

The Talk And Cobden Review • Serving Union County Since 1849

Volume 178, Number 46

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

(continued on page 2)

Monday, Oct. 20: high 72,
low 37.

A Clyde L. Choate Mental Health and Developmental Center display features The Andy Griffith Show and a scene from Mayberry.



THE GAZETTE-DEMOCRAT

THE TALK AND COBDEN REVIEW

Serving Union County Since 1849

(USPS 215-280)

ISSN 2834-6165 (Print)

2834-6173 (Online)

Published weekly on Thursdays

by Southern Illinois LOCAL Media Group, LLC

112 Lafayette St.

Anna, Illinois 62906-0529

618-833-2158

news@annanews.com

Periodical postage paid at Anna, Illinois 62906-0529

ILLINOIS PRESS FOUNDATION

150 YEARS

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS EDITORIAL ASSOCIATION

1900-2025

Benjamin Marxer.....Editor

Miguel Paredes as Trustee of the Paddock Publications, Inc.

Employee Stock Ownership Trust

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Per Year • July, 2022

In Union County.....\$54.00

Elsewhere in 629 Zip Code.....\$56.00

Out of Area.....\$64.00

Per Copy.....\$1.00

E-edition.....\$54.00

MasterCard

VISA

DISCOVER

NAVVIS

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to

The Gazette-Democrat

112 Layfayette St.

Anna, Illinois 62906-0529

Advertising rates given on application.

The Gazette-Democrat | Monday’s Pub.

www.annanews.com

facebook.com/gazettedemocrat

News Notes

(continued from page 1)

A free “Monster Mash Dodgeball Smash” event for all all junior high students is planned from 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, Oct. 31, in the small gym at Cobden Junior-Senior High School. Costumes are encouraged, but not required, for the Halloween-themed dodgeball tournament.

The marching band from Shawnee Junior-Senior High School in Wolf Lake performed at last Saturday’s Southeast Missouri State University homecoming parade in Cape Girardeau.

Union County students went on field trips to the past week’s Fort Massac Encampment in Metropolis.

Registration for Shawnee Community College’s spring semester is scheduled to start Oct. 27.

An inaugural disc golf tournament played Oct. 18 at Shawnee Community College was reported to have been a success. Thirty players competed. The Cache River Disc Golf Club assisted with the tournament.

The Illinois Department of Public Health is observing Lead Poisoning Prevention Week October 19-25 and reminds all parents and caregivers of young children to be aware of risk factors for lead poisoning and how to prevent it.

Illinois State Police Troop 10 shared on social media early Tuesday morning, Oct. 21, that troopers were handling a serious crash on I-24 eastbound south of Rosebud Road (near milepost 32) in Massac County. I-24 eastbound was closed from Illinois Route 146 (milepost 15) down to U.S. Route 45.

Colorfest pageant celebrates community service

The winners of the annual Union County Colorfest Pageant have been crowned following a ceremony on Oct. 9.

The event was part of the Colorfest celebration held in Anna and Jonesboro every autumn.

This year’s Union County Colorfest Miss Queen is Kelly Smith of Anna. The Union County Colorfest Junior Miss Queen is Taylor Schuster. The Union County Colorfest Little Miss Queen is Charlee Nee-

dling. And the Union County Colorfest Princess is Jocelyn Ellis.

The stated mission of the Union County Colorfest Pageant is to celebrate not only beauty and grace, but also generosity and community spirit. Which is why the Queen of Hearts Crown is awarded for outstanding contributions to the pageant’s community service mission.

This year’s Queen of Hearts winner was Jacelyn

Nearly 2 million Illinois residents face loss of SNAP program benefits

By Ben Szalinski
Capitol News Illinois

Nearly 2 million people in Illinois could lose federal food benefits ahead of Thanksgiving if Congress can’t agree on a budget by the end of the month.

The Illinois Department of Human Services announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture has told states that Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program benefits will not be funded beginning Nov. 1 if the federal government shutdown continues into a second month. About 1.9 million people in Illinois receive SNAP benefits each month.

The federal government has been without a budget since Oct.1, making virtually no progress in negotiations over health care issues causing the stalemate. The shutdown is now one of the longest in history and if it extends beyond Nov. 4, would become the longest ever, surpassing a 35-day shutdown in President Donald Trump’s first term. “They’re refusing to save

health care for 22 million Americans, and now they’re willing to let 1.9 million Illinoisans, including children, go hungry,” Democratic Party of Illinois chair Elizabeth “Lisa” Hernandez said in a statement. “Somehow, they can find the money to pay the ICE agents who have terrorized our communities, but not to keep food on our kids’ tables.”

Illinois administers \$350 million in SNAP benefits each month to low-income or other qualifying individuals. In Illinois, 45 percent of SNAP households include children and 44 percent include a person with a disability, according to IDHS.

Beneficiaries receive an average of \$370 each month. The state expects benefit disbursements to continue if a budget is passed by the end of the month.

State’s Limited Options
SNAP benefits are currently entirely funded by the federal government, which Gov. JB

Pritzker said makes it hard for the state to cover if funding is cut off.

“There is no reimbursement of the state if those SNAP benefits are lost,” Pritzker told reporters in Moline on Friday, Oct. 17. “I asked that question immediately. There obviously is a big challenge for a lot of families, hundreds of thousands of families, across Illinois.”

Pritzker said his administration is looking at ways it can help people affected by the cut, but the state faces its own budget challenges, partially because of federal policy changes Congress made earlier this year. Pritzker has directed many state agencies to identify up to 4 percent of spending that can be reserved this year, while his budget office’s latest report indicates the state faces a more than \$200 million deficit in the current fiscal year 2026 and \$2 billion shortfall in FY27. “We’re trying to figure out what we can do and what we

can afford to do to support people, and how we might be able to support pantries,” Pritzker said.

SNAP benefits will soon be partially the state’s responsibility. The “One Big Beautiful Bill Act” Trump signed in July shifts half of administrative costs to states beginning in October 2026.

In October 2027, states will also begin paying a portion of benefits based on the state’s error rate of payments in prior years. States like Illinois with a higher error rate on SNAP payments will have to cover a greater portion of benefits. Illinois’ current error rate would put it on track to pay \$705 million for benefits when the new policy takes effect.

Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service that distributes state government coverage to hundreds of news outlets statewide. It is funded primarily by the Illinois Press Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation.

Storms, strong winds reported in region

eastern Williamson County, southern Johnson County, and the northern parts of Alexander and Pulaski counties. No drought conditions were reported in northern Johnson County.

Strong Thunderstorms
Stormy weather occurred early Saturday night, Oct. 18, in the area. The National Weather Service office in Paducah issued at special weather statement shortly before 7 p.m. Saturday which advised that strong thunderstorms would impact Union, Jackson and Perry counties in Southern Illinois, as well as southeastern Perry County and northeastern Cape Girardeau County in Southeast Missouri.

The Weather Service reported that at 6:54 p.m., Doppler radar was tracking strong thunderstorms along a line extending from near Coulterville to 10 miles north of Altenburg, Mo., to near Gordonville, Mo.

Winds gusts up to 40 miles per hour were possible.

Ahead of Saturday evenings storms, the Weather Service had advised that parts of Southern Illinois, Southeast Missouri and Western Kentucky faced a slight risk for severe weather.

Gusty Winds
Gusty winds were reported in the region on Sunday and Monday. The strong winds were expected to continue on Tuesday. The Weather Service reported wind gusts of 35 mph at around 4 p.m. Monday at the Southern Illinois Airport near Carbondale. The strong winds,

combined with low relative humidity, produced elevated fire weather conditions Tuesday afternoon.

Mild Temperatures
The Weather Service forecast for the region this week was calling for temperatures to average slightly below normal. Most of the week is expected to be dry, before rain chances increase across portions of the area on Friday and even more so over the coming weekend. Overnight lows will be quite chilly. Some patchy frost is possible Thursday morning, today, in northern locales.

Jonesboro Elementary School awarded historic site field trip grant funds

More than 740 students will have an opportunity to visit Illinois state historic sites this school year thanks to grant funding through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, IDNR, State Historic Sites Field Trip Grant program.

More than \$6,740 in donated funds were awarded for 14 field trip grants. Grant recipients represent 12 Illinois counties, including Union County.

“Students should have opportunities to experience Illinois’ historical resources in person and be in the places where history happened in our state,” IDNR director Natalie Phelps Finnie said in a news release. “We are pleased to be able to support learning about historic sites in the classroom with these grants.”

Jonesboro Elementary School received three \$500 grants. One grant will fund a 7th grade trip to the Lewis and Clark State Historic Site in Hartford. Another grant will fund an 8th grade trip to the Lincoln Tomb State Historic Site and War Memorials in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Springfield. A third grant will fund a 7th and 8th grade trip to the Dana-Thomas

House State Historic Site in Springfield.

The IDNR State Historic Sites Field Trip Grant program was initiated in the 2020-2021 school year. Grant recipients for the 2025-2026 school year represent students from 3rd grade through high school. This year marks the most grants awarded by the program, IDNR noted.

The competitive grant program allows Illinois teachers to apply for funds to take students on a field trip to visit and learn at select Illinois state historic sites. Learning activities must directly relate to the school’s curriculum. Funding covers bus transportation.

The annual application deadline is Sept. 30. The 2026-2027 school year application form will be available online in the spring of 2026.

For more information about the IDNR State Historic Sites Field Trip Grant program, contact the IDNR Division of Education at dnr.teachkids@illinois.gov or 217-524-4126. The Illinois Conservation Foundation gladly accepts donations for the IDNR State Historic Sites Field Trip Grant program.

Find us online at annanews.com

Union County Alliance of Churches

Recommendations

1

Thanksgiving Worship, Kornthal, Sun 11/23 - 2PM

2

Potluck later at Old Depot-Anna at 6PM

3

“The Closet” clothing for everyone at your price, next door to Dollar General – Anna.

3

“The Old Depot” 6 pm. Free dinner, live praise, fellowship, everyone welcome, come as you are.

Alliance of Churches (618)614-2974

The winners of the 2025 Union County Colorfest Pageant are, from left, Miss Queen is Kelly Smith of Anna, Junior Miss Queen is Taylor Schuster, Little Miss Queen is Charlee Needling, and the Princess is Jocelyn Ellis. The Queen of Hearts of the pageant is Jacelyn Beegle (above).

eant director Jessi Clark Watson. “It’s about teaching the importance of service, kindness, and giving back. These young women have shown that their crowns shine brightest when they’re serving others.”

The four Union County Children’s Colorfest queens will continue their reign by representing the community at events throughout the year while promoting service projects and positive leadership.

Beegle. Jacelyn collected 434 pounds of non-perishable food for local food pantries.

Jacelyn’s efforts were part of a larger initiative led by all contestants. Together, the girls donated and collected 2,614 pounds of food, helping to ensure that Dalem Lutheran Church’s food pantry is stocked for the upcoming season.

“This isn’t just about crowns and titles,” said pag-

A-J cross country wins fourth conference championship

The Anna-Jonesboro Community High School girls' cross country team once again earns its spot at the top of the Southern Illinois River-to-River Conference, Mississippi Division.

Anna finished first in conference championship meet held at Murphysboro on Thursday, Oct. 16.

The Wildcats captured their fourth-consecutive conference championship in dominant fashion, claiming seven of the top 10 All-Conference spots in a display of team depth and determination.

Leading the pack was Jadyn Gerardi, who continues to dominate girls' cross country in Southern Illinois, finishing first to earn her third-straight individual SIRR title.

A-J runners filled the next three spots, with Melaina Budson finishing second, Raegan Jones coming in third, and Kylee Myers finished fourth, securing a top-four sweep for the Wildcats.

Also earning All-Conference honors were Kinley Leek (7th), Reese Jones (8th), and Kenzie Miller (9th), rounding out an impressive performance by the Wildcats.

On the boys' side, Tilman Dallas led the charge with a strong eighth-place finish to earn All-Conference honors, helping the A-J boys secure third place overall in the team standings.

Runners advance to the Murphysboro regional championships on Saturday, Oct. 25.

Education Day brings high school students to SIU campus

Nearly 400 high school students who are planning to study education were scheduled to have an opportunity to participate in more than 40 interactive activities and informative sessions when Southern Illinois University Carbondale hosted its annual Education Day celebration on Tuesday, Oct. 21.

Students from Union County area schools were among those planning to attend the event.

The all-day event at the SIU Student Center is one component of SIU's multifaceted response to the ongoing teacher shortage.

Participating teens from schools throughout the region could take part in a variety of fun, educational hands-on sessions covering a wide range of topics, including "Beyond Four Walls: Place-Based Service-Learning Approaches in Outdoor Education," "From Classroom to Community," "Read a Story, Make a Book...", "Incorporating Nature Study in Pre-K and Early Elementary Classrooms" and "Bring the Night Sky Into Your Classroom." Each student could choose three sessions to attend.

SIU Education Day 2025 was scheduled to begin with a keynote presentation by Victoria Groves-Scott, the dean of the SIU School

of Education. At midday, students participated in an open-house-style resource fair, during which more than 30 SIU departments, units and education-focused organizations shared information about themselves and talked with students.

Students from Anna-Jonesboro, Carbondale, Carrier Mills-Stonefort, Carterville, Cobden, Crab Orchard, Du Quoin, Egyptian, Gallatin County, Goreville, Hardin County, Harrisburg, Herrin, Johnston City, Marion, Massac, Meridian, Pinckneyville, Pope County, Shawnee, Trico, Vienna and West Frankfort high schools had registered to attend.

SIU's School of Education and the Southern Illinois Future Teachers Coalition, SIFTC, partnered to sponsor SIU Education Day. SIFTC is a grant-funded partnership including SIU, the Illinois State Board of Education, John A. Logan College in Carterville, Shawnee Community College near Ullin and 20 Southern Illinois high schools.

SIFTC has been instrumental as well in creating and supporting Educators Rising clubs in participating high schools, which provide information, activities and support for students who are interested in pursuing careers in the field of education.

Big increases expected in health insurance premiums

**By Peter Hancock
Capitol News Illinois**

SPRINGFIELD – People in Illinois who buy health insurance through the Affordable Care Act marketplace are likely to see big increases in the cost of their premiums next year, but state officials are encouraging them to reach out for help before they decide to drop their coverage.

"We're really encouraging people, don't walk away. Come and talk to a navigator," Illinois Insurance Department director Ann Gillespie said in an interview last week. "Make an appointment to talk to a navigator, because there are over 1,100 plans that we're going to be offering on the marketplace. There might be an option that will be affordable for you."

Open enrollment for the 2026 plan year begins Nov. 1 and runs through Jan. 15. This year will be the first year in which Illinois residents will use a state-based online platform, Get Covered Illinois, to shop for their plans.

"Last year, we were a state-based marketplace, but on the federal platform still. It was our transition year," Gillespie said. "So last year was technically the first year of the state-based marketplace. This year, we're on our own platform for the first time."

Federal Budget Battle

The premium hike is the result of a federal budget change that was included in President Donald Trump's domestic policy agenda known as the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act." That provision ends the enhanced tax credits that subsidize the cost of premiums for people who meet income guidelines.

Premium tax credits have always been part of the Affordable Care Act since it was passed in 2010 as a tool to reduce the out-of-pocket cost of plans sold on the exchange. They were available to households with incomes up to 400 percent of the federal poverty level, or in 2025.

Congress first passed the enhanced credits in 2021 as part of the American Rescue Plan Act, an economic package passed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. They were renewed in 2022 as part of another pandemic-related law, the Inflation Reduction Act.

The ending of those enhanced credits is now at the center of the ongoing federal budget stalemate in Congress, which prompted the partial shutdown of the federal government that began Oct. 1.

That day marked the start of a new federal fiscal year, but so far Congress has been unable to pass the spending bills needed to fund most of the government's day-to-day

operating costs.

Impact in Illinois

In January 2025, an estimated 466,000 people in Illinois were covered by ACA marketplace plans. Of those, Gillespie said, about 90 percent received some amount of tax credit to subsidize their premiums. But she said ending the enhanced credits could cause people's out-of-pocket premium costs to rise, possibly forcing many people to drop their coverage.

"Premiums are going to go up nationwide as a result of this," she said. "People are going to be seeing premiums increased double, triple – in some states they're going to quadruple."

"You can argue that they were just for COVID," Gillespie said. "But I look at it as, it was one more step into making sure we have coverage for everybody in the country and taking it away now after people have become dependent on it is really a cruel blow to people that are facing price increases from inflation."

State-based Exchange

Before Gov. JB Pritzker named Gillespie to lead the Insurance Department in 2024, she served in the state Senate and was the lead sponsor of the 2023 legislation that called for setting up a state-based exchange. Before that, Illinois residents had to use the federal portal, HealthCare.gov, to enroll in ACA insurance.

Gillespie said that bill came about in response to federal policy changes during the first Trump administration, which included shortening the open enrollment period and reducing funding for employing "navigators" who helped people find coverage plans to suit their needs.

"The value of a state-based exchange is that you've got some independence from the federal administration changes and the policy shifts," she said. "So, as a state-based exchange, you've got a little more ability to customize the plan offerings for the residents of your state. You have a little more leeway with setting special enrollment periods."

Gillespie said starting in 2026, there will be two additional enrollment opportunities under the state-based exchange.

One will be a pregnancy open enrollment, she said, "so if you find out that you're pregnant in between open enrollments, we can have a special enrollment period so you can get coverage."

A second opportunity will be tied to filing individual tax returns. "There will be a space on your tax return where you can check to indicate that you'd like enrollment materials for the state-based market," she said.

County Line News

(Mill Creek and Upper Elco)

By Suzan Harvel

Members of Daniel Chapman Chapter (NSDAR) met at the Vienna Diner on Thursday, Oct. 16 for their monthly meeting.

Regent Doda Starkey introduced State Regent, Marria Blinn, who was welcomed as the guest speaker and spoke on Illinois DAR plans for America's 250th birthday next year, and her project of the Liberty Education Center in Batavia, Ill.

Other highlights included new member, Dawna Miller, welcomed in ceremony into the Daniel Chapman Chapter, and Julia Mowery gave information and a demonstration on the packing of Project Patriot boxes sent overseas.

A wreath laying at Daniel Chapman's grave in the Vienna Fraternal Cemetery will take place on Nov. 3 at 10 a.m. to commemorate the 116th anniversary of the chapter's founding. Commemorative Events committee announced that Johnson County's Veterans Day events will be held at the Vienna Public Library on Nov. 11 at 11 a.m. and the chapter monthly meeting will follow.

I was babysitting the grandkids over the weekend while my daughter and her husband attended her 25th class reunion in Poplar Bluff, Mo. She reported that, out of a graduating class of over 200, only 25 or so classmates were there and most didn't even bring spouses. That seems odd to me.

Anyway, a lot of her running group were there and so a lot of information on life situations were caught up on, the photos of kids (and a few grandkids) were shown off, and some addresses exchanged in hopes that maybe those reconnections can strengthen some. Typical reunion stuff.

She spent a lot of time with her best friend over the entire weekend and said it was good to see the closest of classmates there, so I guess that's what successful reunions are about.

The fall switch has been thrown at last! After the rain last Saturday, we finally have true sweater weather. I love it! Thankfully, we didn't get much in the way of storms, but did get some rain. While it didn't rain as much as I thought it would, this weekend is supposed to add to it. We'll see. I've gotten to where I don't believe it unless I can see it. At least need for air conditioning is passed, fingers crossed.

Mill Creek Baptist is planning their Trunk or Treat for this weekend on Saturday, Oct. 25 at 5 p.m. for the

hot dog meal and then the entertainment begins with costume showoff and cries of "Trick or Treat" in exchange for candy. If it does indeed rain, we'll just move tables into a line and they can rotate around indoors instead.

Many homes are decorated up for Halloween. Some will wait until this weekend to put it together. I, myself, am a bit late with decorating this year and cut down on the amount of Halloween decorating because of that. I just had too much going on earlier to set it up. Better luck next year.

Anyway, the patio is decorated with pumpkins and mums, along with the wooden cut-outs of ghosts and jack-o-lanterns displayed, and the odd skeleton is hanging from hooks in the yard. A Halloween tree and village pieces grace the dining room table, along with various décor inside.

It's enough to please the grandchildren and it will take me about 20 minutes to change it out Nov. 1. Then, I can add a few items to the fall item I'll leave in place and Thanksgiving decorating will be wrapped up. However, Christmas is under consideration and that requires more planning, as I tend to get carried away there and it requires the moving of furniture.

A reminder to members of P.A.S.T. of Union County that the October meeting will be on Oct. 28 at 6 p.m. Lee Hackney of the Anna Arts Center will be a guest speaker. If you are a Friend of P.A.S.T., we are signing up to help with the Christmas luncheons and could use the extra help. Please contact Suzan Harvel: 573-208-9692, to sign up to help, or if you are interested in attending the luncheons, please contact Linda Hileman for reservations: 618-697-1870. Dates for this year's luncheons are Dec. 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, and 13. Printed notices will be posted around town and in the newspaper soon.

I wasn't at church Sunday, due to being out of town, but did hear that a few have been added to the prayer list: James Sullivan has surgery this week; Mary Powles has surgery this week, also; and Bonnie Kohler is not feeling well and can use the prayers.

Union County Fixin's

Lemon-Garlic Roasted Chicken

1 whole small chicken, about 4 lbs.

1 Tablespoon butter

1 Tablespoon olive oil

1 lemon

1 teaspoon Italian seasoning

Black pepper and sea salt

2 small cloves, garlic

Paprika

Melt the butter with the olive oil in a small roasting pan. Stir in juice of half the lemon and add the Italian seasoning. Remove giblets and neck from the chicken cavity. Season the inside of the chicken with salt and pepper. Coat it on the outside and inside with melted butter mixture and place it breast side up in the roasting pan.

Cut remaining lemon section in half and stuff it into the chicken cavity along with the garlic.

Season the outside of the chicken with more pepper and salt and a sprinkle of paprika.

Roast at 350 degrees for 1 hour and 15 minutes. Baste every 20 minutes. When done, the thigh section should move easily in the joint. Remove from oven and allow chicken to rest for 5-10 minutes. Baste once more and remove garlic and lemon from cavity before serving.



Hole in one
Debra Hesse of Anna achieved a rare sporting accomplishment with a hole in one. The feat was achieved at Union County County Club on Monday, Oct. 10.

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Don't miss this online-only auction on Thursday, November 13, 2025, at 2:00 PM, featuring four unique properties in Buncombe, Jonesboro, and Ware, IL. Highlights include a 3-bedroom home on 3+ acres with a pond, investment rental in Jonesboro, a lot with two mobile homes, and a buildable corner lot in Ware. Whether you're looking for country living, investment opportunities, or land to build, there's something for everyone.

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"The Preaching Pen"

Making the Way Straight

Many people are familiar with Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech. The inspiration for the speech came from Isaiah 40:4. In this verse, God's prophet outlines assurances that can only be gained by remaining loyal to Him.

First, "Every Valley Shall be Exhorted." Regardless of situation or circumstance, God will lift us in our times of need. Even when we think that no hope remains, God promises hope (Romans 15:13). Jesus Christ is the source of spiritual hope (1 Peter 1:3). Second, "Every Mountain and Hill brought Low." The world is obsessed with power, political, secular, and economic. The powerful are prideful, a concept contrary to God. Christ taught that one must have a humble spirit, Luke 18:9. Remember, all must bow before God, Philippians 2:10-11.

Third, "The Crooked shall become Straight." In Christ's time, the Pharisees misinterpreted of law, Mark 3:1-6; Luke 11:37-39. They sought to solidify their own power and favor with men rather than obey God. God will remove any barriers that cause hardship for his followers, Matthew 7:13.

Finally, "The Rough ways made Plain." Valleys are often portrayed as places of peace and prosperity. Jesus Christ's law helps with the physical/spiritual loads we bear, Matthew 11:28-29. We are expected to be part of this constructive power and help show others the WAY.

Ryan Thornsberry,
Anna Church of Christ

HAPPY HALLOWEEN

Transform your home into a haunted house



Many transformations occur during the month of October. Leaves begin to turn various shades of orange and red, while the weather gets decidedly cooler. In the meantime, neighborhoods across the country begin to look quite different, with many homes decked out in the garish garb of Halloween. The National Retail Federation together with Prosper Insights & Analytics reports that decorating one's home for Halloween is the second most popular way to celebrate the holiday. Only purchasing and sharing candy beats out home decor. Individuals spend billions collectively on Halloween each year, and one of the ways they can have some frightening fun is by transforming a regular, unassuming home into a

haunted house. There are certain necessities to turn a an otherwise typical home into a suddenly spooky abode.

- Scene setter: Start with a scene setter if you would like to decorate both inside and out. Scene setters are plastic or paper backdrops that can be tacked up on walls to make a house look completely different, particularly under low light. A scene setter is an investment of time and money, but it can be reused each year and really make a room take on a new look quickly.
- Lawn graveyard: Visitors to the home who have to step through a graveyard will know there are more scares ahead. It's relatively easy to make your own grave markers from wood or foam. If you're not handy, you can purchase them from

a Halloween supply store. Disturb the earth by the markers to make visitors believe each grave is fresh. A bony hand sticking out of the dirt or some wilted flowers placed by the graves also can set the scene.

- Floating candles: Simulate the look of levitating candles with an easy craft. Take toilet paper or paper towel cardboard tubes and use hot glue on the top to make it look like beads of dripping wax. Paint the tubes with white chalk paint, as this type of paint is thick and covers easily. Glue a battery-powered tea light to the top for the wick. Poke a hole through both sides of the tube and thread some fishing line through. Use your mounting device of choice to attach the fishing line to the ceiling indoors or outside

to hang each candle. When the lights are dim, it's very difficult to see the fishing line and the candles will appear to be floating.

- Haunted archway: Make an arch using PVC pipes, and thread jack-o'-lanterns or papier mâché heads or masks through to create an ominous arch that greets visitors.
- Handprints: Use window-safe paint to create bloody handprints on the inside of windows. This is a design touch that will enhance both the interior and exterior of the windows.
- Fog machine: Use a fog machine to spread a creepy mist where you need it, whether on a front porch or indoors.

Haunted houses come together with various design touches that are easy to execute.

Keeping your pets safe this Halloween

Halloween is an annual celebration that many children and adults look forward to each October. From the mysterious and the macabre to the goofy and gregarious, Halloween speaks to people in many different ways. And with the opportunity to accumulate several pounds of sugary treasure after a few hours of trick-or-treating, is it any wonder celebrants love Halloween?

While Halloween hijinks may be ideal fun for plenty of ghosts and ghouls, companion animals may not be so enthusiastic come October 31. In fact, Halloween can be a source of stress and even dangerous for many pets. Here are some things pet parents should keep in mind prior to Halloween.

Costumes

Pet costumes are popular and can help owners and their pets coordinate for Halloween. Some pets may find costumes uncomfortable or frightening. For those with a mind toward creative costume coordination, introducing the costume to the pet slowly and gradually can help ease the transition. Allow the pet to sniff the costume and put treats nearby to indicate it is no threat. If the pet simply will not warm to the idea of a costume, it's best not to force the issue.

Glow sticks

Glow sticks are a safe way for children to enjoy some spooky fun on Halloween



night and become more visible when the sun sets. But those glow sticks may be attractive to pets and they can bite them, ingesting the liquid. The ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center says typically pets experience a mild and self-limiting taste reaction to glow stick liquid. Wiping off the excess with a damp cloth to help prevent the pet from licking again and having another reaction can help.

Accessibility to candy

One of the biggest Halloween dangers for pets is the accessibility of candy, especially chocolate. Chocolate is toxic and particularly dangerous to dogs. Chocolate with high amounts of cacao is especially

dangerous. Raisins and gum with the artificial sweetener xylitol also are problematic. Candy wrappers can get stuck in the intestinal tract and cause a life-threatening blockage. Lock candy away so pets can't get into it.

Nerves

Many youngsters will ring

the door bell on Halloween. Anxious pets, and even those that normally aren't nervous with visitors, may be overwhelmed. Keep pets in a dark, calm room away from the door to reduce anxiety and make it less likely skittish pets will escape the home and get lost.

Trunk or Treat & Trick or Treat
October 31st • 5pm-7pm
Village of Dongola
136 E. Front St. • 827-4343


FARMERS
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Halloween Season Events Planned in Union County:

“Night of the Living Health Fair”

Rural Health Inc. is planning to host its fourth annual “Night of the Living Health Fair” on Friday, Oct. 24. The event is scheduled from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Rural Health Inc.’s main clinic at 513 N. Main St. in Anna.

“Night of the Living Health Fair” will feature resources from various agencies located throughout the region, games, food and beverages to purchase and candy.

Families from throughout the area are invited to dress in costumes and come to the event.

“Trail of Treats”

An annual Halloween season “Trail of Treats” is planned Oct. 25 in Downtown Anna and on the Jonesboro Square. The event is scheduled from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

“Trick-or-Treat on Main St. Cobden”

An early Halloween event will be held on Main Street in Cobden on Saturday, Oct. 25 for 4 to 6 p.m. Participants are encouraged to dress up in costume and visit businesses and establishments along Main Street.

“Dongola Trunk or Treat”

Dongola will be holding it’s 6th annual Trunk or Treat celebration on Friday, Oct. 31 in downtown Dongola from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

“Wolf Lake Trunk or Treat”

Wolf Lake Community Church will be hosting a Trunk or Treat event on Friday, Oct. 31 from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. Wolf Lake Community Church is located at 275 West St.

“Alto Pass Pumpkin Walk”

The Quetil Trail in Alto Pass will be lit up for Halloween at the Alto Pass Pumpkin Walk on Wednesday, Oct. 29 at 7 p.m.

“Monster Mash Dodgeball Smash”

An event for all all junior high students is planned from 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, Oct. 31, in the small gym at Cobden Junior-Senior High School. Costumes are encouraged, but not required, for the Halloween-themed dodgeball tournament.



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Obituaries

Richard “Rick” Laster

Richard “Rick” Laster, 71, passed away peacefully on Thursday, Oct. 16, at HCA Fawcett Hospital in Port Charlotte, Fla., surrounded by the love of his family.

Born on Dec. 26, 1953, in Memphis, Tenn., Rick was the son of George Monroe and Edda Janette (Johnson) Laster.

On Dec. 23, 1983, he married the love of his life, Debbie (Boulch) Laster, and together they shared over 41 years of marriage built on love, faith, and devotion.

Rick was a longtime member of Anna Heights Baptist Church, where his heart for service and community left a lasting mark. He served faithfully on many committees, including the planning and construction of the church’s new sanctuary and fellowship hall.

For years, he was active as a youth Sunday School teacher and leader, helping guide and mentor countless young people through Youth Activities and Vacation Bible School.

His faith was not just something he spoke about; it was something he lived every day through his generosity, humor, and willingness to help anyone in need.

A 1971 graduate of Wolf Lake High School, Rick began his career farming alongside his father in Wolf Lake, Ill. He later transitioned into construction, working with his brother Kenny at Laster Construction, where his craftsmanship and work ethic became well-known.

In 1992, Rick began a new chapter with the Illinois Department of Corrections, serving as a Maintenance Craftsman at Tamms Correctional Center until his retirement in 2012.

Retirement did not slow him down. Rick quickly returned to his passion for building, working as a Construction Superintendent with Gaylon Cruise Construction and Baysinger Architect.

In 2023, Rick and Debbie relocated to Venice, Fla., to be closer to family. He continued doing what he loved, most recently serving as Construction Superintendent for the new Ocean Prime Restaurant in Sarasota, Fla., a project he took great pride in completing.

Rick’s greatest joys came from life’s simple and beautiful moments. He loved walking the beach with his grandkids, searching for shark teeth to share with them as little treasures from their adventures together.

On weekends, he took pride in making his famous fresh blueberry pancakes, filling the house with the smell of breakfast and the sound of laughter. He also enjoyed boating, bike



riding, snow skiing, hiking, and watching his grandkids’ sporting events, always cheering with pride and encouragement.

Whether at the beach, in the kitchen, or in the stands, Rick was happiest when surrounded by his family. He found peace in the outdoors and purpose in the people he loved most. His presence made every gathering brighter and every challenge easier to face.

He is survived by his loving wife Debra; sons Jason (Charity) of Paducah, Ky., and Creighton (Madison) of Venice, Fla.; daughter Danielle (Brad) of Anna, Ill.; brothers Sammy (Suzanne), Kenny, and Donny (Sharon); sister Janice Derossett (Gary); and eleven beloved grandchildren: Alex McDaniel, Ethan Laster, Dalton Cobb, Mason Laster, Brianna Dodd, River Laster, Dylan Dodd, Blake Laster, Logan Laster, Brynlee Dodd, and Wyatt Laster. He is also survived by many cousins, nieces, nephews, and lifelong friends and classmates, including Bill Littrell, Dennis Lovell, Mike McLane, Bruce Mosby, and cousins Conley Laster and Ronnie Burford, whom all remained close throughout his life.

Rick was preceded in death by his parents and in-laws; brother Tommy; sister Bonita; brothers- and sisters-in-law Clifford and Barbara, Gary Boulch, and Marvin Wilson; along with nephews Anthony and Allen Boulch and Matthew Tebbe.

A Celebration of Life will be held in Anna, Illinois, with details to be announced at a later date.

Rick’s life was defined by hard work, deep faith, and unwavering love for his family. His laughter, wisdom, and kindness will continue to echo in the lives of all who knew him. Though he has left this world, the foundation he built, both in family and in faith, will stand strong for generations to come.

Arrangements are under the care of Kays - Ponger & Uselton Funeral Homes and Cremation, Port Charlotte, Fla. Condolences can be sent to the family at www.kayspongerpc.com

Rebecca (Becky) Carr

Rebecca (Becky) Carr, age 72, of Belknap, Ill. passed away at 5:25 P.M. Thursday, Oct. 16, 2025 at the Ray and Kay Eckstein Hospice Care Center in Paducah, Kentucky.

Rebecca was born Oct. 16, 1953 in Grand Chain, Ill. She attended the Grand Chain School.

Rebecca and Charles Carr were united in marriage on Oct. 10, 1970. She loved spending time with her family and especially her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Rebecca enjoyed going to the Encampment every year.

She is survived by her husband, Charles Carr; daughter, Tammara (Patrick) McGuire of Mayfield, Ky.; two brothers, Gerald Douglas of Georgia and Richard Evers of Belknap; three grandchildren, Shailen Rosenthal of Jackson, Mo., Camden McGuire of Mayfield, Ky. and Dakin Rosenthal of Belknap; two great-grandchildren, Aaris Sullivan of Jackson, Missouri and Emeri Johnston of Jackson, Mo.; a



host of aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews and many friends.

Rebecca was preceded in death by her parents, Wynona and Genevieve Hanle Douglas; one brother, Gary Douglas.

There will be a celebration of life service honoring the life of Mrs. Rebecca Carr at 11 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 25 at Wilson Funeral Home in Karnak. Reverend Kenneth Capps will be officiating. The family will receive friends Saturday morning from 10 a.m. until the service hour.

To leave an online message for the family or to share a memory, you can also visit our website at www.wilsonfuneralhome1928.com

Loretta “The Balloon Lady” Grant

Loretta “The Balloon Lady” Grant, age 67, of Carbondale, formerly of Dongola, passed away on Monday, Oct. 13, 2025 at St. Louis University Hospital in St. Louis, Mo.

She was born on Feb. 25, 1958 to Everett and Cynthia (Provo) Roe in Anna, Ill.

Loretta was happily divorced and enjoyed life. Loretta left school in 1974, but later earned her GED.

She was Baptistostal (Pentecostal and Baptist), who knew this existed.

Loretta’s claim to fame was that her particular set of skills that only a few have, that of balloon twisting, a craft she learned from her nephew, Brian Roe, and things were never the same again. In this craft, she brought much joy to many children of the years and ultimately became known as “The Balloon Lady,” a title of honor and distinction given by the children at the local fairs and other places she took her talent to.

Loretta was also a Bridal Consultant and held Ceramics, Tupperware, and Mary Kay parties. She loved to go fishing and was an egg packer with her mother. She also had worked as a laborer on the assembly lines and was a seamstress.

Survivors include, her children, Vivian (Jeff) Gentry, Jimmy Grant, and Coletta Grant; grandchildren, Samantha Charles, Sydney Charles, Jimmy Grant, Jr., Novonna Grant, and Montrell Neal; one great-grandchild, Arria Henderson, two brothers, Larry



Roe and Perry, Roe; along with many other relatives and friends.

Along with her parents, she is preceded in death by her brothers, Carl (Corkey) Kessler and Everett “Butch” Roe; along with other relatives.

Funeral service will be held on Thursday, Oct. 23 at 2 p.m. with Steve Karraker officiating at Crain Funeral Home in Dongola. Visitation will be held prior to the service from 12 p.m. until 2 p.m.

Interment will follow the service at St. John’s Cemetery in Dongola.

A gathering will be held at the Community Center immediately following the gravesite, please bring lots of stories to share.

In lieu of flowers and balloons, the family requests with gratitude that memorial contributions be made to the family.

Crain Funeral Home in Dongola is in charge of arrangements.

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



Patricia Thompson Smith

Patricia Thompson Smith, age 73, of Cairo, Ill., passed away at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 11, 2025 at Saint Francis Medical Center in Cape Girardeau, Mo.

Patricia was born on Sept. 1, 1952, in Cairo, Ill., the second child and first daughter of Victor Valerian Thompson and Harriette Kathryn Levitt Thompson.

She was a member of St. Patrick Catholic Church in Cairo where she served as greeter and lector.

She attended St. Joseph Grade School in Cairo, St. Henry High School in Charleston, Mo., and graduated from St. Mary High School in Paducah, Ky.

She was a legal secretary in Cairo for 54 years. She first worked for Attorney William F. Meehan, and for most of her career she was employed by the law firm of Johnson, Schneider & Ferrell of Cairo, Illinois, and Cape Girardeau, Mo.

She was married first to Carl Ray Hornbeak of Cairo on July 8, 1972, and he preceded her in death on June 11, 1982. She later married Charles Louis Smith of Cairo on Dec. 27, 1986, and he preceded her on Feb. 21, 2015.

In addition to her parents and husbands, she was preceded in death by her infant son, David Lanning Hornbeak on Aug 15, 1973, and by her brothers, Terry Thompson



and Leonard Thompson.

She is survived by her siblings, Kay Thompson of Paducah, Ky.; Jerome Thompson of Hot Springs, S.D.; Mary Anne (Alex) Smith of Shingle Springs, Calif.; Tim Thompson of El Dorado Hills, Calif.; Marie (Bill) Kalmbach of Shreveport, La.; and Christopher Thompson of Wilmington, N.C.; and by nieces, nephews, and other relatives and friends.

Visitation was held Wednesday, Oct. 15, 2025 at Crain Funeral Home in Cairo. Mass of Christian Burial was held on Thursday, Oct. 16, 2025 at 10 a.m. at St. Patrick Catholic Church, Cairo with Celebrant, Father Chris Mujule.

Interment followed the Funeral Mass at Calvary Cemetery in Villa Ridge, Ill.

Memorial donations may be made to St. Patrick Catholic Church, Cairo, Ill.

Crain Funeral Home in Cairo is in charge of arrangements.

News from

First Baptist Church, Jonesboro

This past Sunday, Oct. 19, Pastor Perry Williams spoke in our morning service, and his message talked about the fact sometime the Lord leads us along paths you might not expect. The Hebrew children were led out from Pharoah on a journey to the Promised Land; but the Lord lead them through a detour. The Lord knew they were not ready for the challenges of taking the Promised Land yet. Sometimes, there are lessons to be learned on the long way around. His text was found in the 13th – 15th chapters of Exodus.

Music Dee Rose led in worship accompanied by the choir. Dee York played the piano. The

choir sang the song, “Jesus is the Lighthouse.”

Our service was sent via transmitter station 87.9 FM for those who want to listen via the radio. The service was also live streamed on Facebook, so if you missed it, you still have an opportunity to view it. Please check our Facebook page, Jonesboro FBC, for the videos and latest info on church events.

Jonesboro FBC is participating in the Operation Christmas Child Shoe Box program this year. Shoe boxes are now available for anyone who would like to participate. Pick up your shoe box now and return by mid-November.

Recent birthdays: Joyce Hol-

Jerry Kent Held

Jerry Kent Held, age 64 of Olive Branch, Ill., passed away on Tuesday, Oct. 14, 2025 at Saint Francis Medical Center in Cape Girardeau.

He was born on April 14, 1961 to Jerry L. and Mildred J. (Pettitt) Held in Cape Girardeau, Mo. Feb. 12, 2003, he married Beverly Henderson.

Jerry had worked for the Illinois Department of Corrections for 30 years. Jerry served his community as a Deputy Coroner for Alexander County, worked as Alexander County EMA Director for many years, served 15 years on the Horseshoe Lake Fire Department and 6 years as Chief.

Jerry was a very active member of BACA (Bikers Against Child Abuse).

Survivors include his wife, Beverly; children, Bethany (DaJohn) Peters, Jeremy Held (Shawna Brawley); Kevin McKee, Joshua (Angie) McKee, and Kayla White (Kris Powell); 17 grandchildren; 3 great-grandchildren; his father, Jerry; two brothers, Michael Held and Kevin (Kim) Held; sister-in-law, Teresa Clubb; one niece, one nephew; and honorary son, Frank Blake - more.



Along with his mother, he is preceded in death by his daughter, Jessica Held; Step-daughter, Brandy McKee; brother, Randy Held; step-brother, David Clubb; father-in-law, Ted (Marie) Henderson; and mother-in-law, Audrey Stroud.

Funeral Services were held on Friday, Oct. 17, 2025 at 3 p.m. with Rev. Brent Gordon officiating at Crain Funeral Home in Tamms.

Interment followed the service at Olive Branch Cemetery in Olive Branch, Ill.

The family requests with gratitude that memorial contributions be made to BACA (Bikers Against Child Abuse). Envelopes will be available at the service.

Crain Funeral Home in Tamms is in charge of arrangements.

Governor reports more than \$10 million in adjusted gross income

By Ben Szalinski
Capitol News Illinois
SPRINGFIELD – Gov. JB Pritzker made more than \$10 million in adjusted gross income in 2024, according to tax summaries released by his campaign Tuesday, Oct. 14

The summaries offer a glimpse into the billionaire governor’s finances, although the campaign did not disclose the total income of trusts benefiting his family. Pritzker does not take a salary from the state and placed his assets in a “blind” trust when he became governor.

The 2024 summary prepared by Deloitte Tax LLP shows Pritzker and his wife, MK, made \$10.7 million, including \$4.2 million from capital gains. Pritzker received a \$4.8 million standard deduction, meaning he paid taxes on \$5.9 million in income.

The trust benefiting the Pritzkers paid \$4.5 million in state taxes and \$30.2 million in federal taxes last year, according to his campaign.

The first family also reported \$3.3 million in charitable donations.

The governor is an heir to the Hyatt Hotel fortune and is one of the wealthiest politicians in American history. He’s currently worth \$3.7 billion, making him the 979th richest person in the world, according to Forbes.

President Donald Trump is the only current elected official worth more, with a net worth estimated at \$5.1 billion, ranking him 700th in the world.

Pritzker has self-funded two campaigns for governor with more than \$300 million and is expected to shell out millions more for his 2026 campaign while rumors swirl that he will seek the presidency in 2028.

His 2024 tax year ranks as one of his best since taking office. The Pritzkers reported \$3.2 million in taxable income in 2023 and have generally made between \$2 million and \$5 million each year he has been governor. However, the Pritzkers reported making \$18.5 million in 2021, largely from capital gains, the Tribune previously reported.

Before running for governor, Pritzker made \$55 million in 2017, which was the year he left his private equity firm, according to the Tribune. Forbes currently ranks Pritzker as the sixth-wealthiest member of the family.

Before taking office, Pritzker placed most of his investments in a “blind” trust, meaning he doesn’t manage it but does reap profits from it.

Pritzker’s running mate, Christian Mitchell, also released his 2024 tax summaries. Mitchell most recently worked for the University of Chicago as vice president of civic engagement.

Mitchell made \$595,830 last year and claimed a \$65,841 deduction.

Mitchell served as one of Pritzker’s deputy governors during his first term. He is also an active member of the Illinois National Guard.

The year ranks as the Pritzkers’ second-highest earning year since launching his 2018 campaign.

Much of Pritzker’s 2024 income came from capital gains. Pritzker put most of his investments in a blind trust before taking office.

Pritzker’s running mate, Christian Mitchell, also released his 2024 tax returns showing he made nearly \$600,000.

Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service that distributes state government coverage to hundreds of news outlets statewide. It is funded primarily by the Illinois Press Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation.

Medicare enrollment assistance available

The Illinois Department on Aging, IDoA, is encouraging everyone with Medicare to check if their plan still meets their needs and budget during this year’s Open Enrollment Period, which began on Oct. 15 and runs through Dec. 7. Individuals can get free help comparing health and drug plan options by contacting the state’s Senior Health Insurance Program, SHIP.

SHIP counselors are available in person and online throughout the year, but they are seen as especially helpful during Open Enrollment from Oct. 15 to Dec. 7, when people with Medicare can join or switch health and prescription drug plans for the coming year. For those who switch plans, coverage starts on Jan. 1, 2026.

SHIP counselors are cautioning beneficiaries to check their Medicare drug coverage, as there are fewer plans to choose from for 2026 and some premiums have doubled in cost. There are also four drug plans with \$0 premiums.

To get help understanding Medicare options and how to save money on costs, call or visit a SHIP site. Information on how to compare 2026

coverage options and shop for plans using Medicare's Plan Finder is available by calling 1-800-MEDICARE to talk with a customer support representative. TTY users should call 877-486-2048. The Medicare Support Hotline is available 24/7, except for some federal holidays.

For information about the department’s programs and services for older adults and persons with disabilities, visit <https://ilaging.illinois.gov/> or contact the Senior HelpLine toll-free at 1-800-252-8966, Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.

News from

Anna Nazarene Church

Sunday, Oct. 19
The morning worship service was held at 10:35 a.m. on Oct. 19. Announcements were given by Jessica Elkins. The worship service was led by Pastor Wright and the worship team. The message “Do Not Worry” was brought by Pastor Wright from Matthew 6:25-34, Proverbs 12:25, Matthew 6:34, 2 Corinthians 9:8, Luke 1:37, 1 Corinthians 15:22

The Missionary Service was held on Oct. 19 at 6 p.m. Following the meal,

Operation Christmas Shoeboxes were packed and prayed for by those attending.

Saturday, Oct. 25
Women’s Ministry Paint Party in the Fellowship Hall from 1p.m. to 4 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 26
Breakfast - 9:00 a.m.
Sunday School - 9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship Service-10:35 a.m

Pastor Appreciation Potluck following the morning worship. Cards of Appreciation are welcome

for Pastor Wright.

Evening Worship Service-6:00 p.m.
Wednesday, Oct. 29
Wednesday Night Service will be held at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. Youth Group in the Fellowship Hall at 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 8
Fun & Games for all at 4 p.m. Cornhole Tournament and Chili Cook-Off

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

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



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Weekly Scripture Reading						
Isaiah 2.1-22	Isaiah 3.1-15	Isaiah 5.1-30	Isaiah 11.1-16	Isaiah 24.1-23	Isaiah 29.15-24	Isaiah 32.1-20

Scriptures Selected by the American Bible Society

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Midweek service Wednesday at 7 p.m.

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LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT
OF THE FIRST JUDICIAL
CIRCUIT
UNION COUNTY, ILLINOIS
ESTATE OF
IRENE STAMP,
DECEASED.
NO. 2025-PR-18
IN PROBATE
NOTICE OF DEATH
INDEPENDENT
ADMINISTRATION,
AND CLAIM DATE

NOTICE IS GIVEN to creditors of the death of IRENE STAMP, of Wolf Lake, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued on October 16, 2025, to AMANDA VOSBURGH, of 525 FOSTER ROAD, ANNA, IL 62906, whose attorney is ELLE J. BASLER, 205B N. Main St., Anna, Illinois. Within 42 days after the effective date of the original Order of admission, you may file a petition with the Court to require proof of the Will by testimony of the witnesses in open Court or otherwise evidence, as provided by Section 5/6-21 of the Probate Act (755 ILCS 5/6-21.)

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

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

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of this court at the Union County Courthouse, 309 W. Market St., Jonesboro, Illinois, or with the Independent Executor, or both, on or before April 23, 2026, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the Executor is required by Section 5/18-3 of the Probate Act of the State of Illinois, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the Executor and to the attorneys within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

Dated: October 16, 2025.
AMANDA VOSBURGH
CAMERON LAW FIRM, LLC
ELLE J. BASLER
ATTORNEY FOR INDEPENDENT EXECUTOR
205B N. MAIN ST.
ANNA, ILLINOIS 62906
PHONE: 618-833-2220
ARDC# 6345426
8221-958911

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT
FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
UNION COUNTY, ILLINOIS
VANDERBILT MORTGAGE
AND FINANCE, INC.,
Plaintiff,

v.
JOSHUA ADEN, SPOUSE,
IF ANY, OF JOSHUA ADEN
a/k/a JOSHUA W. ADEN, NCB
MANAGEMENT SERVICES,
INC., and UNKNOWN
OWNERS and NON-
RECORD CLAIMANTS
Defendants.

Case No. 2025FC14
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE
(30 DAYS PRE-JUDGMENT)
(735 ILCS 5/15-1502(c)(2))

You are hereby notified that the above-entitled mortgage foreclosure action was filed on September 19, 2025 and is now pending. The Plaintiff intends to enter judgment of foreclosure in the case on or after November 22, 2025, a date not less than 30 days from the date this notice is being given. If you have not filed an appearance and an answer or other affirmative pleading in this case before that date (you may also be required to intervene in the case if you are not already a party), then a JUDGMENT BY DEFAULT may be entered for the relief requested in the complaint. If judgment is entered against you, the sheriff may evict you.

which the Foreclosure Action was brought.

The name of the titleholder of record is Ready Mix Solutions, LLC. The legal descriptions of the real estate sufficient to identify it with reasonable certainty is attached hereto as

Mortgage 1 and Mortgage 2:
Tract 10: (14-00-08-429)
LOTS No. 21, 22, 23 and 24 IN WILLIAM MENEES' ADDITION TO THE CITY OF ANNA, SITUATED IN THE COUNTY OF UNION, STATE OF ILLINOIS, REFERENCE BEING HAD TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN RECORDER'S OFFICE OF UNION COUNTY, ILLINOIS, IN DEED RECORD 17, PAGE 223.

EXCEPTING AND RESERVING UNTO MIDWEST STONE COMPANY THE RAILROAD AND RAILROAD RIGHT OF WAY NOT SITUATED ON SAID LOTS, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO ENTER UPON SAID PREMISES FOR THE PURPOSE OF REPAIRING, REPLACING, MAINTAINING AND THE CONTINUED USE OF SAID RAILROAD RIGHT OF WAY BEING A STRIP OF LAND MEASURING 10 FEET FROM THE CENTERLINE OF SAID EXISTING RAILROAD ON EACH SIDE OF SAID CENTERLINE.

EXCEPTING FURTHER, THAT PART THEREOF CONVEYED TO THE STATE OF ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE FOR THE USE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE, BY DEED DATED JUNE 30, 1944, AND RECORDED JULY 18, 1944, IN DEED RECORD 78, PAGE 244.

TRACT 11: (14-00-08-467)
LOT TWENTY-TWO (22) IN A.J. MENEES' ADDITION TO THE CITY OF ANNA; SITUATED IN THE COUNTY OF UNION, STATE OF ILLINOIS.

Commonly known as: 300 McKinley St., Anna, Illinois 62906.

EXCEPT FROM ALL THE ABOVE any interest in the coal, oil, gas and other minerals underlying said land which have been heretofore conveyed or reserved in prior conveyances, and all rights and easements in favor of the estate of said coal, oil, gas and other minerals, if any, situated in Union County, Illinois.

Information concerning the Mortgages sought to be foreclosed is as follows:

Mortgage 1:
(a) Nature of Instrument: Mortgage.

(b) Date of Mortgage: September 21, 2023.

(c) The name of mortgagor(s): Borrower - Ready Mix.

(d) Name of the mortgagee/grantee: Lender - MidAmerica National Bank.

(e) Date and place of recording of the Mortgage: September 22, 2023 with the Union County Clerk & Recorder.

(f) Identification of Recording: File No. 2023R2408, Document Id. 8078821.

(g) Estate Conveyed: Fee simple.

(h) Amount of original indebtedness: \$3,700,000.00.

Mortgage 2:

(a) Nature of Instrument: Mortgage.

(b) Date of Mortgage: September 21, 2023.

(c) The name of mortgagor(s): Borrower - Ready Mix.

(d) Name of the mortgagee/grantee: Lender - MidAmerica National Bank.

(e) Date and place of recording of the Mortgage: September 22, 2023 with the Union County Clerk & Recorder.

(f) Identification of Recording: File No. 2023R2409, Document Id. 8078822.

(g) Estate Conveyed: Fee simple.

(h) Amount of original indebtedness: \$2,300,000.00.

UNKNOWN OWNERS, Defendants in the above-captioned cause, file your answer to the Verified Complaint for Foreclosure in

this cause or otherwise make your appearance therein, in the Circuit Court of Union County at 309 West Market, Room 241, Jonesboro, Illinois 62952, on or before on or before November 17, 2025, default may be entered against you at any time after that day and a judgment for foreclosure entered in accordance with the prayer of the Verified Complaint for Foreclosure and Other Relief.

Lynn K. White (#6278863)
Deionna Ferguson (ARDC # 6338072)
POLSINELLI PC
7676 Forsyth Boulevard, Suite 800
St. Louis, Missouri 63105
Telephone: 314.889.8000
Email: lwhite@polsinelli.com
de Ferguson@polsinelli.com
13274792
8221-958789

TAKE NOTICE

Certificate No. 2021-00025
TO: GAINES, PAUL & MARGARET, McKenzie Banking Company, Kyung Shi Hur Lee, Gordon Plumb and Monica Plumb, Union County Trustee and unknown owners, occupants or parties interested. A petition for Tax Deed on premises described below has been filed in the Circuit Court of Union County, IL
Parcel No. 04-30-02-743-
S30 T11 R1W PT SE PT LOT 5 PT NE SE. 118 JEFFERSON

Said property was sold on 2/15/2023 for the general taxes for the year 2021. The period of redemption will expire on 1/26/2026. On February 4, 2026 at 11:00 A.M., the petitioner will make application to such court in said County for an order for Tax Deed should the real estate not be redeemed.

Vinod C. Gupta,
Petitioner
8221-958567

TAKE NOTICE

Certificate No. 2021-00054
TO: OKRASINSKI, JOYCE, Dustin Salzman and unknown owners, occupants or parties interested. A petition for Tax Deed on premises described below has been filed in the Circuit Court of Union County, IL
Parcel No. 06-24-04-724-
S24 T13 R1W PT W SD W 1/2 S 1/2 SE.

Said property was sold on 2/15/2023 for the general taxes for the year 2021. The period of redemption will expire on 1/26/2026. On February 4, 2026 at 11:00 A.M., the petitioner will make application to such court in said County for an order for Tax Deed should the real estate not be redeemed.

Vinod C. Gupta, Petitioner
8221-958568

TAKE NOTICE

Certificate No. 2021-00083
TO: BAILEY, BETTY JEAN; Mueth, Jon Evan and unknown owners, occupants or parties interested. A petition for Tax Deed on premises described below has been filed in the Circuit Court of Union County, IL
Parcel No. 10-01-06-636-A1
S1 T11 R3W PT NE SW
Said property was sold on 2/15/2023 for the general taxes for the year 2021. The period of redemption will expire on 1/26/2026. On February 4, 2026 at 11:00 A.M., the petitioner will make application to such court in said County for an order for Tax Deed should the real estate not be redeemed.

Vinod C. Gupta, Petitioner
8221-958569

TAKE NOTICE

Certificate No. 2021-00086
TO: MARR, PAUL & PAMELA, First National Bank, John & Jackie Kelley and unknown owners, occupants or parties interested. A petition for Tax Deed on premises described below has been filed in the Circuit Court of Union County, IL
Parcel No. 12-25-07-162-A
SEC 25 T12 R3W NW CR NW NW

Said property was sold on 2/15/2023 for the general taxes for the year 2021. The period of redemption will expire on 1/26/2026. On February 4, 2026 at 11:00 A.M., the petitioner will make application to such court in said County for an order for Tax Deed should the real estate not be redeemed.

Vinod C. Gupta, Petitioner
8221-958570

TAKE NOTICE

Certificate No. 2021-00092
TO: PLOTT, STELLA MAE, FAIRE LINDA FAYE, Johns, Joshua & Nichole, Harley-Davidson Credit Corp, Perry D & Sharon S Wright and unknown owners, occupants or parties interested. A petition for Tax Deed on premises described below has been filed in the Circuit Court of Union County, IL
Parcel No. 14-00-07-508-
S19 T12 R1WLOTS 5 & 6 MC ELHANEY'S HEIRS 3RD ADD.

Said property was sold on 2/15/2023 for the general taxes for the year 2021. The period of redemption will expire on 1/26/2026. On February 4, 2026 at 11:00 A.M., the petitioner will make application to such court in said County for an order for Tax Deed should the real estate not be redeemed.

Vinod C. Gupta, Petitioner
8221-958571

TAKE NOTICE

Certificate No. 2021-00094 & 2021-00097
TO: ODUOLA, KAREN, Jefferson Capital Systems LLC, Union County Trustee and unknown owners, occupants or parties interested. A petition for Tax Deed on premises described below has been filed in the Circuit Court of Union County, IL
Parcel No. 14-00-07-547-
S19 T12 R1WLOT 45 MC ELHANEY'S HEIRS 3RD ADD. 100"

& Parcel No. 14-00-07-562-
S30 T12 R1WLOT 10 J & D CRAVER'S ADD. 72'X 98' 204
Said property was sold on 2/15/2023 for the general taxes for the year 2021. The period of redemption will expire on 1/26/2026. On February 4, 2026 at 11:00 A.M., the petitioner will make application to such court in said County for an order for Tax Deed should the real estate not be redeemed.

Vinod C. Gupta, Petitioner
8221-958572

TAKE NOTICE

Certificate No. 2021-00099
TO: STANLEY, RICHARD & TAMSEN and unknown owners, occupants or parties interested. A petition for Tax Deed on premises described below has been filed in the Circuit Court of Union County, IL
Parcel No. 14-00-07-590-
S30 T12 R1WLOT 35 J & D CRAVER'S ADD. 62'X 98'
Said property was sold on 2/15/2023 for the general taxes for the year 2021. The period of redemption will expire on 1/26/2026. On February 4, 2026 at 11:00 A.M., the petitioner will make application to such court in said County for an order for Tax Deed should the real estate not be redeemed.

Vinod C. Gupta, Petitioner
8221-958573

TAKE NOTICE

Certificate No. 2021-00134
TO: KIRBY, RYAN, City of Anna, Union County Trustee and unknown owners, occupants or parties interested. A petition for Tax Deed on premises described below has been filed in the Circuit Court of Union County, IL
Parcel No. 14-00-09-314-
E PT LOTS 4, 5, & 6 BLK 11 FOREST PLACE ADD 209 LI
Said property was sold on 2/15/2023 for the general taxes for the year 2021. The period of redemption will expire on 1/26/2026. On February 4, 2026 at 11:00 A.M., the petitioner will make application to such court in

said County for an order for Tax Deed should the real estate not be redeemed.

Vinod C. Gupta, Petitioner
8221-958574

TAKE NOTICE

Certificate No. 2021-00153
TO: MCDERMOTT, BETTY & NOLAN TRACY, Union County Trustee and unknown owners, occupants or parties interested. A petition for Tax Deed on premises described below has been filed in the Circuit Court of Union County, IL
Parcel No. 14-00-10-709-
LOT 22 ORIGINAL PLAT OF MILL CREEK.

Said property was sold on 2/15/2023 for the general taxes for the year 2021. The period of redemption will expire on 1/26/2026. On February 4, 2026 at 11:00 A.M., the petitioner will make application to such court in said County for an order for Tax Deed should the real estate not be redeemed.

Vinod C. Gupta, Petitioner
8221-958575

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

UNION COUNTY, ILLINOIS
ANNA-JONESBORO
NATIONAL BANK, a National
Chartered Bank,
Plaintiff,

vs

ADAM LEE MAYS, WENDY J. MAYS, MIDLAND FUNDING, LLC, UNKNOWN OWNERS and NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS, Defendants.
Case No.: 2022-FC-19
NOTICE OF SALE

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above captioned matter on December 19, 2023, the Sheriff in Union County, will by public sale on November 5, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. in the Union County Courthouse, in Jonesboro, Illinois, sell at public venue to the highest and best bidder, for cash, or cashier's check drawn on a federally or state chartered bank or savings and loan, the following described real estate:

Legal Description
A PARCEL OF LAND BEING PART OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 35, TOWNSHIP 12 SOUTH, RANGE 1 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, SAID PARCEL BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED BY METES AND BOUNDS AS FOLLOWS: BEGINNING AT A ½" IRON ROD AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION 35, THENCE N 84°32'19"W, ALONG THE SOUTH LINE THEREOF, A DISTANCE OF 620.30 FEET TO A ½" IRON ROD, THENCE DEPARTING FROM SAID SOUTH LINE, N 00°48'15"E, A DISTANCE OF 639.31 FEET TO A ½" IRON ROD, THENCE S84°54'05"E, A DISTANCE OF 620.00 FEET TO A ½" IRON ROD ON THE EAST LINE OF SAID QUARTER-QUARTER, THENCE S 00°48'16"W, ALONG SAID EAST LINE, A DISTANCE OF 643.25 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING. CONTAINING 9.102

ACRES, MORE OR LESS, IN UNION COUNTY, ILLINOIS. AS PER SURVEY BY SCOTT A. RICHARDS, PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYOR #2996, DATED JANUARY OF 2014. SUBJECT TO EXISTING EASEMENTS OF RECORD IF ANY AND THAT THEREOF FALLING IN MOSCOW ROAD AND PETRAS LANE. ALL IN ACCORDANCE OF "TRACT #1" ON A PLAT OF SURVEY DATED JANUARY 17, 2014 AND RECORDED FEBRUARY 11, 2014 AS DOC. NO. 2014R0247, AND FURTHER INDEXED AT PLAT

BOOK 11, PAGE 908, MADE BY SCOTT A. RICHARDS, ILLINOIS LAND SURVEYOR NO. 2996, IN THE UNION COUNTY RECORDER'S OFFICE, SITUATED IN THE COUNTY OF UNION AND STATE OF ILLINOIS.

PROPERTY ADDRESS: 1770 MOSCOW RD., DONGOLA, IL 62926
TAX ID: PART OF TAX NO. 02-35-01-271

Potential buyers may contact John R. Schneider of the law firm of Johnson, Schneider & Ferrell, L.L.C., 212 North Main Street, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701, Phone Number 573-335-3300 for information regarding this real estate.

At said sale, the Court will give the purchaser a certificate showing the amount of the bid, a particular description of the property sold, and the time when the purchaser will be entitled to a deed for such property unless same shall have been redeemed according to law.

Keri Clark
Circuit Clerk

Document prepared by:
JOHN R. SCHNEIDER
JOHNSON, SCHNEIDER & FERRELL, L.L.C.
212 North Main Street
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
Telephone: 573-335-3300
Facsimile: 573-335-1978
www.johnsonschneider.com
8221-958492

REAL ESTATE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

UNION COUNTY, ILLINOIS
ANNA-JONESBORO
NATIONAL BANK, a National
Chartered Bank,
Plaintiff,

vs

ADAM LEE MAYS, WENDY J. MAYS, MIDLAND FUNDING, LLC, UNKNOWN OWNERS and NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS, Defendants.
Case No.: 2022-FC-19
NOTICE OF SALE

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above captioned matter on December 19, 2023, the Sheriff in Union County, will by public sale on November 5, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. in the Union County Courthouse, in Jonesboro, Illinois, sell at public venue to the highest and best bidder, for cash, or cashier's check drawn on a federally or state chartered bank or savings and loan, the following described real estate:

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Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
Telephone: 573-335-3300
Facsimile: 573-335-1978
www.johnsonschneider.com
8221-958492



Best costume

Winner of the best Halloween costume was Kathy Milam in her Duck Dynasty costume.



Red Hat Halloween

The Little Egypt Red Hat Ladies met at the Pizza Hut in Anna for their Halloween Dinner Party. Queen Mom Kathy Jackson Milam and Brenda Lovelace were hostesses for the event. Kay Johnson was honored for her October birthday.

Pictured are, from left, front row Martha Ann Webb, Judy Smith, Brenda Lovelace and Barbara McNeely. Back row Kathy Milam, Shirley Page! Kay Johnson, Lillian Milam, Lillah Williams, Carole Anderson and Martha Schwegman.



Class Reunion

The Anna Jonesboro Community High School class of 1963 enjoyed their 62 class reunion on Oct. 18 at Pizza Villa in Anna on Saturday and on Oct. 19 at the Davie School Inn.

Pictured are, from left, Margaret and Larry Dale, Diane and Ralph Blaney, Linda and Dale Johnson, Charlotte Frick, Bill and Shirley Reitz, Joyce Brown, Don and Cheryl Denny, Jim and Linda Ellis, Ron Jennings, Martha Ann Webb, Beverly Anderson, Janet Jennings, Barbara Rhymer and John Schumacher.



Art center exhibits

The Tornado Exhibit at Shawnee Hills Arts Council has been a popular site for visitors. Pictured, from left, Barb Bauer (Anna), Sherill Gramse (Herrin) and Lillian Milam (Jonesboro) were amazed at the history and pictures of the devastation the exhibit depicted. The March 18, 1925 Tornado was the deadliest tornado in U.S. history. It carved a path of destruction 219 miles long across Missouri, Illinois and Indiana. In Illinois, the storm hit communities like Murphysboro, where 234 people died, and West Frankfort, with nearly 150 fatalities. The exhibit is on loan from Little Egypt Art Association.

They also enjoyed viewing Kathy Wides Exhibit of her paintings of the forests, landscapes, buildings, and people. Kathy Wides is a world traveler that has wonderful imagination with her paintings and mixed media.

The exhibits are open for viewing through Oct. 26 at 117 West Davie St, Anna: Thursday and Friday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 3 p.m. Admission is free.



Arts social

At the Arts Social, Lee Hackney showed Christina, June and Zack how to create an 80 page journal. Pictured from left, Christina, Lee, June and Zack.

The Arts Social occurs on the third Thursday of each month. It is a chance to meet with other artists and work simultaneously as individuals or collaborate on a project, or try the free art project for the month. The event is free and open to the public.

The Cat's Meow

by Cobden Spay and Neuter Coalition

This is what we seek to do: 1) Safely trap feral/community cats, spay/neuter them, vaccinate for rabies, and carefully return to their habitat/colony; 2) Subsidize the spay/neuter of cats with permanent guardians. We must have immense community support to achieve this goal for Union Co. That support includes cooperation and assistance with trapping and transport to veterinarians, as well as your donations to fund these surgeries.

Additionally, as winter weather rapidly approaches, we seek to assist in providing shelter for the numerous feral cat colonies in the area. Do you know any builders who would like to construct such shelters for these sweet babies? Let us know if you do. We need funding for this project, as well.

Remember, we are 100% donation funded, and 100% volunteer driven; there is no municipal financial support support for what we are doing.

We are looking forward to our Trivia Night Friday, Nov. 21 at Starview Vineyard from 6 to 8 pm. Won't you join us? Our 3rd annual Chili cook-off will be in January at Fuzzy's in Cobden. Great fun!

Please visit our website, cobdenspayneutercoalition.org, or our facebook page to see what we're up to. You may drop off or send donations to our account at Meller-James & Associates, or mail them to CSNC, P.O. Box 542, Cobden, IL 62920. CSNC is a 501c3 nonprofit organization, and donations are tax-deductible.

Please Spay/Neuter/Adopt companion animals. Meanwhile, if you see a companion animal in need, in trouble, or suffering, please, please call someone before it's too late for them. Call your local animal control office, the police, or the Sheriff's Dept. It IS your business if an innocent being who cannot speak for himself needs your help!

Thousands mobilize in Chicago, across Illinois to send a message: ‘No Kings’

By Maggie Dougherty, Beth Hundsdoerfer and two others
Capitol News Illinois

CHICAGO – Tens of thousands of protesters gathered Saturday, Oct. 18, in downtown Chicago under overcast skies to say they reject the policies and tactics of the Trump administration.

The rally was one of more than 2,600 so-called “No Kings” demonstrations held nationally and across Illinois, organized by the protest group Indivisible.

In Chicago, the focus of the protests was on the Trump administration’s recent immigration enforcement operations. President Donald Trump’s attempt on Oct. 4 to federalize more than 300 members of the Illinois National Guard and another 200 from the Texas National Guard has been tied up in the courts.

U.S. District Judge April Perry issued a temporary restraining order forbidding the federal government from deploying troops on Chicago streets, ruling there was “no credible evidence that there is a danger of rebellion in the state of Illinois.”

Larry Canning arrived early on Saturday to set up a display of American flags with a towel painted to read, “NO KINGS EVER.”

Canning, of Tinley Park, described himself as a “straight down the line” independent, voting for both Republicans and Democrats. But like others at the protest, he took issue with the administration’s recent approach to immigration enforcement.

“They’re denying due process to a lot of people that are good people and they’re trying to make a living,” Canning said. “They’ve been here a long time and they’re ripping them out of their homes and their beds, and that’s tyranny to me.”

Keith Fry, a pastor who lives in the Beverly neighborhood, carried a sign reading, “Sorry for being awkward! This is my first dictatorship.”

Fry said he was motivated in part to come out after watching a video of the Rev. David Black being shot in the head with a pepper bullet by a federal agent while protesting at an Immigration and Customs Enforcement facility in nearby Broadview.

“As a person of faith who sees horrible things happening to my neighbors, I can’t stay silent about that,” Fry said. “But I’m also a proud citizen of my country, and I can’t be quiet with what’s going on. We’ve slid into fascism.”

Kat Abughazaleh, a congressional candidate running for Illinois’ 9th District seat, has been a regular protestor at the Broadview facility and gone viral for a video in which she was shoved to the ground by a federal agent. Abughazaleh believes the Trump administration’s immigration enforcement activity is only one piece of the puzzle.

“It never stops with one population,” Abughazaleh said. “It doesn’t stop with immigrants; it doesn’t stop with blue cities. It comes for all of us one way or another.”

Indivisible volunteer Sally Schultze, who was involved with organizing the local rally, called the administration’s actions “un-American.”

Schultze, like others, referenced fear caused by masked and unidentified agents detaining people, the targeting of journalists, the use of chemical irritants deployed in neighborhoods and nighttime raids that have targeted adults – in some cases American citizens – and zip-tied children detained outside for hours.

However, Schultze said organizers were focused on keeping the protests peaceful. In addition to reminding attendees about expectations for nonviolent action, Schultze said that the No Kings coalition held four volunteer safety marshal trainings in the last two weeks to prepare for this day.



Protest in Carbondale

Demonstrators from across Southern Illinois lined Main Street, stretching from Lenus Turley Park to Old West Main Street, during the No Kings protest. Capitol News Illinois photo by Pearl Franz.

Safety marshals wore yellow vests and acted as a buffer to deescalate any potential conflicts.

While four protesters were arrested at the Broadview facility on Saturday, according to the Cook County Sheriff’s Office, the downtown rally remained peaceful, with protesters blowing bubbles, dancing and singing along to music.

As first popularized in anti-ICE protests in Portland, a number of protesters at the Chicago rally donned inflatable costumes, presenting a whimsical and joyful contrast to Trump’s depiction of the city as a “war zone.”

Organizers said they saw the day as a way to make their voices heard and build community but also sought to provide outlets for further action. Along the path of the march, they posted QR codes where people could find additional ways to support neighbors at risk.

“It’s a cowardly kind of thing, this fascism,” state Sen. Mike Simmons, D-Chicago, said. “It’s rooted in a type of fragility and a type of insecurity and sickness. I think being united and being in the streets and solidarity with each other is how we fight back.”

This was the second major No Kings movement. Organizers mobilized approximately 2,000 protests across the country in June and estimated that over 5 million people took part. Trump supporters dubbed the demonstrations “Hate America” rallies.

Protestors pushed back on that classification by loudly expressing their patriotism, with Gov. JB Pritzker leading in chants of “USA! USA! USA!”

“We are here today to defend the principle that has defined America since its founding, the belief that tyranny in any form must be resisted by the people of conscience,” Pritzker boomed from the stage. “Especially here in Chicago, we will never surrender.”

Springfield

About 75 No Kings rallies were scheduled across Illinois. In Springfield, more than 1,000 people gathered by the Abraham Lincoln statue in front of the Illinois Capitol, spilling onto the sidewalks and lawns fronting the Illinois Supreme Court building and the Illinois State Library.

Many held signs and waved flags with messages like “No Kings in America” and “Stop the coup” while engaging in chants of “No thrones, no crowns, no kings” as passing cars honked and drivers waved their fists in support.

The serious messages shared belied the festive atmosphere. Songs like the “Cha Cha Slide” and “Macarena” peppered between traditional protest songs like “For What It’s Worth” and “Born in the USA” as a light rain sprinkled the gathered demonstrators.

Martin Woulfe, a minister of the Abraham Lincoln Unitarian-Universalist Church in Springfield, joked to assembled demonstrators that

“I watched all of you who’ve been praying for rain” in drought-ridden downstate Illinois, and “now we’re going to work on our timing.”

“We understand that there’s been a drought – a drought in this land, and a deep division,” Woulfe said. “We pray for hope. We pray for goodness. We pray for good trouble, and we understand that we all have a role.”

Central Illinois has largely been spared the aggressive immigration raids that have taken place in the Chicago region over the last month. But the issue was still top of mind for those who gathered in Illinois’ capital city.

Kristi Poole, a hospice aide from Springfield, said that “our immigrant communities may be smaller” in Central Illinois, “but they are here, and they matter.” She said activists are forming rapid response teams in case immigration enforcement ramps up downstate.

“If ICE comes into our communities, I will stand like Corrie ten Boom, like Harriet Tubman, like Anne Frank,” Poole said. “I will not be silent. I will not be complicit, because what is happening in this country isn’t just injustice, it’s a war crime. And history will remember what side we stood on.”

She added: “Authoritarianism is here, fascism is here,” but how long it stays depends on us.”

Karen Broquet, a doctor at the SIU School of Medicine and the leader of Springfield’s Indivisible chapter, said Saturday’s protest was “bigger than anything we’ve done,” noting that they had about 1,000 people at the first “No Kings” rally in June and about 400 at monthly protests since. But Saturday’s protest was the first time she couldn’t spot her family because of all the new faces in the crowd.

“With each more egregious step that our current government takes, it’s impacting more people – and it’s impacting others that they love,” Broquet said. “And it’s forcing them to pay attention. And folks are getting a little bit more courageous, myself included, about talking to friends, neighbors, standing on the street corner screaming (and) holding up signs.”

Lake County Treasurer Holly Kim, a Democratic candidate for Illinois comptroller, was among the speakers, which also included local activists and candidates for local political office.

Signs of counterprotest were minimal in Springfield beyond a man who circled the block several times with Trump flags waving from the bed of his pickup truck.

Metro East

In Belleville, the protest dropped off about noon, two hours before it was scheduled to end, due to a steady downpour, but organizers still estimated attendance at around 1,000.

Protesters stood outside the St. Clair County Courthouse holding signs. Drivers honked

as they passed protesters in costumes and rain gear, shouting in protest of Trump.

Paralee Stewart, who said she was representing the Service Employees Union International, came out to oppose cuts to health care, including Medicaid cuts under the Republicans’ One Big Beautiful Bill signed into law in July.

“The cuts are affecting everyone, including home health care providers, and we take care of the disabled, the elderly and the children, and by them cutting that it means our most vulnerable are going to be affected. That’s why we are out here,” she said.

In Granite City, a steel town, once a big union town and Democratic stronghold, held a “No Kings” protest that drew about 100 people Saturday morning.

Art Asadorian, a Democrat and former Madison County Board member, said he came to support the movement.

“This protest takes me back to when I learned about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and the Declaration of Independence. The reason we formed this country is because we didn’t want kings,” Asadorian said. “I got involved because I could feel a rumble under my feet right now, the Founding Fathers rolling in their graves because of what’s going on. It’s just not right,” he said.

Two Democratic candidates for Madison County Board were also in attendance. Jeremy D. Haston and Amy Mohme, both Democrats, said they were inspired by the political culture and decided to get involved. Neither Mohme nor Haston has run for office before.

“Somebody has to stand against a candidate who is running unopposed, who has no one speaking against that pro-Trump agenda. Somebody had to do it. And if nobody else will, I will,” Hasten said.

Carbondale

Farther south, in Carbondale, the planned No Kings rally drew about 2,000 people that included a visible mix of older and younger people. Carbondale is home to Southern Illinois University.

People stood along main roadways holding signs with messages like, “Hate will not make us great.” They also took jabs at Trump, including a mock cover of Time magazine with an image of Trump as “Clown of the Year.”

One middle-aged protester said she was heartened to see so many people in their 20s and 30s in the crowd, saying the younger generation “needs to make sure they participate, too.”

Maggie Dougherty is a freelance reporter covering the Chicago area.

Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service that distributes state government coverage to hundreds of news outlets statewide. It is funded primarily by the Illinois Press Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation.

Opinion and Commentary

Head Start Awareness Month celebration underway in October

President Ronald Reagan first proclaimed October as Head Start Awareness Month on October 22, 1982. Since then Head Start teachers, parents and alumni have been engaging in meaningful activities to commemorate the impact of Head Start on the nation’s children.

Southern 7 Head Start, S7HS, is joining in the special observance at each of its centers in the region during October.

Throughout the month, children and their families have been participating in various activities, including learning the history of Head Start and how this free, kindergarten readiness program has changed the lives of more than 40 million children nationwide since 1965.

What began in 1964 under President Johnson, Head Start was created in 1965 as a child development program. Head Start provides comprehensive child development services that foster children’s growth in social, emotional, cognitive and physical development, and monitors their progress in these areas for nearly 800,000 children each year.

“Head Start is much more than day care,” S7HS community outreach coordinator Shawwna Rhine said in a news release. “In addition to kindergarten readiness skills, children enrolled in the program receive health, dental and developmental screenings, participate in educational activities and socialization skills, and receive healthy meals and

snacks. It’s a well-rounded approach to early development that’s beneficial to the whole family.”

Families with children in Head Start have access to mental health services, parent engagement and training tools, services to children of all needs and abilities and services available through Southern 7 Health Department, including vaccinations, health screenings, and WIC (Women, Infants and Children) Supplemental Nutrition Program. They are also invited to volunteer in the program and participate in Head Start Policy Council.

Head Start is a federally funded, educational program for income eligible families that provides comprehensive services to children ages birth to 5 to prepare children and their families for kindergarten and beyond.

Southern 7 offers both Head Start and Early Head Start for income eligible families that live in the seven southernmost counties in Illinois for children age 3 to 5 and Early Head Start serves infants and children age 6 weeks to 3. Both programs offer full-day enrollment, with Early Head Start available year-round. A home-based option is available for families if requested. Head Start has dual enrollment with Pre-K.

For more information about Southern 7 Head Start, call 618-634-2297, extension 971127, visit www.southern7.org, or download the Southern 7 App.

Fire officials stress importance of having working smoke alarms

State and local fire safety officials gathered in early October at the Springfield Fire Department to emphasize the lifesaving importance of working smoke alarms and to promote a free installation program available to Springfield residents. As part of the second Annual Statewide Smoke Alarm Blitz, the Springfield Fire Department joined agencies across Illinois in ensuring more families are protected.

“Working smoke alarms save lives, and I cannot stress enough how vital they are in every home across Illinois,” Illinois State Fire Marshal Michele Pankow said. “Fires burn hotter and faster today than they did decades ago, giving families less than three minutes to escape safely. That’s why it’s critical to test, inspect, and replace broken or expired alarms, and don’t hesitate to reach out to your local fire department for help. Our ultimate goal is zero fire fatalities – and ensuring every home has working smoke alarms is one of the most important steps toward making that a reality.”

According to the National Fire Protection Association, working smoke alarms reduce the risk of dying in a home fire by more than half (60 percent), while the majority of civilian home fire deaths

continues to occur in homes with no smoke alarms or no working alarms.

Fire safety officials offer these key smoke alarm safety tips and guidelines:

- Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area, and on each level of the home.
- Make sure smoke alarms meet the needs of all family members, including those with sensory or physical disabilities.
- Test smoke alarms at least once a month by pushing the test button.
- Replace all broken or expired smoke alarms that are 10 years old or older.

In 2024, the Statewide Blitz once again demonstrated the impact of collaboration and community outreach. In just one week, 71 Illinois fire departments installed 2,351 smoke alarms in 743 homes across the state. Beyond providing this lifesaving protection, firefighters educated 1,670 residents on fire safety practices, helping families not only have working alarms but also the knowledge to respond quickly and safely in an emergency. The program also achieved a milestone with its first documented save in Greenville, where newly installed alarms alerted an elderly resident to danger, and she was able to escape safely.

Please read this... Thank goodness for the Critters...

Another week. Another deadline. Another case of writer’s block.

Such was the case for your writer Monday morning. Fortunately, Critters were kind enough to help out, including Rocky, a flock of turkeys and squirrel... Don’t know what I would do without them.

Rocky, traveling alone this time, paid another visit to our front porch one evening last week. A wise observer might suggest that Rocky would not keep coming back if we did not put treats outside for the “outside cat” which became part of our lives during the pandemic. Kitty just sort of showed up...and stuck around. Fortunately for Kitty, The Other Half has a really big, kind heart.

Anyway, as we have previously shared, Rocky, and Rocky’s buddies, are frequent visitors to our front porch. They really enjoy Kitty’s treats. And they are very persistent in their efforts. Such was the case with Rocky’s most recent visit.

Rocky managed to gulp down some goodies before, with some encouragement, and the help, once again, of a big red stick, the furry Critter exited the porch...and climbed up a big sweet gum tree in our front yard.

Rocky, however, was determined to have some more goodies. The Critter climbed out of the tree and returned to the porch. He again was encouraged to leave. Which he did. Rocky wandered away into the dark of the night. I’m guessing Rocky was thinking bad raccoon thoughts...and plotting his revenge...

Meanwhile...

Late Monday afternoon, The Other Half and yours truly were returning home from an appointment in metropolitan Anna. We decided to take the “scenic route” back home, by way of Kaolin Road and Mountain Glen Road.

As we often do on such journeys, we were on the lookout for some of the wildlife which calls Southern Illinois home. While they probably don’t count as wildlife, we did see three dogs out enjoying the nice weather, including one which was carrying something in its mouth which we could not identify.

Shortly after that, as we were heading east on Mountain Glen Road, a flock of about half a dozen wild turkeys were kind enough to cross the road right in front of us. Once they were across the road, the turkeys made their way up a hillside and strutted off into the woods.

Meanwhile...

While on a daily walkabout last Saturday, I caught a glimpse of a squirrel at the top of a utility pole along the street. The squirrel looked to be carrying a walnut...and the Critter looked exhausted. Maybe the effort of getting that treat to the top of the pole was just a bit much. There are times when I feel just like that squirrel...like when this column was being created. At least I didn’t have to climb to the top of a utility pole...

By the way...pictures of Rocky, the turkeys and the squirrel accompany this week’s column...which was finally finished Tuesday morning...some things just take time...

Meanwhile...

Finally...it would appear that summer is making an exit and autumn weather has arrived. Temperatures have been a bit more seasonable this week...and we even had a little bit more rain. Last week, high temperatures were still in the 80s for six days in a row. Seemed more like summer.

During our drive through the country on Monday, we noticed how green the landscape is in the third week of October. We did see a few hints of changing colors in some of the trees. Our guess was that given another week or so, we might see a display of yellows, reds and more of the colors of autumn.

A-J FFA earns several honors during October

October has been a very successful month for the FFA chapter at Anna-Jonesboro Community High School.

The school shared on social media that the chapter’s FFA ag sales team took first place at an ag sales competition hosted by A-J and will advance to district competition. Ag sales is a contest in which students research and sell an agricultural product. The contest prepares the students for future careers in the sales industry.

Also competing this month, Addison Bonner and Ella Helton represented A-J in an ag ed competition. They created and taught a lesson plan and then reflected on their teaching. Addison placed second overall and will move on to the district level.

At a district horse judging competition, A-J’s team placed third out of more than 50 schools. Addison Bonner placed third individually out of more than 450 participants.

Cemetery information

The City of Anna has announced that ground arrangements may be placed out at the Anna cemetery starting Nov. 1, 2025 and stay down until March 1, 2026.

People are reminded that no glass or shepherd’s hooks are allowed and are asked to not block the aisles.

If you walk your dog, please clean up after it. The Cemetery is open from dawn till dusk.

For questions, call the Anna City Garage at 833-7813.

Pick ‘Em If You Got ‘Em

By Zack Rowatt, SHAC

Sunday afternoon saw the Shawnee Hills Arts Council (SHAC) hosting another unique regional artist, this one working in more than the customary two- or three-dimensional formats of some of our painters, illustrators or sculptors.

Alan Dillard, a.k.a Old Goat, presented on his crafting of custom cigar box guitars, something that he has been practicing since the late 2010s.

Once an avid performance musician and professional winemaker, Dillard turned to this form of creativity in his retirement. He enjoys building these one-of-a-kind instruments because they just look cool.

During his presentation where he brought a few examples, he discussed how he worked towards honing his skills during the pandemic and numbers his creations close to 150 so far. Most of the instruments that he builds end up donated to fundraisers and auctions for a wide array of causes, which is what it’s all about for him.

Notably, for fans of the one-day festival, Dillard donates an instrument annually to the Raddle the Bottoms music festival. All his efforts have landed him a few slots for several of his custom builds in a traveling exhibit coordinated by the National Blues Museum as well as a couple on permanent display at museums in the southeast.

The presentation centered on specific materials and their durability including machine-fabricated products versus natural resources like deer antler or bone, methods for different



Rocky returns...for yet another sequel...and yet another visit to the front porch. After the picture was taken, Rocky abandoned the porch and scrambled up a sweet gum tree in the front yard.



After crossing Mountain Glen Road, a flock of turkeys made their way up a hillside and into the woods Monday afternoon.



This squirrel may have just been plain old worn out from the heavy load it had carried to the top of a utility pole.



Alan Dillard, a.k.a Old Goat demonstrates tone and action on a custom cigar box guitar. Closeups of an original guitar up for raffle with tickets for sale at the SHAC.

intonation and playability, as well as personal aesthetic. Additionally, some history was discussed from the early days of similar homemade instruments by pioneering black blues musicians.

An original Old Goat cigar box guitar has also been donated to the SHAC for fundraising purposes as it seeks to restore the brick façade and roof of the historic City Hall which the arts center occupies. Tickets are for sale at the SHAC and will be drawn later in the fall after most of the SHAC’s fall events have occurred culminating with the children’s musical, ‘The Secret Garden’ in December. One does not need to be present to win.

The SHAC is always offering recurring programs as well as artist spotlights and special events. Other happenings on the schedule at present include the annual Haunted House ‘Creatures of the Night’ being offered Oct. 24, 25, and 29 to 31, with doors opening at 7 p.m. until 9:30 p.m. on Fridays, 10 p.m. on Saturdays, and 11 p.m. on Halloween night.

Starting off November is the annual Salute to Veterans Dinner at 6 p.m. on Nov. 10, where all attendees need a ticket, but all veterans and active duty eat free. Next month closes with the festive Reindeer 5k and 1-Mile Run/Walk on Nov. 29 at 8 a.m. Further details and registration info for these events can be found on the organization’s social media pages as well as at www.shawneehillsart.com.