

THE GAZETTE-DEMOCRAT

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News Notes

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

On Saturday, Dec. 14, Anna-Jonesboro Community High School boys' basketball team head coach Mike Chamness made history. With a win over Union County rival Cobden, he became the all-time winningest basketball coach at A-JCHS, surpassing the legendary Mike Crews and Paul Houghton.

A-JCHS is celebrating student athletes Ruby Yates and Ariana Turner, who have signed to continue their softball careers at Mineral Area College; and Olivia Schaefer, who has signed with Blackburn College to play softball.

Union County continues to be well ahead of schedule on paying off bonds which were issued for the construction of a new courthouse. Revenue is generated by a local sales tax.

As a new year begins, the Union County animal control program continues to welcome donations of food and financial resources.

Stephanie Cox and county board of commissioners member Darryl Harvell have been reappointed as Union County representatives on the Southern Five Regional Planning District and Development Commission board. The appointments were approved at last Friday morning's regular meeting of the Union County Board of Commissioners.

The Anna City Council is reviewing a proposal to establish a fire department auxiliary. The auxiliary would support the fire department in a variety of ways.

Union County experienced nine days of rainy weather from Dec. 19 to Dec. 30.

A "Crosswords & Coffee" event for folks ages 60 and older is set for 10 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 7, at Stinson Memorial Public Library in Anna.

Shawnee Community College is congratulating certified nursing assistants who recently graduated from the Union County Extension Center program in Anna. Instructor Hailey Merriman says the class had a 100 percent pass rate.

Auditions for Shawnee Community College's spring musical, "Little Shop of Horrors," are set for Jan. 10-11. Auditions will be at the college and are open to those ages 16 and older for the musical which will be staged April 10-12.

Regular business hours are scheduled to resume Thursday, today, at Shawnee Community College. The college's spring semester begins Jan. 13.

Local weather...

Flood watch Saturday, wind advisory Tuesday, winter storm possible in area this Sunday into Monday



Clear Creek Sunday afternoon
The National Weather Service office in Paducah advised last Saturday that area creeks and streams have been running high and could have flooded with more heavy rain which was possible. After heavy rain fell Saturday night, the water level was high Sunday afternoon on Clear Creek at the Trail of Tears State Forest.

A flood watch was in effect for parts of the region over the weekend between the Christmas and New Year's holidays...

...the year came to an end with a wind advisory in place on Tuesday...

...and the new year looks to bring colder weather, along with the possibility of a winter storm which could impact the region.

Flood Watch

The flood watch issued by the National Weather Service office in Paducah was in effect from 6 p.m. Saturday through Sunday morning.

Parts of Southern Illinois (including Union County), Southeast Missouri and West-

ern Kentucky were included in the watch.

Ahead of the arrival of heavy rain, the weather service advised that excessive runoff may have resulted in flooding of rivers, creeks, streams and other low-lying and flood-prone locations.

Extensive street flooding and flooding of creeks and rivers were possible. Area creeks and streams have been running high and could have flooded with more heavy rain.

Due to recent rounds of rain and thunderstorms, creeks and streams in the flood watch area were running high and soils are very saturated.

A round of heavy rain and thunderstorms moved through the flood watch area from Saturday night through Sunday morning. Rainfall amounts of 1.5 to 2.5 inches, with locally higher totals over 3 inches, were in the forecast.

Wind Advisory

The weather service office issued a wind advisory for the region which was in effect from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. Tuesday – the final day of 2024.

Northwest winds of 15 to 20 miles per hour were in the forecast, along with gusts of 40 to 45 mph.

As the paper was going to press for this week, the weather service office was reporting 33 mph wind gusts at the Southern Illinois Airport near Carbondale on Tuesday morning.

The weather service office said that "a few trees may be uprooted due to the wet ground, and tree limbs could be blown down as well. This may result in a few power outages."

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Jonesboro Head Start welcomes Ag in the Classroom visit



Haley Bode from the Union County Farm Bureau Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom program visited students enrolled at Southern 7 Jonesboro Head Start in early December. She read the story of Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer and then children created a mix of reindeer food. They discussed where each of the food ingredients of oats, rice, craisins and sugar sprinkles came from. Photos provided.

2024 weather: warm winter, stormy spring in region

In terms of weather, 2024 was a very active year in the Southern Illinois, Southeast Missouri and Western Kentucky region.

Spring and summer were particularly active seasons, the National Weather Service office in Paducah reported. The office also serves southwest Indiana.

Highlights from the year were reported in a review of 2024 weather posted by the office on its website.

Warm Winter

The year began with the region experiencing one of its warmest winters on record (the fourth warmest in Paducah) with very little snow (most areas only receiving 0.5 of an inch to 3 inches).

Summer-like temperatures were observed in February, with readings soaring to 90 degrees in Van Buren, Mo., on the 27th.

Cape Girardeau and Carbondale tied their February warmest temperature of 79 degrees.

Severe Spring Weather

There were three especially notable severe weather events during the spring.

An April 2 early morning tornado outbreak included 19 tornadoes, the most tornadoes recorded at the weather service office in Paducah in a single day for the Quad State region since Halloween 2013.

A May 8 multi-round severe weather outbreak included nine tornadoes and set the office record for most warnings issued in a single day.

May 26 Storms

A May 26 multi-round severe weather outbreak included widespread straight-line wind damage, along with 18 tornadoes and the second highest single day warning issuance count.

The multiple rounds of severe thunderstorms produced widespread damage and left over 100,000 customers without power at its peak.

The first wave was a bow-

ing line that progressed east across Southeast Missouri into Western Kentucky and far Southern Illinois between 5 a.m. and 10 a.m.

This was quickly followed by a second line that was mostly sub-severe which then exited the region by 1 p.m.

The environment was able to recover during the afternoon, providing ample fuel for another round of severe thunderstorms during the evening.

Supercells formed across parts of the region between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. Meanwhile a line of storms developed to the west and moved quickly east-southeast across the entire area after 7 p.m.

This line sagged south toward the Kentucky/Tennessee border by 11 p.m..

Widespread damaging winds of 60 to 70 mph occurred with both rounds, along with large hail up to tennis

ball sized and numerous tornadoes. There have been 18 confirmed tornadoes from this event, including three EF-3's.

Tornado No. 13 was reported in the Lick Creek and Buncombe areas in Union and Johnson counties.

The tornado occurred from 8:13 p.m. to 8:22 p.m. The twister had an EF-1 rating with estimated peak winds of 100 mph.

(continued on page 2)



Storm debris in May 2024

Debris was left behind in Jonesboro after stormy weather swept through the region on May 26. The National Weather Service office in Paducah reported that three especially notable severe weather events occurred in the region during the spring of 2024.



Remembering those who passed

Following is a listing of the names of those who passed away and whose obituaries appeared in The Gazette-Democrat during 2024. The listing is by the week that the obituaries appeared in the newspaper during 2024.

January

Jan. 4. Terrell Adkins. Karyle Yvonne Ashton Holderfield. Richard Reynolds. Richard B. “Dick” Schaefer. Juliette Jane Goddard. Karen Ann “Amy” Dover. Jennifer “Jenny” Renee Davis. William Dean Bracken. James William (Bill) Buster.

Jan. 11. Betty L. Stricklin. Mary Carolyn Rendleman. Jo Anne Lambert. Gloria A. Merriman. William Douglas “Doug” Stoner. Stan Vaughn. Norma Jean Cline Frailey. Donald “Gene” Eddleman.

Jan. 18. Dr. Ruth Eleanor Duff. Claudia Kay Leslie. Jason Kyle Lovell. Mary Lee Wells. Sharlet Sue Sims.

Jan. 25. Jane “Janie” Burnett Wargo. Margie Belle Bittle. Glenn L. Winstead. Diana Marie Woolridge-Perry. Vernon Ray Glasco.

February

Feb. 1. Velta Carol Jimenez. Shirley Fox. Kay Frances Judd. Deon Warden. Vicky L. Chamness. Jessica Grace Gorev. Lois Dean Edging Sams.

Feb. 8. Henry C. Lingle. Dr. Michael Martin Williamssen. Arthur Scott Aronson. Laura Ruth Spiller. Dr. Glenn Hudgens. Bonnie Jean Dillow. Junior Lee “Zip” Toler.

Feb. 15. Betty Lou Hartline. Louis Jerome “Jerry” Basler. Earl Dean Simpson. Floyd Morris Dover. Dr. Carl Albert Budelsky. James “Rico” Synowiec. Willie Lariel “Dean” McIntosh. Earl W. Miller. Linda Lou “Teann” McIntosh.

Feb. 22. Helen Holderfield. John Aaron Wagoner. Patricia Ann Fritz Keil. Mary Ellen Griffith Hafford. Gordon Patrick “Pat” Sams. Jenny Anderson. Mary Elizabeth Yeckley. Donna “Renee” Anderson.

Feb. 29. Carole Ann Wilson West. LaVerne Thompson. Harold L. Foster. Bill Pritchett.

March

March 7. Danny L. Freyenger. Dr. Dennis P. Robinson. Evelyn L. Aguila. Betty Ruth Toler. Vernita Miller. Donna F. Vance. Betty L. Trexler Baker. Carole J. Bauer. Alice Rhey Zeschke. Mary D. Crutchfield.

March 14. Patricia Ann “Pat” Shaffer. Thomas “Tom” Sadowski. Kathryn Marie “Coco” Halter. Mary Pauline Wilson Littrell. Beverly Carol Galbraith. Rev. Lacie Dean Betts.

March 21. Judith Kay Vaupe. Dr. Homer L. Cissell Jr. Dr. Richard Louis “Dick” Pommier. Angel Garner. John R. Holman. Tim Williams. Derek “D” Blume.

March 28. Doris “Janie” Walter. Samuel “Sam” Joe Myers. Marshall Wayne Duty.

April

April 4. Ruby L. Clover Black. Rosamaria Davis. James Eric Myers. Richard Gene Gaddis. Marshall Wayne Duty. Wilford Garrett.

April 11. Mary M. Richardson. Judith Winger. Michael H. “Mikey” Myers. Ivy Goins Yana. Linda Sue Lingle.

April 18. Shirley Howard Russell. Betty June Smith. Tanya D. Sams. Nora Carmona. Joseph Richard Reppert.

April 25. Leona Carnell Mount. Bon L. Kohler. Chester K. Pedigo. Vernon O. “Big” Henderson.

May

May 2. Carl Dean Massey. Larry “Joe” Birkhead. Michael F. Whelan. Kenneth Dean Phillips.

May 9. Thomas Harold Keller. Michael Gene Kelley. James “Robin” Hoyle. Lynn Heisner.

May 16. Keith Todd Beggs. Linde Ann Caraker-Owens. Barbara Morrison. Della L. “Ms. Della” McMahan-Shepard.

May 23. Pfc. Bryan Myers Jr. Robert “Bo” Wright. Winifred Marcella Dillow. Nancy Joyce Gearhart. Vicki Sue Glasco Escue. Manuel Mejia Palacios. Mary Lou Harris Ristow.

May 30. Barbara J. Livesay. Jacob Dale Parmly. Willard Leon Mowell. James “Hank” Greenley. Kenneth Oscar Nance. Robert Dennis Brown.

June

June 6. Marsha Gail Hartline Yates. Dan Wilson. Kenneth “Carter” Dallas. Dustin Cody Pitts. Catalina Duran De Charicata. Sarah Lea Duty.

June 13. James D. “Jim” Brown. Deacon Patrick W. “Pat” Patterson.

June 20. Harold Wayne Hubbs. Charles L. Stiff. Michael Sevenski III. Randy Echols. Gwendolyn Yates Arthur. Larry Dean Greer. Dale Lynn Pender.

June 27. Kathleen “Kathy” Crosier. Sharon Henderson Ivy. Gary Boyd Langston. Lawrence E. Larson.

July

July 4. Viola Lambdin. Jonathan Michael Brim.

July 11. Jerry M. Toler. Betty L. Wright. Robert Lee “Bobby” Newton. Luca Titan Muskopf.

July 18. Patricia Lou Chandler. Kathy Irene Franklin. Gary Lee Coats. Linda Simpson. Edwina “Eddie” Murray. Larry Gene Martin. Lenora O. Lovell. Marcelo Amezquita. Robert “Bob” G. Bittle.

July 25. Carolyn Bracken. Juanita Miller Pickel. James E. Selinger. Carolyn Bracken. Minnie Pearl Quertermous.

Robert E. “Bob” Hileman.

August

Aug. 1. Marie Foster. Elizabeth “Beth” Showmaker. Rosemary H. Heern. Walter C. Ridenhour. Marietta Ford. Sondra Kay Boie.

Aug. 8. Marlene Flamm Rich. Lonnie Hall. Ellen Jane Eads. Emerenciana Carmona. Mildred L. Smith. Richard Knight.

Aug. 15. Evelyn Louise Dailey. Donna “Ani” Dakin. Kevin Dale Wehmeyer. Albert Reynolds. Donald Dean Pearson. Lois Marie Dillow. Sue Jane Rosenthal Whiting.

Aug. 22. Marvalee Hope “Marlee Girl” Dougherty. Sue Rendleman. James Calvin Wright. William Brian Barkley.

Aug. 29. Bruce Williams. John Rooney.

September

Sept. 5. Marvin Lynn “Red” West. Shirley Lee Penrod. Wayne Davis. Carleen Cain. David Kevin St. Arbor. Earlene Highfield. Isaac Enrique Guignon.

Sept. 12. Linda Gail Rutherford. Nicholas Robin Dillon. Mary Ann Courtright. Mary Lou Schlenker. Harold Edward Ralls.

Sept. 19. William “Bill” Garner. Emma Lou Williams. William “Bill” F. Witthoft Jr. Cathy Sue Evans. Londa Faye Peterson. Lindell “Link” Warren.

Sept. 26. Lana Diane Livesay. Gloria M. Sivia. Lois Ann Carr.

October

Oct. 3. Terry Marie Simon Baine. Anita Jeanne Stadelbacher. Jerry Lee Richardson Sr. Freda Mary Dillow. Eugene I. Hartsock. Hallie Dean Smoot Jr.

Oct. 10. Dorothy M. Zinn (nee Cerny). Henry M. “Pete” Tanner. Lois Ann Benson. Patricia McRaven. Pamela Jane Sadler. Shirley Ann Ralls. Pvt. Robert L. Skaar. Hallie Dean Smoot Jr.

Oct. 17. Paula Yvonne Hansil. W. Leon Gunn. Shirley Jean Peeler Burns.

Oct. 24. Irene Stamp. Jennifer Alveria Budtsick Applegate. Friederike Muntion. Jackie Lee Ralls. Sandra Zamora Martinez. Everett Ray Rhodes. Patrick Wilson Treece. John W. Lehr. Walter Wayne Schultz. Jack Denton Brimm.

Oct. 31. Marilyn Dorothy Toler. Michael H. Maguire. Rosemary M. “Rosie” Cates. Jim Tucker. Charlotte Chavan Grant. Rose Key Menees.

November

Nov. 7. Robert M. “Bob” Hansil. Millicent Louise Casper Hankla. Shelby Kay Rushing. Wayne L. Douglas. Hazel M. Reichrath. James Michael (Jim) Helm.

Nov. 14. Kathryn Ann Kerr. Tim Bundren. Geneva Meryman.

Nov. 21. Gary Jackson. Jerry Marvin Bennett. Jack Davie Sensmeier. Sherman Lee Mays. Shirley Ann Bennett. Tommy Joe Walker.

Nov. 28. Kenneth Howard Sifford. Roger Dale Cook. Joshua Blake Eubanks. William L. “Bill” Hendricks. James E. “Jimmy” Ethridge.

December

Dec. 5. Sharon Kay Toler. Donald Ray Hickam. Ronald Gayle Bittle.

Dec. 12. Ruby Lee Caldwell. Norman Lee Gibbs. Michelle Leann Easter. Teresa Sue Mowery. Jeffrey Edward Dickey. Donald M. Ballestro. Blanche Elzora Wehmeyer. Barbara Porterfield.

Dec. 19. Mary Ruth Bloodworth. Larry L. Basler. Ronald E. Diggs. Mary Dehen. Robert Lee Whitaker. Anita Marie Dillow Beard. Vicky Lee Arnold. Daric Allen Smith. Jason R. McHugh. Gerald Wilbur Hileman. Mickie Lynn Smith Lacer. Robert Eugene Parker. Jerrie T. Clayton.

Dec. 26. Diana Marie McClelland. Barbara Sue Duckworth. Jerrie T. Clayton.

(Editor’s note: every effort was made to include a complete listing of all of the obituaries which appeared in the newspaper during the year.)



Little Egypt Red Hat Ladies Christmas dinner, party
Little Egypt Red Hat Ladies met for a Christmas dinner and party at Subway in Anna. From left are guest Judy Francis, Shirley Page, guest Emelia Eddleman, Lila Schley, Marie Samuel, Dee Dillon, hostess Lillian Milam and Kay Johnson, Carole Anderson, Lillah Williams, Brenda Lovelace, Martha Schwegman and Martha Ann Webb. Little Egypt Red Hat Ladies Kathy Milam, Connie Harvel and Pam Baker could not be present for the picture. Photo provided.

Nearly 300 new Illinois laws take effect in 2025

By Ben Szalinski
Capitol News Illinois
Time to study up, Illinois. When the clock hit midnight on New Year’s Day, 293 new state laws took effect.

Those include some of the defining bills of the 2024 legislative session and others that will change how people get IDs, evaluate job postings and even cancel gym memberships.

In addition to the laws taking effect on Jan. 1, the state’s minimum wage will rise to \$15 to complete a ramp up initiated during Gov. JB Pritzker’s first month in office in 2019.

Digital Driver’s Licenses
The secretary of state can begin creating a process to issue digital driver’s licenses and state IDs beginning in the new year after Pritzker signed House Bill 4592.

Residents will still be required to receive a physical ID and agencies or private entities will not be required to accept digital IDs in place of physical IDs.

Providing a phone to police to show a digital ID also doesn’t give police consent to search a person’s cell phone.

Salary Transparency
Employers with 15 or more employees must include information about benefits and the salary range on job postings, according to House Bill 3129. The law will also apply to businesses hiring for remote work positions in Illinois.

“When employers aren’t transparent about pay, gender and racial wage gaps widen, costing women and people of color valuable compensation,” Lt. Gov. Juliana Stratton said in a news release. “Illinois’ new Pay Transparency law is a resounding win for the working people who call our state home.”

“Junk” Health Insurance
Short-term, limited duration health insurance plans became illegal in Illinois beginning Jan. 1.

The plans, often called “junk insurance” by critics, do not meet the minimum standards of the federal Affordable Care Act.

The ban outlined in House Bill 2499 was part of Pritzker’s health insurance overhaul that lawmakers passed in the spring. It was aimed at reducing barriers to care for patients and making health care more affordable by expanding coverage requirements for insurance companies.

Short-term insurance plans are typically for people who have a lapse in health insurance coverage such as when they lose or change jobs, but they are different from COBRA benefits, which most employers are required to offer under federal law.

Supporters of the bill argued the plans are deceptive and stick consumers with huge out-of-pocket costs, but others said the plans provide consumers with an affordable option to fill a gap in coverage.

Caregiver Discrimination
House Bill 2161 adds family responsibilities to the list of categories protected from discrimination and retaliation in the workplace.

The new law prevents employers from taking adverse action against employees because of their responsibilities as a caregiver for a family member, which could cause them to miss work.

Bill sponsor Rep. Will Guzzardi, D-Chicago, told a House committee in April that pregnant women are a good example of who the bill is designed to help. He said pregnant women shouldn’t be passed up for a promotion or face other consequences at work in anticipation that they will be taking time off to care for their baby.

Guzzardi stressed the bill does not protect employees who fail to meet job performance requirements.

AI Regulations
New laws governing artificial intelligence took effect Jan. 1. It will be illegal to generate child pornography using AI, according to House Bill 4623.

Supporters of the bill, including the Illinois Attorney General’s Office, said it is becoming more difficult to distinguish between real and AI-generated images. They said updating Illinois’ child pornography laws was a necessary to step allow law enforcement to identify and prosecute child pornography cases.

House Bill 4875 also adds new protections to prohibit using AI to recreate a person’s voice, image or likeness for commercial purposes without the person’s consent. Recording artists can seek damages for violations of the law.

Politics and Religion at Work
Employees can’t be required to sit through work meetings discussing religion or politics starting Jan. 1.

Senate Bill 3649, an initiative of the Illinois AFL-CIO, creates new protections for employees who skip out on such meetings and prevents employers from retaliating against them.

The law does not prohibit discussing religion or politics at work, but employees are not required to participate in the discussions if such activities are not part of their job.

The law excludes non-profit and advocacy groups where politics or religion may be part of a job.

Coming Later in 2025
Pritzker’s signature health

reform package went into effect on Jan. 1, but most provisions don’t have to be implemented until the beginning of 2026.

House Bill 5395 bans “step therapy,” which requires patients to try and fail treatments preferred by insurance companies before they can receive the treatment recommended by their doctor.

It also bans insurance companies from requiring prior authorization for emergency in-patient mental health treatment, requires insurers to keep up-to-date lists of in-network providers and expands the power of the Illinois Department of Insurance to regulate premium rates.

Many hotels in Illinois will no longer be allowed to provide customers with single-use plastic soap and shampoo beginning July 1 under Senate Bill 2960. The move is designed to cut down on waste from single-use products. The Illinois Hotel & Lodging Association supported the change. Hotels with fewer than 50 rooms have until 2026 to make the change.

Other New Laws
NIL money: Student athletes at NCAA universities can earn name, image and likeness money directly from their universities. House Bill 307 was an initiative of the University of Illinois.

Hearing aids: Insurance providers must cover medically prescribed hearing aids for all people under House Bill 2443. Coverage was previously only required for those under 18.

Gym memberships: House Bill 4911 requires gyms and fitness centers to accept multiple ways for people to cancel their membership. Physical fitness locations also must now allow customers to cancel their membership by email or online. Customers will also be allowed to submit written notice for canceling their membership by mail.

Subscription renewals: Businesses that offer a free trial or promotional period for their product or service must notify customers at least three days before the subscription automatically renews at a paid rate under Senate Bill 2764. The law only applies to subscriptions longer than 15 days.

Crime victim DNA: DNA evidence collected from a person who is the victim of a crime to aid a criminal investigation cannot be entered into a DNA database, according to House Bill 1168.

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"The Preaching Pen"

Paul’s Advice to Corinth: 1 Corinthians 1:10

Today, as was in the 1st Century, confusion causes much trouble when it comes to pleasing God. As a result of confusion, division ensues and disharmony destroys Godly unity. If division was not compatible with the gospel in Paul’s day, is it same for our day? Here is Paul’s advice to those 1st Century Corinthians. Lesson #1: Speak the same thing (meaning the instructions from Jesus Christ). The unity of message means that each should have same message, after all, it was delivered once Jude 3. Paul wasn’t ashamed of this one message Romans 1:16, Peter wasn’t ashamed on the Day of Pentecost of the one message Acts 2:47, and we must not be ashamed to speak the same thing. Lesson #2: be no divisions among you (we must practice unity). Dissentions or schisms between what we say and what the Bible concludes only offer 2 Tim 4:3-4 disrespect and Matt 15:1-9 traditions of men. Christ was contradictory purposed against man — we must be unified in practice and unified in worship. We must follow the plan HE established in Eph 5:1. Lesson #3: but ye be perfectly joined together (we must strive to have the same mind-unity of attitude), Our mental outlook must come from the gospel 2 Tim 3:12. Obedience brings 1) knowledge, 2) Patience, and 3) hope James 5:11, 2 Cor 7:4. Lesson #4: same judgment (we must have a unity of opinions). The Bible challenges us to all think the same way. THE BIBLE WAY. Our purpose is derived from gospel John 17:21. What was Christ’s purpose? Luke 19:10, Matt 18:11 We need to adjust our opinions and world views to align with the gospel. Unity is not union. Unity means oneness, sharing a sense of common (fellowship) purpose. Whereas union means being united; you can be united but not sharing unity. But if you share unity, you are in union with one another. May we strive to please God and in doing so, we please ourselves.

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Ryan Thornsberry,
Anna Church of Christ

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Get a head start on resolutions

After the rush of the holiday season has largely ended, and the excess of the season starts to weigh on celebrants' minds, it is customary for many people to start thinking about the changes they want to implement in the new year. According to a Pew Research Center survey of United States adults conducted in January 2024, 30 percent of people reported making at least one resolution, with half of this group making more than one. The survey also found that young adults are the most likely to make New Year's resolutions, with 49 percent of those between the ages 18 and 29 saying they have made a resolution.

It's never too early to start thinking about what to improve upon in 2025, or which goals to set. Here are some common resolutions and how to implement them.

· Exercise more. Getting in shape is one of the most popular New Year's resolutions every year. Gym memberships spike and people often invest in home exercise equipment around this time of year. According to the American College of Sports Medicine, wearable technology continues to be a top trend in fitness and has been a mainstay since 2016. While Fitbit and the Apple Watch series have remained

strong contenders, one also may want to invest in the Garmin Vivomove, which boasts wireless charging. Tracking fitness goals can keep those resolutions going strong.

· Improve mental well-being. Getting in shape is not the only health-related goal this time of year. Mental health also comes into play when people make their resolutions. Taking opportunities to slow down and be more mindful can help. One way to do so is through journaling. Human behavior expert and author Natalie Friscia Pancetti, says journaling reduces stress, helps with anxiety, encourages confidence, and can improve perceptions. This is why she developed a journal with inspirational writing prompts as a companion to her "This Too" book and planner.

· Quit smoking. Quitting smoking is a worthy goal. Health care experts know smoking is the leading cause of lung cancer and has been linked to more than 27 diseases. Many people want to quit smoking, but the Mayo Clinic says only about 5 percent of people who try to quit succeed without a smoking cessation product. Nicotine replacement items are some of the most popular smoking cessation tools.

For those who want to go drug-free, Füm is a device that addresses the three major components of habit formation that occur with smoking. Employing flavored air, the device replaces the fixation of the hand-to-mouth habit with non-addictive plant extracts that are inhaled, simulating smoking without the negative effects.

· Learn a new language. Learning a new skill or language is another popular resolution. Today there are many apps available to help people learn one or more new languages. From Duolingo to Babbel to Memrise, there are programs available whether one is a visual learner or wants to jump right into specific phrases.



Happy New Year!

from all the staff and students
of Anna District
37 Schools!

happy new year

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5 New Year's resolutions to benefit the brain

Resolutions made at the start of a new year often focus on personal improvement. Giving up poor habits like smoking or drinking too much alcohol and losing weight through diet and exercise are some popular resolutions.

Health and wellness certainly dominates the resolution landscape. Improvement-minded individuals interested in gaining long-term benefits from their resolutions this year may want to consider ways to improve brain health and function. Here are five ideas to consider.

1. Get moving: Exercise does the body good and even positively affects the brain. The American Academy of Neurology has found aerobic exercise may play a significant role in reversing and preventing cognitive decline. Researchers have found that even a little exercise each day can result in improved brain function in less than six months. Andrew E. Budson, M.D., a professor of neurology at Boston University, also says aerobic exercise releases growth factors in the brain, which can help grow new brain cells.

2. Start a new hobby. When doing the same activities over and over, you eventually learn how to do those activities better. But doctors can't confirm this is actually helping the brain in a meaningful way. Rather, there is evidence that doing new things can be beneficial to the brain. So learning a new hobby, taking a class, or even learning to play a musical instrument can push the brain to improve from a cognitive standpoint, indicates The Healthy, a Reader's Digest brand.

3. Make more time for fun. Repeated stress can have detrimental effects on the body and mind. Harvard Health says stress has been linked to cognitive problems and a higher risk for Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. Taking time to relax and enjoy oneself can tame stress, and in

turn, alleviate issues affecting memory and cognition.

4. Practice mindfulness more often. Mindfulness is an exercise in paying attention to one's surroundings, senses and more. Too often people are multi-tasking and never fully devoting their attention to one thing. Mindfulness gives the brain a break and brings a person into the present.

5. Eat a better diet. The benefit of eating healthy foods extends beyond the waistline. Many of the foods that are good for the heart are important for preventing cognitive decline and dementias. A 2015 systemic review found strong evidence for a protective effect of the Mediterranean diet, according to researchers at Deakin University School of Medicine in Australia.

By making brain health a priority when coming up with New Year's resolutions this year, individuals can benefit for years to come.

Brunch begins the New Year right

The first official meal of 2025 should be memorable and flavorful. Chances are late night New Year's Eve revelry will make breakfast a nonstarter, but a New Year's Day brunch can hit the spot on January 1. When family members or guests rouse from their post-countdown slumbers, these brunch ideas and tips can kick off the new year with flavor.

Skip the mimosas

While it may be tempting to employ a little "hair of the dog" therapy to combat the ramifications of overindulgence from the evening prior, it is a better bet to skip any extra alcohol come the morning. Rather, serve plenty of hydrating refreshments, with water at the top of the list. For those who desire something with a little more zip, create a mocktail with fruit juice and

sparkling water.

Make-ahead meals

Serving foods that can be made in advance cuts back on the amount of work that needs to be done in the late morning of New Year's Day. Breakfast casseroles can be the way to go, as they pair many ingredients together and can be reheated. Fruit salads as well as homemade granola parfaits can be made in advance and then served during the brunch.

Consider bagels and breads

A platter of bagels, croissants and cinnamon rolls are easy to serve and might be a welcome way to fill the stomach. Paired with lox, cheeses and cold cuts, these carbohydrates can help complete the meal.

Sheet-pan options are easy

Brunch hosts and hostesses who choose to whip up foods during the brunch itself can employ some tactics to make the work easier. Crack eggs onto cheese-coated slices of thick bread and put under the broiler for perfectly cooked batch results.

Don't forget the sweets

Muffins and sweet rolls can blur the lines between meal and dessert; otherwise, serve alternative make-ahead desserts that are relatively easy, such as pound cakes or cookies.

Set up the coffee bar

Chances are a little caffeine might be necessary to jumpstart the day. Make coffee, tea, hot chocolate, and other warm beverages readily available with the accompanying creamers and flavorings so that brunch guests can customize their drinks.

What is the Year of the Snake?

Chinese New Year is a cultural phenomenon in China. In fact, the National Museum of Asian Art indicates Chinese New Year is the most important holiday in China, where a 15-day celebration incorporates age-old traditions in commemoration of the nation's culture and history. Chinese New Year also has a global footprint, and celebrations in various countries commemorate this unique event that heralds the arrival of spring and the beginning of a new year on the lunisolar calendar.

One notable tradition associated with the Chinese New Year involves animals. That tradition is traced to an ancient Chinese poem that told the story of 12 mythical animals that descended from the heavens in a particular order. The Rat was the first animal to arrive and help celebrate the coming spring, and the Pig was the last to make its presence known. Each Chinese New Year commemorates a different animal from that ancient poem, which is why celebrations are often

characterized as "Year of the (Name Animal)." Chinese New Year celebrants will commemorate the Year of the Snake in 2025. According to National Museums Liverpool, the snake is wise and intense. The Snake emphasizes physical beauty, which is why it's often associated with vanity. Travel China Guide adds that the snake carries meanings of malevolence, cattiness and mystery, but also notes that some in China believe a snake found in a courtyard is an omen of good luck. In addition, Chinese mythology characterizes the creator of the world as having a human head and the body of snake.

Compatibility is another notion associated with the animals of the Chinese Zodiac that feature so prominently in Chinese New Year celebrations. The Snake is considered most compatible with the Rooster, which the poem suggests was the tenth animal to descend. The Pig (twelfth) is considered the least compatible animal with the Snake.

Chinese New Year is a notably unique celebration.

Unique New Year's celebrations across the globe

It is time to turn the page on one year and usher in another. Each December 31, people all over the world reminisce, celebrate, plan, and party in honor of the changing calendar.

Many are likely familiar with some of the common ways to ring in the new year, which include champagne toasts, fireworks and watching the ball drop in Times Square. Yet, there are many other ways to celebrate this occasion and welcome a new year with hope and good luck. Enjoy these ways to commemorate the start of 2025.

· Make some noise. Although fireworks are commonplace on New Year's Eve in various locales around the world, in Thailand it once was traditional to fire guns to frighten off demons. National Thailand reports that it is no longer legal to fire weapons during New Year's Eve festivities, but other noisemakers can simulate the ancient tradition. Thailand also has its own New Year celebration in April called Songkran, a three-day event. It's customary to splash water and shoot colorful water guns, which is another idea for ringing in the new year.

· Smash pomegranates for luck. Many have heard of smashing grapes to make wine, and the band Smashing

Pumpkins has millions of devoted followers across the globe. The comic Gallagher used to smash watermelons on stage. But in Turkey, smashing a pomegranate outside your front door is said to bring good luck. The fruit is seen as a symbol of prosperity, abundance and health.

· Make some good luck "Hoppin' John." Hoppin' John is a traditional New Year's Day dish from regions of the southern United States. The dish is made with black-eyed peas and pork bacon and is said to bring good luck to those who consume it for the new year, according to the Old Farmers Almanac.

· Choose honey-dipped apples. People can take a page from the Jewish New Year tradition, which sees celebrants dipping apples in honey for a sweet new year. Rosh Hashanah takes place in late summer or early fall because it follows the Hebrew lunisolar calendar. However, anyone can apply similar customs to the New

Year's celebrations taking place each January 1.

· Put on some polka dots. In the Philippines, wearing polka-dotted clothing on New Year's Eve is a tradition said to bring good fortune in the new year, according to Philstar Life.

· Watch a sunrise. Chances are many revelers are staying up late on New Year's Eve and into the next day, so they'll have ample opportunity to catch the sunrise. In Japan, watching the first sunrise of the new year is called "hatsuhinode," and is a practice thought to bring good fortune.

· Grab some cash. There's a perpetuating superstition that it's better to have some extra money in your wallet to enter the New Year full of financial prosperity. Also, it's best to wipe out any unpaid debts before December 31 disappears; otherwise, the months ahead might not be financially sound.

New Year's traditions have persisted throughout the years and are borne of customs from all over the world.

Happy New Year!

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The Village of Dongola



Thank you for your loyal support. Have a safe and wonderful holiday!



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100 Years Ago This Month: Historical events from January 1925

The month of January has been home to many historical events over the years. Here's a look at some that helped to shape the world in January 1925.

- Christiania, the capital city of Norway, is renamed "Oslo" on January 1.
- Violence plagues Italy on January 2 as part of the fallout of Benito Mussolini's crackdown on opposition newspapers. Though King Victor Emmanuel III refuses to grant Mussolini the dictatorial powers the latter requested, he grants the Prime Minister tacit permission to respond to the violence how he sees fit.
- Nellie Tayloe Ross is inaugurated as the Governor of Wyoming on January 5, becoming the first woman elected to a gubernatorial office in United States history.
- Bhanupratap Deo is proclaimed as the new Raja of the princely state of Kanker within British India on January 8. The 3-year-old would rule until 1947, when the princely states are abolished as India gains its independence.
- The British submarine HMS L24 sinks in the English channel on January 10. The submarine had collided with the Royal Navy battleship HMS Resolution, killing all 43 men aboard the L24.
- Al Capone survives an assassination attempt made by the North Side Gang on January 12 in Chicago. Capone was conducting business inside a State Street restaurant when the rival gang riddled his car with bullets, prompting the mobster to order a bulletproof Cadillac.
- Joseph Stalin fires Leon Trotsky as Commissar for Military and Navy Affairs on January 15. A prominent critic of Stalin, Trotsky is eventually murdered at his home in Mexico City by a Stalinist agent

in 1940.

- Huddie Ledbetter, better known as "Lead Belly," is granted a full pardon by Texas governor Pat Morris Neff on January 16. The blues musician had served seven years of his prison sentence after being found guilty of killing a relative over a fight for a woman.
- "The Gentleman Bandit" Gerald Chapman is arrested in Muncie, Indiana on January 18. Chapman is apprehended thanks in part to informant Ben Hance, who is murdered in August in a killing that is believed to have been performed as retaliation for Chapman's incarceration.
- Roy Olmstead, a lieutenant in the Seattle Police Department, is indicted by a federal grand jury on January 19. Olmstead is accused of smuggling alcohol into the country from Canada in violation of the Volstead Act.
- Curtis Welch, the only doctor in Nome, Alaska, sends an urgent message via radio telegram on January 22. The message alerts all major Alaskan towns of an impending outbreak of diphtheria, while a second message sent to the U.S. Public Health Service in Washington, D.C. highlights

the desperate need for anti-toxin. Roughly 300,000 units of antitoxin are discovered in Anchorage on January 26, temporarily containing the epidemic.

- Paul Newman is born in Shaker Heights, Ohio, on January 26. The son of Theresa Garth and sporting goods store owner Arthur Sigmund Newman, Sr., the younger Newman would grow up to become one of the world's most recognizable movie stars and a devoted philanthropist.
- A riot breaks out in Berlin on January 27. Numerous injuries are reported as monarchists, communists and republicans clash during demonstrations held on the birthday of ex-kaiser Wilhelm II.
- On January 28, nominee to the U.S. Supreme Court Harlan Fiske Stone testifies before the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee. Stone is eventually confirmed by a vote of 71 to 6.
- After nearly a year of fighting and 14,000 deaths, the Khost rebellion against King Amanullah Khan is ended in Afghanistan on January 30. The rebellion is ultimately unsuccessful, but many of the king's reforms are delayed until 1928.

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Report Drunk Drivers
You can help by reporting suspected drunk drivers to your nearest Illinois State Police headquarters. From your cellular telephone or citizens band radio, provide the state police with the following information:
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Number One Killer
Alcohol is the number one killer on American roadways. Alcohol affects your vision and slows your reaction time so it takes longer to act in an emergency. Alcohol affects your driving even if you are below the level of illegal intoxication. Drinking even a small amount of alcohol increases your chances of causing a crash. Do not drink and drive.

Make a Plan
Illinois law enforcement personnel say make a plan for a sober ride home and remember these tips:
Designate a sober driver or make a plan to use public transportation or a ride-sharing service to get home safely. If available, use your community's sober ride. If you see an impaired driver on the road, pull over and contact 911. Have a friend who is about to drive impaired? Take the keys away and make arrangements to get them home safely. They'll thank you later. Always buckle up.

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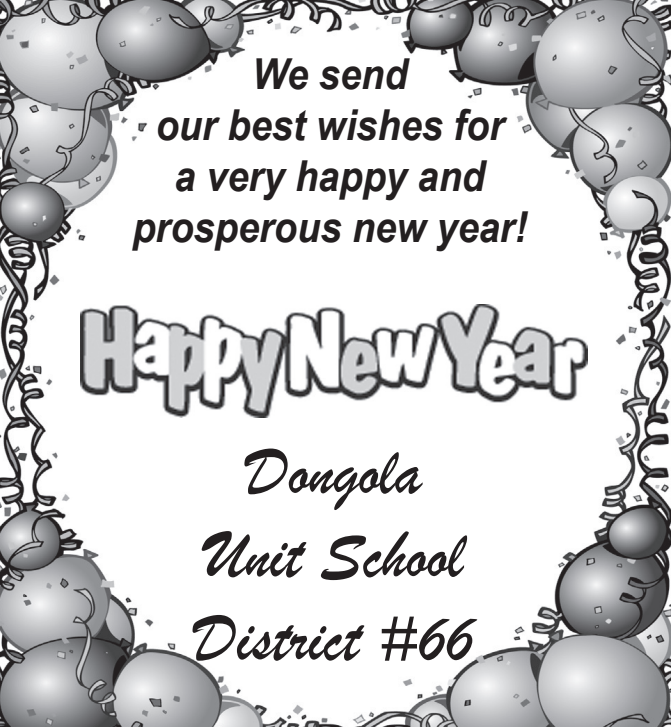
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Thank you for your loyal support this past year and we look forward to seeing you again in the new year.
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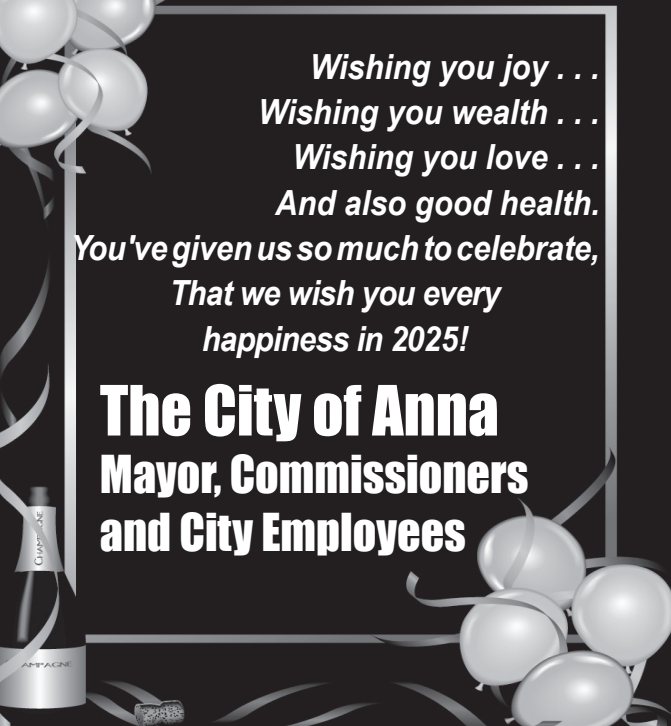
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The City of Anna
Mayor, Commissioners and City Employees

HAPPY NEW YEAR
Best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year to all our good friends..

HAPPY NEW YEAR
When the sun rises on the new year, may it bring peace and harmony for all with it.
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May your spirits soar and your dreams take wing in the year ahead. And may peace and freedom become a reality for all people, everywhere.

BEST WISHES
For A Happy New Year!
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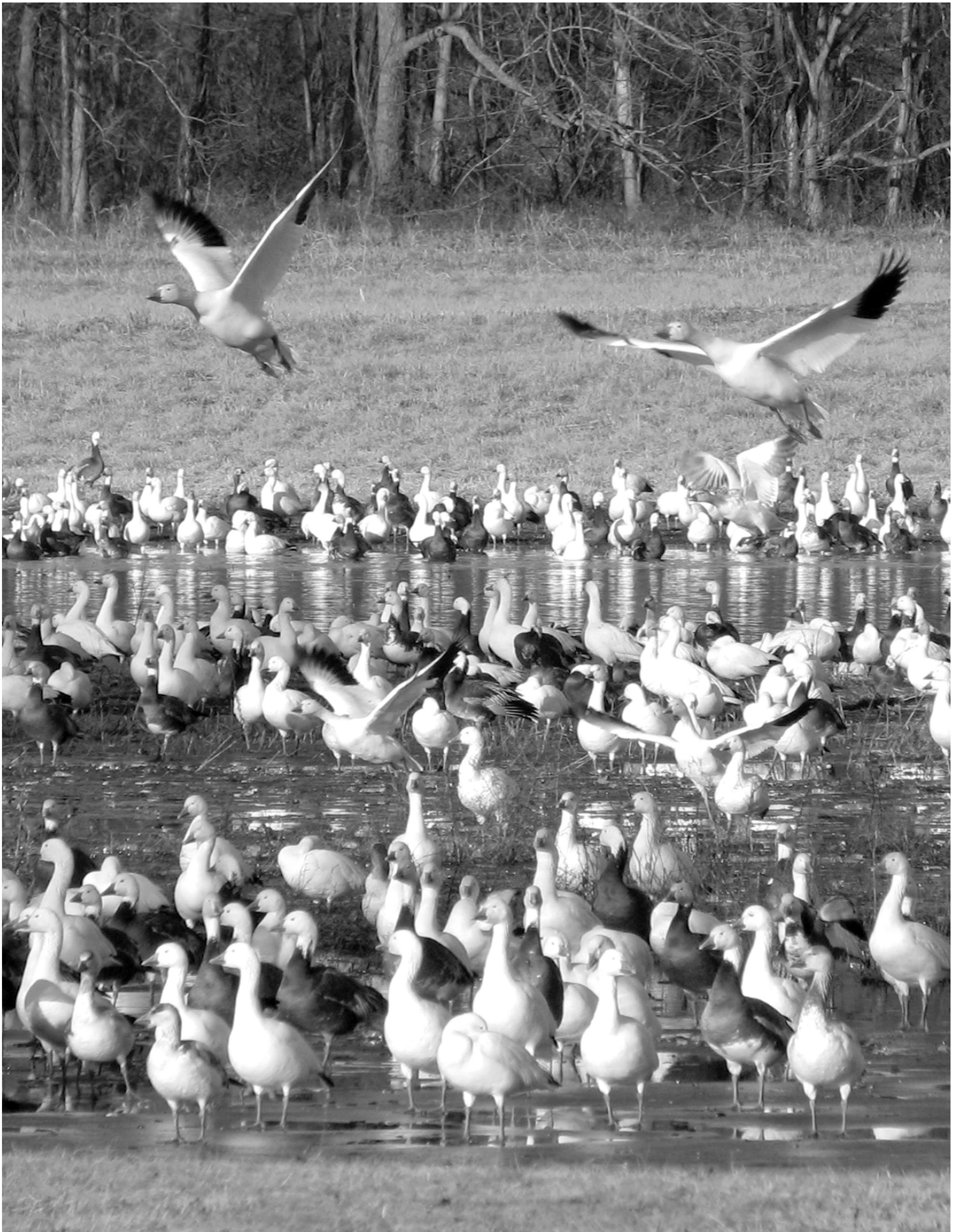
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Obituaries

Joan Cavaness (Graves) Edwards

Joan Cavaness (Graves) Edwards, 95, of Anna, passed away on Friday, December 20, 2024 at The Lutheran Home in Cape Girardeau, Missouri.

She was born on September 3, 1929, in Mounds, the daughter of Joe M. and Lena Mae (Cavaness) Graves. She lived in Southern Illinois all her life, moving to Anna at age 2.

Joan worked at Choate Mental Health and Developmental Center in Anna as an LPN Administrative and worked as a Dietary and Purchasing Agent for Head Start.

She was a member of Mount Moriah Lutheran Church in Anna.

She was a community servant of the highest caliber and her proudest achievement was having the Heliport at the Union County Hospital in Anna named after her due to her efforts in securing it for Union County as a Hospital Board Member for 25 years and was always an outspoken advocate of Union County.

She was a member of several organizations, such as the Daughters of the Union Veterans, the Masonic Order of the White Shrine of Jerusalem, where she held the honor of Past Worthy High Priestess, a Kentucky Colonel of the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels, a commission of distinction that can only be given by the Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, and most of all, she will always be remembered by many, as the Red Hat Society.



Survivors include her sons, Quinn Edwards and Jason Edwards; daughters-in-law Holly Wohlwend and Katie Edwards; stepdaughter Mary Lenigk; five grandchildren, Savannah Edwards, Kamryn Glasco, Joseph (Meghan) Wohlwend, Elizabeth (Dominic) Pietoso and Brynn Edwards; and four great-grandchildren.

Along with her parents, she was preceded in death by her son, Major Louis Joe Wohlwend; granddaughter Jackie Edwards; and one great-grandson.

Funeral services were at 1 p.m. Monday, December 23, at Crain Funeral Home in Anna-Jonesboro, with eulogy by family and friends. Interment followed the service at Anna City Cemetery.

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

Crain Funeral Home in Anna-Jonesboro was in charge of arrangements.

Greg Webb

Greg Webb, 65, of Ullin, died Friday, Dec. 27, 2024, at his home.

He was born on July 1, 1959, in Cairo, the son of Ronald and Sue Isom Webb.

He married the love of his life, Cindy Webb, and she survives.

He loved to farm, as well as fishing and hunting of all kinds. He also loved riding side by sides. He was a member of the National Rifle Association, the Farm Bureau, the National Wildlife Turkey Federation and Whitetails Unlimited.

Other survivors include his daughter, Katelan Webb; two sisters, Sheila (Jerry) Hase and Sondra (Brian) Halmaghi; as well as many other friends and family.

Along with his parents, he was preceded in death by his grandfather, Henry Alexander Webb.

Graveside services were at 11 a.m. Monday, Dec. 30, at St. John's Cemetery near Dongola, with Brent Miller officiating.

A visitation followed the graveside service, with everyone asked to dress casual.

Memorials can be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

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

Crain Funeral Home in Ullin was in charge of arrangements.



gola, with Brent Miller officiating.

A visitation followed the graveside service, with everyone asked to dress casual.

Memorials can be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

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

Crain Funeral Home in Ullin was in charge of arrangements.

Margaret Ruth Peeler

Margaret Ruth Peeler, 100, of Dongola, died Sunday, Dec. 22, 2024, at Deaconess Illinois Union County Hospital in Anna.

She was born on Sept. 13, 1924, at home in Union County, the daughter of Johnny and Nellie Knupp Fisher.

She married William Allen Peeler in 1945. He preceded her in death on Feb. 18, 1993.

She is survived by her two sons, Johnny Peeler and Mike (Janet) Peeler, all of Dongola; four grandchildren, Tim (Beth) Peeler, Jason (Santhi) Peeler, Jeremy Peeler and Amanda; four great-grandchildren, Claire, Camden, Charlotte and Christian; other relatives and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Allen Peeler; a son, Jack Peeler;

granddaughter Jaime Mullins; and siblings Don Fisher, Colleen Corzine and Bonnie Jo Ford.

She was a member of Mt. Zion Cumberland Presbyterian Church. She retired from the Anna State Hospital, where she worked for many years as a mental health technician. She enjoyed cooking for her family and quilting with the Willing Hands quilting club.

Funeral services were at 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 28, at Rendleman & Hileman Funeral Home in Anna. Interment was held privately at Mt. Pisgah Cemetery in Dongola.

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

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

James William Dillow

James William Dillow, 81, of Perryville, Mo., and formerly of Anna, died Sunday, Dec. 29, 2024, at Mercy Southeast Hospital in Cape Girardeau.

He was born on Feb. 22, 1943, in Union County, the son of James and Clyde Harris Dillow.

His mother and father died when James was a very small child. He was raised by his aunt and uncle, Stella and Lloyd Harris.

He married Jackie Simms Wagoner on June 3, 1978, in Anna.

He is survived by his wife, Jackie Dillow; daughters Lynn (Buddy) Hellman and Lea (Randy) Wright; grandchildren Dylan (Alanna) Hellman, Blake Hellman, Madison (Bradley) West and Jacob Wright; great-grandchildren Carter and Lenna Hellman; siblings Bill Dillow, Alma Osterholm and Ken (Carol) Dillow; nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents; son John Wagoner; and sisters Juanita Freeman, Mary Lou Lang and Betty Grant.

Mr. Dillow was a member of the First Baptist Church of Jonesboro. He served in the U.S. Army.

He was a lifelong resident of Union County, working as a contractor, building structures and homes throughout the county. He loved to work.

He was a very devoted Christian and family man. He cherished his family and loved spending time with them. He and Jackie greatly enjoyed camping and traveling.



Funeral services for James Dillow will be at 1 p.m. Friday, Jan. 3, at Rendleman & Hileman Funeral Home in Anna, with Pastor Nathan Ammon officiating.

Interment will follow in the Anna Cemetery. Graveside military rites will be conducted by Carroll P. Foster Post No. 3455 of the VFW in Anna and the Illinois Army National Guard funeral honor team of Marion.

Visitation will be from 11 a.m. until the service time at 1 p.m. at the funeral home.

Memorials can be made to the Missouri National Veterans Memorial in Perryville, Mo. Envelopes will be available at Rendleman & Hileman Funeral Home.

To leave online condolences for the family of James Dillow, visit his memorial page on the Rendleman & Hileman Funeral Home website at rendlemanhilemanfh.com.

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



Henry Grant Taylor

Henry Grant Taylor, 99, of Ullin, died Thursday, Dec. 26, 2024, at the Illinois Veterans Home in Anna.

He was born on Aug. 15, 1925, in Dongola, the son of John L. and Augusta Peeler Taylor.

He married the love of his life, June Brown, on May 29, 1947, and together they spent over 36 years together until her passing in December of 1983.

Mr. Taylor served in the U.S. Army Air Force Post World War II in occupied Japan.

He had worked in the petroleum industry as a sales representative and farmed. He was a member of the local VFW and the First Lutheran Church of Dongola. He loved music and dancing.

He is survived by his son, Larry (Jerri) Taylor of Ullin; granddaughters Beth (Patrick) Dallas and Laura (Andrew) Zanowski; grandson Jason Crow; eight great-grandchildren, Tilman Dallas, Luke Dallas, J.J. Dallas, Carson Dallas, Ellie Zanowski, Charlotte Zanowski, Lacey Crow and Lauren Crow; special friend of 16 years, Wilma Bass; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife; and siblings Almeta Modglin, Lenora Knupp, Fae Smith and Glen Taylor.



Funeral services were at 1 p.m. Monday, Dec. 30, at the First Lutheran Church of Dongola, with the Rev. Chere Riedel officiating.

Interment with full military honors followed the funeral service at Green Lawn Memorial Gardens in Villa Ridge.

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

Crain Funeral Home in Ullin was in charge of arrangements.



Melvin Wayne Henderson

Melvin Wayne Henderson, 63, of Anna, and formerly of Herrin, died Friday, Dec. 20, 2024.

He was born on Oct. 13, 1961, in Herrin, the son of Melvin Juvers and Ruth Ann Griffen Henderson.

He loved fishing and hunting, and was an avid jokester. Most of all, he loved his family and would remind them at this time to "grieve not for me, for I am in a better place now."

Survivors include his sons, Nicholas (Damian) Henderson and Dillan Shayne Henderson; other children Tony, Heather, Ashley and Michael; sisters Lou Ann Henderson and Tina Mack (Jimmy May); family friends Cathy Crawford and Raechel Fitzpatrick; and many other friends and family. He was preceded in death by his parents.

No services will be held at



this time. The cremation of Melvin Wayne Henderson has been personally handled by the staff of Crain Funeral Home.

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

Crain Funeral Home in Anna-Jonesboro is in charge of arrangements.

Deborah 'Debbie' Lynn Miller

Deborah "Debbie" Lynn Miller, born February 10, 1951, passed away peacefully on December 24, 2024, near her home of Anna, Illinois, surrounded by her loved ones.

She leaves behind a legacy of laughter, mischief and a never-ending playlist of her own whimsical songs.

Debbie, a self-proclaimed "forever girlfriend" of Mickey Mouse, now joins her parents, Francis "Peggy" and Dean Pittman, in the ultimate adventure.

Debbie had a way of making everything brighter, funnier, and more magical, and while we imagine she's already redecorating heaven for Christmas, those of us left behind will do our best to carry on her traditions – though we doubt we'll ever match her festive flair.

Debbie's greatest joy was her family, who she adored (even when they didn't laugh at her jokes).

She leaves behind her daughter, Deana Zastudil, and her son-in-law, Robert, who she lovingly teased every chance she got; her grandkids, Ashley Morris (Donnie Kiernan), Christopher Morris and Megan Morris (Joey Scheerle), who all inherited her mischievous spirit; step-grandchildren Amanda (Zac) Lois and Joshua (Ashley) Zastudil; her great-grandchildren, Kolt, James Edenfield and Bella Kiernan, who she loved to spoil; step-great-grandchildren Grant, Gavin, Graham and Amelia; brother Dean (Tina) Pittman; sister-in-law Barb Pittman; cousin and lifelong best friend, Toni Livengood, her partner-in-crime for every shenanigan.

She was preceded in death by her parents and brother.



Mark Pittman.

Debbie adored her family, Christmas (especially the kind with lights you can see from space), daytime soaps and singing about just about anything. Whether it was a song about doing the dishes or an ode to her great-grandkids, her creations were always funny, heartfelt, and entirely Debbie. She brought joy and giggles wherever she went – and let's be honest, she probably left a trail of glitter, too.

A private family ceremony will be held in Champaign, where Debbie will be entombed alongside her parents at Mt. Hope Cemetery. She'd probably tell us to skip the tears and have a toast instead, preferably with a Mickey Mouse-shaped cookie in hand.

Debbie, you were a firecracker in a world that sometimes forgets how to sparkle. Thank you for reminding us to laugh a little louder, love a little harder and never, ever grow up. We'll keep singing for you.

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

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

News from

Anna First Baptist Church

Anna First Baptist Church met for worship on Dec. 29, which was the last Sunday of 2024.

Pastor Lupe welcomed those in the sanctuary and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

An opening prayer and prayer over the prayer list was held.

Cissi Cuthbertson did the call to worship, which was about "Praise and Adoration."

The worship team led in the singing of "How Great Thou Art," "Thank You Lord" and "Agnus Dei."

Pastor Lupe's sermon was titled "No Excuses." Scripture was from Exodus and Judges.

The sermon shared that "making excuses delays the fulfillment of God's purpose for our lives and robs us of the joy that comes from walking in obedience to His will.

"When we serve God according to His calling, we align ourselves with His perfect plan, which brings blessings to us and to those we impact.

"Excuses reflect a lack of trust in God's power to equip and guide us for the tasks He has given us. God calls us to faithfulness, not perfection, and He promises to work through our weaknesses to accomplish His glory."

Sunday School for all ages meets at 9 a.m. each Sunday morning.

The church's worship services 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.

McGrath receives Service Award from Edward Jones

Phillip McGrath, an Edward Jones financial advisor in Anna, recently received the firm's Service Award.

The award recognizes 15 years of hard work and enthusiasm with Edward Jones.

The Service Award is first earned after five years of service at the firm and at every five-year increment thereafter.

McGrath was one of Edward Jones' 3,987 financial advisors to receive the award.

"I can't believe it's been 15 years," McGrath said in a news release. "This firm has proved to be everything I expected. It is truly dedicated to individual investors and understanding each investor's unique financial goals. For that reason, I am proud to represent this firm in Anna."

The Edward Jones branch office business model, with nearly 16,000 branches throughout North America, allows the firm's more than 19,000 financial advisors to identify what

matters most to each individual client and create personalized strategies, with the goal of developing long-lasting relationships to help keep them on track toward their goals.

McGrath's office is located at 311 S. Main St. in Anna.

Edward Jones is a leading North American financial services firm, with 20,000 financial advisors as of Nov. 4, 2024.

The firm serves more than 8 million clients with a total of \$2.2 trillion in client assets under care as of Sept. 27, 2024.

Edward Jones' purpose is to partner for positive impact to improve the lives of its clients and colleagues, and together, better communities and society.

Through the dedication of the firm's approximately 54,000 associates and a branch presence in 68 percent of U.S. counties and most Canadian provinces and territories, the firm is committed to helping more people achieve financially what is most important to them.



News from

Anna Nazarene Church

A morning worship service was held Sunday, Dec. 29. Announcements were given by Jessica Elkins. Music was led by Pastor Randy Wright and the worship team.

A message titled “To Be Better Today Than Yesterday” was brought by Pastor Wright. Scripture was from 2 Corinthians and Ephesians.

There was no Sunday evening service.

Birthdays: Curt Lyerla, Dec. 31; Ed Grisham, Jan. 3.

Anniversary: Robert and Nancy Smith, Jan. 1.

Sunday, Jan. 5

Breakfast, 9 a.m. Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. Morning service, 10:35 a.m. Evening worship service, 6 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 7

NDI board meeting, 6 p.m. Church board meeting, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 8

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.

Arrest made in connection with fatal accident involving state trooper

Illinois State Police, ISP, Division of Criminal Investigation Zone 1 on Dec. 24 announced the arrest of 69-year-old John Fleet of Wilmington in connection with Scott’s Law (a Class 4 felony) after a fatal crash the night before involving Trooper Clay M. Carns.

Around 9:42 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 23, ISP reported that Trooper Carns observed debris in a lane on southbound I-55 just north of Blodgett Road near Channahon.

He initiated his emergency lights, pulling over to the right shoulder. Trooper

Carns exited his vehicle and was standing in the lane grabbing the debris when a Chevrolet Silverado struck Trooper Carns. The driver of the Chevrolet was identified as John Fleet.

Trooper Carns was taken to St. Joseph Hospital in Joliet, where at approximately 10:45 p.m., he succumbed to his injuries. Fleet was not injured and remained on the scene.

Trooper Carns was 35 years old and served 11 years as an officer with ISP. He was assigned to Troop 3.

He is survived by his wife Meghan, children Gray and Ally, parents Patti and Dan-

ny Carns and siblings Chad Carns, Erica (Carns) Raciack and Elyssa Carns.

On Dec. 24, the Will County state’s attorney’s office approved a Scott’s Law charge against Fleet. ISP also issued Fleet multiple Illinois Vehicle Code citations. The charges were not detainable offenses and Fleet was released.

As of Dec. 24, ISP had suffered 26 Move Over Law-related crashes, with 12 troopers injured and one death.

In 2023, ISP had 21 Move Over Law-related crashes, with seven troopers injured; and suffered 25 crashes in 2022 leaving 13 troopers

injured.

The Move Over Law, also known as “Scott’s Law” in Illinois, requires all drivers to move over when approaching an emergency vehicle or any vehicle with its emergency or hazard lights activated.

A person who violates the Move Over Law faces a fine of no less than \$250 and no more than \$10,000 for a first offense.

If the violation results in injury to another person, the violator’s driver’s license will be suspended for a mandatory period of anywhere between six months and two years.

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



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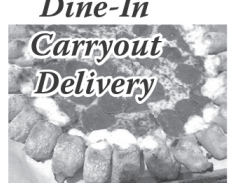
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How Far Will You Go?



Photo Credit istockphoto.com/RichLegg

How far will you go in life? In the dictionary, the word “success” is listed as a noun. But is it possible that true success can be viewed as an ongoing journey, perhaps more aptly a verb? If so, what is the route and where do we find our direction? What about the detours along the way? Proverbs 3:5-6 says, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.” How far will you go in life? Begin by worshipping at your house of worship this week; you will go as far as your faith takes you.

Weekly Scripture Reading

Philippians	Philippians	Philippians	Hebrews	Hebrews	Hebrews	Matthew
2.1-30	3.1-21	4.1-23	1.1-14	2.1-18	3.1-19	1.1-17

Scriptures Selected by the American Bible Society

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Sunday
Worship Service
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Wednesday
Bible Study
7pm





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REAL ESTATE

Looking to buy a home, very private. Around 1,800 to 2,000 sq ft., acreage OK. Location in the city limits or AJ vicinity. Call 618-614-2777. 3-5gp

HELP WANTED

HELP WANTED: The City of Anna, IL is accepting applications for the position of a Full-Time General Laborer, as well as, a Full Time/Part Time General Laborer. Candidates must be at least 18 years of age. Please contact the Human Resources Department at 618-833-8528 with any questions. Applications will be available for interested candidates at Anna City Hall or online at cityofanna.org. Please return employment application to the Human Resources Department at Anna City Hall, 103 Market Street Anna, IL 62906 or by email to mmcreynolds@cityofanna.org. Positions will remain open until filled. EOE 4-5gp

HELP WANTED: Automotive Mechanics instructor for Five County Regional Vocational System located in Tamm. Qualification: 60 semester hours of accredited college credit and documentation evidence of 2,000 hours of work experience in the automotive mechanic repair field, and necessary requirements for Illinois licensure. Interested persons should send letter of application and resume to Patrick Harner, Five County Regional Vocational System, P.O. Box 70, Tamm, IL 62988 or patrickpharner@fivecountyrvs.com 2-3p, 3-4g

PUBLIC NOTICE

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

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, f 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

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

FARMERS STATE BANK OF ALTO PASS, a state chartered bank,

Plaintiff,

vs.

BRONSON SHADOWENS; BRANDON SHADOWENS; UNKNOWN HEIRS OR LEGATEES OF SHEILA R. YATES f/k/a SHEILA R. SHADOWENS, Deceased; DAVID B. GARAVALLIA, as Special Representative of Sheila R. Yates f/k/a Sheila R. Shadowens, deceased; UNKNOWN OWNERS; AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS,

Defendants.

No. 2024-FC-5

NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure entered by the Circuit Court of the First Judicial Circuit, Union County, Illinois, Case No. 2024-FC-5, FARMERS STATE BANK OF ALTO PASS, a state chartered bank v. BRONSON SHADOWENS, et al., Defendants, the property hereinafter described or so much thereof as shall be sufficient to satisfy said judgment, will be sold to the highest bidder.
Contact Tom Jones,

so much thereof as shall be sufficient to satisfy said judgment, will be sold to the highest bidder.
(A) The name, address and telephone number of the person to contact for information regarding the real estate is: Tom Jones, 55 N. Elm, Alto Pass, Illinois, 62905, (618) 893-2464.
(B) The common address and other common description, if any, of the real estate is: 1210 Bethel Church Road, Cobden, IL.
(C) The legal description of the real estate is:
A part of the North Half of the Northeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section 26, in Township 11 South, Range 1 West of the Third Principal Meridian described as follows: Beginning at the Northwest corner of the North Half of the Northeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section 26, in Township 11 South, Range 1 West of the Third Principal Meridian; thence easterly along the North line of the said North Half of said Quarter-Quarter to a distance of 1320 feet, more or less; thence southerly along the East line of the said North Half of said Quarter-Quarter a distance of 208.7 feet to a point; thence westerly parallel to the North line of said North Half of said Quarter-Quarter to a point on the West line of said North Half of said Quarter-Quarter which is 208.7 feet South of the point of beginning; thence northerly along the West line of the said North Half of said Quarter-Quarter a distance of 208.7 feet to the point of beginning, situated in the County of Union and State of Illinois.
(D) The description of the improvements on the real estate is: A 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom home with approximately 1,560 square feet of gross living area.
(E) The time and place of the sale are: Public sale at 9:00 o'clock a.m. on January 22, 2025, in the Lobby of the Union County Courthouse, 309 W. Market Street, Jonesboro, Illinois.
(F) The terms of the sale are: Cash or certified check or the equivalent thereof at the time of sale.
(G) Title to the real estate will be conveyed subject to all general real estate taxes which are a lien upon the real estate, and special assessments, if any; other exceptions, reservations, licenses, if any, set forth in the title insurance commitment, easements, covenants and restrictions of record, and parties in possession.
FARMERS STATE BANK OF ALTO PASS
BY: Michael R. Twomey, One of Plaintiff's attorneys
BARRETT, TWOMEY, BROOM, HUGHES & HOKE, LLP
Attorneys at Law
100 North Illinois Ave.
P.O. Box 3747
Carbondale, IL 62902-3747
Tel: (618) 457-0437
e-mail: mrtwomey@btbhh.com 8221-948705

REAL ESTATE

NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure entered by the Circuit Court of the First Judicial Circuit, Union County, Illinois, Case No. 2024-FC-5, FARMERS STATE BANK OF ALTO PASS, a state chartered bank v. BRONSON SHADOWENS, et al., Defendants, the property hereinafter described or so much thereof as shall be sufficient to satisfy said judgment, will be sold to the highest bidder.
Contact Tom Jones,

Farmers State Bank of Alto Pass, 55 N. Elm, Alto Pass, Illinois, 62905, telephone: (618) 893-2464, for information regarding the real estate.
The common address of the real estate is as follows: 1210 Bethel Church Road, Cobden, Illinois.
Improvements on the real estate are: A 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom home with approximately 1,560 square feet of gross living area.
Public sale to be held at 9:00 o'clock a.m. on January 22, 2025, in the Lobby of the Union County Courthouse, 309 W. Market Street, Jonesboro, Illinois.
The terms of the sale will be cash or certified check or the equivalent thereof at the time of sale.
Title to the real estate will be conveyed subject to all general real estate taxes which are a lien upon the real estate, and special assessments, if any; other exceptions, reservations, licenses, if any, set forth in the title insurance commitment, easements, covenants and restrictions of record, and parties in possession.
FARMERS STATE BANK OF ALTO PASS, Plaintiff
BY: Michael R. Twomey, one of Plaintiff's attorneys
BARRETT, TWOMEY, BROOM, HUGHES & HOKE, LLP
Attorneys at Law
100 North Illinois Avenue
P.O. Box 3747
Carbondale, IL 62902-3747
Tel: (618) 457-0437
e-mail: mrtwomey@btbhh.com 8221-948705

News from

First Baptist Church, Jonesboro

On Sunday, Dec. 29, Pastor Perry Williams spoke in the morning service.
His message addressed the story of a childless couple, the parents of John the Baptist. The message shared that “even though Zechariah had unbelief, God’s promise could not be canceled.” Scripture was from Luke in the New Testament.
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. Marlee Smith sang the song, “We All Bleed the Same.”
Avery Goines and Danielle Mayfield were baptized and welcomed into the church family.
Men’s and women’s Bible studies were scheduled at 6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 30.
The church office was closed Wednesday, Jan. 1, for New Year’s Day.
Women on Mission plan to meet at 9:30 a.m. Thursday, today.
Birthdays: Evanne Osman, Dec. 26; Larry Rendleman, Dec. 30;

Mary Lou Wright, Dec. 31; Jean Lynn, Jan. 2; Regina Osman, Jan. 3.
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.
Intended for Last Week
On Sunday, Dec. 22, Pastor Perry Williams spoke in the morning service. His message addressed “angels who do the will of God by not only announcing good news, but also by protecting us.” He told the story of Elisha and his servant surrounded by angels on horses and chariots of fire. Scripture was from 2 Kings in the Old Testament.
Connor Benbrook led worship in the absence of music director Dee Rose. Debbie York was the pianist. Molly Jones sang the song “Angels Among Us.”
On Tuesday evening, Dec. 26, a Christmas Eve

service was held.
The church office was closed Tuesday and Wednesday, Dec. 24-25, for the Christmas holiday.
Young people from the church planned to attend a Youth Extreme Conference Friday through Sunday, Dec. 27-29.
Birthdays: Carolyn Harvel, Stacy Hill, Dec. 24.
Anniversary: Michael and Stacy Freeman, Dec. 23, two years.

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:
A fish fry will be served Jan. 3 from 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. Star Karaoke will be at the post from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.
Mystify Music is scheduled to be at the post from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. Jan. 10.
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. The canteen will be closed on Christmas Day.
IDNR reminds waterfowl hunters to take precautions and thoroughly cook game meat to an internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit. Avoid handling sick or dead waterfowl found in the field. Further guidance for hunters can be found online.
In addition to detections in wild birds, Illinois and other states across the United States have seen detections in poultry.
“The Illinois Department of Agriculture, IDOA, encourages poultry owners to be aware of the risk, increase biosecurity measure and prevent contact with wild birds,” said Dr. Mark Ernst, IDOA state veterinarian. “In addition, we encourage poultry owners to report unusually large mortalities in their flocks and to be aware of IDPH’s recommendations regarding exposure to sick birds.”

State agencies monitoring avian flu morality events in waterfowl

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources, IDNR, reported Friday, Dec. 20, that it was monitoring a large event of waterfowl mortality at numerous locations throughout the state.
Test results which had been received indicated highly pathogenic avian influenza, HPAI, was the cause.
The public is reminded by IDNR to not handle or attempt to capture waterfowl or other wild birds displaying signs of illness.
IDNR will continue to monitor for HPAI mortality events throughout the state during the seasonal bird migration.
Members of the public are encouraged to report concentrations of five or more deceased birds found at one location to IDNR district wildlife biologists by going online at wildlifeillinois.org.
Due to risk of infection to other animals, dogs and other pets should be kept away from the carcasses of birds that may have died from HPAI.
If carcasses need to be disposed of, IDNR recommends following guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health, IDPH, which can be found online at dph.illinois.gov.
IDNR is unable to assist with carcass removal from non-IDNR properties in most situations.
Local animal control agencies should also take similar precautions and follow the guidelines in disposing of dead birds. In addition, IDPH recommends:
Do not send dying or dead birds to veterinarians, wildlife refuges, etc., for testing. Instead, notify your local health department or alert IDNR wildlife biologists in cases of five or more deceased birds found in one location.
People can get on antiviral medications after exposures to prevent illness.
If the public develops

any symptoms of the “flu,” such as fever, cough, sore throat, difficulty breathing, body aches, headaches, eye redness, vomiting or diarrhea, after exposure to sick or dead birds, they are asked to notify the local health department immediately. Upon seeking medical attention, please let any health care facility know of your exposure, IDPH advised.
Treatment must be started within two days of illness for it to be most effective, so the public is urged to not delay seeking care.
“While avian influenza generally poses a low

risk to the population, it is essential to take the necessary steps to avoid exposure, and to seek treatment quickly if you are exposed,” IDPH director Dr. Sameer Vohra said. “We encourage all Illinoisans to follow the advice of the experts at IDNR in order to avoid contact with sick birds, and to take any potential exposure seriously. These common-sense steps can help reduce the likelihood of spreading this illness.”
IDNR recommends that wildlife rehabilitators not accept waterfowl and other aquatic birds because of the elevated risk of infection by HPAI at this time.
Caution should also be taken when accepting raptors, scavengers and other birds displaying signs of illness due to risk of exposure to HPAI. Further guidance for wildlife rehabilitators regarding HPAI can be found online.

Union County

Fixin’s

By Suzan Harvel Wassail
From Vickie Jacobs Sparta, Illinois

4 lemons, cut in half
4 oranges, cut in half
1 1/2 quarts of water
Spice mix: 3 cinnamon sticks, 2 teaspoons whole allspice, 2 teaspoons whole cloves, 2 whole nutmegs
1/2 cup of honey or granulated sugar
1 gallon clear apple cider
2 bottles cranberry juice
In large stock pot, bring to a boil the lemons, oranges, water and spice mix. DO NOT press on fruit. Reduce heat and let simmer for 30 minutes.
Strain the mixture into another pot or large heat proof bowl, but DO NOT squeeze the fruit, as it will make it bitter. Discard fruit and spices.
Put the strained liquid back into the stock pot and add remaining ingredients. Heat on medium until hot and sugar is dissolved.
Serve warm and refrigerate leftovers (keep empty bottles from cider and juice).

County Line News

(Mill Creek and Upper Elco)

By Suzan Harvel

Another Swing in Weather

We’ve had another swing of spring to winter weather. I really wish it would stick with one and at this point I don’t really care which that is.
The creeks have been at a high level and some are overflowing at this point with the rain we’ve received this last week.
The Mississippi River sure doesn’t seem to be getting much of it though. I’ve been watching the land creep closer and closer to the shipping channels and wonder if the northern states are going to get enough rain and snow in an abundance to flow downstream in the spring of this new year. It certainly didn’t happen in 2024.
Change...
As we enter this new year, we are also dealing with a change in our government. I guess time will

tell if that’s a good thing or not.
Every year since I became old enough to vote (the 1970s) it seems each president brought some of both the good and bad.
It’s certainly not a job I would want. Have you noticed how quickly they seem to age after taking office? I sure as heck don’t need any help with THAT.
After Christmas...
For now, I guess I better quit rattling on and work on packing away all the Christmas debris. It sure didn’t seem like that much when I put it out. I suspect it’s like laundry and dust...it multiplies while you sleep.
Happy New Year
Happy New Year to you all. We hope each of you had a most safe and joyous holiday and that the new year brings you great health, prosperity and joy.

Community science project focuses on monitoring local weather data

“Nice weather we’re having.” “Looks like rain.” “Can you believe how cold it is?”

Whether the skies are clear, or a storm is incoming, people pay attention to the weather.

The weather prompts how we dress, where we go, and our plans for the day. We can’t control it, and it is one thing we all experience together.

It’s in this communal spirit that researchers at the University of Illinois and Extension are establishing a network of volunteer-operated local weather data monitoring stations that will help communities prepare and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Using a community-based approach, researchers with the Illinois Microclimate Extension Team project have started gathering climate data through a network of monitoring stations and volunteers as part of the two-year Extension collaboration grant project.

Samuel Stickley, one of the

principal investigators for the grant, said consistently gathering temperature, precipitation and other weather data points from multiple locations at a local scale gives researchers the data they need to model real-world microclimate conditions, such as urban heat islands, in a way that weather stations cannot.

“Understanding microclimate conditions can greatly help in assessing which communities in our cities are more

vulnerable to extreme climate conditions and allow us to target locations that would most benefit from climate change mitigation and adaptation plans, such as urban forestry programs,” said Stickley, a teaching assistant professor, Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences.

The data also would help scientists understand how plants and animals are affected by changing climate conditions.

The goal is to set up a network of six weather monitoring stations and 80 climate logging systems, first in east central Illinois and then in the Chicago area.

Weather stations are being set up at schools in Urbana, Champaign, and Danville and several climate logger systems have been placed around the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign campus, including at the historic Morrow Plots, as a starting point.

Project staff will work with teachers to integrate the project into their classrooms and students will gain hands-on science experience collecting climate data, maintaining the equipment and exploring the results.

Climate logging systems will be housed at local Extension offices and with Master Gardener and Master Naturalist volunteers who will be trained on how to collect and report data.

Television Listings

THURSDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM :30	Local Programs	Local Programs	Local	Local Programs	ESPN Original	Bang (HD)	(4:00) College Basketball (HD)	Big City	(5:03) “Imitation” (‘14)	(5:00) “Movie”	★★★★½ “The Hateful Eight” (‘15, Western) Samuel L. Jackson. (R) (HD)
7 PM :30	Ext. Makeover	Marriage Ghosts	Hell’s Kitchen (HD)	Law & Order (HD)	To Be Announced <i>Info unavailable.</i>	Bang (HD)			★★★ “Call Me by Your Name” Armie Hammer.	“Movie”	
8 PM :30	Murders	(‘01) Matlock	Animal	Law & Order: SVU		Bang (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	Wizards			
9 PM :30	Murders	“Claws”	Dutch			Bang (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	Wizards Waverly (HD)	(:13) “Jason Bourne” (‘16) Matt Damon.	“Movie”	“The Dead Don’t Hurt” (‘24) Vicky Krieps. (R)
10 PM :30	Local	Local		Local	SportsCenter (HD)	Bang (HD)	Law & Order: SVU Sex crimes. (HD)	Miraculous			
11 PM :30	Jimmy Kimmel Live	(:35) Late Show (HD)		(:35) Tonight (HD)	SportsCenter (HD)	“Tag” (‘18, Comedy) Ed Helms. (R) (HD)		Miraculous	“Chocolate Factory”	“Movie”	Dexter: Original Sin
	Nightline	Midnight	Local Programs	Late Night				Bluey			

JANUARY 2, 2025

FRIDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM :30	Local Programs	Local Programs	(5:00) Local Programs	Local Programs	TBA	Bang (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	(:20) “Movie”	“Role” (R)	(5:00) “Movie”	“Braveheart” (‘95) (R)
7 PM :30	High Potential (HD)	#AtHome Videos (HD)	College Basketball (Live) (HD)	Place Lopez vs.	(:43) To Be Announced <i>Info unavailable.</i>	★★★ “The Fate of the Furious” (‘17, Action) Vin Diesel.	WWE Friday Night SmackDown (HD)		“Stevie Van Zandt: Disciple” (‘24) Stevie Van Zandt.	“Movie”	Dexter: Original Sin
8 PM :30	(‘01) 20/20 <i>Investigative news.</i> (HD)	Fire Country (HD)		Dateline NBC <i>Investigative news.</i>				Wizards Waverly (HD)			The Agency (HD)
9 PM :30		Blue Bloods (HD)	Local Programs <i>Local info.</i>		(:05) To Be Announced <i>Info unavailable.</i>		Law & Order: SVU	“Movie”	“Scream” (‘96, Horror) David Arquette. (HD)	“Movie”	“The Big Short” (‘15) Christian Bale. (R) (HD)
10 PM :30	Local	Local		Local		(:45) ★★ “Fast & Furious” (‘09, Action) Vin Diesel. (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	Big City			
11 PM :30	Jimmy Kimmel Live	(:35) Late Show (HD)		(:35) Tonight (HD)	SportsCenter (HD)		Law & Order: SVU	Big City	(:55) “Scream 2” (‘97)	“Movie”	“The Aviator” (‘04)
	Nightline	Midnight	Local	Late Night				Big City			

JANUARY 3, 2025

SATURDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM :30	(3:30) NFL	Local Programs	Local	Local Programs	To Be Announced <i>Info unavailable.</i>	“Mockingjay” (‘15)	(3:30) IMSA WeatherTech Sports Car Championship (HD)	Big City	“House at End” (‘12)	(5:00) “Movie”	“Mission: Impossible Ghost Protocol” (‘11)
7 PM :30	(:15) NFL Football “Teams TBA” (HD)	Elsbeth (HD)	College Basketball <i>Michigan vs USC</i> (Live)	The Wall (HD)		★★★ “The Hunger Games” (‘12, Action) Jennifer Lawrence. (HD)		“Movie”	To Be Announced	“Movie”	
8 PM :30		48 Hours (HD)		Dateline NBC				ZOMBIES	(:38) “It Follows” (‘15, Horror) Maika Monroe.		“Murder Company” (‘24) (HD)
9 PM :30		48 Hours (HD)	Local Programs	Saturday Night Live	(:15) To Be Announced <i>Info unavailable.</i>		9-1-1 (HD)	ZOMBIES		“Movie”	
10 PM :30	(:15) Local Programs	Local Programs <i>Local info.</i>	Hell’s Kitchen (HD)	Local		“The Hunger Games: Catching Fire” (‘13)	9-1-1 (HD)	ZOMBIES	(:22)		“Panama” (‘22) Cole Hauser. (HD)
11 PM :30	Local Programs		Local Programs	Saturday Night Live (HD)	SportsCenter (HD)		9-1-1 (HD)	Big City	“Annabelle: Creation” (‘17)	“Movie”	Dexter: Original Sin

JANUARY 4, 2025

SUNDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM :30	Home Videos (HD)	NFL Football (Live)	NFL (Live) The OT	Football America (HD)	SportsCenter (HD)	Bang (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	Big City	(:12) The Last of Us x	“Monster”	“Hell or High Water”
7 PM :30	Home Videos (HD)	The 82nd Annual Golden Globes (HD)	Dutch Animal	(:15) Sunday Night Football (Live) (HD)	College Football “Division III Championship” (Live) (HD)	Bang (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	★★★ “Tangled” (‘10) Mandy Moore.	“Scott Pilgrim vs. the World” Michael Cera.	(:34) “Taken” (‘09) Liam Neeson.	Dexter: Original Sin
8 PM :30	“Toy Story 3” (‘10, Comedy) Tom Hanks. (HD)		Krapopolis Universal			Wipeout	Law & Order: SVU	StuGo		(:06) “Criminal” (‘16, Crime) Kevin Costner. (R)	The Agency (HD)
9 PM :30			Local Programs			★★½ “Divergent” (‘14) Shailene Woodley. (PG-13) (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	Big City	“Fast & Furious” (‘09) Vin Diesel.		Dexter: Original Sin
10 PM :30	Local Programs <i>Local info.</i>	Local Programs	Local Programs	Local Programs <i>Local info.</i>	Sports		Law & Order: SVU	Big City	“Warcraft” (‘16) Travis Fimmel.	★★½ “Immortals” (‘11, Fantasy) Henry Cavill.	The Agency (HD)
11 PM :30		Local Programs	Local Programs		SportsCenter with Scott (HD)	“Insurgent”	Law & Order: SVU	Bluey			Dexter: Original Sin

JANUARY 5, 2025

MONDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM :30	Local Programs	Local Programs	Local Programs	Local Programs	College Football “FCS Football Championship: Final” (Live) (HD)	Bang (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	Big City	(:13) “Mystic Pizza” (‘88) Annabeth Gish. (HD)	(:04) “Sisters” (‘15, Comedy) Tina Fey. (HD)	★★★ “Michael Clayton” (‘07) George Clooney.
7 PM :30	Will Trent (HD)	Neighbor.	9-1-1: Lone Star	Brilliant Minds (HD)		Bang (HD)	WWE Monday Night Raw (HD)				
8 PM :30	Will Trent (HD)	NCIS “Hardboiled”	(:02) Rescue: HI-Surf	Brilliant Minds (HD)		Bang (HD)		(:25) Kiff	★★½ “Eat Pray Love” (‘10, Drama) Julia Roberts. (HD)	“Mississippi Masala” Denzel Washington.	Dexter: Original Sin
9 PM :30	Will Trent (HD)	NCIS: Origins (HD)	Local Programs <i>Local info.</i>	Brilliant Minds (HD)	SportsCenter (HD)	Dad (HD)		Kiff			The Agency (HD)
10 PM :30	Local	Local		Local	SportsCenter (HD)	Dad (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	Wizards Waverly (HD)	“Woman in Gold” Helen Mirren.	★★★ “The Secrets We Keep” (‘20)	Dexter: Original Sin
11 PM :30	Jimmy Kimmel Live	(:35) Late Show (HD)	Local Programs	(:35) Tonight (HD)	Sports	Dad (HD)	Race <i>Alaska race.</i>	Bluey	“Fruitvale”		The Agency (HD)
	Nightline	Midnight		Late Night	Sports	Dad (HD)		Bluey			

JANUARY 6, 2025

TUESDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM :30	Local Programs	Local Programs	(5:00) Local Programs	Local Programs	CFP Rankings Show	Bang (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	(5:15) “Movie”	“X-Men: Apocalypse” (‘16) James McAvoy.	“In Time”	“The Pledge” (‘01) (R)
7 PM :30	Will Trent (HD)	FBI “Trusted” (HD)	Kitchen Nightmares	Deal or No Deal Island (HD)	To Be Announced <i>Info unavailable.</i>	Bang (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	Wizards	“Another Earth” (‘11) Brit Marling.		Dexter: Original Sin
8 PM :30	High Potential (HD)	FBI: International	Doc (HD)			Bang (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	Wizards	The AFC North	(:05) “Beowulf” (‘07, Fantasy) Ray Winstone.	The Agency (HD)
9 PM :30	The Rookie (HD)	FBI: Most Wanted	Local Programs <i>Local info.</i>	The Irrational (HD)		Bang (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	ZOMBIES	The AFC North		“Black Box Diaries” (‘24) (HD)
10 PM :30	Local	Local		Local	SportsCenter (HD)	Family	Law & Order: SVU	Jessie	★★★ “St. Vincent” (‘14) Bill Murray.	“Parasite” (‘19, Drama) Song Kang-ho. (HD)	
11 PM :30	Jimmy Kimmel Live	(:35) Late Show (HD)	Local Programs	(:35) Tonight (HD)	SportsCenter (HD)	Family	Law & Order: SVU	Bluey			“The Intervention” Clea DuVall.
	Nightline	Midnight		Late Night		Family		Bluey	AFC North	“Fruitvale”	

JANUARY 7, 2025

WEDNESDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM :30	Local Programs	Local Programs	(5:00) Local Programs	Local Programs	TBA	Bang (HD)	SVU (HD)	(5:10) “Movie”	(5:03) “Godzilla” (‘24)	“Ondine”	★★★★½ “The Aviator” (‘04, Drama) Leonardo DiCaprio. (PG-13) (HD)
7 PM :30	Gears	The Price Is Right at	Special Forces: World’s Grueling challenge.	Chicago Med (HD)	(:43) To Be Announced <i>Info unavailable.</i>	Bang (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	Wizards	“Super/Man: Christopher R.”	(:37) “It Comes At Night” (‘17) (R)	
8 PM :30	Celebrity Jeopardy!	Raid The Cage (HD)		Chicago Fire (HD)			Law & Order: SVU	Wizards		(:09) “Immortals” (‘11, Fantasy) Henry Cavill.	
9 PM :30	What Would You Do?	Elsbeth “Devil’s Night”	Local Programs <i>Local info.</i>	Chicago P.D. (HD)	(:05) To Be Announced <i>Info unavailable.</i>	Family	Law & Order: SVU	Big City	(:50) The AFC North		★★★ “Flight” (‘12, Drama) Denzel Washington. (R) (HD)
10 PM :30	Local	Local		Local		Family	Law & Order: SVU	Wizards	(:50) “Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga” (‘24) Anya Taylor-Joy.	“Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai” (‘00)	
11 PM :30	Jimmy Kimmel Live	(:35) Late Show (HD)	Local Programs	(:35) Tonight (HD)	SportsCenter (HD)	Family	Law & Order: SVU	Wizards			
	Nightline	Midnight		Late Night		Family	SVU (HD)	Big City			“Get Rich”

JANUARY 8, 2025

THURSDAY

7:00pm
NBC Law & Order “The Perfect Man” Shaw and Riley look for someone with a motive to kill the founder of an AI dating app; Benson’s choice to be a witness for the defense shocks Price and Maroun. TV14 (HD)
8:00pm
ABC Only Murders in the Building “Persons of Interest” After being implicated in the murder of Board President Bunny Folger, Charles, Oliver and Mabel must decide whether to go after the killer themselves. TVMA (HD)

FRIDAY

7:00pm
NBC Happy’s Place “Emcee Squared” Bobbie and Gabby face off over the role of emcee for the tavern’s anniversary party, and Isabella and Steve bet on who will come out on top. (HD)
9:00pm
PARSHO The Big Short ★★½ (2015, Drama) Christian Bale, Steve Carell. After coming to the realization that the global economy is on the verge of collapse, four high-finance outsiders take on some of the biggest banks in the US. R (HD)

SATURDAY

7:00pm
TBS The Hunger Games ★★ (2012, Action) Jennifer Lawrence, Stanley Tucci. In a post-apocalyptic future, an annual event is held in which 24 young people are pitted against each other in a bloody game of survival. PG-13 TV14 (HD)
9:00pm
NBC Saturday Night Live NBC’s award-winning late-night comedy showcase features sketch comedy, celebrity hosts and musical performances live before a studio audience. TV14 (HD)

SUNDAY

7:00pm
HBO Scott Pilgrim vs. the World ★★½ (2010, Comedy) Michael Cera, Mary Elizabeth Winstead. In Toronto, a 22-year-old bass guitarist meets the girl of his dreams, but before being with her, he learns that he must battle her seven evil exes. PG-13 (HD)
8:00pm
ABC Toy Story 3 ★★★★★ (2010, Comedy) Tom Hanks, Tim Allen. As Andy leaves for college, the toys are packed and donated to a daycare, but when things get a little too rough, they plan a daring escape so they can go home. G TV G (HD)

MONDAY

7:30pm
CBS Poppa’s House “School Days” After Junior and Nina’s son is accepted into a prestigious private school, they turn to Poppa for help with the tuition, but he thinks public school is enough. TVPG (HD)
8:00pm
ABC Will Trent “Residente o Visitante” Will visits Antonio in Puerto Rico to strengthen his ties to his late mother; Faith and Ormewood look for answers to questions about a sex offender’s death. (HD)

TUESDAY

8:00pm
CBS FBI: International “Touts” After a U.S. citizen and former member of the Irish Republican Army is shot in London, the team goes on the hunt for the murderer; Smitty visits her mother. TV14 (HD)
10:00pm
MAX Parasite ★★★★★ (2019, Drama) Song Kang-ho, Lee Sun-Kyun. Chaos erupts between a street-smart family and a wealthy family when a parasitic interloper jeopardizes their symbiotic relationship. R (HD)

WEDNESDAY

7:00pm
FOX Special Forces: World’s Toughest Test Famous celebrities tough it out through the most grueling challenges from the special forces selection process, struggling to survive another day. (HD)
9:00pm
PARSHO Flight ★★ (2012, Drama) Denzel Washington, John Goodman. When an airline pilot saves a flight from crashing and killing the passengers, an investigation is forced to take place to find out the truth. R (HD)

Opinion and Commentary

Public input sought on proposal to protect monarch butterfly



Stop at a flower
A monarch butterfly made a stop at a flower at Stinson Memorial Public Library in Anna. File photo.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced in December that it is proposing protection for the monarch butterfly.

The service is encouraging the public to be part of the monarch butterfly’s recovery.

The Service is seeking public input on a proposal to list the species as threatened with species-specific protections and flexibilities to encourage conservation under section 4(d) of the Endangered Species Act, ESA.

Public comments will be accepted on the proposal until March 12, 2025. The Service will then evaluate the comments and any additional information on the species and determine whether to list the monarch butterfly.

“The iconic monarch butterfly is cherished across North America, captivating children and adults throughout its fascinating lifecycle. Despite its fragility, it is remarkably resilient, like many things in nature when we just give them a chance,” U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service firector Martha Williams said in a news release.

“Science shows that the monarch needs that chance, and this proposed listing invites and builds on unprecedented public participation in shaping monarch conservation efforts. Providing monarchs with enough milkweed and nectar plants, even in small areas, can help put them on the road to recovery. Working together, we can help make this extraordinary species a legacy for our children and generations to come.”

The Service noted that for more than 50 years, the ESA has been an effective catalyst for on-the-ground collaborative conservation, promoting the recovery of wildlife and conserving the habitats upon which they depend. This proposed rule will help build on and enhance monarch conservation efforts while balancing activities in support of economic growth.

With its notable orange and black markings, the monarch butterfly is one of the most recognizable insects in the world.

In North America, monarchs are grouped into two long-distance migratory populations.

The eastern migratory population is the largest and overwinters in the mountains of central Mexico.

The western migratory population primarily overwinters in coastal California.

In the 1980s, over 4.5 million western monarchs flocked to overwintering grounds in coastal California. In the mid-1990s, an estimated 380 million eastern monarchs made the long-distance journey to overwintering grounds in Mexico, completing one of the longest insect migrations in the world.

Today, the eastern migratory population is estimated to have declined by approximately 80 percent.

The western migratory population has declined by more than 95 percent since the 1980s, putting the western populations at greater than 99 percent chance of extinction by 2080.

During this same period, the probability of extinction for eastern monarchs ranges from 56 to 74 percent, according to the Service’s most recent species status assessment.

Threats to monarchs include loss and degradation of breeding, migratory and overwintering habitat; exposure to insecticides; and the effects of climate change.

Although many people have already helped conserve the butterfly, additional habitat and protections are needed to ensure the species is conserved for future generations.

The proposal to list the monarch butterfly, and designate critical habitat, was to have been published in the Federal Register on Dec. 12, 2024.

A 90-day comment period began Dec. 12 and closes on March 12, 2025. Information about how to submit comments can be found on [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) by searching for docket number FWS-R3-ES-2024-0137. This docket also includes information about how to attend two virtual public information meetings, and associated public hearings, about this listing proposal.

The Service noted that everyone can play a role in saving the monarch butterfly. Because of the species’ general habitat use and wide distribution, all sectors of society have an opportunity to participate in a broad range of conservation efforts throughout the butterfly’s range.

More information about the monarch listing proposal, and how to help conserve monarch butterflies, can be found online at <https://www.fws.gov/monarch>.

Educators awarded grants

Southern Illinois Electric Cooperative continues to invest in the education of students throughout its service community.

The cooperative’s Touchstone Energy Classroom Grant program is providing seven area educators with additional resources to further improve their classrooms and the overall experience for their students.

The educators will receive \$500 towards their projects.

Those receiving grants, by school district, included: Lick Creek School District No. 16: Crystal Kneuen.

Anna School District No. 37: Leslie Thurston, Morgan Politte, Lori Randolph, Melisa Taylor

Jonesboro School District No. 43: Stephanie Hill.

Vienna High School District No. 133: Craig Bradley.

Please read this...

Keeping holiday season traditions alive...

By Geof Skinner



A turtle...in December? One brave reptile was seen enjoying the sunshine about a week before Christmas at the Lincoln Memorial Picnic Grounds in Jonesboro.

So many things to ponder...and so little time and space...

Last Sunday’s passing of Jimmy Carter brought back a special memory for a young reporter who was “covering” a presidential campaign for the very first time. Mr. Carter made a stop in Carbondale during the closing weeks of the 1976 presidential campaign, which he went on to win. (Yes...recalling an event in 1976 dates your writer...)

The young reporter learned rather quickly, with some encouragement from a rather large member of the law enforcement community, that there is a process involved in covering a presidential campaign. One does not just show up at such events; certain “credentials” are required. The young reporter managed to get a photograph of the candidate...and learned to do better the next time.

He went on to cover presidential campaign events for Paul Simon (the senator, not the singer) and Bill Clinton; along with visits to the region by Presidents Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton and Donald Trump.

Meanwhile...

Seems hard to believe that Christmas Day...and then New Year’s Day...have already come and gone...and here we are in the year 2025...which, for reasons unknown, makes me think about a song from 1969 sung by Zager and Evans...

Hope everybody had a nice holiday. Our Christmas holiday celebration included keeping a tradition or two alive...and creating some memories for the holiday season...

On the morning of Christmas Eve, we went on a mini road trip which took us to the bottomlands in western Union County and back home again. We were accompanied by a visitor from the Show Me State, which was could be seen off to the west in the form of a distant gray tree line on the other side of the Mississippi River.

We treated our holiday visitor to a little bit of the history of Union County, along with some of the natural beauty of this little corner of the world which we call home. One of our stops was at the Trail of Tears State Forest so your writer could continue a Christmas Eve tradition of wandering through a creek bed...this time with company.

One more Christmas Eve tradition continued in the dark of a rainy evening when yours truly cooked some “delicacies” on the grill in the backyard. A little bit of rain didn’t dampen things...much. At least rain was better than sleet, snow and a temperature around 10 degrees...all three of which have been part of the tradition.

Meanwhile...

How ‘bout a few Critter Sighting Updates?

Bald eagle near Ware? Yup. We spotted what is now the nation’s “official bird,” thanks to a measure signed on Christmas Eve by President Joe Biden. We saw the bald eagle in a tree line alongside a watery area in metropolitan Ware during our day-before-Christmas journey. Seemed like very good timing.

Geese at the Union County State Fish and Wildlife Area near Ware. Yup. Two of ‘em. Not two thousand. Just two. In a pool of water. Along with some mallard ducks and other waterfowl of some sort.

A lone turtle on a log. Yup. Again, on Christmas Eve, not far from where we saw the bald eagle. We couldn’t figure out why a turtle was out and about on Christmas Eve, which leads us to...

Turtles in the pond at the Lincoln Memorial Picnic Grounds in Jonesboro on the 19th day of December. Yup. Go figure. The temperature at the time yours truly paid a visit to the park was 46 degrees. The sun was shining, but a chill wind was blowing. Maybe the turtles were watching for reindeer...

...and, a lone rabbit on a cold, windy Monday evening. Yup. Monday. On my daily walkabout. In the cold. And the wind. And, if we can believe the weather forecast, walkabouts could get colder...with some snow thrown in...

Enough for now. Hope you have a Happy New Year...



A bald eagle was spotted on the morning of Christmas Eve high in the bare limbs of a tree just west of Illinois Route 3 in Ware. The eagle was kind enough to stay put for a photo or two and then flew away...probably to do some last-minute Christmas shopping.



Two geese were seen during a Christmas Eve visit to the Union County State Fish and Wildlife Area.



Conditions changed rather quickly in a creek bed at the Trail of Tears State Forest. On Christmas Eve, the location was dry enough to go for a walk, which allowed for a tradition to continue. By Sunday afternoon, walking in the creek bed likely would have resulted in wet, cold feet.

Extension offering Paid Summer Internship Program

University of Illinois Extension has announced a 2025 Paid Summer Internship Program for area students.

The program offers a chance for students to gain hands-on experience, build marketable job skills and explore potential career paths.

The 10-week program is scheduled to run from June 2 through Aug. 8, 2025.

Student in the program will have an opportunity to immerse themselves in community-driven fieldwork while earning an hourly wage of \$17.

Students from accredited universities or community colleges who are enrolled in the spring 2025 semester and maintain an overall grade point average of 2.5 or higher are encouraged by Extension to apply for the program.

This competitive program offers 27 internship positions throughout Illinois, including placements in Alexander, Johnson, Massac, Pulaski and Union counties.

Interns will work within one of six key focus areas: 4-H youth development. Family and consumer sciences. Agriculture and agribusiness. Community and economic development. Natural resources, energy and environment. Integrated health disparities.

“This internship program provides students with an incredible opportunity to gain practical, real-world experience while

contributing to meaningful projects within local communities,” said Ife Adesoye, SNAP-Ed educator, in a news release. “Students will not only earn income but also develop skills that will make them more competitive in the job market.”

The program offers students a mentored experience with the potential to earn academic credit. Interns will engage in impactful community projects, working alongside seasoned professionals in the field.

Each position is considered a security-sensitive role, and comprehensive background checks will be conducted for all applicants.

Application Process

The deadline to apply is 5 p.m. Jan. 15, 2025. Interested students are advised to submit the following application materials: Resume. Cover letter. One professional letter of recommendation.

Applications are to be sent to Ife Adesoye at iadesoye@illinois.edu. Students from diverse backgrounds are encouraged to apply, as the University of Illinois Extension is committed to equal opportunity and affirmative action employment practices.

John M. Hamilton became governor of Illinois on Feb. 6, 1883. He succeeded Shelby M. Cullom, who resigned to become a U.S. Senator.