

THE GAZETTE-DEMOCRAT

The Talk And Cobden Review • Serving Union County Since 1849

Thursday, January 16, 2025

Anna, Illinois

\$1.00

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News Notes

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



Ice...and icicles...covered a traffic signal in Anna last week.

Records kept by local weather observer Dana Cross showed that temperatures in 2024 in Union County ranged from a high of 97 degrees in August to a low of 1 degree below zero in January. Precipitation for the year totaled 47.49 inches, which included just 2.8 inches of snow.

A Winter Gala is planned for the evening of Feb. 8 at The Pavilion in Marion in support of the Cross of Peace on Bald Knob Mountain near Alto Pass.

A movie about Martin Luther King Jr. is scheduled to be shown at 10:30 a.m. Jan. 18 at Stinson Memorial Public Library in Anna.

A “Celebrate Anime” event is scheduled from 3:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. Jan. 28 at Stinson Memorial Public Library in Anna. Origami, a Ramen buffet, Japanese treats, a watch party and more are planned.

Stinson Memorial Public Library also is planning special activities for a “Take Your Child to the Library Day” event which slated from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Feb. 1.

A Cobden School District American Red Cross blood drive planned for this week has been rescheduled for March 5.

Cobden High School homecoming activities have been rescheduled for Feb. 3-8.

Homecoming activities were scheduled to begin Monday, Jan. 13, and continue through Friday, Jan. 17, at Dongola High School and Shawnee High School in Wolf Lake.

The Dongola School District was planning to honor its junior high softball, junior high baseball, high school cross country and high school volleyball teams Monday evening, Jan. 13.

Shawnee Community College’s spring semester started Monday, Jan. 13.

Winter storm brings heavy snow to area Friday

Union County experienced another round of winter weather during the past week.

A winter storm on Friday brought heavy snow to the Union County area. The storm was followed by very cold temperatures.

Early this week, the National Weather Service office in Paducah reported that another arctic blast would move through the region on Monday. Very cold weather occurred Monday night.

The weather service advised that temperatures were expected to warm up through Friday into the upper 40s and almost 50 degrees. Rain is expected through Friday afternoon and Saturday morning.

“Just for a little something different another cold front comes through Saturday which for now has highs in the 20s and lows in the low teens to single digits,” the weather service reported.

A high temperature of 26 degrees was in the forecast for this coming Sunday in the Union County area, followed by a low of 9 Sunday night and a high near 20 on Monday, Jan. 20.

Winter Storm Friday

Local weather observer Dana Cross recorded 4 inches of snow near Jonesboro after a winter storm swept through the region on Friday, Jan. 10.

Ahead of the snowfall, the weather service office in Paducah issued a winter storm warning for parts of the Southern Illinois, Southeast Missouri and Western Kentucky.

The winter storm warning was in effect from midnight Thursday, Jan. 9, through midnight Friday, Jan. 10.

Heavy snow was in the

forecast for the region. Total snow accumulations between 4 and 7 inches were possible.

“Plan on slippery road conditions,” the weather service advised, adding that downed tree limbs and additional power outages would be possible in areas that still had significant icing from the Jan. 5-6 winter storm which struck the region.

The Jan. 5-6 winter storm left behind heavy icing and 2 inches of snow.

Friday’s winter storm led to more cancellations and closing the area. Local schools were not in session, with some going to E-Learning.

Due to the inclement winter weather, the Union County Courthouse in Jonesboro was closed Friday, Jan. 10.

A regular meeting of the Union County Board of Commissioners which had been scheduled for Friday morning was not held. Board meetings are held at the courthouse.

Illinois State Police Troop 10 shared on social media that Friday’s weather could create dangerous conditions. “Please stay home unless it is an emergency,” the state police advised.

Union County Sheriff David Wilkins reported that multiple traffic accidents had occurred on Friday. No major injuries were reported.

The sheriff praised the work done by the Union County Highway Department in response to the storm. He said the department did “an awesome job.” The sheriff also praised the work done by local utility crews to restore power after many outages occurred as a result of the ice and snow.



Heavy snow falls Friday

Motorists traveling on old U.S. Route 51 in Cobden were challenged with driving through heavy snow which was falling Friday afternoon, Jan. 10. Union County was under a winter storm warning at the time.

'Fully restored!'

Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative chronicled work to restore electricity to thousands of customers after winter storm

"Fully restored!"

Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative, SIEC, shared that special message Saturday evening, Jan. 11, after a challenging week which was highlighted by two major winter storms.

Ice, snow and cold combined to create conditions which left more than 5,500 customers without winter.

SIEC chronicled its day-by-day response to the storms with frequent, ongoing updates on social media.

The cooperative posted the following message at 6 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 11:

“It has been a long week,

but we are proud to inform our members that ALL OUTAGES HAVE BEEN RESTORED! Now there is still significant ice on trees and line infrastructure, so there could be more outages moving forward.

“We cannot thank all of those who shared words of encouragement or offered help to our crews in the field. Your support has been overwhelming! A special thank you to all of our employees, contractors, and neighboring cooperative crews for all their hard work. It has been a true team effort!”

SIEC serves customers in Union, Alexander, Jackson,

Johnson, Massac, Pope, Pulaski and Williamson counties.

Here’s a look at some of the highlights of the impact of the winter weather and the hard work that went into restoring power as shared by the cooperative on social media:

January 5 at 5:51 p.m.

SIEC currently has 4 substations down due to transmission outages: Cobden, Jonesboro, Lick Creek, & Mill Creek

Once Southern Illinois Power Cooperative is able to restore power to these substations, our crews will be able to begin troubleshooting specific affected areas on our system.

(continued on page 2)



Thank you...

Words of gratitude, like those seen on a sign at the Wolf Lake Community Center, were shared by many people for the work done by the Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative in response to severe winter weather. Photo provided.



Cleaning up after winter ice storm

City of Anna workers were picking up and removing downed tree limbs and branches along North Main Street in Anna Wednesday morning, Jan. 8. The damage was caused by a winter ice storm which occurred Sunday, Jan. 5.



Shawnee National Forest welcomes new supervisor



New to post in Southern Illinois
Felipe Cano is the new supervisor of the Shawnee National Forest in Southern Illinois. Photo provided.

The U.S. Forest Service is welcoming Felipe Cano as the new supervisor of the Shawnee National Forest in Southern Illinois.

“I am both honored and excited to serve the people of Illinois, and the American public, as the Shawnee National Forest’s new supervisor,” Cano said in a news release. He is a 25-year U.S. Forest Service veteran.

“I grew up in the panhandle section of Idaho where I was surrounded by national forests,” Cano said.

“I was instilled with a wonder of the rivers, lakes, mountains and peoples of the area.

“That wonder carried over into my curiosity of how ecosystems work, and natural products connected with people in many locations around the world.

“The Forest Service became an exciting opportunity to learn and contribute to the agency’s distinctive mandate to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of national forests.”

Cano’s Forest Service career began in 1999 on the Ouachita National Forest in Arkansas and Oklahoma,

where he worked to improve red-cockaded woodpecker habitat through vegetation management.

He later worked in Puerto Rico on the El Yunque National Forest and in Arizona on the Tonto National Forest.

He served as a district ranger on the Idaho Panhandle National Forest in 2018, and just recently as the natural resources staff officer on the Plumas National Forest in California.

Cano is not new to the region, having recently served in a 120-day detail as a deputy forest supervisor on both the

The Alexander/Pulaski Counties NAACP plans to host its annual Martin Luther King Breakfast on Jan. 20 at Meridian High School, which is located at 1401 Mounds Rd. in Mounds. The event is scheduled to begin at 9 a.m.

A keynote address will be delivered by Father Joseph Brown, a professor of African American Studies at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

A musical performance by Evangelist Dollette Jones is planned.

Ouachita National Forest and Mark Twain National Forest in Missouri.

“This is a major goal for me to join you all as the forest supervisor on the Shawnee National Forest, returning to the Midwest, and I’m looking forward to learning about you and your experience here,” Cano said.

Cano added that being part of people’s lives has been a blessing and honor in his own journey. Cano said he’s learned that the wonderful moments people share with one another is what truly matters in overcoming challenges.

“The thought of helping steward the world class resources and landscapes on the Shawnee National Forest and working with community and tribal partners here is incredibly energizing,” Cano said.

“I am eager to join the Forest and the community in continuing the current great work that Shawnee staff have established.”

Cano’s selection on the Shawnee National Forest is a result of a decision to move away from a combined management model. Mike Chaveas will continue to serve as the supervisor of the Hoosier National Forest in Indiana.

Annual King breakfast set in Mounds

The event will also recognize four local businesses/individuals for their contributions to the community.

The breakfast serves as a fund-raiser for scholarships for graduating seniors from high schools in Alexander and Pulaski counties.

Tickets are available by calling Sarita Sawyer at 618-306-2324 or Janice Russell at 618-534-1576. Tickets are \$20 per person adult; \$10 for young people aged 12 and under.

Underground Railroad exhibit set at Shawnee Hills Arts Council



‘Journey To Freedom: Illinois’ Underground Railroad’

The PAST organization of Union County at the Shawnee Hills Arts Council are planning to present a showing of an exhibit titled “Journey to Freedom: Illinois’ Underground Railroad.”

The exhibit is scheduled from Jan. 18 through Feb. 23 at at the Shawnee Hills Arts Council at 123 W. Davie St. in Anna.

The “Journey to Freedom: Illinois’ Underground Rail-

road” exhibit consists of many picture/story panels that tell the known history of the Underground Railroad in Illinois.

The display has been created professionally by the Looking for Lincoln organization in Springfield and is booked in several cities for the next two years.

Organizers of the exhibit in Anna said that Union County is very fortunate to have the display on loan through the

annual Civil War Weekend, which is planned in February at the Shawnee Hills Arts Council in Anna.

Opening Event

An opening event for the exhibit is set for 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 17, at the Shawnee Hills Arts Council.

Looking for Lincoln speaker Heather Feezor is scheduled to give an overview of the exhibit. The event is open to the public. Refreshments will be served.

There is no written record of the Underground Railroad operating in Union County. However, those involved with the display at the arts council said the likelihood is very probable that the Underground Railroad did operate in Union County, given the county’s location just north of Cairo.

Days and hours scheduled for viewing the exhibit include Saturdays and Sundays, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., and Thursdays and Fridays, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

School groups are encouraged to visit. For more information, contact Linda at 618-697-1870 or Lee Hackney at 904-625-1109.

Cardinals Caravan schedules visits in region

The St. Louis Cardinals have announced the schedule for the 2025 Cardinals Caravan, presented by Missouri Farm Bureau Insurance.

The Cardinals Caravan is scheduled to visit 20 different cities in Illinois, Missouri, Tennessee, Arkansas, Kentucky and Indiana over the course of just four days.

A combination of more than 40 current Cardinals players, prospects, alumni and team broadcasters will embark on one of six different caravans through Cardinal Nation scheduled Jan. 17-20.

The Caravan’s schedule includes stops in Marion, Paducah and Cape Girardeau:

Sunday, Jan. 19, Marion, The Pavilion, noon.

Monday, Jan. 20, Paducah, McCracken Convention Center, noon.

Monday, Jan. 20, Cape Girardeau, Osage Community Center, 5:30 p.m.

Matt Pauley is scheduled to be the emcee for the three visits.

Current players who are slated to participate include Thomas Saggese, Chris Roycroft, Kyle Leahy and Sem Robbese.

Alumni participants are slated to include Kerry Robinson

and Al Hrabosky.

The Caravan gives fans outside of St. Louis a chance to meet and connect with Cardinals players. Nineteen players with Major League experience, along with top prospects, are scheduled to participate.

As in previous years, the club will implement an autograph ticket system at each stop.

The first 400 kids, ages 15 and under, through the door on the day of the event will receive a free autograph ticket which guarantees one autograph from each current and former player.

City of Anna ANNUAL TREASURER’S REPORT FOR PERIOD ENDING 04/24				
DATE 01/07/25				
REVENUE SUMMARY: COLLECTION OF INSUFFICIENT CHECKS \$1,130.81 - INSUFFICIENT CHECK PROCESSING FEE \$340.00 - PROPERTY TAX \$327,640.24 - STATE SALES TAX \$1,985,869.73 - VIDEO GAMING TAX \$170,841.60 - STATE INCOME TAX \$704,464.38 - TELECOMMUNICATIONS TAX \$44,757.92 - LEASES/RENTS \$507.47CR - LICENSES \$57,395.00 - PERMITS \$6,833.67 - FRANCHISE FEES \$28,972.63 - FINES \$50,104.00 - SALE OF MATERIALS \$1,326.04 - CONTRIBUTIONS-4TH OF JULY \$6,455.00 - GRANT INCOME \$141,191.00 - INTEREST EARNED-CHECKING \$354,975.17 - INTEREST EARNED-INVESTMENTS \$102,526.31 - OTHER INCOME \$259,544.80 - FIRE PENSION TAX \$105,499.86 - FIRE FEES \$14,150.00 - UTILITY SALES \$5,219,354.53 - UTILITY BILL LATE FEES-GARBAGE \$62,342.53 - PARK/POOL REIMBURSEMENT FEES \$150.00 - GRAVE OPENINGS \$16,775.00 - SALE OF CEMETERY LOTS \$4,550.00 - POLICE PENSION TAX \$208,288.18 - STATE REPLACEMENT TAX \$64,826.15 - ADMISSIONS/PASSES \$9,189.00 - PARTIES \$4,275.00 - CONNECTION FEES \$17,480.00 - UTILITY SERVICE TAP FEES \$9,500.00				
COMPENSATION SUMMARY: UNDER \$25,000.00 MILLER, CORY - SULLENS, MICHAEL - HUGHEY, JOHN - LAFOON, FRANK - LLOYD, JOHN - STEARNS, QUENTIN - MILLER, BRYAN - CLARK, CHRISTOPHER A. - CRAIG, BRANDON - KOSTAL, JUSTICES - JACKSON, PHILIP ELIAS - BUSBY, SETH L. -MOWELL, GRACE E. - TESKE, DRUE MARIE - FORD, ZACHARIAH - WRIGHT, HAILEY - CARTER, LAKELYN - DOVER, DANIEL R - BORDERS, CALLYSTA V.L. - RICHARDSON, DANIEL - KLEIN, JARED - MILLER, BRYAN - GOINES, GARRETT I. - CLARK, ADAM CHRISTOPHER -WILKINS, TESS - CHOTNER, NILE - CLARK, MEGAN -JAVED R. KISAT - WRIGHT, ALESHIA - VAUGHN, BRAD - CALDWELL, THOMAS - VOSBURGH, KYLE - GIRTMAN, COLYN -BREWER, GWENDOLYN - PENGRESS, CARSON - JONES, KOLTON J. - DAMMERMAN, MICHEL D. - HESS, SAM - ALDRIDGE, MELANIE - BIGLER, MICHAEL -BRYAN, KATHY - CARTER, TORIE -WEBB, MARTHA ANN - LOVELESS, KEVIN - ROBERTS, JESSICA- PERRY, ETHAN - WILSON, HUNTER - HARRIS, GARY - HARTLINE, STEVE - FAULKNER, JAMIE L. - OXFORD, NASH - PECORD, ELIJAH - MANDY D. BROWN - QUICK, GENTRY - HAND, CODY - WEBB, ANGELA M. - KRISTOFF, BRAXTON H. - MYERS, HUNTER R. - WAGNER, SCOTT - SMITH, TIMOTHY R. - Between \$25,000.00 and \$49,999.99 BIBLE, JODI K.- MCREYNOLDS, MELANIE - DOUGLAS MEADOWS- WILLIAMS, TREVOR - COLLINS, CODY- DODD, DANYELLE - SIMS, BRENTLEY - BUSBY, ASA K. -LINTON, JACOB - FRANK, DAVID - BASS, AIDEN - LOVELLJR., JERRY R. - PENDER, AUSTIN - CHAMNESS, JORDAN - Between \$50,000.00 and \$74,999.99 ROACH, MICHAEL - SANDERS, JACOB - BRIMM, JACOB - CLOVER, CALEB - BROWN, DARREN K. - TRIPP, ADAM - STONE, SHAWN - LEWIS, LONNIE - SADLER, TINA S. - WHITESIDE, DANIEL - LEEK, JASON - SHARP, BILLY - DAHMER, GARY - Between \$75,000.00 and \$99,999.99 WATKINS, BRYANS. - BIGLER, DORI - TOTAL COMPENSATION: \$1,859,866.24.				
EXPENDITURE SUMMARY: A & G AUTOMOTIVE, INC \$4,969.97 - APGA SECURITY AND INTEGRI \$1,512.11 - A-J WATER COMMISSION, INC \$1,036,317.17 - ALL BLOWN UP INFLATABLE R \$4,972.90 - AMEREN ILLINOIS \$2,992.04-ALL YEAR SPORTS GALAXY, L \$10,734.00-ANNA TIRE & AUTO CENTER, \$28,076.73 - ANNA EVERGREEN \$815.00 - ANNA-JONESBORO NATIONAL B \$461,310.96 - ANNA-JONESBORO NATIONAL B \$817,560.07-ANNA QUARRIES, INC. \$1,983.11- APPLIED CONCEPTS \$2,117.50 - ASH CREDIT UNION, NPO \$97,555.00 - ASL METAL FABRICATORS INC \$46,331.50 - AUTO TIRE AND PARTS, INC. \$6,164.69 - B & D SIGNS, SP \$4,182.00 - BANNER FIRE EQUIPMENT, IN \$25,930.79 - BASS FARMS \$1,100.00 - BEUSSINK & HICKAM, P.C. \$30,000.00 - BLUE CROSS/BLUE SHIELD OF \$443,976.96 - BOBCAT OF MARION \$2,014.07 - CURTIS CALDWELL \$2,286.00 - BOOTHEEL FENCE CO \$27,514.73 - BRAD'S COLLISION WORKS, L \$3,059.29 - CADY BUSINESS TECHNOLOGIE \$2,350.20 - CDS OFFICE TECHNOLOGIES, \$1,500.00 - CARGILL INCORPORATED \$8,494.48 - COAST TO COAST SOLUTIONS \$1,039.30 - CAPE ELECTRICAL SUPPLY, \$925.05 - CAPITAL ONE \$61,668.88 - CARTERVILLE WINLECTRIC CO \$2,416.55 - CINTAS CORP \$2,765.92 - CITY OF ANNA \$50,630.43 - CITY OF ANNA \$915,893.07 - CITY OF ANNA EMP RETIREMENT \$129,999.96 - CITY OF CARBONDALE \$15,001.92 - CITY OF JONESBORO \$2,858.25 - CLEARWAVE \$12,959.17 - KAREN CLARK \$2,650.00- COAD CHEV,OLDS,CAD, INC. \$6,318.01 - COAD CHEVROLET FORD, INC. \$3,197.02 - CUMMINS CROSSPOINT \$11,498.34 - DAWSON, BRAD \$1,000.23 -DISPLAY SALES, INC. \$4,265.00 - DITCH WITCH \$1,245.45 - OS CUSTOM BUILDERS, LLC \$36,150.00 - E.T SIMONDS CONSTRUCTION \$311,901.89 - E.T. SIMONDS MATERIAL COM \$2,323.90 -ELECTRIC CONTROLS COMPANY \$725.00 - ENVIRONMENTAL WORKS \$2,100.00 - ETHAN TAYLOR STEPHENSON \$650.00 - F. W. ELECTRIC, INC. \$53,179.00 - FASTENAL INDUSTRIAL & CON \$703.26 - FIRE DEPARTMENT, CITY OF \$97,628.67 - TOWER LOAN \$1,239.28 - BCBS ANCILLARY BILLING DE \$1,606.55 - FRONTIER \$4,143.00 - FRONTIER COMMUNICATIONS \$1,337.14- GAZETTE DEMOCRAT \$1,344.95 - GILBERT, HUFFMAN, PROSSER \$9,815.94 - GOVDEALS, INC. \$35,867.99 - H&R AGRI-POWER \$16,431.49 - HAWKINS, INC. \$14,781.96 - HEATH CONSULTANTS INC \$978.44- ILLINOIS POWER MARKETING \$260,732.57 - HORNER & SHIFRIN, INC \$138,152.83 - IDES \$186,280.21 - ILLINOIS COUNTIES RISK MA \$183,514.66 - ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF RE \$88,890.51 -ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF RE \$52,008.26 - ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TR \$1,165.36 - IL-				
LINOIS EPA \$10,000.00 - ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL PR \$64,744.24- ILLINOIS FRATERNAL ORDER \$4,731.00 - ILLINOIS MUNICIPAL RETIRE \$224,783.71- IMCO UTILITY SUPPLY COMPA \$2,947.08 -J T BLANKINSHIP, INC. \$27,188.70 JIM CARTER TIRE COMPANY S \$10,076.87 - JULIE, INC. \$711.18 - JW AUTO SALES LLC \$63,000.00 - KEN HALL ELECTRIC INC. \$932.54 - KEY EQUIPMENT & SUPPLY CO \$14,381.17 - KIEFER AQUATICS \$1,160.27 - KOONS GAS MEASUREMENT \$11,782.84 -KROGER STORE \$3,195.75 - L D SUPPLY, P \$1,091.40 - LABOR LOCAL 773 \$8,046.50 - LED OUTFITTERS \$648.93 - LITTLE CHINA \$7,999.77 -LOCIS, INC. \$11,295.29 - MAIER'S TIDY BOWL, INC \$6,057.40 - MARTIN'S SHARP ALL SHOP, \$900.67 - MEA ENERGY ASSOCIATION \$1,050.00 - MIDWEST METER, INC. \$13,206.78 - MIDWEST PETROLEUM & EXCAV \$35,675.00 - MILLER'S WELDING, SP \$15,275.00 - MOORE, BRIEN \$600.00 - MORAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMEN \$3,182.50 - MOSCA DESIGN \$1,659.00 - MUNICIPAL EQUIPMENT COMPA \$22,501.81- MCCARVER'S REPAIR SERVICE \$799.98 - NALEE RAE'S \$3,525.20 - NEWTERRA CORPORATION, INC \$14,863.50 - NOVACOM INC \$11,803.12 - O'REILLY AUTOMOTIVE INC. \$975.67- OVIVO USA, LLC \$42,534.00 - P.F PETTIBONE & CO \$628.30 - PACE ANALYTICAL \$1,804.20 - PENNINGER ASPHALT PAVING, \$17,363.00 -PIEDMONT PEST CONTROL \$1,800.00 - PLAYPOWER LT FARMINGTON, \$932,000.00 - PLOTT CONSTRUCTION \$50,361.80 - POLICE DEPARTMENT, CITY O \$192,748.09 - POSTAL PAL, INC. \$1,180.32 - QUADIENT \$30,421.19 - QSI \$6,162.01 - RAY O'HERRON COMPANY, INC \$7,763.45 - READY-MIX SOLUTIONS LLC \$3,626.75 - REPPERT'S OFFICE SUPPLIES \$6,607.95 - REPUBLIC SERVICES \$374,106.01 - RISE PERFORMANCE -ANNA \$2,000.00 - RON REEDER APPRAISAL SERV \$1,500.00 - ROYAL PAPERS, INC. \$869.00 - RURAL KING, INC. \$2,880.41 - RUSTY'S HOME CENTER, INC. \$16,364.07 - SWEITZER, GARY \$7,060.00 - MIKE FRICK \$7,800.00 - S & W LINE CONTRACTING \$3,250.00 - SCHULTE SUPPLY, INC. \$1,602.17 -SCOTT ESCUE CONSTRUCTION L \$4,000.00 - SECURITY 1 \$958.00 - SELIER GEOSPATIAL \$2,980.00 - SENTRY EQUIPMENT CORP \$719.43 - SENTINEL EMERGENCY SOLUTI \$1,145.50 - SHAWNEE ADMINISTRATIVE SE \$102,853.86 - SHAWNEE DEVELOPMENT COUNC \$690.86 - SHAWNEE PROFESSIONAL SERV \$3,750.00 - SHOP WITH A COP \$3,000.00 - SI BUILDER SUPPLY LLC \$3,053.39 - SIH WORKCARE/SIHMG \$3,745.00 - SIMS, BRENT \$1,750.00 - SOUTHERN F S, INC. \$76,948.22 - SOUTHERN BANK C/O GOV DEA \$1,050,020.00 -SOUTHERN ILLINOIS COMM FO \$1,000.00 - SOUTHERN FIVE REGIONAL PL \$3,250.00 - SOUTHERN ILLINOIS CRIMINA \$800.00 - SOUTHERN ILLINOISELECTRI \$7,401.15 - SPECTRUM GRAPHICS \$7,690.00 - STEVE HESS PORTABLE TOLIE \$3,416.00 - STINSON MEMORIAL LIBRARY \$8,539.79 - SULLIVAN PLUMBING \$3,818.76 - SYDENSTRICKER NOBBE PARTN \$881.83 - SYMMETRY ENERGY SOLUTIONS \$914,130.02 - SURE SHOT BILLIARDS, LLC \$1,500.00 - TABOR WHOLESALE NURSERY \$1,700.00 - T & I OFFICE EQUIPMENT, I \$2,418.05 - AXON ENTERPRISE, INC \$805.00 - THOMAS SECURITY \$2,896.00 - THE SHIRT SHOP \$5,253.43 - TRANS UNION RISK & ALTERN \$975.00- UNION COUNTY ABSTRACT, IN \$122,474.51- UNION COUNTY CLERK \$4,515.00 - UNION COUNTY DARE, NPO \$2,431.63 - PAY IT FORWARD - UNION CO \$1,000.00 - UNION COUNTY TREASURER \$/121,278.48 - USA BLUEBOOK, P \$2,919.79 - - UTILITY SAFETY & DESIGN, \$456,505.51- UTILITY PIPE SALES \$4,664.94 - VERIZON WIRELESS \$11,032.46 - VAN SALES BY WOODFIN, LLC \$69,900.00 - WAGNER, SCOTT \$10,200.00 - WALLER ELECTRIC LLC \$9,206.18 - WAL MART COMMUNITY BRC \$4,896.86 - - WEBB'S EQUIPMENT SERVICE \$9,296.45 - WIGGS EXCAVATING, INC \$243,933.21 - All other Disbursements Less Than (600) \$24,243.61 -				
CITY OF ANNA, ILLINOIS SUMMARY STATEMENT OF CONDITION YEAR ENDED APRIL 30, 2024				
	GENERAL FUND	SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS	ENTERPRISE FUNDS	FIDUCIARY FUNDS
RECEIPTS/REVENUES:				
Local Taxes	253,323	73,302	0	313,788
State Intergovernmental	3,111,400	202,229	0	0
Federal Intergovernmental	0	0	0	0
Other local	1,244,904	26,769	5,611,805	545,782
TOTAL RECEIPTS/REVENUES	4,609,627	302,300	5,611,805	859,570
EXPENDITURES/EXPENSE:				
TOTAL EXPENDITURES/EXPENSE	3,585,980	387,392	4,394,384	577,004
EXCESS OF RECEIPTS/REVENUE OVER				
EXPENDITURES/EXPENSES	1,023,647	(85,092)	1,217,421	282,566
OPERATING TRANSFERS	0	0	0	0
INCREASE IN FUND BALANCE/RETAINED EARNINGS	1,023,647	(85,092)	1,217,421	282,566
BEGINNING FUND BALANCE/RETAINED EARNINGS	11,035,411	797,164	10,590,354	4,467,611
ENDING FUND BALANCE/RETAINED EARNINGS	12,059 058	712,072	11,807 775	4750177



Trees along West Vienna Street in Anna that were coated in ice glistened in the sunshine on Wednesday morning, Jan. 8. A utility pole near the street could be seen leaning precariously.

Winter storms bring ice, snow to Union County

Union County experienced two rounds of winter storms in early January. A winter storm on Sunday and Monday, Jan. 5-6, brought ice, snow, power outages and widespread damage to the county. Heavy snow fell Friday, Jan. 10. The county also experienced bitterly cold temperatures. The accompanying photographs were taken in Union County during and after the storms.



Crews worked into the dark to restore power along South Walker Street in Cobden Tuesday night, Jan. 7.



Fallen tree limbs coated in ice were on the ground Tuesday, Jan. 7, near the Henry Dillow Grandstand and the Anna Kiwanis Club building at the Anna City Park.



Ice covered utility lines and the landscape along old U.S. Route 51 in Cobden on Wednesday afternoon, Jan. 8.



Traffic passed by ice-covered tree limbs which had fallen along South Main Street in Anna on Thursday afternoon, Jan. 9.



Trees along North Main Street in Anna still were covered in a layer of ice on Wednesday morning, Jan. 8.



Snow and ice had been removed from a parking lot at the Union County Courthouse in Jonesboro by Thursday afternoon, Jan. 9.



Heavy snow was falling on school buses parked in Cobden Friday afternoon, Jan. 10. January's winter storms had a major impact on schools.



Ice which covered trees was melting in the sunshine and noisily falling along Skyline Drive near Alto Pass Sunday afternoon, Jan. 12.



Kids enjoyed the snow Friday afternoon, Jan. 10, in Cobden. Snow was falling at the time the photograph was taken.



A truck made its way through a railroad crossing in Cobden while heavy snow was falling Friday, Jan. 10.



Utility lines and poles damaged in the ice storm were the focus of attention on Wednesday, Jan. 8.



Ice and snow covered the landscape along East Davie Street in Anna Monday morning, Jan. 6.



Icicles were seen on a veterans monument near the four-way stop in downtown Anna Wednesday, Jan. 8.

Obituaries

Janseen Ray Hand

“Love is the most important thing in the world, but baseball is pretty good, too.”
– Yogi Berra

Janseen Hand, age 54, dedicated husband and father, born on June 26, 1970, in Carbondale, passed away on December 31, 2024, in Burghausen, Germany, due to complications from a heart attack and infection. He was surrounded by several family members.

Janseen’s priorities in life were his sons Nolan and Reese, and his wife Kelly, their well-being always came first.

He had an enormous heart, a wonderful sense of humor and was a kind soul who never met a stranger. He was a man of Christian faith who was generous, loyal, brave and always full of laughter and jokes.

Growing up he was an avid baseball player and lived for summer Khoury League. He had an undeniable natural talent as a pitcher and third baseman and was fearless at the plate. He played at Cobden High School all four years. He went on to play for John A. Logan Community College in Carterville and Belmont College in Nebraska before signing with the National League’s Pittsburgh Pirates in 1992.

His love of baseball continued through summer coaching of his son’s teams. He had natural rapport with the boys that he helped coach and treated them with respect and always looked to encourage and build them up, which in turn caused them to respect him immensely still to this day.

He leaves a huge hole in the hearts of his family and friends who were always entertained by his stories and hilarious sense of humor. He was a true inspiration of courage and strength. He was determined to win and was the guy you wanted on your team – and there are many teams out there who will feel his absence.

Janseen is survived by his wife, Kelly Hand; two sons, Nolan Hand and Reese Hand; his parents, Henry Hand and Edna Mae (Johnson) of Cobden;

Christina E. Nickles

Christina E. Nickles, 89, of Anna, died Wednesday, Jan. 8, 2025, at Mercy Southeast Hospital in Cape Girardeau.

She was born on Jan. 15, 1935, in Jonesboro, the daughter of Christ and Estella Goodman Nickles.

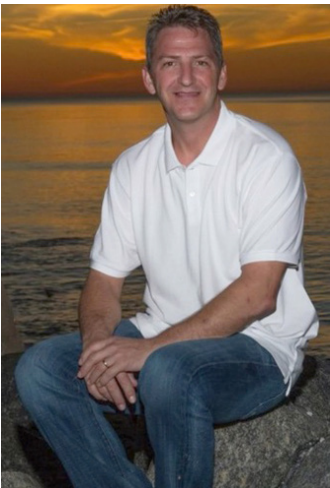
She is survived by her son-in-law, Douglas Meadows; grandchildren Doug Meadows II and Mary Katherine (Terry) Meadows-Oatman; great-grandchildren Alex Meadows, Eldin Myers, Connor Meadows and Olivia Meadows; nieces, nephews and other relatives.

She was preceded in death by her parents; daughter Melody Meadows; and siblings Glenn, Lynn, Willie, Ray, Ellis, Billy and Mary.

She worked at the Florshheim Shoe Factory in Anna until it closed. Afterwards, she worked for the Union County Sheriff’s Department and Shawnee Development Council.

She enjoyed watching hummingbirds, but her greatest love was her family, especially her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

View Obituaries
Online at
annanews.com



brothers Henry (Dawn) Hand of Anna, Tony (Robbie) Hand of Skiatook, Okla., John Hand of Cobden and Eric Hand of Jacksonville, Ill.; sister Stephanie (Geoff) Ritter of Murphysboro; brother-in-law Corey South of Marion; aunt Mildred (Mike) Dewitt of Ullin; great-aunt Jean Goolsby of Cobden; uncle George (Linda) Hand of Buckhannon, W. Va.; aunt Jean Marie (Mike) Thorton of Zeigler; aunt Lucille (Butch) Carpenter of Paragould, Ark.; aunt Debbie (Wade) McArthur of Collinsville; aunt Betty Johnson; and great-aunt Erna Shelton of Jonesboro.

He was “Uncle Jake” to many nieces and nephews who surely all have a story to tell of his shenanigans.

We have thrown many prayers to you Jake, may you catch every one of them and know that you are loved by many. Rest in Peace.

Funeral services will be at 12 noon Saturday, January 18, 2025, at the Cobden High School Gymnasium, with Bradley Dexter officiating.

Visitation will be from 10 a.m. and until the service at 12 noon at the Cobden High School Gymnasium.

Interment will be in the Cobden Cemetery. In lieu of flowers memorial contributions are preferred to his sons, Nolan and Reese Hand. Envelopes will be available at the school on the day of the service and at Rendleman & Hileman Funeral Home.

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

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



cially her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Private funeral services for Christina Nickles will be held at Rendleman & Hileman Funeral Home in Jonesboro, with Father Uriel Salamanca officiating. Interment will take place at the Jonesboro Cemetery.

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

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

Beverly Jane Pecord

Beverly Jane Pecord, lovingly known as Bunny, went home to be with her Lord and Savior at 1:15 p.m. on Jan. 10, 2025, at the age of 96, surrounded by her family.

She was born on Jan. 29, 1928, in Louisville, Ky., the daughter of Walter and Gladys Miller-Becker.

She married Orval “Gene” Pecord on June 6, 1946, in Paducah, Ky. Theirs was a love story for the ages. They shared many happy years together before he preceded her in death on Nov. 17, 2004.

She attended Lake Milligan Baptist Church in Miller City for much of her life, and in later years she attended Alexander Freewill Baptist Church in Olive Branch.

Bunny held many positions, including postmaster of the Cache, Ill., post office and running multiple goose hunting clubs with her husband Gene.

She was also a choir director at Lake Milligan and taught several generations in Sunday School and Bible School.

In her later life, she worked with her family at The Briar Patch consignment store. However, her most beloved role was raising her children and being Granny to her grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

She is survived by her children, Clinton (Susan) Pecord of Mounds, Ill., Becky (Stan) Cantrell of Advance, Mo., Billy (Deana) Pecord of Olive Branch, Ill., and Amy (Bill) McClarney of Olive Branch, Ill.; sister Patsy Mason of Anna, Ill.; grandchildren Jeffery (Melanie) Pecord, Lisa (Jason) Mueller, Lorna (Aaron) Freed, Natalie Cash, Lauren (Tim) Butler, Lucas (Addie) Pecord, Hannah McClarney, Angie Poe and Steven Cantrell; 16 great-grandchildren; 11 great-great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.



Cheryl April Anne Wright

Cheryl April Anne Wright, 76, died Tuesday, Jan. 7, 2025 at Deaconess Hospital in Evansville, Ind.

She was born on June 16, 1948, in Meridian, Texas.

She married Kenneth Carlson on Dec. 3, 2002. He preceded her in death Nov. 5, 2022.

She had a bright smile and cheerful personality. She worked for many years at the Trueblood dining hall on Southern Illinois University Carbondale campus.

She enjoyed traveling, especially to the beach, and making stained glass with Kenneth at their home studio.

She is survived by her daughter, April Hill, and brother, David Dewitt. She was preceded in death by her parents; husband Kenneth



News from

Camp Ground Church, Community

It seems like it has been a long time since the last column. Like just about every other church in the region, Camp Ground Church did not have services Jan. 5. Also, like many homes in the area, the church was without electricity for about four days.

In spite of the hardships of ice, snow and power outages, the hearts of those in the Camp Ground Church community are heavy and prayers are constant for those with worse winter weather than what has been experienced here or those who enduring the ravages of the west coast wildfires.

Those in the church family were glad to be back together on Sunday.

Bro. Easton’s sermon was titled “Freedom to Love,” with his main scripture Galatians 5:1-6.

The message asked: “What do we think of when we hear



She was preceded in death by her husband, her parents, brother Walter Becker, two nephews and a great-great-grandson.

A special thanks to her incredible caregivers who helped her stay in her home for the last few years: Lisa Rodgers, Maria Van Meter, Becki Satterlee and Terri Oliver. Also, a heart-felt thank you to the amazing staff at Providence Hospice at the Lutheran Home for the care they provided her in her final days. As our Granny would say, angels around you.

Visitation will be Friday, Jan. 17, from 4 p.m. until 7 p.m., and Saturday, Jan. 18, from 10 a.m. until the time of service at 11 a.m., with the Rev. Sam Ramdial officiating, all at Crain Funeral Home in Tamms.

Interment will follow the funeral service at Beechwood Cemetery in Mounds, Ill.

Memorials can be made to St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital and/or the Wounded Warrior Project and/or Providence Home Health & Hospice, 2825 Bloomfield Rd., Cape Girardeau, Mo. 63703. Memorial envelopes will be available at the funeral home.

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

Crain Funeral Home in Tamms in charge of arrangements.



Carlson; and brother Ernest Dewitt. She will be dearly missed.

There will be no services at this time.

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

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

Scenes in the snow...



A heavy fur coat made winter weather a little more bearable for a dog watching the snow fall Friday afternoon, Jan. 10, in Cobden.



A toy bulldozer appeared to be taking on the challenge of tackling snow which had fallen Friday, Jan. 10, in Cobden.

News from

First Baptist Church, Jonesboro

On Sunday, Jan. 12, Pastor Perry Williams spoke in the morning service.

His message addressed worshipping and giving to the Lord with the right attitude. He also shared a reminder that “if we repent, He will not remember our sins anymore.” Scripture was from Isaiah and Malachi.

The service was sent by transmitter station 87.9 for those who wanted to listen on the radio. The service was also live streamed on Facebook. The church’s Facebook page, Jonesboro FBC, has videos and the latest information about church events.

Music director Dee Rose led worship. Debbie York was the pianist. John Turner sang the song “Hymn of Heaven.” He accompanied himself on the guitar.

Men’s and women’s Bible studies were scheduled at 6 p.m. Monday, Jan. 13.

The LLL senior adult group planned to have a monthly meeting and potluck meal Tuesday morning, Jan. 14.

Birthdays: Jerry Hunter, Aaron Sheffer, Jan. 7; Michael DeLashmutt, Jan. 8; Amy Sheffer, Jan. 10; Denna Williams, Jan. 11; Robert McCain, Jan. 12; Marcita Martin, Jan. 18; Kim Anderson, Jan. 20.

The 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. and Sunday evening worship at 6 p.m.

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

The Dig-In program for children meets at 6 p.m. on Wednesdays.

An adult prayer meeting and Bible study are scheduled on Wednesdays at 6 p.m.

Food service sanitation courses set at Shawnee

Shawnee Community College is planning to offer four food service sanitation courses during the spring semester.

The schedule for the courses follows:

Monday and Tuesday, Feb. 10-11, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., Union County Extension Center, Anna.

Saturday, March 22, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Alexander County Extension Center, Cairo.

Saturday, April 5, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Johnson County Extension Center, Vienna.

Saturday, May 17, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Johnson County Extension Center, Vienna.

Registration is available by calling 618-634-3200.

News from

Anna Nazarene Church

A morning worship service was held Sunday, Jan. 12. Announcements were given by Jessica Elkins. Music was led by Pastor Randy Wright and the worship team. Special music was presented by Jonathon Cauble. A message titled “What Does It Take to be a Better Christian?” was brought by Pastor Randy Wright. Scripture was from Matthew, Ephesians, John, Colossians, 1 Corinthians, Mark, 1 Peter, 1 Thessalonians and Philippians. There was no Sunday evening service.

Birthday: Kaylee Smith, Dec. 12.
Sunday, Jan. 19
Breakfast, 9 a.m. Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. Morning service, 10:35 a.m. Evening worship service, 6 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan. 22
A Wednesday night service is planned at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. A youth group meeting is planned at 6:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall. The church can be contacted by calling the church office at 833-6702 and leaving a message if necessary or by calling Pastor Wright at 618-534-7103.

News from

Anna First Baptist Church

Anna First Baptist Church met for worship on Sunday, Jan. 12. Pastor Lupe greeted everyone in the sanctuary and on the church’s live stream of the service. Announcements were shared. Prayers were said over the prayer list. The call to worship was on joy and triumph. The worship team led in the singing of “Count Your Blessings,” “Above All” and “Oceans.” Pastor Lupe’s sermon

was the beginning of a study about the Book of Revelation in the New Testament. He shared that the Book of Revelation, written by the Apostle John, “is a profound and symbolic work that reveals God’s ultimate plan for humanity and the culmination of history. “Addressed to seven churches in Asia Minor, it provides both encouragement and warning to believers facing persecution. “Central to the message is

the triumph of Jesus Christ over evil, ensuring hope and victory for the faithful. Its vivid imagery and prophetic visions underscore the sovereignty of God and the promise of a new heaven and earth for His people.” After the service, a church potluck meal was shared. The meal featured soups, sandwiches and desserts. Sunday School for all ages meets at 9 a.m. each Sunday morning. The church’s worship service for adults and children’s church start at 10:15 a.m. on Sunday.

The church has a prayer time at 6 p.m. on Wednesday. The church has a youth program which meets at 6 p.m. on Wednesday. The church has a bus which runs for all of its programs and services. Information is available by calling the church’s office during the day. First Baptist Church is located at 409 Morgan St. in Anna. The church’s phone number is 833-5416. The church’s website is www.annafirst.org. The church’s YouTube address is Anna First Live Stream.

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



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Weekly Scripture Reading

Matthew 9.18-38	Matthew 10.1-15	Matthew 10.16-31	Matthew 10.32-42	Matthew 11.1-19	Matthew 11.20-30	Matthew 16.13-28
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Scriptures Selected by the American Bible Society

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Breakfast and Sunday School at 9:45 a.m.
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Midweek service Wednesday at 7 p.m.

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You're Invited! CrossPointe Church

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Sunday
Worship Service
10:30am

Wednesday
Bible Study
7pm

To support your community Church Page, contact Meta for more details at 1-800-293-4709.

The Gazette-Democrat

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HELP WANTED

HELP WANTED: Shawnee Community College is looking for full and part-time Custodian for their Ullin Campus and The Massac County Extension Center. For more information, please Call 618-634-3200 Ext. 3436 6-17gp

PUBLIC NOTICE

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

ESTATE OF BARBARA ANN PORTERFIELD, DECEASED. NO. 2024-PR-30 IN PROBATE

PUBLIC NOTICE

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

ESTATE OF BARBARA ANN PORTERFIELD, DECEASED. NO. 2024-PR-30 IN PROBATE

NOTICE OF DEATH INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION, AND CLAIM DATE

NOTICE IF GIVEN to creditors of the death of BARBARA ANN PORTERFIELD, of Anna, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued on January 3, 2025, to STEPHEN R. PORTERFIELD, of 4190 Burns Road, P.O. Box 84, Dongola, IL 62926, whose attorney is Elvis C. Cameron, 205B N. Main St., Anna, Illinois.

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

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

The estate will be administered without Court supervision unless, under Section 5/28-4 of the Probate Act (Ill. Compiled Stat. 1992, Ch. 755, Par. 5/28-4), any interested person terminates Independent Administration at any time by mailing or delivering a petition to terminate of the Clerk of this Court.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of this court at the Union County Courthouse, 309 W. Market St., Jonesboro, Illinois, or with the Independent Executor, or both, on or before July 16, 2025, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the Executor is required by Section 5/18-3 of the Probate Act of the State of Illinois, the date stated in that notice.

Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the Executor and to the attorneys within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

Dated: January 16, 2025.

STEPHEN R. PORTERFIELD CAMERON LAW FIRM, LLC ELVIS C. CAMERON ATTORNEY FOR INDEPENDENT

COURT OF THE FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT UNION COUNTY, ILLINOIS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF DONALD M. BALLESTRO Decedent. No. 2024-PR-28

CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given to creditors of the death of DONALD M. BALLESTRO. Letters of Office were issued to Executor, Sandra L. Ballestro whose address is 3085 Kaolin Road Cobden, Illinois 62920, whose attorney of record is the law office of Brandon, Schmidt & Montgomery, 916 West Main Street, P.O. Box 3898, Carbondale, Illinois 62902. (The estate will be administered without court supervision unless under 28-4 of the Probate Act (755 ILCS 5/28-4) any interested person terminates independent administration at any time by mailing or delivering a petition to terminate to the clerk.)

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Union County Circuit Clerk's Office or with the representative or both, on or before July 9, 2025 or, if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the estate representatives and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

/s/ Dakotah L. Hubler, # 6349451 8221-949212

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

ESTATE OF MARILYN D. LANGHOLF TOLER, DECEASED NO. 2024-PR-29 IN PROBATE

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CITY OF ANNA ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

ESTATE OF MARILYN D. LANGHOLF TOLER, DECEASED NO. 2024-PR-29 IN PROBATE

NOTICE OF DEATH INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION, AND CLAIM DATE

NOTICE IS GIVEN to creditors of the death of Marilyn D. Langholf Toler, of Anna, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued on Dec. 20, 2024, to Doug Bridgeman, 605 Barringer School Lane, Anna, Illinois 62906 as Independent Executor, whose attorney is Elvis C. Cameron, 205B N. Main St., Anna, Illinois.

Further notice is given to descendants of Shirley Toler, fi any, and to Dale Lawrence, whose whereabouts is unknown, as to the rights detailed herein.

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

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

The estate will be administered without Court supervision unless, under Section 5/28-4 of the Probate Act (Ill. Compiled Stat. 1992, Ch. 755, Par. 5/28-4), any interested person terminates Independent Administration at any time by mailing or delivering a petition to terminate to the Clerk of this Court.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of this court at the Union County Courthouse, 309 W.

Market St., Jonesboro, Illinois, or with the Independent Executor, or both, on or before July 2, 2025, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the Executor is required by Section 5/18-5 of the Probate Act of the State of Illinois the date stated in that notice.

Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the Executor and to the attorneys within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

Dated: December 20, 2024.

DOUG BRIDGEMAN CAMERON LAW FIRM, LLC ELVIS C. CAMERON ATTORNEY FOR INDEPENDENT EXECUTOR 205B N. MAIN ST. ANNA, ILLINOIS 62906

PHONE: 618-833-2220 ARDC# 6244394 8221-949156

State senator participates in inaugural ceremonies

State Sen. Dale Fowler, R-Harrisburg, participated in inaugural ceremonies of the Illinois Senate as the 104th General Assembly convened Jan. 8 in the State Capitol Building in Springfield.

Illinois Supreme Court Justice Mary Kay O'Brien administered the oath of office to newly elected state senators. Fowler has served in the Senate since 2016.

"It's an amazing honor to serve the 59th District. I will continue to work hard to grow our economy and to showcase the beauty of Southern Illinois and the amazing resiliency of the good people who call it home," Fowler said in a news release.

"With the convening of a new two-year General Assembly, we renew our commitment to serve our great state and welcome the opportunities awaiting all Illinoisans."

Fowler said biparti-

State senator participates in inaugural ceremonies

Memento brings back special memories

Martha Ann Webb of Anna shares that she recently received a 1909 plate for Christmas from Beverly Hankla Thornton, who lives in California now.

The plate was a gift to her from her grandmother Mamie Vaughn, who lived in Anna.

Martha says she and Beverly played flutes together while attending Anna-Jonesboro Community High School. She also shared the following news:

When I was writing the Anna News Beverly knew how much I loved history of our community and wanted to send me this calendar plate that said from the Jonesboro store. Beverly said she knew I would find a good place to display it.

I messaged another high school friend Donna Sitter and asked her if she knew where the store was because she loves history of our community also. It wasn't long till I got the two pictures from Donna of the store in Jonesboro.

A little history of Beverly's family she sent me. Beverly's great-grandmother was Minnie Murphy. She was John Davis's great-grandmother too. His grandmother, Maude West, and Beverly were sisters.

Phyllis Vaughn was married to her third cousin, Larry Vaughn. Their grandfathers were brothers. His grandpa, Jess Vaughn, and Beverly's grandpa, Everett Vaughn, who was married to Beverly's grandma Mamie,

County Line News

(Mill Creek and Upper Elco)

A New Year...

It's a new year...and what a mess it's been. First ice and the accompanying power outages, then single digit temperatures, followed by 3 inches of snow.

I know it's worse in other areas, and believe me, I'm praying for those folks. I'm missing attending church, as Mill Creek has been out for three services in a row.

Prayer List

Added to the prayer list are Fred Wood, who is having heart surgery on Jan. 22; Jim Hubka for a huge blood clot and his family who have health issues as well; Josh and Autumn Tripp, whose home burned; and Rita Austad, who is in the hospital with pneumonia.

Also, be in prayer for the family of Carol Pinkston, who passed away this past

County Line News

(Mill Creek and Upper Elco)

County Line News

(Mill Creek and Upper Elco)

County Line News

(Mill Creek and Upper Elco)

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(Mill Creek and Upper Elco)

County Line News

(Mill Creek and Upper Elco)

State representative takes oath of office in Springfield

State Rep. Paul Jacobs, R-Pomona, was sworn into office Wednesday, Jan. 8, at the University of Illinois Springfield during inaugural ceremonies commemorating the start of the 104th General Assembly.

Jacobs said in a news release that the State of Illinois faces significant fiscal challenges in the months and years ahead.

“Today is a special day, and I am always so grateful

to the voters of the 118th District for giving me this privilege to serve. I am thankful to my wife Rhoda, who is always my biggest supporter, and my family for their love and support. Our state is in trouble, and we need a new approach to governing that provides financial relief to our citizens and restore their faith in government,” Jacobs said.

Jacobs said his focus in a new General Assembly will

be on protecting taxpayers and the most vulnerable residents he represents.

“As state representative, I am proud to have built a solid, conservative record. I’ve rejected tax increases, pay raises for politicians and irresponsible spending.”

Jacobs said he has “demanded accountability from the Pritzker administration to improve services for veterans and individuals with disabilities” he represents at

the Illinois Veterans Home in Anna and the Choate Mental Health and Developmental Center in Anna. “I will continue this work in the 104th General Assembly.”

Jacobs’ Marion office is open Monday through Friday at 600 Halfway Rd., Suite 103, Marion, Ill. 62956.

Jacobs can be reached by phone at 618-559-7018. His website is RepPaulJacobs.com and his email address is Jacobs@ILHouseGOP.org.

Anna VFW calendar of events

Veterans of Foreign Wars Carroll P. Foster Post No. 3455 of Anna has announced its schedule of events. The post is located at 70 VFW Ln. near Anna. The schedule includes:

Live music with Dave Clark and Jeremy Wheaton is planned from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. Jan. 17.

Jan. 18. ACO at 10 a.m. Mystify Music from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m.

A joint meeting of the

post and auxiliary is planned at 5:30 p.m. Jan. 20. The auxiliary plans to meet at 6 p.m. The post plans to meet at 7 p.m.

Glo Bingo is scheduled Jan. 24-25.

Star Karaoke is scheduled to be at the post from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Jan. 31.

The canteen is scheduled to be open from 1 p.m. to 10 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and from 1 p.m. to 12 a.m. on Friday and Saturday.

Television Listings

THURSDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM 7 PM 8 PM 9 PM 10 PM 11 PM	Local Programs Ext. Makeover (HD) (:01) Only Murders Only Murders (HD) Local Jimmy Kimmel Live Nightline	Local Programs Hollywood (:31) First Marriage Ghosts Matlock “Belly of the” Local (:35) Late Show (HD) Midnight	Local Don’t (HD) Ramsay’s Food Stars Local Programs Local Local Programs Late Night	Local Programs Law & Order (HD) Law & Order: SVU Found (HD) Local (:35) Tonight (HD) Late Night	NHL Hockey <i>Detroit Red Wings at Florida Panthers</i> (Live) NHL Hockey <i>Edmonton vs Colorado</i> (Live) SportsCenter (HD)	Bang (HD) Bang (HD) Bang (HD) Bang (HD) Bang (HD) Jokers Jokers “Aquaman” (‘18, Action) Jason Momoa. (HD)	(4:00) College Basketball (HD) Law & Order: SVU Law & Order: SVU Law & Order: SVU Sex crimes. (HD)	Big City Big City Wizards ZOMBIES ZOMBIES Kiff Kiff Moon Girl Jessie Jessie Bluey Bluey	“The Farewell” (‘19) “Showing Up” (‘16) Michelle Williams. ZOMBIES ★ ★ “Kicks” (‘16) Jahking Guillory. “The Florida Project” (‘17) Willem Dafoe. (R)	(5:10) “In Time” (‘11) “Backtrack” (‘16) Adrien Brody. “127 Hours” (‘11) James Franco. (:05) ★★½ “High Rise” (‘16) Tom Hiddleston. (R)	“Poltergeist” (‘82) “Final Destination” Devon Sawa. (:45) “Talk to Me” (‘23, Horror) Sophie Wilde. “Good Boy” (‘23) Gard Lokke. (R)

JANUARY 16, 2025

FRIDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM 7 PM 8 PM 9 PM 10 PM 11 PM	Local Programs Shark Tank (HD) (:01) 20/20 <i>Investigative news.</i> (HD) Local Jimmy Kimmel Live Nightline	Local Programs NCIS: Sydney (HD) Fire Country “I Do” S.W.A.T. “Life” (HD) Local (:35) Late Show (HD) Midnight	(5:00) Local Programs College Basketball <i>Indiana vs Ohio State</i> (HD) Local Programs Local Local Local Local	Local Programs Night (HD) Night (HD) Dateline NBC <i>Investigative news.</i> Local (:35) Tonight (HD) Late Night	NBA Basketball <i>Orlando Magic at Boston Celtics</i> (Live) NBA Basketball <i>Charlotte Hornets at Chicago Bulls</i> (Live) SportsCenter (HD)	Bang (HD) Bang (HD) ★ ★ ★ “Black Adam” (‘22, Action) Dwayne Johnson. (HD) “The Suicide Squad” (‘21, Action) Margot Robbie. (HD)	Law & Order: SVU WWE Friday Night SmackDown (HD) Law & Order: SVU Law & Order: SVU Law & Order: SVU	Big City Big City ZOMBIES (:10) Kiff (:35) Kiff Moon Girl Big City Big City	Bill Maher: Is? (HD) “Movie” ZOMBIES Real Time with (HD) Real Time with (HD) Real Time with (HD)	“Amityville” (‘05) (HD) “Birds of Prey: And the” (‘20) (R) “The Last House on the Left” (‘09) (HD) (:39) ★½ “Pulse” (‘06) Kristen Bell.	“Primal Fear” (‘96) Dexter: Original Sin The Agency (HD) “Slingshot” (‘24) Casey Affleck. (:50) “I.S.S.” (‘24) Ariana DeBose.

JANUARY 17, 2025

SATURDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM 7 PM 8 PM 9 PM 10 PM 11 PM	ESPN Doc. Local Programs Local Local Local Programs Local Programs	Local NFL Today NFL Football “Teams TBA” (HD) Local Local Programs Local Programs Local Programs	(3:00) Local Programs College Basketball <i>St. John’s vs Seton Hill</i> Local Programs Special (HD) Local Programs	Local Programs The Wall (HD) Dateline NBC Saturday Night Live Local Saturday Night Live (HD)	ESPN Doc. ESPN Films ESPN Films (HD) SportsCenter with Scott (HD) Sports	Bang (HD) Bang (HD) ★ ★ ½ “Transformers: Beginnings” (‘07) Kevin Dunn. (NR) “Days of Thunder” (‘90) Tom Cruise.	(3:30) IMSA WeatherTech Sports Car Championship (HD) 9-1-1 (HD) 9-1-1 (HD) 9-1-1 (HD)	(5:15) “Movie” StuGo StuGo StuGo Kiff Kiff Kiff StuGo StuGo	“Sully” Tom Hanks. “A Different Man” (‘24) Sebastian Stan. (HD) “Moonlight” (‘55) “The Accountant” (‘16) Ben Affleck. (HD) “Everything Everywhere” (‘22)	The Knick “Whiplash” “Love & Other Drugs” (‘10) Jake Gyllenhaal. “Hell or High Water” (‘16) (HD) “Moonlight” Trevante Rhodes. “Everything Everywhere” (‘22)	“The Dead Don’t Hurt” (‘24) Vicky Krieps. (R) “Hell or High Water” (‘16) (HD) (:45) “Pig” (‘21, Drama) Nicolas Cage. (R) (HD) Dexter Sin

JANUARY 18, 2025

SUNDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM 7 PM 8 PM 9 PM 10 PM 11 PM	Home Videos (HD) Videos (:31) ★ ★ ★ ½ “Beauty and the Beast” (‘17) Emma Watson. Local Programs Local Programs Local Programs	60 Minutes (HD) Tracker “Noble Rot” The Equalizer (HD) To Be Announced Local Programs Local Programs Local Programs	NFL Play NFL on FOX Simpsons Universal Burgers Krapopolis Local Programs Local Programs Local Programs	TBA TBA To Be Announced To Be Announced Local Programs Local Programs Local Programs	Path to Path to Championship Drive (HD) SportsCenter with Scott (HD) SportsCenter (HD) Sports	Bang (HD) Bang (HD) Bang (HD) Wipeout ★ ★ ★ “Dune” (‘21, Action) Rebecca Ferguson. (PG-13) Dad (HD) Dad (HD) Dad (HD) Dad (HD)	Law & Order: SVU Law & Order: SVU Law & Order: SVU Law & Order: SVU Law & Order: SVU Law & Order: SVU	Big City Big City ★ ★ ★ “The Lion King” (‘19) Donald Glover. (PG) Wizards Wizards Wizards StuGo StuGo Hamster Hamster	★ ★ ★ “Dirty Rotten Scoundrels” Steve Martin. (:10) “The Imitation Game” (‘14, Thriller) (HD) “Lady Bird” (‘17) Saoirse Ronan. “Different”	(5:29) “Batman” (‘23) ★ ★ ★ ½ “A Star Is Born” (‘18) Bradley Cooper. (:16) “The Color Purple” (‘23, Musical) Fantasia Barrino. “The Hateful Eight” (‘15) Samuel L. Jackson. “Viva”	“The Big Short” (‘15) Dexter: Original Sin The Agency (HD) The Agency (HD) “The Hateful Eight” (‘15) Samuel L. Jackson. “Final”

JANUARY 19, 2025

MONDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM 7 PM 8 PM 9 PM 10 PM 11 PM	Local Programs To Be Announced TBA To Be Announced Local Jimmy Kimmel Live Nightline	Local Programs Neighbor. Poppa’s NCIS “Out of Control” NCIS: Origins (HD) Local (:35) Late Show (HD) Midnight	Wom Bball Local 9-1-1: Lone Star (:02) Rescue: HI-Surf Local Programs Local Local Programs Local Programs	Local Programs The Traitors <i>Celebrities compete.</i> The Traitors <i>Celebrities compete.</i> Local (:35) Tonight (HD) Late Night	(5:00) To Be Announced <i>Info unavailable.</i> SportsCenter (HD) SportsCenter (HD) SportsCenter (HD)	Bang (HD) Bang (HD) Bang (HD) Bang (HD) Dad (HD) Dad (HD) Dad (HD) Dad (HD) Dad (HD)	Law & Order: SVU WWE Monday Night Raw (HD) Wizards Wizards Wizards To Be Announced Race <i>Alaska race.</i>	(5:55) “Movie” Wizards Wizards Wizards To Be Announced Bluey Bluey	★ ★ ★ “Uncharted” (‘22) ★ ★ ½ “Marshall” (‘17) Chadwick Boseman. (HD) “Unstoppable” (‘10, Thriller) (HD) “Straight Outta Compton” (‘15)	“Curse Llorona” (‘19) ★ ★ ★ “Trollhunter” Otto Jespersen. “The Last Black Man in San” Jimmie Fails. “The Kill Team” (‘19) Nat Wolff.	“Gump” (‘50) ★ ★ ★ ½ “Selma” (‘15, Drama) David Oyelowo. (HD) The Agency (HD) “Talk to Me” (‘23) Sophie Wilde. “Final”

JANUARY 20, 2025

TUESDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM 7 PM 8 PM 9 PM 10 PM 11 PM	Local Programs Will Trent (HD) High Potential (HD) The Rookie (HD) Local Jimmy Kimmel Live Nightline	Local Programs FBI “Doubted” (HD) FBI: International FBI: Most Wanted Local (:35) Late Show (HD) Midnight	(5:00) Local Programs Kitchen Nightmares Doc (HD) Local Programs Local Local Programs Local Programs	Local Programs Medical Night (HD) Deal or No Deal (HD) The Irrational (HD) Local (:35) Tonight (HD) Late Night	CFP Rankings Show To Be Announced <i>Info unavailable.</i> SportsCenter (HD) SportsCenter (HD)	Bang (HD) Bang (HD) Bang (HD) The Joe Schmo Show The Joe Schmo Show Family Family Family	Law & Order: SVU Law & Order: SVU Law & Order: SVU Law & Order: SVU Law & Order: SVU Law & Order: SVU	“Movie” Wizards Wizards Wizards To Be Announced Bluey Bluey	“MaXXXine” (‘24) (R) “It Follows” (‘15) Maika Monroe. (:43) “The Lighthouse” (‘19) Willem Dafoe. “Scream” (‘96) David Arquette. (R)	“Ghost Dog” (‘00) (R) “127 Hours” (‘11) James Franco. (:34) “In Time” (‘11, Thriller) Amanda Seyfried. ★ ★ ½ “Machete Kills” Danny Trejo.	★ ★ ★ “Patriot Games” (‘92) Harrison Ford. (HD) “Murder Company” (‘24) (HD) ★ ★ ½ “Sling-shot” (‘24) Casey Affleck. (R) (HD) The Agency

JANUARY 21, 2025

WEDNESDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM 7 PM 8 PM 9 PM 10 PM 11 PM	Local Programs Gears Elementary Celebrity Jeopardy! What Would You Do? Local Jimmy Kimmel Live Nightline	Local Programs The Price Is Right at Raid The Cage (HD) Elisbeth (HD) Local (:35) Late Show (HD) Midnight	(5:00) Local Programs Special Forces: World’s Grueling challenge. Chicago Fire (HD) Chicago P.D. (HD) Local (:35) Tonight (HD) Local Programs Late Night	Local Programs Chicago Med Chicago Fire (HD) Chicago P.D. (HD) Local (:35) Tonight (HD) Late Night	TBA (:43) To Be Announced <i>Info unavailable.</i> SportsCenter (HD) SportsCenter (HD)	Bang (HD) Bang (HD) All Elite Wrestling: Dynamite The Joe Schmo Show Family Family Family	SVU (HD) Law & Order: SVU Law & Order: SVU Law & Order: SVU Law & Order: SVU Law & Order: SVU	(:15) “Movie” Wizards Wizards Waverly (HD) Wizards To Be Announced Bluey Bluey	(5:55) ★ ★ ★ “Warcraft” (‘16) Travis Fimmel. (HD) TBA To Be Announced ★ ★ ½ “Keeping Up with Joneses”	“A Star Is Born” (‘18) ★ ★ ★ “The Giver” (‘14) Jeff Bridges. “Love & Other Drugs” (‘10) Jake Gyllenhaal. “Everybody Wants To Be” (‘09)	“The Switch” (‘10) ★ ★ ★ “Crazy, Stupid, Love.” (‘11) Steve Carell. “40 Days and 40 Nights” (‘02) (R) “Zack & Miri Make Porno” (‘08)

JANUARY 22, 2025

THURSDAY

7:00pm
HBO Showing Up ★ ★ ★ (2023, Comedy) Michelle Williams, Hong Chau. A sculptor struggles to finalize her pieces before the day of her opening show amidst snide remarks from her competitors and issues with her family and friends. NR (HD)

8:31pm
CBS Ghosts “The Work Retreat” After Trevor fakes his way into a remote financial analyst job, a mandatory in-person work retreat threatens to bring everything crashing down around him. TVPG (HD)

FRIDAY

7:00pm
TBS Black Adam ★ ★ ★ (2022, Action) Dwayne Johnson, Sarah Shahi. An ancient being with the power of an Egyptian god breaks free 5,000 years after being imprisoned, determined to unleash his unique justice. PG-13 (HD)

9:00pm
CBS S.W.A.T. “Life” A prison hostage situation goes sideways when a bomb detonates, releasing several maximum-security prisoners from their cells. TV14 (HD)

SATURDAY

8:00pm
PARSHO Hell or High Water ★ ★ ★ ½ (2016, Drama) Jeff Bridges, Chris Pine. Two estranged brothers decide to rob the bank that is threatening to foreclose on their land, but they are chased by a Texas Ranger and his partner. R (HD)

8:55pm
HBO The Accountant ★ ★ ★ (2016, Action) Ben Affleck, Anna Kendrick. A gifted criminal accountant is assigned to work with a firm with a discrepancy in their books, but as he digs up the truth, the he is pursued by authorities. R (HD)

SUNDAY

7:00pm
MAX A Star Is Born ★ ★ ★ ½ (2018, Drama) Bradley Cooper, Lady Gaga. When a seasoned musician falls in love with a struggling singer, he helps push her into the spotlight but soon realizes his best days may be behind him. R

8:00pm
FOX Bob’s Burgers “Boogie Days” Bob is forced to confront his past when Louise signs up for a father-daughter boogie board contest. TVPG (HD)

MONDAY

7:00pm
CBS The Neighborhood “Welcome to the Wicked Stepmother” Tina redoubles her efforts to reunite her father with his wife after realizing he has age-related impairments. TVPG (HD)

9:00pm
HBO Unstoppable ★ ★ ★ (2010, Thriller) Denzel Washington, Chris Pine. An expert engineer and a novice conductor race to stop a runaway, poisonous train from crashing and causing a catastrophe in a large town directly in its path. PG-13 (HD)

TUESDAY

7:00pm
ABC Will Trent “You’re the One I Want Watching My Back” Will and Faith encounter a world of secrets and corporate intrigue when a dispute within a family-owned business leads to poisonings; Angie makes a discovery. (HD)

8:00pm
CBS FBI: International “A Leader, Not a Tourist” The team is joined by a new special agent after his partner is shot in Los Angeles, with the suspect ultimately fleeing to Budapest. TV14 (HD)

WEDNESDAY

7:30pm
ABC Abbott Elementary “Strike” Gregory and O’Shon become friends; students begin to miss school because of a strike impacting city buses, so the teachers turn to hybrid learning. TVPG (HD)

8:38pm
MAX Love & Other Drugs ★ ★ ½ (2010, Comedy) Jake Gyllenhaal, Anne Hathaway. A pharmaceutical salesman charms his way through life but changes when a one-night stand with a Parkinson’s patient develops into more than either expected. R (HD)

Opinion and Commentary

Community pharmacies closing at alarming rate

By Garth Reynolds
Executive Director, Illinois Pharmacists Association
The pharmacy profession is under siege. Community pharmacies (independent and chain) are closing at an alarming rate, leaving countless communities without access to essential medications and care. The culprits behind this crisis are pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs), whose opaque and predatory practices are decimating the very foundation of our health care system.

A recent Health Affairs study revealed that nearly 30 percent of U.S. pharmacies have closed since 2010, with closures disproportionately affecting rural, urban and underserved communities.

Illinois has seen this crisis firsthand (more than 80 pharmacy closures just in 2024), with closures leaving countless residents in “pharmacy deserts,” where access to medications, vaccinations and chronic disease management is severely limited; particularly in minority neighborhoods, exacerbating health care disparities and leaving vulnerable populations stranded without necessary pharmaceutical services.

The situation is dire. The Federal Trade Commission, FTC, has intensified its investigation into PBM practices, acknowledging their anti-competitive behaviors that harm consumers and drive pharmacies out of business.

The Illinois Auditor General’s report provides a damning critique of PBM management of Medicaid dollars (\$200 million in just two years), revealing waste, inefficiency, and inflated costs to taxpayers.

Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul has taken decisive action, filing lawsuits against PBMs for deceptive practices and antitrust violations (more than \$100 million in settlements). These steps, while commendable, are insufficient to stem the tide of pharmacy closures and the resulting health care crisis.

Medicaid programs are particularly susceptible to PBM exploitation. Through a lack of transparency, PBMs siphon funds intended to support patients and providers, forcing pharmacies to operate at a loss for Medicaid prescriptions. This financial strain leads to closures, leaving patients in underserved areas with fewer care options. Commercial insurance is not immune; PBMs leverage their market dominance to eliminate competition, prioritize their own services, and restrict patient choice.

Illinois stands at a pivotal moment. We must act decisively to halt this crisis:

Enforce Transparency: Mandate full disclosure of PBM contracts, including pricing and rebate practices, to ensure accountability for taxpayer dollars and premiums.

Implement Fair Reimbursement: Ensure pharmacy reimbursement reflects the actual cost of medications, preventing PBM manipulation.

Expand State Oversight: Empower the attorney general and the Departments of Healthcare and Family Services & Insurance to broaden investigations into PBM practices, and authorize the auditor general to audit PBM contracts for commercial plans (e.g. State Employees Plans).

Support Federal Action: Advocate for federal reforms to restrict PBM abuses nationwide, ensuring consistent standards across state lines.

Protect Independent Pharmacies: Provide immediate financial relief and long-term policy support to preserve their vital role in communities.

The collapse of community pharmacies is a health care emergency. Patients rely on their pharmacists for more than medications; they depend on us for guidance, education, and access to the health care system. Every pharmacy closure represents a loss for patients and communities.

As executive director of the Illinois Pharmacists Association, I urge state and federal leaders to address this crisis with the urgency it demands. PBMs must be held accountable, and pharmacies must be empowered to provide the care their patients need.

Our profession has stood strong through countless challenges, but the PBM crisis threatens to erode the foundation of pharmacist delivered patient-centered care. It is time to ensure that pharmacies are no longer treated as expendable casualties in a broken system but rather as vital partners in delivering healthcare to all.

Let’s act now –before another pharmacy closure reminds us of what we have lost.

The Illinois Press Association distributed this op-ed by Garth K. Reynolds, BSP Pharm, RPh, MBA, FAPhA, who is a practicing community pharmacist.

2024: Temperatures, precipitation finished above normal in region

With 2024 in the books, the National Weather Service office in Paducah has taken a look back at the region’s weather for last year.

Temperatures and precipitation both finished above normal in the Southern Illinois, Southeast Missouri and Western Kentucky region.

Temperatures finished above normal by 2 to 3.5 degrees. “For one month this departure isn’t substantial, but for an entire year it certainly is,” the weather service noted. “All 5 of our long-term climate stations observed one of their top 5 warmest years on record, with both Paducah and Cape Girardeau setting their warmest year,” the weather service continued.

“Only 2 of the months finished with below normal temperatures, January and July. The most abnormally warm months compared to normal were February, March, April, May, and November.”

Precipitation finished wetter than normal across much of the region, with amounts ranging from 45 to 65 inches. The highest amounts were primarily focused across Western Kentucky, where localized amounts received over 65 inches.

The wettest months compared to normal were January and May. On the flip side, the driest months compared to normal were February, August and October.

Portions of the region were in moderate drought from the end of February through early May. Moderate to severe drought returned from the end of August through September, with abnormally dry conditions continuing into early November.

Please read this...

Old Man Winter has overstayed his visit...



A squirrel and cardinal appeared to be waiting patiently for a chance to get something to eat at a bird feeder in Cobden.



A turkey vulture may have been eye-balling the photographer as a potential snack from its perch in a tree coated with ice. Actually, it appeared to be pondering some sort of unidentified formerly in the present tense Critter that seemed to have met a very bad ending in the middle of the road.



A (great blue?) heron was spotted in the sunshine last Sunday afternoon along a frozen pool of water next to a corn field near Cobden. This Critter was seen while yours truly was on a Sunday afternoon driveabout instead of a daily walkabout.

By Geof Skinner

At this point in time, it seems like Old Man Winter has officially overstayed his welcome in Southern Illinois. And we’re only halfway through January.

After pondering our latest round of arctic cold earlier this week, The Other Half suggested that yours truly needed to stop taking the ice and snow and arctic temperatures personally. She is correct, of course.

Then again, the forecast I saw Monday evening suggested that the high temperature next Monday could be TWENTY ONE DEGREES. That would be a nice temperature if we were in Fairbanks, Alaska...where, by the way, it was 33 degrees on Monday afternoon. (Well, that’s what I saw on the internet... and you know how I feel about things I see on the internet...)

While I have not been particularly enamored with our recent winter adventures, the conditions have not kept me from getting in a daily walkabout.

In the midst of our recent ice storm, I managed to get out for a walk. Same for the days which followed. Walking in the frozen precipitation was a bit challenging, but doable. Same goes for wandering through the snow we had last Friday. You just have to adapt to whatever the conditions might be... Dress appropriately... A coat is a good idea... Something warm on one’s head...the knit cap I purchased a number of years ago before the Polar Vortex made its debut in our little corner of the world turned out to be one of the best things I have ever bought... The cap is very warm... Gloves are good, too... I have a pair of gloves a fellow traveler on The Journey Through Life knitted for me... The gloves keep my hands warm, but also allow my fingers to be free to take photographs...

That is a very good thing, because, as you know, I like to take my camera on my daily walkabouts, because one never knows that kind of Critters one might see...

And, in spite of the silliness Old Man Winter has been sharing with us, Critters have been out and about...

Which brings us to this week’s Critter Sighting Updates... which are featured in the photographs which appear with this week’s word salad...

Enough for now... Oh...one more thing... Spring is 63 days away. Well, that’s what I saw on the internet...



A bird, perhaps of the woodpecker variety, found a treat on the snow- and ice-covered ground at the Lincoln Memorial Picnic Grounds in Jonesboro.



Bluebird of chilliness? Might have been hard for it to be a bluebird of happiness under the conditions it/we experienced after our ice storm.

Illinoisans can now vote on new state flag



The design on the current state flag of Illinois.

By Jerry Nowicki
Capitol News Illinois
Illinoisans can now vote on whether they want a new state flag.
The Illinois Secretary of State’s office officially opened the voting portal on Friday, Jan. 10, and votes will be accepted through Feb. 14.
Voters can choose from 10 designs for a new flag, the current flag, the 1918 centennial flag or 1968 sesquicentennial flag. Individuals can vote for one flag once every 24 hours and may select the same or a different flag each day.
To view the designs and vote, visit www.ilsos.gov/stateflag.
The online vote will be non-binding but will inform a report that the Illinois Flag

Commission is set to release to the General Assembly by April 1.
After the commission delivers its final report, with a recommendation as to whether the state should adopt a new flag, the Illinois General Assembly will have the choice to adopt a new flag or keep the old one.
The flag commission is made up of current and former lawmakers, representatives of state agencies and other advocates appointed by current state officials.
The commission was created in the previous General Assembly by Senate Bill 1818, sponsored by State Sen. Doris Turner, of Springfield, and Rep. Kam Buckner, of Chicago.
The commission selected the 10 finalists in December from 4,844 entries.
The possible new flags come from a variety of designers, including born-and-raised Illinoisans, students and other young people, longtime residents and the great-grandchild of James McCartney – a Civil War veteran and past Illinois attorney general.
Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service that distributes state government coverage to hundreds of news outlets statewide. It is funded primarily by the Illinois Press Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation.

Illinois has had two state flags. The first was adopted in 1915. More than 50 years later, Chief Petty Officer Bruce McDaniel of Waverly urged that a new flag be designed to include the word "Illinois." Without the state’s name on it, the identity of the Illinois flag hanging in his mess hall was often questioned.
On July 1, 1970, a white field carrying the word "Illinois" and the emblem portion of the state seal became the state’s official flag. – *from the 2001-2002 Illinois Blue Book*