchaser not to exceed \$300, in certified funds, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.

If the property is a condominium and the foreclosure takes place after 1/1/2007, purchasers other than the mortgagees will be required to pay any assessment and legal fees due under The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4).

If the property is located in a common interest community, purchasers other than mortgagees will be required to pay any assessment and legal fees due under the Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1).

If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney.

Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser shall receive a Certificate of Sale, which will entitle the purchaser to a Deed to the real estate after Confirmation of the sale. The successful purchaser has the sole responsibility/expense of evicting any tenants or other individuals presently in possession of the subject premises.

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

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

For information: Examine the court file or contact Plaintiff's attorney: Codilis & Associates, P.C., 15W030 North Frontage Road, Suite 100, Burr Ridge, IL 60527, (630) 794-9876. Please refer to file number 14-25-01388. 13292480 8221-968153

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

In the Matter of the Estate of GAIL PARKER, Deceased No. 2026-PR-4 CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given of the death of Gail Parker of Villa Ridge, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued on July 22, 2026, to Rebecca Parker Robertson, whose attorney is John R. Schneider of Johnson, Schneider & Ferrelli, L.L.C., 212 North Main Street, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, 63701.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Pulaski County Courthouse, 500 Illinois Avenue, Mound City, Illinois, 62963, or with the representative, or both, by February 20, 2026, or three (3) months from the date of mailing or delivery of a personal claim notice, whichever date is later, and any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

Stephanie Crain
PULASKI COUNTY CIRCUIT CLERK
8221-968126

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT UNION COUNTY, ILLINOIS IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF CLAYTON RAY BRADISH JR., Deceased. NO. 2026PR14 CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given of the death of Clayton Ray Bradish Jr., deceased, a resident of Dongola, Union County, Illinois. A Petition for Letters of Independent Administration and for Letters of Office were filed with the Circuit Clerk on July 29, 2026. Letters of Office were issued on the 3rd day of August, 2026, to Clayton Bradish III, of 135 Amarillo Dr., Carpentersville, IL 60110.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Circuit Clerk at the Union County Courthouse, Jonesboro, Illinois, or with the representative, or both, on or before February 20, 2027, at which time a hearing date will be set in Circuit Court of

Union County. Failure to file any claim within that period does not deprive the claimant of their right to enforce their claim in any other manner provided by law. Copies of a claim filed with the Circuit Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within ten days after it has been filed.

Keri E. Clark
Circuit Clerk of Union County
Alan W. McIntyre
Attorney at Law
412 Court Street
P.O. Box 515 Vienna, Illinois 62995
(618) 658-9497
ARDC# 6237658
Email: alan@amcintyrelaw.com
8221-968145

CITY OF ANNA, ILLINOIS ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS SOUTH STREET SANITARY SEWER MAIN REPLACEMENT
The City of Anna, Illinois, is accepting sealed bids for the replacement of an existing 8-inch sanitary sewer main located within South Street in Anna, Illinois. SCOPE OF WORK
The project generally consists of:

- Replacement of approximately 160 linear feet of existing 8-inch sanitary sewer main.
- The existing sewer main is located approximately 10 feet below grade within the roadway of South Street.
- Excavation and removal of the existing sewer pipe, roots, debris, and other obstructions encountered within the project area.
- Installation of a new 8-inch sanitary sewer main, including all necessary connections and appurtenances.
- Proper bedding, backfilling, compaction, and restoration of the excavated area to provide a stable roadway base.
- Removal and disposal of all construction debris and unsuitable materials.
- Restoration and paving of the affected portion of South Street following completion of the sewer replacement.
- All labor, equipment, materials, traffic control, safety measures, and other work necessary to provide a complete and functional sewer main replacement.

Contractors shall be responsible for verifying existing site conditions and shall take all necessary precautions regarding existing underground utilities and infrastructure.

SUBMISSION OF BIDS

Sealed bids shall be clearly marked:

"South Street 8-Inch Sewer Main Replacement Bid"
Bids shall be submitted to: City of Anna 103 Market Street Anna, Illinois 62906

Bids must be received no later than 4:00 PM on September 15, 2026.

Bids received after the deadline will not be considered. Bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at Anna City Hall following the submission deadline.

Bidders should provide a lump-sum price for the complete project, including all labor, materials, equipment, excavation, removal and disposal, installation, backfill and compaction, roadway preparation, paving, traffic control, and site restoration.

The City of Anna reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive informalities or irregularities in the bidding process, and accept the bid determined to be in the best interest of the City.

Questions regarding the project or requests to inspect the project location may be directed to the City of Anna at 618-833-8528. 8221-968183

NOTICE

The Village of Tamms will hold a close-out public hearing on Monday, August 31st, 2026 at 11:00 am at the Village Hall in Tamms to review and obtain interested parties views regarding the Village's program activities and performance under the IL Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's Community Development Block Grant #19-242043. The purpose of the grant was for sewer improvements to the lagoon located south of Pumphouse St. and lift stations improvements on Russell St., Fairlawn St. and Railroad St. Persons with disabilities or non-English speaking persons who wish to attend and need assistance should contact Lacey Reagan at Southern Five at 618-845-9000. 8221-968184

STATE OF ILLINOIS COUNTY OF JOHNSON
WHEREAS, THE STATE OF ILLINOIS HAS ENACTED "AN ACT REGULATING WAGES OR LABORERS, MECHANICS AND OTHER WORKERS EMPLOYED BY ANY PUBLIC WORKS BY THE STATE, COUNTY & CITY OR ANY PUBLIC BODY OR ANY POLITICAL SUBDIVISION OR BY ANY ONE UNDER CONTRACT FOR PUBLIC WORKS", APPROVED JUNE 26, 1941, AS AMENDED, (11. REV. STAT. 1987, CH 48 PAR 39 SEQ AS AMENDED BY PUBLIC ASCS 86-799 AND 86-693. WHEREAS, THE AFORESAID ACT REQUIRED THAT THE COUNTY OF JOHNSON INVESTIGATE AND ASCERTAIN THE PREVAILING RATE OF WAGES AS DEFINED IN SAID ACT FOR LABORERS, MECHANICS AND OTHER

WORKERS IN THE LOCALITY OF SAID COUNTY OF JOHNSON EMPLOYED IN PERFORMING CONSTRUCTION OF PUBLIC WORKS, FOR SAID COUNTY OF JOHNSON. THIS ORDINANCE WAS PASSED JULY 28TH, 2026 8221-968113

PUBLIC NOTICE Notice of Proposed Tariff Changes Gas Service Schedule III. C. C. No. 2 To the Gas Patrons of Ameren Illinois Company d/b/a Ameren Illinois:
Ameren Illinois (or Company) hereby gives notice to the public that on August 14, 2026, it filed with the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC or Commission) evidence (direct testimony) regarding the reconciliation of revenues collected from its gas customers under the Company's Gas Energy Efficiency and Demand Response Cost Recovery (GER) Rider, with actual and prudent associated costs from January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025. This reconciliation may result in changes to the Company's rates and charges with respect to gas delivery services in the Company's service area in Illinois. The changes in rates and charges will take effect after hearings and after the Commission issues its final Order.

The Commission docketed the filing as Docket No. 25-0964. A copy of the evidence may be inspected at Ameren Illinois' offices located at 300 Liberty Street, Peoria, Illinois or online at www.icc.illinois.gov/e-docket/.

All parties interested in this matter may obtain information with respect thereto either directly from Ameren Illinois or by addressing the Chief Clerk of the Illinois Commerce Commission, 527 East Capitol Avenue, Springfield, Illinois 62706.

AMEREN ILLINOIS COMPANY d/b/a Ameren Illinois By: Patrick Smith, President 8221-968276

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING FOR 2026-2027 BUDGET

Notice is hereby given by the Board of Education of Anna-Jonesboro CHSD #81 in the State of Illinois that the tentative budget for fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026, is on file and conveniently available for inspection at the District Office, 608 S. Main St., Anna, Illinois, after 8:00 a.m. on the 18th day of August 2026. Notice is further given that a public hearing on said budget will be held at 6:00 p.m. on the 21st day of September 2026, at the AJCHS Library at the address listed above. 8221-967982

NOTICE
Shawnee Community College is seeking proposals for an Electric Vehicle. Proposals will be opened on Tuesday, September 8, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. (CST). The Board reserves the right to reject any or all proposals. Bid specifications are located on the College's website at shawneecc.edu/bids. Please contact Christina Wright at (618) 634-3239 or christinaw@shawneecc.edu for any questions. 8221-968199

ASSUMED NAME PUBLICATION NOTICE
PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT ON AUGUST 13, 2026 A CERTIFICATE WAS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK/RECORDER ROBIN HARPER-WHITEHEAD OF JOHNSON COUNTY, ILLINOIS, SETTING FORTH THE NAMES, POST OFFICES AND ADDRESSES OF ALL OF THE PERSONS OWNING, CONDUCTING AND TRANSACTING THE BUSINESS KNOWN AS:

TROVER RENTALS LLC
LOCATED AT: 10875 US HWY 45 NORTH TUNNEL HILL, IL 62972
Robin Harper-Whitehead
Johnson County CLERK/RECORDER
8221-968226

PUBLIC NOTICE LEGAL NOTICE CERTIFICATE NUMBER 2022-00089 To: JOE J SMITH AND/OR UNKNOWN OCCUPANTS OFFICER FOR FIFTH THIRD BANK NA UNION COUNTY CLERK, and all unknown owners, occupants, beneficiaries, heirs, devisees or parties interested. A Petition for a Tax Deed on the premise described below has been filed in the Circuit Court of Union County, Illinois, as Case Number 2026TX22. On 12/16/2026 at 11:00 AM, Via Zoom, Meeting ID: 980 2593 9529, No Passcode, the Petitioner will make an application to such court in Union County, Illinois, for an Order on the Petition that a Tax Deed be issued if the real estate is not redeemed from the sale. The real estate is described as follows, to wit:

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: S23 T12 R2W PT SE SE
PERMANENT INDEX NUMBER: 08-23-06-017-A1 and was sold on 2/7/2024 for general taxes for the year 2022. The period of redemption will expire on 12/4/2026. RAVEN SECURITIES INC PETITIONER 8221-967845

PUBLIC NOTICE LEGAL NOTICE CERTIFICATE NUMBER 2022-00143 To: MICHAEL JEROLDS AND/OR UNKNOWN OCCUPANTS CT CORPORATION SYSTEM AGENT FOR TOWER LOAN OF ILLINOIS DBA TOWER LOAN OF MARION UNION COUNTY CLERK, and all unknown owners, occupants, beneficiaries, heirs, devisees or parties interested. A Petition for a Tax Deed on the premise described below has been filed in the Circuit Court of Union County, Illinois, as Case Number 2026TX23. On 12/16/2026 at 11:00 AM, Via Zoom, Meeting ID: 980 2593 9529, No Passcode, the Petitioner will make an application to such court in Union County, Illinois, for an Order on the Petition that a Tax Deed be issued if the real estate is not redeemed from the sale. The real estate is described as follows, to wit: LEGAL DESCRIPTION: LOT 19 BLK 1 FOREST PLACE ADD. 55' X 150' PERMANENT INDEX NUMBER: 14-00-09-172 and was sold on 2/7/2024 for general taxes for the year 2022. The period of redemption will expire on 12/4/2026. RAVEN SECURITIES INC PETITIONER 8221-967846

LEGAL NOTICE -REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ) City of Vienna, IL

The City of Vienna is accepting Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) from licensed engineering firms for professional services on various federally funded projects. Scope varies by project and will be stated in specific work orders. Submissions due by 4:00 PM CST on

September 4, 2026, at Vienna City Hall, 205 N. 4th St., Vienna, IL 62995. Federally funded rules apply. Equal Opportunity Employer. The City reserves the right to reject any or all submittals, waive informalities, and select the firm that best serves the interest of the City. Download the complete RFQ packet, evaluation criteria, and instructions at www.cityofviennail.net or contact Aleatha Wright, City Clerk, awright@cityofviennail.net, 618-658-5161. 8221-967977

Assumed Name Publication Notice

Public Notice is hereby given that on Monday, August 3, 2026, a certificate was filed in the Office of the County Clerk of UNION County, Illinois, setting forth the names and post-office addresses of all of the persons owning, conducting, and transacting the business known as: THE BARRELS OF UNION COUNTY 170 N COUNTY LINE RD COBDEN IL 62920 Dated this 3rd day of August, 2026. Stephanie L. Cox COUNTY CLERK No. ABN2026-7922 8221-967838

REAL ESTATE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT UNION COUNTY, ILLINOIS LEGENCE BANK, AN ILLINOIS BANKING INSTITUTION, Plaintiff, v. CURTS CLASSICS, LLC, an Illinois Limited Liability Company, ROY CURTIS WALKER, NATIONAL LOAN INVESTORS, L.P., SAMSON MCA LLC, a New York Limited Liability Company, UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS, Defendants. Case No.: 2025FC19 NOTICE OF SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of the above court entered in the above entitled cause on June 22, 2026, the following described real estate will on the 23rd day of September, 2026, at 9:00 a.m., at the Union County Courthouse, 309 West Market Street, Jonesboro, IL 62952, be offered for sale and sold at public venue.

A. The name, address and telephone number of the person to contact for information regarding the real estate is between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Lawler Brown Law Firm, 1600 West Main Street, PO Box 1148, Marion, IL 62959, telephone (618) 993-2222.

B. The common address and other common description, if any, of the real estate is 460 NE Front Street, Dongola, IL 62926.

C. The description of the real estate is as follows:

Permanent Index Numbers: 06-24-04-732 and 06-24-04-728-B.

D. A description of the improvements on the real estate is commercial property.

E. The time and place of the sale are: Public sale at 9:00 a.m. on September 23, 2026, at the Courthouse in Jonesboro, Union County, Illinois.

F. The terms of the sale are: Cash or certified check or the

equivalent thereof at the time of sale. This property is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "as is" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court. Plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information.

G. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments or special taxes levied against said real estate.

H. The successful purchaser has the sole responsibility/expense of evicting any tenants or other individuals presently in possession of the subject premises.

Dated: August 10, 2026
LAWLER BROWN LAW FIRM

By: /s/ Zachary S. Walston
LAWLER BROWN LAW FIRM

Adam B. Lawler #6283341
David W. Lawler #6303793
Nick Brown #6302494
Zachary S. Walston #6331559
Evan W. Taylor #6305093
Jarrod Wiggs #6350317
1600 W. Main St/P.O. Box 1148
Marion, Illinois 62959
Telephone: (618) 993-2222
Facsimile: (618) 731-4141
Service Email: service@lbllf.com
8221-968131

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 1ST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT PULASKI COUNTY, MOUND CITY, ILLINOIS Mortgage Research Center, LLC d/b/a Veterans United Home Loans PLAINTIFF Vs. Jeremy Anderson; et. al. DEFENDANTS No. 2025FC3

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE
PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on 04/23/2026, the Sheriff of Pulaski County, Illinois will on September 29, 2026 at the hour of 10:30 AM at Pulaski County Courthouse 500 Illinois Avenue Mound City, IL 62963, or in a place otherwise designated at the time of sale, County of Pulaski and State of Illinois, sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash, as set forth below, the following described real estate: PIN 03-32-300-036

Improved with Single Family Home
COMMONLY KNOWN AS: 785 S Main St
Grand Chain, IL 62941

Sale terms: 10% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the auction; The balance, including the Judicial sale fee for Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund, which is calculated at the rate of \$1 for each \$1,000 or fraction thereof of the amount paid by the purchaser not to exceed \$300, in certified funds, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.

If the property is a condominium and the foreclosure takes place after 1/1/2007, purchasers other than the mortgagees will be required to pay any assessment and legal fees due under The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4).

If the property is located in a common interest community, purchasers other than mortgagees will be required to pay any assessment and legal fees due under the Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1).

If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney.

Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser shall receive a Certificate of Sale, which will entitle the purchaser to a Deed to the real estate after Confirmation of the sale. The successful purchaser has the sole responsibility/expense of evicting any tenants or other individuals presently in possession of the subject premises.

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

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

For information: Examine the court file or contact Plaintiff's attorney: Codilis & Associates, P.C., 15W030 North Frontage Road, Suite 100, Burr Ridge, IL 60527, (630) 794-9876. Please refer to file number 14-25-01388. 13292480 8221-968153

SUPPORT OUR

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Business

Please read this...

Zombie filler ... heat index of 178 degrees ... and other stuff

Let’s start with something that was posted last week on the internet (and, no, we are not making this up): “People are injecting fat from dead bodies. It’s called zombie filler.”

There is nothing else to say ...

Meanwhile ...

At the time this week’s gem was being crafted, the air temperature in our little corner of the world was a toasty 93 degrees Fahrenheit. Well ... that’s what the internet told me. (Of course, the internet also was where I saw the “zombie filler” thing.) The dewpoint was 75 degrees, also Fahrenheit. And the heat index, in Fahrenheit, was 105 degrees. That might have made it hot enough to cook an egg on a sidewalk. However, eggs cost too much to cook one on a sidewalk. And then there’s the whole mess to clean up.

A fellow traveler on The Journey Through Life shared a spot-on thought about the hot weather we were experiencing last week: “Staying cool is a challenge for sure! Good golly Miss Molly, ITS HOT!!!!” Yup. ALL CAPS. And four exclamation points. The message was accompanied by one of those emoji things. The emoji was melting. Reminded me of the scene near the end of “Raiders of the Lost Ark” where the Nazi bad guys have nasty, left a candy bar in the car on a hot summer day sorts of thing happen to them when they open the ark.

Anyway ... the wonderful heat and humidity and heat index values that we’ve been experiencing lately led me to start walking in the evening...or fairly early in the day. Last Friday morning, for example, after attending a local governing body’s meeting, I went for another walk at the Lincoln Memorial Picnic Grounds in Jonesboro. A couple of fellow travelers on The Journey Through Life were at the picnic grounds. One of those folks was actually doing some running. Nope.

Based on what the thermometer in my car informed me, the temperature at the time of my visit to the picnic grounds was 84 degrees. That also happened to the temperature about 12 hours earlier, when I went out in the dark last Thursday night to scan the sky for a



Did not expect to see this Critter at the pond at the Anna City Park one sunny and sweltering morning last week. I have seen Canada geese at the pond ... but not a great blue heron.

Was not gonna do that.

While on a nice and slow walk through the picnic grounds, I heard, but could not see, a chorus of crows cawing loudly on the other side of a tree line. The crows sounded like they might have been upset about something ... or, maybe, someone. At one point, an unseen hawk cried out. The crows went silent for a moment ... and then resumed their cacophony. Oh...I did see a young hawk in the park, just not close to the noisy crows. The hawk had landed briefly on the ground and then flew straight in my direction. I think I could actually hear the hawk soar by before landing high on a branch in a tree close by.

I also spotted a turtle as it unsuccessfully attempted to scale a muddy section of the bank along the pond at the picnic grounds. After a couple of tries, the turtle silently slipped back into the water and moved on. Too hot to work very hard.

Both candidates spoke to farmers each for nearly an hour and did not cross paths.

In a nearly 20-minute stump speech before taking moderated questions, Pritzker leaned heavily on his overall governing record, citing broad economic development achievements as evidence he is a good governor for farmers. He also tried to level with the audience about his agricultural knowledge.

“Know what you don’t know and be willing to ask for help from people who are smarter than you are,” Pritzker told the crowd. “And that’s why about six years ago, I hired Jerry Costello as the director of the Department of Agriculture.”

Both candidates agreed that Illinois needs to reform the estate tax. The issue has long been a top priority for the state’s farmers, who say taxes are strangling farming

meteor.

The Perseid meteor shower had peaked during the nighttime hours of August 12-13. It would have been somewhat challenging to spot meteors in the sky at that time, since Mother Nature scheduled some stormy weather during the night of August 12.

As the storm approached, lightning flashed frequently in the sky off to the west. Some pretty impressive bolts of lightning ripped through the sky in the general direction of the ground below. The flashes of bright light were accompanied by the rumbling of thunder.

With such conditions occurring, yours truly, once again, did the most sensible thing. He went outside to watch. And to try to take some pictures of lightning. The good thing was as the storm blew through, the temperature dropped to a chilly 72 degrees. The weather outside may have been frightful, but the cooler temperatures were delightful.

Last Thursday night, I did see one meteor. I had just stepped outside ... looked up ... and the meteor streaked across the sky, from north to south.

Numerous satellites also were moving through the

night sky ... some from north to south ... some from south to north ... some from west to east ... and one that was just going around in a circle (not really) ...

A few lightning bugs also tried to fool me by disguising themselves as meteors and flitted through the dark. I stayed out in the 84-degree nighttime heat and humidity for about half an hour and mostly got bitten my mosquitoes ...

Meanwhile ... Speaking of the temperature, I thought I would look up some fascinating weather factoids and share them with you ...

... The highest heat index ever recorded was on July 8, 2003, someplace in Saudi Arabia ... when the air temperature was 108 degrees, the dewpoint was 95 degrees ... and the heat index was 178 degrees. (Please revisit the “Good golly Miss Molly, ITS HOT!!!!” message shared earlier. At 178 degrees, you can even add a few more exclamation points. And maybe even come up with your very own emoji.)

In the for whatever it might be worth category, the temperature at the South Pole at about 4:55 a.m. on August 15 was 71 degrees BELOW ZERO. With a wind out of the northeast at about 30 miles per hour, the temperature felt like it was 120 degrees BELOW ZERO. Oh, well, it is winter at the South Pole.

Finally, just in case you might be interested ... temperatures at the Gale Crater on August 7 ranged from a high of 19 degrees Fahrenheit to a low of 98 degrees below zero. Gale Crater is located north of Lick Creek ... as on the Planet Mars ...

The weather factoids, like the zombie filler, were found online ... so they all must be true ...

Meanwhile ...

A visit to the upcoming Union County Fair in Anna might include another sighting of a bear or two. We shall see ...

Notes

From page 1

Looking ahead: A-J’s homecoming football game is scheduled Sept. 25 against Pinckneyville.

Anna School District 37 kitchens are featuring “scratch cooking” for the breakfast program. Homemade items on the menu include muffins, biscuits, granola and parfaits.

The Flying Pig and Alto Proud planned to sponsor a Back to School Bash school supply drive Friday afternoon, Aug. 14. The event to assist students of all ages was scheduled at the park in Alto Pass and included free hot dogs.

A hummingbird banding event was planned Saturday morning, Aug. 15, at the Cross of Peace on Bald Knob Mountain near Alto Pass.

Shawnee Hills Arts Council in Anna is making plans for its annual haunted

house in October. A meeting is set for 4 p.m. Sept. 16 at the arts council in Anna for those who may be interested in helping.

The fall semester was scheduled to start Monday, Aug. 17, at Shawnee Community College.

Ahead of the start of the new semester, Shawnee Community College faculty and staff members attended an annual fall convocation last week.

Shawnee Community College is saluting recent graduates who are now officially LPNs and those who have completed the college’s truck driving program.

Auditions are scheduled Friday and Saturday, Aug. 21-22, for Shawnee Community College’s fall musical production of “Frozen.”

Auditions forms can be filled out online at shawneecc.edu/musical.

Region bakes in longest heat wave of summer

A prolonged dangerous heat wave impacted the Southern Illinois, Southeast Missouri and Western Kentucky region last week. The heat wave, accompanied by extreme heat, humidity and heat index readings, continued into the weekend.

“In terms of duration, this looks to be our longest heat wave of this summer,” the National Weather Service office in Paducah shared on its website. A brief break in the extreme heat and humidity was possible early this week. The break may have been short-lived. The Weather Service said the heat may build back in the middle to late part of this week.

A heat advisory initially was in effect from Monday, Aug. 10, through 11 a.m. Thursday, Aug. 13, in the region. For the heat advisory, heat index values up to 107 degrees were possible.

An extreme heat warning then went into effect at 11 a.m. Thursday, Aug. 13, and continued through 8 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 16, for the region. For the extreme heat warning, dangerously hot conditions were in the forecast, with heat index values up to 115 degrees possible. The Weather Service

advised that a few locations in the region could have seen 100-degree air temperatures over the weekend.

Union County was included in both the heat advisory and the extreme heat warnings, which were issued by the Weather Service office in Paducah. At 3:49 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 13, the air temperature at the Southern Illinois Airport near Murphysboro was 95 degrees. The dewpoint was 75 and the heat index was 107.

The Weather Service was calling for extreme, rare and/or long-duration extreme heat with no overnight relief last week at some locations in the region, including Carbondale, Mount Vernon, Cape Girardeau and Paducah. Such conditions would affect anyone without cooling/hydration, as well as health systems, industries and infrastructure.

High temperatures in the Union County area for last Tuesday through Sunday were expected to be in the upper 90s. The forecast was calling for a high near 96 on Thursday, near 97 on Friday, near 99 on Saturday and near 99 on Sunday. Highs were expected to be near 91 on Monday, near 89 on Tuesday and near 94 on Wednesday.

Illinois political candidates address farmers about ag issues

**By Ben Szalinski
Capitol News Illinois**

Illinois farmers heard pitches from incumbent Gov. JB Pritzker and downstate Republican farmer Darren Bailey on Monday, Aug. 10, as each argued they’re best positioned to address agricultural issues.

Bailey, a former state lawmaker who was also his party’s nominee for governor in 2022, told the crowd at the candidate forum, hosted by the Illinois Agricultural Legislative Roundtable on a farm south of Bloomington, that he speaks their language and best understands the challenges they face.

Pritzker, the two-term Democratic governor with a business background who owns horse farms in Wisconsin and Florida, argued his governing record shows he’s been a better friend to farmers than Bailey’s party, which must answer for price hikes caused by President Donald Trump’s policies.

“We have everything that we need; we are just lacking leadership,” Bailey said, pledging to be a “spokesman” for farmers as governor.

But Bailey’s record doesn’t show he can deliver results for

farmers, Pritzker argued to reporters following the forum.

“Darren Bailey hasn’t done anything for farms,” Pritzker said. “He passed two bills when he was in the state legislature and they had nothing to do with farms. And he doesn’t have a proposal for anybody that makes sense.”

Both candidates spoke to farmers each for nearly an hour and did not cross paths.

In a nearly 20-minute stump speech before taking moderated questions, Pritzker leaned heavily on his overall governing record, citing broad economic development achievements as evidence he is a good governor for farmers. He also tried to level with the audience about his agricultural knowledge.

“Know what you don’t know and be willing to ask for help from people who are smarter than you are,” Pritzker told the crowd. “And that’s why about six years ago, I hired Jerry Costello as the director of the Department of Agriculture.”

Both candidates agreed that Illinois needs to reform the estate tax. The issue has long been a top priority for the state’s farmers, who say taxes are strangling farming

families and making it harder for new generations to continue the business. Right now, a deceased farmer’s family is required to pay taxes on the whole estate if it’s valued above \$4 million.

Bailey said the state’s tax rate should at least match the federal exemption of \$30 million for families. He got emotional describing how families struggle to keep farms alive when the primary owner passes away and surviving family members must pay taxes on the estate. He said the state’s current policies are driving farmers out of Illinois.

“Thinking back to my son, Zach – I have a son that was killed – he was in the process of moving to Florida or Texas potentially,” Bailey said. “They were looking into that because of the hardships that Illinois is bringing on business, on the farm, on the schools, on our families.”

Pritzker said he supports a bill with bipartisan support in the General Assembly called the Family Farm Preservation Act, which would exempt the first \$6 million of any estate meeting farm property qualifications from being taxed.

“It’s time for us to make

sure that farmers can hand their farms down through the generations as they have been for many generations up to now with less tax on that transfer,” Pritzker said.

Estate tax revenue increased by 44 percent in fiscal year 2026 and was a key driver of revenue growth for the year, according to the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability.

How to regulate data centers was also a hot topic at the forum, with many farmers concerned about rising utility prices, water usage and how much land the expansive facilities occupy.

Pritzker pledged to “hold their feet to the fire” and make sure data centers are supplying their own water and electricity.

“What we want, I think importantly, is for local governments...to make their own decisions about whether they want to have a data center located there,” he added.

Bailey said Pritzker has pushed “too fast” for a transition to clean energy and should’ve foreseen earlier how much power data centers were going to require. He also said the state should end its ban on new coal and natural

gas plants to help deal with the utility problem.

“Time is running out,” Bailey said. “This is part of what’s leading to businesses moving out of Illinois.”

As the candidates debated agricultural issues, Pritzker blamed many problems on Trump.

“Without a farm bill, without FEMA dollars or a cessation of international hostilities, a divided Washington is hanging our farm communities out to dry,” Pritzker said.

Bailey is a supporter of Trump and defended the president’s tariffs.

“I do believe that these tariffs that are imposed... (are) a short-term pain for a long-term gain, and I believe it’s the only tool that we have to be competitive again,” Bailey said.

Pritzker countered the state can help farmers dealing with the pain of rising costs.

“State government can’t do a lot about stopping a hot war in Iran or trade wars with the rest of the world,” Pritzker said. “What we can do is help our farmers with things like promoting new ag trade, fixing rural roads and bridges and river

ports, expanding agricultural education, attracting more food processors, investing in our rural communities and making it easier to do business in Illinois.”

Republican U.S. Senate nominee Don Tracy also participated in the forum. Lt. Gov. Juliana Stratton, the Democratic nominee, was a no-show. Her campaign confirmed she was participating in fundraisers and other events in Martha’s Vineyard.

“It does seem like a misplaced priority to go to a fundraiser instead of a meeting with the Illinois Farm Bureau,” Tracy said.

In a statement, Stratton’s campaign said she will meet with the organization next week and “has been a strong advocate for Illinois’s farms and farmers.”

Throughout the forum and in questions with reporters afterward, Tracy tried walking a line between acknowledging the price pain caused by Trump’s tariffs and war in Iran and defending the president’s decision-making.

He said farmers are a “pawn” in the trade war but didn’t say Trump should relax his trade policies.