

THE GAZETTE-DEMOCRAT

The Talk And Cobden Review • Serving Union County Since 1849

Thursday, February 6, 2025

Anna, Illinois

\$1.00

Volume 176, Number 9

News Notes

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

Union County Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development's 10th annual gala is set for Feb. 8 at The Havisham House in Alto Pass. Diamond Dog is slated to perform at the gala, which begins at 5 p.m.

The third annual Galentine Girls' Night Out event is planned from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Feb. 7 in downtown Anna and Jonesboro.

The annual Bald Knob Cross of Peace meeting is set for 6 p.m. on Feb. 11. The meeting will be in the welcome center at the Cross of Peace on Bald Knob Mountain near Alto Pass.

Other upcoming events at the Cross of Peace are scheduled to include an Easter sunrise service on April 20, Blessing of the Bikes on May 18 and Blessing of the Jeeps on June 7.

Shawnee Hills Arts Council and the PAST organization of Union County are planning to cosponsor Civil War Weekend activities on Feb. 21-22 in Anna.

After a taste of spring early this week, it looks like weather in the Union County will be on a not unexpected for this time of the year roller coaster ride through next Monday. Rain is possible each day from Thursday, today, through Sunday.

Anna-Jonesboro Community High School seniors Brinley Corbit and Brooklynn Eastman and Cobden High School's Garrett Basler have been awarded Southern Illinois University Carbondale Chancellor's Scholarships.

Students in teacher Alysha Hase's co-op work class at Anna-Jonesboro Community High School had a real-world lesson in taxes, thanks to Mary K. Harris, a tax professional with 27 years of experience and owner of H & R Block in Anna.

A-JCHS student athletes Rylan Frazier and Taj Hodges have been selected to the All South soccer team.

A-JCHS coach Mark Boomer has been honored as the 2A All South soccer coach of the year.

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Blood drive set at A-JCHS

An American Red Cross blood drive is scheduled Tuesday, Feb. 11, at Anna-Jonesboro Community High School.

Hours for the blood drive will be from 8:30 a.m. 2:30 p.m.

Local schools impacted by illness

Southern 7 responds to recent increased flu cases

In response to increased rates of flu cases in Illinois and the surrounding region, Southern 7 Health Department planned to hold an indoor, pop-up flu and COVID vaccine clinic for those 18 and older on Wednesday, Feb. 5, at the Shawnee Community College Extension Center in Anna.

On Jan. 25, the Illinois Department of Public Health's Seasonal Respiratory Illness Dashboard indicated that emergency department visits for flu had increased to their highest point of this year's flu season following a decline at the beginning of the month.

Schools in the Union County area were being impacted by illness.

Anna School District 37 shared last week on social media that classes were not in session for several days due to sickness. Sports events were being cancelled.

School nurses were sharing information about illnesses, including when children needed to stay home.

Southern 7 Health Department shared that residents are being encouraged to get their shots to reduce the overall burden of respiratory illnesses.

According to the CDC, it is possible to have the flu, as well as other respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19, at the same time.

To help keep yourself and family healthy, and to prevent the spread of illness-causing germs, Southern 7 Health Department urges everyone to vaccinate and follow a few simple, health tips.

Wash your hands. You should wash frequently with water and soap for at least 20

seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub containing at least 60 percent isopropyl alcohol.

Avoid touching your face. Try not to touch your eyes, mouth, or nose with unwashed hands.

Cough and/or sneeze into your elbow. Be sure to practice this healthy habit to avoid germy hands.

Wipe down and disinfect high-touch surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches, tabletops, countertops, bathroom sinks, toilets, faucet handles, shopping cart handles and gas pump handles. It's a good idea to keep a bottle of hand sanitizer in your vehicle to use after pumping gas.

Disinfect hard, nonporous surfaces in your vehicle, including cup holders, the steering wheel, door handles, seat buckles and radio knobs as permitted by the manufacturer's instructions. Always follow manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and disinfecting of electronics.

Maintain your space between yourself and others keeping six feet of distance whenever possible. Try to avoid close contact with people who are sick.

Wear a facemask to help reduce your chance of inhaling viral particles or spreading a virus to someone who may have a weakened immune system.

Boost your immune system. Proper diet, hydration, exercise and sleep are all needed to maintaining good health. While a strong immune system doesn't prevent you from getting sick or passing a virus on to others, establishing these

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YOUR CHILD NEEDS TO STAY HOME IF.....						
Your child has a fever	Your child has vomited	Your child has diarrhea	Your child has a rash	Your child has head lice	Your child has an eye infection	Your child has been in the hospital
						
Temperature of 100.0 or higher	Within the past 24 hours	Within the past 24 hours	Body rash with itching or fever	Itchy head, active head lice	Redness, "crusty" drainage from eye	Hospital stay and/or ER visit

Important message

This was one of the messages being shared on social media by local schools in response to recent increased rates of illness.

'Stop The Bleed' sessions slated

Southern 7 Health Department's Medical Reserve Corps, MRC, has been awarded funding to conduct "Stop The Bleed, STB, community trainings in the lower seven Southern Illinois counties.

The community trainings are scheduled to start in February and continue through April.

The program will be coordinated through a partnership between the health department and the Regional Hospital Coordinating Center, RHCC, which will provide the personnel to conduct the trainings. Participants who complete the free training will receive a STB starter kit.

"The purpose of the STB campaign is to build community resilience," said Bobi Cavins, Southern 7 Health Department emergency preparedness coordinator in a news release. "In doing so, residents are better prepared to save lives by knowing how to help in bleeding emergencies. These trainings enhance

public health and safety while fostering collaboration among community organizations."

Trainings are scheduled to last from one hour to an hour and a half, depending on student participation. Each class will be limited to 25 participants age 18 and older. Pre-registration is required.

The health department announced the following schedule for training sessions on its website:

Feb. 18: Shawnee Community College Alexander County Extension Center, Cairo, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 19, Anna-Jonesboro Community High School, Anna, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 27, Massac County High School cafeteria, Metropolis, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

March 1, Shawnee Community College main campus near Ullin, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

March 6, Hardin County School Commons Area, Elizabethtown, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

March 8, Fellowship Baptist Church, Vienna, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

March 19, Anna-Jonesboro Community High School, Anna, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

March 22, Goreville School cafeteria, Goreville, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

March 27, Meridian School cafeteria, Mounds, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

March 31, Vienna High School Media Center, Vienna, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

April 2, Hardin County School Commons Area, Elizabethtown, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

April 3, Century School cafeteria, Ullin, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

To register for an upcoming training, visit the Emergency Preparedness page at www.southern7.org or Southern 7 Health Department on Facebook.

For more information, or to learn how to host a "Stop The Bleed" training session, call Bobi Cavins at 618-634-2297, extension 971123.

January weather: Temperatures below normal, precipitation wetter than normal

Temperatures were below normal during January in the Southern Illinois, Southeast Missouri and Western Kentucky region.

Precipitation was wetter than normal in much of the region, the National Weather Service office in Paducah reported in a climate review for the first month of 2025.

Temperatures

Temperatures finished below normal by 3 to 5 degrees.

Most of the first 15 days of the month were below normal, with highs in the 20s and 30s commonplace.

A brief warmup into the 50s occurred on the 16th and 17th.

This was followed by the coldest air of the month from the 19th through 22nd.

Lows fell into the single digits during this time with highs only in the teens or low 20s a couple of these days.

Wind chills were below 0 each morning during this period, with coldest readings down to 10 degrees below zero.

Much warmer weather greeted the region from the 25th through 31st, with highs back into the 40s and 50s most days.

The warmest day of the month occurred on the 29th

or 31st, with highs in the 60s in many areas.

Precipitation

Precipitation averaged wetter than normal across much of Southeast Missouri, Western Kentucky and far Southern Illinois.

These areas received anywhere from 4 to 7 inches, which was 0.5 of an inch to 3 inches wetter than normal.

Meanwhile, the driest areas were located across Southern Illinois and southwest Indiana along and north of I-64,

where amounts were only 2 to 3 inches, which was up to an inch below normal.

Winter Precipitation Events

There were two wintry precipitation events that impacted the region.

The first was a wintry mix of freezing rain, sleet and snow on the 5th. Ice amounts ranged from 0.25 of an inch to 0.75 of an inch across much of the area and up to 100,000 customers were without power at the height of the event.



Ice on utility lines

Ice covered utility lines throughout the Union County area following a winter storm on Jan. 5.



Rain helped to wash away reminders of winter weather

Heavy rain fell on the region Thursday, Jan. 30, helping to wash away signs of recent winter weather in Union County, such as a small pile of snow at the edge of a parking lot at the First Baptist Church in Cobden. The National Weather Service office in Paducah issued a flood watch for Thursday, Jan. 30, that included parts of Southern Illinois (including the Union County area), Southeast Missouri and Western Kentucky. Rainfall amounts ranging from 1.5 inches to 4 inches were possible. Local weather observer Dana Cross recorded 1.39 inches of rain on Jan. 30 near Jonesboro.



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News Notes

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A-JCHS student athletes Taj Hodges and Kaleb Gore earned all-tournament team honors at the Arrowhead Classic in Johnston City.

Cobden’s Mallory Adamitis and Matthew Marks have earned all conference honors in junior high basketball.

A Valentine’s dance for students in grades 4 through 8 is scheduled from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Feb. 14 at Lick Creek School.

Khoury League baseball and softball sign-ups are planned from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Feb. 20 and Feb. 25 at the Dongola Community Center.

A sign posted on the front door of the former US Bank location in Cobden reads “Branch Closed...This branch is permanently closed.”

The Fowler Bonan Foundation reports that it has received a generous donation from the Laborers’ Local 773 Union which continues a long-standing partnership to combat food insecurity throughout Southern Illinois.

Last week, Shawnee Community College welcomed members of the Higher Learning Commission to the college’s main campus near Ullin for a 10-year accreditation review. The college expects to hear results from the visit in the coming weeks.

February is Career and Technical Education, CTE, Month. Shawnee Community College plans to highlight programs it offers on CTE Day, which is Thursday, Feb. 20.

February is Earthquake Preparedness Month. According to the Central United States Earthquake Consortium, earthquakes continue to occur on a daily basis in the central United States, with nearly 200 occurring each year. Southern 7 Health Department is encouraging everyone to follow safety steps which can be found online at

Flu

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habits are beneficial to help maintain your physical health during cold and flu season.

Stay home when you’re sick.

For information on how to receive a vaccine, contact your local Southern 7 public health clinic to make an appointment.

For more information, call the health department at 618-634-2297, download the Southern 7 app or visit www.southern7.org.

Arts council planning to host Open Mic Night



Musicians perform at a Shawnee Hills Arts Council Open Mic Night. Photo provided.

Shawnee Hills Arts Council on West Davie Street in Anna plans to continue its monthly tradition of Open Mic Nights on Friday, Feb. 7. Open Mic Night gets underway at 7 p.m.

The arts council expects the usual roster of local talent from singers and musicians to poets and comedians but with a couple of special additions this month.

The first special addition is that local entertainer Rolie Hawk will be hosting the event for the first time.

“Most people in the area know me from my years of IT and government work, but I’ve really been branching out over the last year with comedy and karaoke,” Hawk said in a news release.

“March of 2024 was my first Open Mic Night ever where I sang a couple of songs. Then, in April, I did a stand-up routine for the first time. Something about it really felt right and I’ve been

Overall respiratory illness level ticks up again to high in Illinois

The Illinois Department of Public Health, IDPH, on Feb. 3 announced that after a one-week dip, the state’s overall respiratory illness level had ticked up again from moderate to high, driven by a notable increase in emergency department, ED, visits and hospital admissions for flu.

While data for ED visits and hospital admissions for the week ending Jan. 25 showed that COVID-19 and RSV were declining, it indicated the flu was circulating more widely.

There were three times as many hospital admissions for flu as there were for COVID-19, with 4.6 percent of admissions attributed to flu, with 1.6 percent to COVID-19 and 0.7 of a percent for RSV.

Almost 20 percent percent of ED visits were for acute respiratory illness, a catchall category that includes flu, COVID-19 and RSV plus other respiratory conditions. Of those, 7.8 percent were attributed to flu, 1.6 percent to COVID-19 and 0.7 of a percent to RSV.

“IDPH continues to closely monitor data on seasonal viruses during this respiratory season,” IDPH director Dr. Sameer Vohra said in a news release.

“Flu continues to circulate widely across Illinois. I recommend that all those over 65, very young children, individuals with chronic disease, and those who are immunocompromised, use all the tools at their disposal to prevent exposure.

“If you do develop flu-like symptoms, contact your health care provider and seek treatment right away. Antiviral medication is most effective if initiated less than 48 hours after your symptoms begin.”

The state’s overall respiratory activity level as calculated by the CDC moved up to high in late December but dipped to moderate in January for one week before ticking up to high again in the most recent week, driven by increasing rates of flu.

The five CDC respiratory activity levels are designed to help people understand the extent of respiratory illness activity in their area.

They are divided into mini-

doing it ever since all over the region.”

Hawk encourages others to explore their creativity at Open Mic Night.

“Many of us have these hidden talents that we keep to ourselves,” Hawk said. “For whatever reason, we are hesitant to share them with others. But so many of these talents can only be grown by doing them and sometimes that means doing them in front of a crowd.”

“The crowd at the arts council’s Open Mic is very patient and supportive. It’s a great place to try something new,” Hawk said. “It’s seriously been life changing for me. Singing and comedy are sides to me that most people never got to experience before and I never considered myself a performer before but it’s a great outlet.”

The second special addition is that Hannah Prendergast Photography will be spending the evening there to take free photos of the performances.

“Hannah’s become a real staple of the Union County business community,” Hawk said. “She’s an amazing photographer and these are the kinds of photos that will look great on social media accounts for the performers and not only capture great memories but help them get the word out about their talent.”

mal, low, moderate, high and very high and are based on data that captures a broad range of diagnoses from emergency department visits for respiratory illnesses, from the common cold to severe infections like influenza, RSV and COVID-19.

For those who are unvaccinated, public health officials note that it’s not too late to get vaccinated. It takes about two weeks for vaccinations to provide their full level of protection. Getting shots now will offer protection through the cold and flu season that lasts into the spring.

Vohra recommends that anyone feeling symptoms of respiratory illness, such as a fever, runny nose, sore throat or cough, consider getting tested and treated early in the course of their illness, especially if they are at risk for serious illness or spreading it to someone who is at risk of serious illness.

Those who are ill should avoid spreading germs to others by self-isolating (staying away from others when they are ill) or wearing a mask if unable to isolate.

The IDPH Respiratory Illness Dashboard has recorded five pediatric deaths this season from flu, with three from RSV and one from COVID-19 and RSV.

These deaths are seen as a stark reminder of the importance of vaccinations for children and of the risk of serious illness from these largely preventable seasonal illnesses.

OSHA training set at Shawnee

Shawnee Community College is planning to offer OSHA training. OSHA 10 and OSHA 30 training are scheduled.

OSHA 10 is set for Feb. 10-12, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. each day at the college’s main campus near Ullin.

OSHA 30 is scheduled at the main campus on Mondays and Wednesdays, from Feb. 10 to March 26, with hours set from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Information about enrolling in either course is available by calling 618-634-3200.



Viewing exhibit
A visitor looks at panels in the “Journey to Freedom: Illinois’ Underground Railroad” exhibit at the Shawnee Hills Arts Council in Anna. The photograph was taken during an event which was held to mark the opening of the exhibit.

Underground Railroad exhibit continues in Anna

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

The exhibit is scheduled to be on display through Feb. 23 at at the Shawnee Hills Arts Council at 123 W. Davie St. in Anna.

The “Journey to Freedom: Illinois’ Underground Railroad” exhibit consists of many picture/story panels that tell

the known history of the Underground Railroad in Illinois.

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

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

School groups are encouraged to visit. For more information, contact Linda

Lawyer in Library sessions slated in area

Each month at local public libraries in the First Judicial Circuit in Southern Illinois, volunteer attorneys are working to help self-represented litigants through the Lawyer in the Library program.

Organizers of the program note that with locations across the Southern Illinois region, free legal advice is available nearby.

The Lawyer in the Library program provides patrons needing help with a legal issue an opportunity to sit down with an attorney for a private, one-on-one, approximately 20-minute session, to receive advice or help with legal documents.

There is no fee, but preregistration is required at most locations.

On the date of a session, those seeking assistance are advised to check in at the library registration desk and bring paperwork pertaining to their legal question or situation, if applicable. The program may be limited to one visit per patron.

More information about the program, as well as preregistration to speak to an attorney, are available by contacting one of the participating libraries.

The upcoming schedule for the program in Union County

area communities includes:

Anna: Stinson Memorial Public Library, 618-833-2521. Attorney Gene Turk. Feb. 19, noon to 1 p.m.

Carbondale: Carbondale Public Library, 618-457-0354. Attorney Gene Turk. Feb. 19, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Attorney Christine Heins. Feb. 27, noon to 2 p.m.

Those involved with the program voiced their appreciation to the following for their support:

Chief Judge William J. Thurston, First Circuit judges and circuit clerks, volunteer attorneys, library directors, library program coordinators and other library staff members.

Each Lawyer in the Library program is initially launched with a Self-Represented Litigant/Access to Justice Improvement Grant, ATJ Grant, funding through the Access to Justice Division, Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts.

The programs continue with each volunteer attorney coordinating with the library and the Office of the Chief Judge, Brenda Sprague, executive assistant to the chief judges and ATJ Grant coordinator. www.firstcircuitil.org.

Mass transit district to host public meetings

Shawnee Mass Transit District is planning three public meetings as a way to seek public feedback.

Members of the public will be invited to provide feedback on the district’s current services and to suggest improvements, discuss routes and other topics.

The public meetings are planned at the district’s depots in Metropolis, Anna and Mounds. The schedule follows:

Feb. 11, Metropolis Depot, 5337 Industrial Park Dr.

Feb. 12, Mounds Depot 510 Beechwood Ln.



Anniversary celebrated
A celebration of the first anniversary of worship services was held Saturday night, Feb. 1, at Casper Church near Anna. Danny and Norma Weaver started the worship services. Dan and Kathy Whiteside joined them in singing and also sang the first night. Photographer for all of the pictures Martha Ann Webb.



Singing at service
Ashley Smith sang with Danny and Norma Weaver at the Casper Church worship service that meets on the first Saturday of every month. Ashley also sponsors, along with the Alliance of Churches, free meals and fellowship at The Old Depot on East Davie Street in Anna every Sunday night at 6 p.m.



Using sign language
Sara Wylie used sign language to accompany Tammy Hagler, who was singing at the gospel worship service at the Casper Church Saturday night, Feb. 1.

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Shawnee Mass Transit District Public Meeting

Shawnee Mass Transit District invites the public to provide feedback on our current services, suggest improvements, discuss routes, and more. Public comment sessions will be held at our depots in Metropolis, Anna, and Mounds on the dates listed below.

To ensure accessibility, we are offering free transportation on our existing routes to and from these meetings. To schedule a ride, please contact our dispatch center at 866-577-6278 at least 24 hours in advance. These sessions will take place from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM.

If you are unable to attend but have questions or feedback, you can send a letter to: 100 Smart Drive, Vienna, IL 62995 Attn: Executive Director

You may also email the Executive Director at mpietrowski@smtdil.com

February 11, 2025

Metropolis Depot, 5337 Industrial Park Drive, Metropolis IL 62960

February 12, 2025

Mounds Depot, 510 Beechwood Lane, Mounds IL 62964

February 13, 2025

Anna Depot, 120 Denny Drive, Anna IL 62906

NOROVIRUS AND THE FLU?

WHAT TO DO!

WHAT IS NOROVIRUS?

Norovirus is a stomach bug (virus) that can very easily spread from person to person.

SYMPTOMS OF NOROVIRUS:

Your symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Body aches
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Nausea/ stomach pain

WHAT DO I DO?!

Both Flu and Norovirus symptoms come on suddenly

- If you (or your child) are sick, stay home unless seeking medical treatment. **Do not return to work or school until you are 24 hours fever free without the use of fever-reducing medicine.**
- Limit contact with others
- Get plenty of rest & stay hydrated by drinking plenty of fluids
- Wash your hands with soap & water often (for at least 20 seconds)
- Disinfect common surfaces after each use
- Don't cook or prepare food for others if you are sick

WHAT IS THE FLU (INFLUENZA)?

Influenza (or flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by flu viruses. Most people with flu have mild illness and do not need medical care or antiviral drugs.

SYMPTOMS OF THE FLU:

Your symptoms can include:

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea. This is more common in children.

Egyptian Health Department January 2025

Important message shared as illnesses impact local school district
Several different illnesses have been impacting Anna School District 37, including influenza A, a stomach virus (possibly Norovirus), COVID and a viral upper respiratory virus. School nurse Candice Sauerbrunn shared a graphic on social media which had been shared with her by a coworker. She also shared the following message: "If your student has a fever today of 100 degrees or more today, do not send them to school tomorrow. If your child has diarrhea or vomiting today, do not send them to school tomorrow. The only way to get on the other side of this is to follow these guidelines and break the cycle of spread."

Master Naturalist spring course slated

The Illinois Master Naturalist volunteer training program is looking for individuals to become engaged environmental stewards in Southern Illinois.

University of Illinois Extension believes in fostering connections between local communities and the outdoors.

Extension strives to grow a new generation of learners connected to the natural world while providing an avenue for personal growth and fulfillment.

Illinois Extension will host a hybrid training in 2025 for the next cohort of Master Naturalists.

The training consists of science-based educational opportunities offered through self-paced assignments, in-person activities and discussions.

Regional experts will teach class sessions on ecology, invasive species, rivers and streams, forestry, geology, herpetology, entomology and much more.

Participants will learn through a variety of materials, including an online course, a manual, in-person activities and discussions and guided hikes.

Extension natural resources educator Erin Garrett notes that the program allows local participants to facilitate conservation and restoration through volunteer work within their communities.

"Southern Illinois has a rich and diverse landscape that allows for many volunteer opportunities," Garrett said. "Volunteers can work with state parks and refuges to assist with natural areas restoration and education or collect data as a community scientist."

The fee for the spring course is \$250, which includes 10 weeks of online materials and live sessions.

Training sessions are scheduled on Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. from April 3 to June 12. The group will meet at the visitor center at Giant City State Park near Makanda. The visitor center is located at 1-245 Giant City Rd.

To join the training, download an interest form at go.illinois.edu/2025MNinterestform. The deadline to receive interest forms is March 14.

Becoming a Master Naturalist volunteer requires a background screening process.

To learn more about becoming a Master Naturalist, contact program coordinator Anne Townsend at 618-833-6363 or cupquake@illinois.edu.

University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment. If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in programming, contact Anne Townsend at 618-833-6363 or cupquake@illinois.edu. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time for meeting participant needs.

"The Preaching Pen"

Lessons from Lot's Wife: Lesson 3

Lessons from Lot's Wife: Lesson 3

After the healing of the 10 lepers, Jesus spoke to the apostles about his second coming. In that preparation, he made mention of Lot's wife. "Remember Lot's wife," "Luke 17:32. Nearly 2,000 years after her fatal error, Christ reminded them of her, and after another 2,000 years it is good for us to remember her mistake.

Lesson 3: We must remember to accept responsibility for our sins.

Lot's wife was responsible for her sins and so are we. We cannot defend our mistakes, ignore us, wrong choices, or claim lack of understanding when it comes to sin. God's warnings are plain, simple, and easy to understand. Man makes them complicated. In Philipians 2:12, Paul writes, "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only; but now in my absence, work out own salvation with fear and trembling." We are responsible for our own works and can offer God no excuses or arguments for why we procrastinate to do His will, Galatians 6:5 Lot's family realized that God's punishment is severe and irreversible. Jeremiah 31:30 reminds us, "everyone shall die for his own iniquity." Matthew 7:21 records the words of Christ, "Not everyone that saith unto me Lord, Lord shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven."

Have you accepted the responsibility for your sins? Why not let Jesus help you today?

Ryan Thornsberry,
Anna Church of Christ

Part-Time DRIVER Needed

At The Gazette-Democrat, Anna, IL office

This contract position is a great opportunity for a dependable, short-distance driver and bundle handler!

Primary duties Include:

- Driving personal vehicle to deliver weekly publications to area vendors and post offices
- Lifting, loading and unloading our publications and products
- Helping with product bundling and other tasks that expedite delivery of our products
- Communicating professionally and timely with our team

Candidates must have:

- Dependable personal vehicle
- Valid driver's license
- Working cell phone
- Current auto insurance
- Successful drug screening
- Self-motivation
- Demonstrated ability to take initiative and work effectively with others

This is a contract position (approximately 3 hours per week) with a flat pay of \$100 per week.

Qualified candidates only - For consideration, forward resume to lhinton@annanews.com

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Obituaries

Debby Ann Tadlock

Debby Ann Tadlock, 70, of Marion, and formerly of Union County, died Sunday, Jan. 19, 2025, at St. Louis University Hospital.

She was born on March 11, 1954, in Wayland, Iowa, the daughter of Arthur and Lila Ann Brown Freyenberger.

Debby is survived by her sisters-in-law, Karen Freyenberger of Cobden and Myra Freyenberger of Alto Pass; dear friend Trish Odom of Marion; all her family at Haven House in Marion; nieces and nephews Tammy Clark of Cobden, Billy and Wanda Freyenberger of Herrin, Forrest Freyenberger of Alto Pass, Bobby and Kyle Roe of Centralia, and Amy and Sonny Camden of Alto Pass; other relatives and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents; son Frances Ryan Freyenberger; brothers Danny and Ricky Freyenberger; and sister, Vicky Roe.

Debby honorably served her country in the United States Army from 1973 to 1976.

Graveside funeral services will be at 11 a.m. Thursday, **RENDLEMAN & HILEMAN** today, at the Cobden Funeral Homes Cemetery,



with Clarisa Blakemore officiating. Interment will immediately follow.



Graveside military rites will be conducted by Carroll P. Foster Post No. 3455 of the VFW in Anna and the Illinois National Guard funeral honor team of Marion. Everyone attending is asked to go directly to the cemetery.

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

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

Laura L. Johnson

Laura L. Johnson, 87, of Paducah, Ky., and formerly of Cairo, died Monday, Jan. 27, 2025, at Providence Pointe in Paducah,

She was born on Feb. 6, 1937, in Barlow, Ky., the daughter of Elmer and Clara Apperson Kerley.

On Aug. 23, 1953, she married Donald E. Johnson, and together they spent over 68 years together until his passing in 2022.

Mrs. Johnson worked for Bunge Corporation, where she was a secretary.

She was a faithful member of the Mighty Rivers Regional Worship Center in Cairo, where she was a member of the church choir and taught Sunday school for several years. She and Donald always treated her church children like family and they would take them on outings to Cape Girardeau and when summer came, have them over for swim parties with Donald operating the grill. She was devoted to her family that she loved. In her leisure time, she loved to read.

Survivors include her daughter, Donna L. (Kenneth) White of Corinth, Miss.; son Gregory W. Johnson of Paducah; sister Glenda Hendricks of Zephyrhills, Fla.; grandchildren Jennifer, Bethany, Bradley, Brian, Heidi and



Ben; 13 great-grandchildren; and one great great-grandchild.

Along with her husband, she was preceded in death by her parents and her sister, Virgie Flatt.

Funeral services were at 11 a.m. Friday, Jan. 31, at Mighty Rivers Worship Center in Cairo, with the Rev. Larry Potts officiating.

Interment followed the funeral service at Spencer Heights Cemetery in Mounds.

Memorials can be made to Mighty Rivers Regional Worship Center.

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

Crain Funeral Home in Cairo was in charge of arrangements.

Donald William Casper Sr.

Donald William Casper Sr., 70, of Murphysboro, died at home on Thursday, Jan. 30, 2025.

He was born on Sept. 13, 1954, in Cobden, the son of William Lynn and Shirley Cross Casper.

He is survived by his mother, Shirley Casper of Carbondale; son Dee (Sarah) Casper of Pottsville, Pa.; brother-in-law Charles McCann of Carbondale; nephew Chad (Ashley) McCann; niece Jamie (Jeff) Howard; great-nieces Jaycee McCann, Madeline McCann and Elizabeth Howard; great-nephew Thomas Howard; other relatives and friends.

He was preceded in death by his father, William Lynn Casper, and sister, Jacqueline McCann.

Mr. Casper worked for Jackson County Senior Adult Services. He was a man of great faith. He saw himself as a servant to others and enjoyed



serving his community however he could. He had a passion for photography, especially photographing things in nature.

Visitation will be from 11 a.m. to noon Saturday, Feb. 8, at Rendleman & Hileman Funeral Home in Anna. Interment will be private at the Casper Cemetery near Anna. Memorials can be made to the Casper Cemetery.

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

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

Garry Dale Poole

Garry Dale Poole, 84, of Anna, died Thursday, Jan. 30, 2025, at his home.

He was born on July 18, 1940, in Alexander County, the son of Forrest E. and Maude L. Jordan Poole. He married Karen King.

Mr. Poole is survived by his wife, Karen Poole of Anna; son David (Becki) Poole; daughters Rebecca Poole and Christina Poole-Pratt; grandchildren Kyleigh, Conner and Carly; great-grandchildren Hunter Lee, Willow Grace and Meadow Raine; sister-in-law Shirley Poole-Cooke; niece Debra and family and nephew Lindell and family.

He was preceded in death by his parents; son-in-law Ryan Pratt; and brothers Jackie E. Poole and Donald D. Poole.

In high school, he was very athletic, playing basketball and baseball. Later he enjoyed slow-pitch softball. He

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fan and an exceptional pool player, playing in a league for many years. Many will remember him as the bartender at the Four Seasons in Anna.

Garry's family will celebrate his life this summer during their annual family 4th of July celebration.

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

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

Leona G. ‘Ramona’ Wright

Leona G. “Ramona” Wright, 92, of Anna, died Monday, Jan. 27, 2025.

She was born on Aug. 26, 1932, in Alexander County, the daughter of Orvil and Maggie Smiddy Brown.

She married Melvin Wright on Feb. 18, 1950. He preceded her in death on Jan. 31, 1997.

Mrs. Wright is survived by her daughters, Terry Luebke and Donna Pope; grandchildren April Luebke, Paul (Alison) Suits, Jennifer Pope, Timothy Pope, Michelle Wright, Nick Wright, Jamie Wright, Maggie Wright, Tony (Kelly) Bish, Crystal (Shawn) Morris and Tasha (J.R.) Anis; 21 great-grandchildren; eight great-great-grandchildren; brothers Gerald Brown and Rocky Brown; numerous nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

She was preceded in death by her husband; her parents; children Gary Wright and Jerri Pazdzior; grandson David Pope; two great-grandchildren and six siblings.

She was a member of Trinity Pentecostal Tabernacle in Jonesboro. She was a God-loving Christian woman. No one could say a bad thing about her.

She enjoyed crocheting and loved to cook. Over the years, she did many things, from factory work to owning a ceramic



shop on the Jonesboro Square.

Her greatest love was her family, especially her great-grandchildren who lived close by, Jaden, Reese and Kenna.

Funeral services for Leona G. “Ramona” Wright were at 2 p.m. Monday, Feb. 3, at Trinity Pentecostal Tabernacle in Jonesboro, with the Rev. Geoff Bond and the Rev. Bryan Tinnin officiating. Interment followed in the Jonesboro Cemetery.

Memorials can be made to the Trinity Pentecostal Tabernacle. To visit her memorial page and to leave online condolences for her family, visit the Rendleman & Hileman Funeral Home website at rendlemanhilemanfh.com.

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

Donald Edward Thady

Donald Edward Thady, 95, of Jonesboro, died Friday, Jan. 24, 2025, at the Illinois Veterans Home in Anna.

He was born on July 23, 1929, in Morgan County, the son of Roy Louis and Lois Evelyn Sawyer Thady.

He married Joy Elaine Irlam on Dec. 12, 1950, in Piggott, Ark.

Mr. Thady is survived by his wife, Joy Elaine Thady of Jonesboro; two children, Kathy Sue (Steven) VanValkenburgh and Randall Jay Thady (Dale Marie); one grandchild, Evan Paige (Jefferson) Chastain; two great-grandchildren, Ellyette and Julia Kate; other relatives and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents; a son, Donald Steven Thady; siblings; and one grandchild.

Mr. Thady served in the U.S. Army during the Korean Conflict. He was a retired State Trooper for the Illinois State Police after 28 years of service. He was a lifetime member of Carroll P. Foster Post No. 3455 of the VFW in Anna.

RENDLEMAN & HILEMAN Grave-side funeral services Funeral Homes



were at 1:30

p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 4, at the Jonesboro Cemetery, with Mark Mattheis officiating. Interment immediately followed.

Graveside military honors were conducted by Carroll P. Foster Post No. 3455 of the VFW in Anna and the Illinois Army National Guard military funeral honor team of Marion. To view the obituary and to leave online condolences for the family, visit www.rendlemanhilemanfh.com.

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



Ruth Carolyn Johnson Ashworth

Ruth Carolyn Johnson Ashworth, 85, of Cairo, died Friday, Jan. 31, 2025, at her residence, surrounded by her family.

She was born on Jan. 24, 1940, at St. Mary's Hospital, the daughter of Walter and Ruth Goins Johnson of Cairo.

Her education was from Elmwood School, Junior High School and Cairo High School.

After graduation, Ruth married Billy Shelton Ashworth on Feb. 27, 1960, at the First Memorial Methodist Church in Cairo. They were married for 56 years until his passing on Aug. 23, 2016.

After graduation, she worked for The Brokerage, becoming manager in 1962. She retired in 1964 to raise a family. Then in 1991, she began working at the county clerk's office for Sue Harrington. In 1993, she went to work for the City of Cairo under Mayor James Wilson and Brenda Miller as clerk. She worked under Mayors James Wilson, Paul Farris, Judson Childs and Tyrone Coleman. She enjoyed meeting people. After retirement, she worked part-time.

She enjoyed sewing, quilting, knitting, scrapbooking, not to mention working on the all Cairo High School class reunions. She kept in touch with many special classmates.

She leaves behind her daughter, Amy Ann Ashworth Conaway of Charleston, Mo.;

Crain Funeral home one granddaughter, Claire Elise



Conaway; one brother-in-law Ronnie (Marilyn) Ashworth of Jackson, Mo.; one cousin, Aleshia Cron of Paducah, Ky.; Spencer Newton, who called her Granny Ruth; son-in-law Deron Conaway; special caregivers Ryan and Samantha Mills, David Brown, Jody Pruett and Joyce Cassey, all of whom became family members to her as well.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband; and her infant son, Derrin Ashworth.

A private graveside burial will be held at Green Lawn Memorial Gardens in Villa Ridge, with Mary Helen Wissinger officiating.

Memorials can be made to the Cairo Public Library.

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

Crain Funeral Home in Cairo is in charge of arrangements.

Stanley A. Fowler

Stanley A. Fowler, 63, of Herrin, died Monday, Jan. 27, 2025, at Shawnee Christian Nursing Center in Herrin.

He was born on Oct. 15, 1961, in Carbondale, the son of Benjamin Junior and Virgie M. Webb Fowler.

Mr. Fowler is survived by his son, Zachary R. Fowler; brother Scott Spurlock of Jonesboro; nieces and nephews; other relatives and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents; a brother, Earl E.

Fowler; and a sister, Vickie L. Clover.

Mr. Fowler worked for many years as an electrician and custodian. He and Scott enjoyed watching movies, cutting up and just spending time together. Stanley will be missed by everyone who knew him.

There are no services at this time.

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

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

News from

Anna First Baptist Church

Anna First Baptist Church met for worship on Sunday, Feb. 2.

Pastor Lupe greeted everyone at the service in the sanctuary and on the church's YouTube livestream. Opening prayer was said and announcements were shared.

The call to worship was on the Lord's Supper.

The worship team led in the singing of "In the Garden," "Way Maker" and "Open the Eyes of My Heart, Lord."

Pastor Lupe's sermon was titled "Seven Letters" and was part four of a continuing study of Revelation.

Mobilization ceremonies scheduled

Illinois Army National Guard unit mobilization ceremonies are scheduled Saturday and Sunday in the area.

Approximately 80 soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 130th Infantry Regiment, based in Marion, will hold a mobilization ceremony at noon Saturday, Feb. 8, at John A. Logan in Carterville.

Approximately 130 soldiers from Company A, 2nd Battalion, 130th Infantry Regiment, will hold a mobilization ceremony at 9 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 9, at Frankfort Community High School at 601 E. Main St. in West Frankfort.

Both units are preparing to deploy overseas, where they conduct security operations in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility.

The seven letters in Revelation, found in chapters 2 and 3, were written by the Apostle John to the churches in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea.

Each letter contains Christ's commendations, correction and a call to overcome, reflecting the spiritual state of each church.

The letters serve as both historical messages to first-century congregations and prophetic warnings applicable to churches today.

The letters emphasize faithfulness, repentance and perseverance in the face of trials and spiritual complacency.

After the service, the church observed the Lord's Supper.

Sunday School for all ages begins at 9 a.m. on Sunday morning.

The church's worship services start at 10:15 a.m. on Sunday.

The church has a prayer time at 6 p.m. on Wednesday. The church has a youth program which meets at 6 p.m. on Wednesday.

The church has a bus which runs for all of its programs and services. Information is available by calling the church's office during the day.

First Baptist Church is located at 409 Morgan St. in Anna. The church's phone number is 833-5416.

The church's Facebook page is Facebook.com/AnnaFirstBaptistChurch. The church's email address is fbcanna409@gmail.com. The church can be found on YouTube at Anna First Live Stream.

View Obituaries Online at
annanews.com

News from

Anna Nazarene Church

A morning worship service was held Sunday, Feb. 2. Announcements were given by Jessica Elkins. Music was led by Pastor Randy Wright and the worship team. A message titled “Holiness” was brought by Pastor Wright. Scripture was from 2 Peter, Matthew, Romans, the Psalms, 1 Samuel and John. Pastor Wright brought a message titled “What God Does Not Do” at the Sunday evening worship service. Scripture was from Jeremiah. Birthday: Lottie Smith, Feb. 2.

Prayers and sympathy are extended to the Wright family in the loss of their loved one, Ramona Wright. She was the sister-in-law of Bill and Linda Wright and aunt to Pastor Wright and his family. Funeral services were at 2 p.m. Monday, Feb. 3, at Trinity Pentecostal Tabernacle in Jonesboro.

Sunday, Feb. 9
Breakfast, 9 a.m. Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. Morning service, 10:35 a.m.

Feb. 9 will be \$5 Sunday, an opportunity to help with some of the extra expenses

and special needs of the church by putting \$5 in the offering.

No evening worship service is scheduled.

Wednesday, Feb. 12
A Wednesday night service is planned at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. A youth group meeting is planned at 6:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall.

The church can be contacted by calling the church office at 833-6702 and leaving a message if necessary or by calling Pastor Wright at 618-534-7103.

News from

First Baptist Church, Jonesboro

On Sunday, Feb. 2, Pastor Perry Williams spoke in the morning service. His message addressed “the sin of complaining. Are we reaping the fruit of complaining over every little thing? The Lord heard the children of Israel complaining and some of them paid the ultimate price.” Scripture was from Numbers in the Old Testament.

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

Music director Dee Rose led worship. Debbie York was the pianist.

The Celebration Choir sang a medley that included “Just Over in the Gloryland,” “Highway to Heaven” and “When We All Get to Heaven.” Jayson Rose sang “The Words I Would Say.” Men’s and women’s Bible studies were scheduled at 6 p.m. Monday, Feb. 4.

Women on Mission plan to meet at 9:30 a.m. Thursday, today.

Birthday: Joe McRaven, Feb. 6.

Anniversary: Marc and Amy Sheffer, Feb. 2, 23 years; Jim and Jerri Miller, Feb. 6, 49 years.

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

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

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

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

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



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Did your name get left off the guest list...did your friends go somewhere without you? It hurts when you don't make the cut. Maybe you have shied away from church as well, thinking you are not “invited.” God wants us all at His party! Each one of us is special to Him and He loves us no matter how popular we are... there is room enough for each and every one of us in His Heart and His House. Worship this week, feel the acceptance of His love and take that confidence everywhere you go.

Weekly Scripture Reading						
Acts 13.36-52	Acts 14.1-28	Acts 15.1-21	Acts 15.22-41	Acts 16.1-15	Acts 16.16-40	John 2.1-25

Scriptures Selected by the American Bible Society

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



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CITY OF ANNA, IL- LINOIS, NOTICE OF SALE OF SURPLUS PROPERTY: Pursuant to 65 ILCS 5/11-76-4 of the Illinois Municipal Code, the City of Anna has declared the following Surplus Property List, as surplus personal property and offers the same for sale. I. 2003 Ford F-150 VIN: 2FTRF18W84CA14814, 66,156 miles, RUNS, AS-IS. Minimum Bid: \$5,400.00. II. 1997 Ford F-250 Heavy Duty, VIN: 1FTHF26H-5VEAA95501, 130,438 miles, RUNS, AS-IS. Minimum Bid: \$3,800.00. Said property may be inspected at City Hall located on 103 Market Street, in the City of Anna and is sold in “AS IS” condition, without any implied or expressed warranties. Sealed bids, identifying the above-described item, shall be received by the City Clerk during normal business hours, Monday through Friday at the Anna City Hall, 103 Market Street, Anna, Illinois through March 4, 2025. Minimum bids have been established and no bids for less than that amount will be accepted. All bids will be opened and read at the regular meeting of the Anna City Council to be held on March 4, 2025 at 5:00 at the Anna City Hall. The City of Anna reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

9g

HELP WANTED

Part-Time DRIVER Needed at The Gazette-Democrat, Anna, IL office. This contract position is a great opportunity for a dependable, short-distance driver and bundle handler! Primary duties Include: Driving personal vehicle to deliver weekly publications to area vendors and post offices; Lifting, loading and unloading our publications and products; Helping with product bundling and other tasks that expedite delivery of our products; Communicating professionally and timely with our team. Candidates must have: Dependable personal vehicle; Valid driver’s license; Working cell phone; Current auto insurance; Successful drug screening; Self-motivation; Demonstrated

ability to take initiative and work effectively with others. This is a contract position (approximately 3 hours per week) with a flat pay of \$100 per week. Qualified candidates only - For consideration, forward resume to lhinton@annanews.com. Equal Opportunity Employer

9gpf TN

The City of Anna, IL is accepting applications for the position for a Part-Time School Resource Officer. Under the direction of the Chief of Police and in coordination with School Administration, the School Resource Officer will work to improve school safety and security. This is a part time position with an hourly rate of pay of \$20.00. The hours of this position coincide with the school calendar, not to exceed 1,560 hours per calendar year. Minimum qualifications for an interested candidate are as follows; must be a U.S. citizen, have a valid driver’s license, possess a valid Illinois FOID card, have certification from the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board, must pass a medical and criminal background check, and reside within 30 minutes of the corporate limits of Anna. Applications will be available for interested candidates at Anna City Hall or online at cityofanna.org. Please return resume and employment application to the Human Resources Department at Anna City Hall, 103 Market Street Anna, IL 62906 or by email to mmcreynolds@cityofanna.org. Position will remain open until filled. EOE 9-10g

DONGOLA UNIT SCHOOL # 66 is seeking applicants to fill the following positions: Bus Drivers. Specifics of the position are; Full time / 9-month position. Benefits include sick, personal and bereavement leave. Health, dental and vision insurance is available. Board paid life insurance policy. Applicants must be able to: work at a fast pace, lift heavy objects, display good organizational skills, possess a good work ethic and the ability to develop a positive rapport with students and co-workers. Applicants must submit a letter of interest addressed to Dr. Paige Maginel, resume, bus driver’s license and three letters of reference to: Jamie Flores, District Secretary, Administrative Building, Dongola Unit School #66, 1000 High Street Dongola, IL 62926. Or emailed to jflores@dongolaschool.com DUSD # 66 IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER. Position will be filled as soon as possible. 9-10gp

HELP WANTED: Shawnee Community College is looking for full and part-time Custodian for their Ullin Campus and

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PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT UNION COUNTY, ILLINOIS ANNA-JONESBORO NATIONAL BANK, A National Chartered Bank,, Plaintiff, vs JEREMIAH O. DAVIS, UNKNOWN OWNERS and NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS, Defendants. Case No.: 2025FC1 PUBLICATION NOTICE

The requisite affidavit for publication having been filed, notice is hereby given to you, Jeremiah O. Davis, Unknown Owners and Non-Record Claimants, Defendants in the above entitled suit, that the said suit has been commenced in the Circuit Court of Union County, Illinois, by the said Plaintiff against you and other defendants to foreclose a certain Mortgage covering the following described premises, to-wit:

Legal Description LOT 21 AND THE WEST HALF OF LOT 13 IN D.W. BROWN’S FOURTH ADDITION TO THE CITY OF ANNA, SITUATED IN UNION COUNTY, ILLINOIS. P.I.N. 14-00-08-796 COMMON ADDRESS: 309 EAST CHESTNUT STREET, ANNA, IL 62906

and for other relief, that summons was duly issued out of the said Court against you as provided by law, and that said suit is still pending.

Now, therefore, unless you, the said Defendants, Jeremiah O. Davis, Unknown Owners and Non-Record Claimants, file your answer to the Complaint in the suit, or otherwise make your appearance therein, in the Circuit Court of Union County, Illinois, in the County Courthouse in the City of Jonesboro, Illinois, on or before the 24th Day of May, 2025, default may be entered against you and each of you at any time after that day and a decree entered in accordance with the prayer of said Complaint.

Keri Clark Clerk of the Circuit Court Prepared by: JOHN R. SCHNEIDER JOHN R. SCHNEIDER & FERRELL, L.L.C. 212 North Main Street Cape Girardeau, MO 63701 Tel: (573) 335-3300 Fax: (573)335-1978 8221-950068

NOTICE UNDER ASSUMED BUSINESS NAME ACT State of Illinois SS County of Union

Notice is hereby given pursuant to “An Act in relation to the use of an Assumed Name in the conduct of Transaction of Business in the State,” as Amended that a certification was filed by the undersigned with the County Clerk of Union County, Filed this 28th day of January, 2025, under the Assumed Name of The Bread Basket, with the place of business located at 1155 E. Vienna St., Ste. D, Anna, IL 62906, and that the True Name(s) and Residence Address of the Sole Owner(s) and Proprietors of said Business is:

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Address: 2880 Friendship School Rd., Anna, IL 62906

Lance Meisenheimer Union County Clerk 8221-949971

Canada, Mexico are among Illinois’ top trading partners

Tariffs could impact hundreds of billions of dollars of goods in Illinois

By Ben Szalinski
Capitol News Illinois
President Donald Trump’s plan to implement tariffs on key United States trading partners could affect more than \$100 billion worth of goods imported to Illinois from Canada, Mexico and China.

The countries were Illinois’ top trading partners in 2023, according to the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

A wide range of goods coming to Illinois could be affected by tariffs, including oil and natural gas from Canada, beer from Mexico and electronics from China.

Trump initially committed to imposing 25 percent tariffs on goods from Canada and Mexico beginning on Tuesday, including a 10 percent tariff on energy imported from Canada, though on Monday he announced he’d delay the tariffs on Mexico after the country’s president agreed to send troops to the U.S.-Mexico border. The tariffs on Canadian goods remain in place as well as a 10 percent tariff on all goods coming from China.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced targeted tariffs on Sunday on goods exported by the United States in response.

Trump has criticized the three countries for allowing fentanyl to enter the country and has argued Canada and Mexico have tallied up a trade advantage over the United States.

While Trump hopes the tariffs will punish the countries into implementing reforms and negotiating with the United States, economists generally agree American consumers will bear the costs, including in Illinois.

“Let’s call these tariffs what they are: Trump’s Taxes on Working Families. If these tariffs remain in place, it will jack up the price of groceries and goods, make gas more expensive, and raise utility bills,” Gov. JB Pritzker said in a statement.

Illinois Republican Party Chair Kathy Salvi defended Trump’s decision.

“Under Democrat leadership, Mexico and Canada have gained economic advantage at America’s expense and President Trump is committed to stopping this. His policies on Canada and Mexico serve as a strong negotiating tool to enhance security and prosperity for Illinois and the United States,” Salvi said in a statement to Capitol News Illinois.

Illinois received \$127.8 billion of imports from China, Canada and Mexico in 2023, according to DCEO. Canada is Illinois’ largest partner for both imports and exports, with the state receiving \$65.6 billion of goods from the country in 2023.

Illinois is highly dependent on oil and gas from Canada, meaning consumers could be in line for higher energy and gas prices. About 72 percent of Illinois’ imports, or \$47.4 billion, from Canada in 2023 was

oil and gas, according to DCEO.

Data from the Canadian government shows Illinois also received far more energy products from Canada than any other state in 2020, with \$20.5 billion of energy resources imported to Illinois. Texas was the next closest state with \$5.2 billion in energy imports.

China was the second highest number of imports to Illinois in 2023, with \$43.9 billion of goods, including \$27.2 billion of computers and electronics.

Illinoisans might end up paying more for alcohol and cars if tariffs are implemented on Mexican goods. Illinois received \$18.3 billion of imports from Mexico in 2023, including \$5.9 billion of beverages and tobacco and \$2 billion of transportation equipment.

“Ultimately if Trump’s Taxes on Working Families remain in effect, they would force businesses and supply chains to pass costs onto Illinois consumers,” Pritzker said. “If prices go up and jobs are killed, we must all give credit where credit is due: Donald Trump.”

Illinois businesses could find themselves in the crosshairs of a trade war, including Walgreens, Baxter, Abbott and other health care supply companies.

“While it’s important the United States stand up to bad actors that are dumping products into our country, stealing intellectual property and illegally subsidizing in-

dustries, tariffs should be focused and used as a scalpel, not a sledgehammer,” Illinois Manufacturers’ Association CEO Mark Denzler said in a social media post.

China, Canada and Mexico received \$37.9 billion of exports from Illinois in 2023, nearly half of the state’s exports for the year. This includes a combined \$3 billion of agricultural goods to China and Mexico and nearly \$4 billion of machinery to Canada.

Canada’s targeted tariffs include penalties on American exports of food and metal products, according to the CBC. Illinois sent \$3.2 billion of food and primary metal manufacturing products to Canada in 2023.

Several Canadian premiers lashed out further, ordering their providences’ liquor regulation bodies to stop purchasing and selling alcohol from the United States.

“Trade is an anchor of the Illinois economy,” Pritzker said. “Illinois is the single largest exporting state in the Midwest and fourth largest exporter in the United States. Our jobs and economic success are linked to our top two trading partners, Canada and Mexico, and also China.”

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.

Trip reconnects Native American tribes with historic painted robes

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign history professor Robert Morrissey traveled to a Paris, France, museum in November to see four ceremonial robes created more than 300 years ago by Native American tribes in Illinois.

The research trip included members of the Miami and Peoria Nations and was part of a collaborative project, “Reclaiming Stories: (Re)connecting Indigenous Painted Hides to Communities through Collaborative Conversations,” to reconnect the tribes with their hide painting tradition.

Tribal citizens involved with the project made two trips to the Musée du quai Branly-Jacques Chirac in Paris in 2023, but this was Morrissey’s first visit to see the robes, which he called “extraordinary.”

“It was a really powerful experience of time travel, relating to the past across this massive gulf of time and culture,” Morrissey said.

“I spend a lot of time trying to relate to people in the distant past as a historian and to imagine individuals that I can only make contact with through reading texts. Somehow being with these objects in person really helped me imagine the people who made them.”

Through a revitalization movement during the past three decades, the Miami and Peoria Tribes have been teaching their native language, history and traditions, including artwork such

as hide painting and tattooing.

“Few groups lost more in the 19th and 20th centuries,” including their land, languages and federal recognition of the Peoria Tribe, Morrissey said.

The goal of the Reclaiming Stories project is to support the revitalization efforts and to reconnect the tribes with the painted robes. The project supported workshops during the past three summers on hide painting techniques, hide tanning and tattooing in preparation for the visits to see the robes in Paris. Morrissey said that, to his knowledge, an April 2023 trip of tribal citizens to Paris was the first time anyone from one of the tribal communities has interacted with the painted robes since they were collected in the 1700s.

“Especially for these communities that have had an extraordinary chapter of cultural discontinuity and rupture, to bridge that gap and reconnect with that earlier, long-ago culture is super-powerful. They are pulling all of that into the present, into their current revitalization programs and what it means to their nations today to connect to painting and tattooing traditions,” he said.

In addition to continuing research on the painted robes during the November trip, the group traveled in the footsteps of Chekagou, a chief of the Metchigamea, a group later incorporated into the Peoria Nation, and one of the most im-

portant 18th-century tribal leaders in the Midwest. Chekagou and four other chiefs made a diplomatic visit to France in 1725.

“We were walking in the footsteps of the delegation through the sites they visited,” Morrissey said. “We know where they went from the surviving documentation. They were kind of a spectacle in France, so the press took note. Newspapers covered their journey.”

Among the places the group visited were the Château de Fontainebleau, where Chekagou gave diplomatic speeches, hunted with a 15-year-old Louis XV and possibly prayed at a Catholic Mass in his native language, and the Palace of Versailles, which was the seat of the French government at the time.

Curators from several French museums, including the Musée du quai Branly-Jacques Chirac, are planning an exhibition at the Palace of Versailles this year to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the diplomatic visit.

Two partners on the Reclaiming Stories project, George Ironstrack, a Miami Tribe citizen and the associate director of the Myaamia Center at Miami University of Ohio, and Elizabeth Ellis, a Peoria Tribe citizen and a history professor at Princeton University, are consultants on the exhibition.

Their participation will add an Indigenous perspective to the exhibition, Morrissey said. Their viewpoint is that

Chekagou was important enough to the French to visit their country. His journey was a voyage of discovery to bring the French people into his world.

The Reclaiming Stories project will support another visit to Paris by tribal citizens for the opening of the exhibition in November.

The project organized its own exhibit at Miami University in 2024 that included replicas of the painted robes in Paris, hide paintings made by tribal citizens in the summer workshops and information about the materials, process and iconography of painted hides.

When the Versailles exhibition is finished, the group hopes to bring the 18th-century painted robes to the United States for an exhibition curated by the tribal communities.

In addition to reconnecting the tribes with their traditions and the artwork of their ancestors, the project also is an opportunity to increase the visibility of current Indigenous nations, Morrissey said.

“For the people of Illinois and my students, there is a pervasive and persistent story that the Native Americans of Illinois are gone. They are not gone,” he said. “Here are the modern nations of Miami and Peoria. There was a time they suffered such tremendous loss, and this is part of a revitalization story. People should know about it. This is a good way to tell the story of it.”

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County Line News

(Mill Creek and Upper Elco)

Six More Weeks of Winter?

Well, the groundhog saw his shadow, so it’s said we’ll get six more weeks of winter. Darn groundhog. Just when I was reveling in the 60 plus degree temperatures.

Mill Creek Village Board
The Mill Creek Village Board met Jan. 28. New board member, Travis Miller was voted in.

Other board members and the village president will be on the ballot this year at election time.

The village has been experiencing a lot of theft, ordinance violations and trespassing issues. Several of these complaints were lodged with the board and the Union County Sheriff’s Office.

Some residents reported lodging complaints about the lack of snow plowing within the village and on Lake Road during the storms last month. Many said they called the highway department and were never called back.

Painting continues on the inside of the village hall and other updates are in the works. Park issues are being addressed with applications for grants.

The next board meeting is scheduled at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 18.

PAST Meeting
The PAST organization of Union County met Jan. 28. Locations for historical businesses were discussed for the 2025 Annabelle Festival tour in June.

Also discussed were the resignation of a board member due to health issues, repair needs at Heritage House in Jonesboro, the booking of Back Porch Company at St. Anne’s Church on April 6 and a change for the Christmas luncheons this year to

be for only six days.

The next board meeting is set for 6 p.m. on Feb. 25.

Mill Creek Baptist Church

Mill Creek Baptist Church had another wonderful service from 1 Peter, chapter 5.

We need to remember that Satan never takes a rest from his torment of us (vs. 8). Especially, Christians.

We need to keep our eyes upon Jesus and less on Satan’s temptations. His main goal is to steal your joy and peace and to kill your witness. If he can get you thinking wrong, he’ll get you doing wrong. He will always go for your weakest areas, especially past sin.

Resist and remember that our past sins are just that, PAST. God doesn’t see those sins. He only sees the blood of Jesus who covers those sins.

Satan can’t take our salvation away, but he sure knows how to stir us up and make us weak.

Seek God’s hedge of protection around you and your family: mentally, physically, spiritually, morally, financially and emotionally.

Satan will attack our children, our friendships, our health, our marriages and he will use addictions, our work environment and even use the church to stir up troubles for us.

Resisting Satan’s wiles can NOT be done on our own. We must seek God’s strength daily to help us through every day. Will we stumble and fall? Oh yeah. But, with God we can get back up and fight anew.

Prayer List

Those added to our prayer list are the Moore family in the loss of their son; the Roger Hiland family in his passing and the George

By Suzan Harvel

Temke family in his passing; Shirley and Richard Harvel and Cheryl Kohler-McKinney, who all have the flu; and Jeff Starr, Karly Sadler, Mary Powles and Melody Richardson for health.

Union County Fixin’s

By Suzan Harvel
*Cornmeal
Lime Cookies*
By Wendy Rusch,
Cameron, Wis.

1 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1 large egg
1/4 cup lime juice
4 1/2 teaspoons grated lime peel

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup yellow cornmeal
Glaze

2 cups confectioners’ sugar
3 tablespoons lime juice
Sprinkles

In large bowl, cream butter and both sugars until light and fluffy. Beat in egg, lime juice and lime peel.

Combine flour and cornmeal separately and then add gradually to creamed mixture. Mix well.

Shape into two 12-inch rolls. Wrap each in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes. Shape each log into a square shaped log, re-wrap, and freeze until firm.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Unwrap logs and cut into 3/8-inch slices. Place 1 inch apart on parchment covered flat baking sheets.

Bake 11 to 14 minutes or until set. Remove to wire racks to cool completely.

Combine confectioners’ sugar and lime juice; spread over cookies and add sprinkles to decorate. Let stand until set.



A-J Women’s Club meets

The GFWC Illinois Anna-Jonesboro Women’s Club met Monday, Feb. 3, at the Anna Pizza Hut. In the first row are, from left, Suzie Kessler, Marie Samuel and Martha Ann Webb. In the second row are Lillian Milam, who gave the devotion and blessed the food; Lila Schley; guest speaker Elaine Bonifield, a retired educator who talked about her life growing up and her different jobs as a teacher, principal, superintendent and many others in the professional field; president of the club Jane Bauer, who called the meeting to order. Everyone stood and said the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and the Club Collect. Martha Schwegman was honored for her January birthday. Guest Venus Buck, an RN, patient advocate and activity coordinator for Deaconess Illinois Union County Hospital in Anna, talked about her work there. Lee Hackney was present but could not be in the picture. Photo provided.

Preliminary harvest total of 170,758 for all 2024-2025 deer hunting seasons in state

Hunters in Illinois harvested a preliminary total of 170,758 deer during all 2024-2025 archery and firearm seasons, which concluded Jan. 19.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources, IDNR, reported that the preliminary total for 2024-2025 compared with a total harvest of 160,313 deer for all seasons in 2023-2024.

During the 2024-2025 deer seasons, hunters took 46.27 percent females and 53.72 percent males.

Final harvest totals by season and county can be found in the annual deer harvest report, which will be published later this spring, IDNR said.

Totals from specific seasons follow:

Archery deer hunters took a preliminary total of 73,598 deer during the season that began Oct. 1 and concluded Jan. 19. The total archery harvest during the 2023-2024 season was 71,226 deer.

Youth deer hunters harvested a preliminary total of 4,057 deer during the three-day Illinois youth deer season Oct. 12-14, compared to 4,576 in 2023.

Firearm season hunters took a preliminary total of 82,496 deer during the firearm season Nov. 22-24 and Dec. 5-8. This compared to a harvest of 76,494 deer taken during the 2024 firearm season.

Muzzleloader hunters harvested a preliminary total of 2,832 deer during the muzzleloader-only season Dec. 13-15, compared with a harvest of 3,378 deer during the 2023 muzzleloader season. Late-winter seasons: The

2024-2025 late-winter antlerless-only and special chronic wasting disease, CWD, deer seasons concluded Jan. 19 with a combined preliminary harvest total for both seasons of 7,775 deer. Season dates for the seven-day late-winter and CWD seasons were Dec. 26-29 and Jan. 17-19. During the same seasons in 2023-2024, a total of 4,639 deer were taken.

Eighteen Northern Illinois counties were open to the special CWD season, which is used to assist in slowing the spread of chronic wasting disease in the Illinois deer herd.

Twenty-seven counties were open for the late-winter antlerless season in 2024-2025 compared to 23 counties in 2023-2024. Counties that are at or below their individual deer population goal for two consecutive years may be removed from the late-winter season.

Anna VFW Post 3455 calendar of events

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

A fish fry will be served from 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. Friday, Feb. 7. Star Karaoke is scheduled to be at the post from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m.

Live music with Night Train is planned from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 8.

A Super Bowl party is planned Sunday, Feb. 9, in the canteen.

A Valentines dinner is planned from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 14. The menu will include steak, a baked

potato, salad and dessert for \$25. Stop by the canteen during regular business hours to sign up. A limited number of meals are available. Payment is required at the time a reservation is made.

Mystify Music is scheduled to be at the post from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. Friday Feb. 14.

A district Auxiliary meeting is planned Saturday, Feb. 15. A joint meeting is scheduled at 11 a.m. The joint meeting will be followed by lunch. The Auxiliary meeting begins at 1 p.m. An audit of the district treasurer and secretary’s books is planned after lunch.



AFSCME Retirees officers

Warren Anderson is the newly appointed vice president of the local AFSCME State Retirees Union. He is with Jeri Knupp, president of the AFSCME State Retirees Union. The union’s meetings are scheduled at 9 a.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month at Shawnee Community College’s extension center in Anna. Photographer Martha Ann Webb.

WHAT IS THE



Alliance of Churches

Union County, Illinois

The Alliance is not a church, nor a pastor-only organization. It is a loose association of Believers, congregations, and like minded non-profits who care about the plight of the worsening human condition in our community, and realize the problems overshadow even the government’s capabilities. The task requires a concerted effort by all of us to be effective. The Alliance was established in the 1960’s when helping someone was temporary and individual in nature. Today it has grown to a societal cancer which is generational in magnitude, national in scope, and deadly as fentanyl.

We are responsible for the community worship at the Union County Fair, and organize a community prayer on the National Day of Prayer. We provide labor to unload monthly truckloads of food for Salem Lutheran and Shawnee Development pantries. Celebrate Recovery, the 35 year old internationally known twelve step program has held a group meeting every SAT at 6pm at Anna Heights Baptist for the past four years, thanks AHBC. It is staffed and operated by members of the Alliance. The morning prayer and other volunteer chaplain duties at Union County Hospital are provided by the Alliance. The blood drives at the Main Street Center in Anna are promoted by the Alliance. The following recovery organizations: Arrowleaf/ROSC, a macro facilitator of all things recovery, and United Community Recovery Coalition, lead by Serena Smith who is a survivor herself now helping lead others to safety, both are endorsed by the Alliance.

We support Closet Ministries, beside Dollar General in Anna, where Andrea Wheaton allows people to pay what they can afford for clothing, and the Old Depot, 110 E Davie, where every SUN at 6pm the owners, Ashley and Tide invite anyone who is hungry, cold, or lonely to join them at their table for dinner, followed by live praise music at no cost. They also help those in recovery to overcome their individual hurdles.

The main thing we have learned in our sixty years of ministry is there are a few people who are truly gifted in their areas of ministry, and the Kingdom is better served if we find those gifted folks and help them with their good work rather than compete with it. Lastly, our work is funded by “ringing the bell” at Walmart between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Thank you Walmart, and people of Anna for supporting us, we really appreciate it. Every penny collected stays in Union County. Also, there are a few county churches who encourage us in our work with monthly stipends. God bless are co-workers in Christ.

We meet at 8:30AM, the first Wednesday of each month, at a different member church. March will be at Lockard Chapel in Jonesboro. Come and see, and join us in this noble endeavor, to reclaim Union County from the foreboding darkness.

Kent Young, President
Union County Alliance of Churches
(618)-614-2974

Opinion and Commentary

‘Gun Safety in Home’ offered by Southern 7

Southern 7 Health Department’s latest podcast, “Gun Safety in the Home,” is available through the Southern 7 app. The podcast also can be found on YouTube. The YouTube version is also available for sharing through the Southern 7 Facebook page.

In June, 2024, Southern 7 Health Department joined with the Illinois Department of Public Health, IDPH, in recognizing gun violence as a public health crisis and to promote community gun safety and prevent accidental injuries in Southern Illinois by giving free gun locks to residents that request them.

As of Sept. 30, 2024, approximately 2,000 individuals had been reached and more than 600 gun locks distributed. Southern 7 plans to continue the program through June of this year.

The latest episode of the Southern 7 podcast features a conversation with Allie Baum with the Ad Council and Colleen Creighton with Brady United Against Gun Violence about what these groups are doing to reduce gun violence nationwide.

The podcast also highlights what gun owners who have firearms in their home can do to ensure that their family stays safe.

The health department noted that the program is not about gun control...just overall gun safety.

Union County 4-Hers staying busy this winter

By Hannah Nies, Union County 4-H reporter

The Union County 4-H group has been busy this winter. From collecting cans to caroling, we have been out and about in Union County.

In November, we started collecting cans and other non-perishable food items for the Canstruction contest. Canstruction is a contest where contestants create art with cans that they collect.

We worked hard to collect the most cans possible, collecting cans and donations for weeks before the event.

On Dec. 2, the group traveled to Shawnee Community College in Ullin to construct our design.

Our design was a Christmas tree, complete with “presents” and a “train,” all made with food.

The total number of items that we collected was 1,679. We won both “the most cans” and “most creative” divisions in the contest.

Thank you to the local residents for contributing money and food to donate to the food pantry and serve local residents.

Some of the members of our group went to the wreath making class at Giant City State Park on Saturday, Dec. 7. There they learned how to make and take care of wreaths. The class also made their own wreaths to take home.

On Dec. 9, as a part of our December meeting, we went caroling. We went to Integrity Healthcare of Anna and Voyage of Anna. We sang a medley of songs, and spread Christmas cheer to the residents.

Another event the 4-H group participated in was Wreaths Across America. Wreaths Across America is a non-profit that strives to honor and remember our veterans by placing wreaths on the veterans graves around the holidays.

Our 4-H group teamed up with the local Girl Scout troop and after participating in the service at the First Baptist Church, we were assigned to the Anna Cemetery.

Although it was wet since the day was a rainy one, we scoured the cemetery looking for graves to put the wreaths on.

Wreaths Across America happens every year, this year’s date being Saturday, Dec. 13.

The Union County 4-H group has been serving the community, learning new skills and working together toward making our world a better place.

Presentation to feature famed people who have visited Cairo

The Daniel H. Brush Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, DAR, is planning to host a presentation highlighting Cairo’s history.

The presentation, “Famous & Infamous Visitors to Cairo, IL,” is scheduled from 11 a.m. to noon Saturday, Feb. 8, at the Carbondale Public Library. The library is located at 405 W. Main St. in Carbondale.

The free program, which is open to the public, will be presented by local historian, author and teacher Darrel Dexter.

Zoom registration is available online at register.carbondale-publiclibrary.org/DAR.

At the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, Cairo, has hosted a multitude of visitors...some famous, others infamous.

Those visitors have included 11 presidents, 10 major presidential candidates, numerous Civil War generals, authors, women’s rights and civil rights activists, entertainers, and others.

Dexter teaches history at Egyptian Community School in Tamm. He is the author of “Pulling Off the Sheets: The Second Ku Klux Klan in Southern Illinois” and “Bondage in Egypt: Slavery in Southern Illinois,” which has been referred to as “the most comprehensive account to date of racial slavery in Illinois.”

Winter book sale set at Stinson

A winter book sale is planned at Stinson Memorial Public Library in Anna. The sale is sponsored by the Friends of Stinson group. The sale is scheduled Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 7-9. The library is located at 409 S. Main St. in Anna.

A Friends Appreciation Sale for members of the group is planned from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Friday. Memberships will be available at the sale. A public sale is scheduled from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday. A bag sale is planned from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday.

Please read this... Another shameless plug..and turning a page...

By Geof Skinner

We’re going to start this week with another “shameless plug”...and maybe a Critter Sighting Update or two...and then get to the “good stuff”...

Before we get going, though, wasn’t the sunshine and warmer weather wonderful? It was really nice to be able to sit outside last Sunday...

Meanwhile...

Another “shameless plug”...

A winter book sale is planned at Stinson Memorial Public Library in Anna. The sale is sponsored by the Friends of Stinson group.

The sale is scheduled Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 7-9. The library is located at 409 S. Main St. in Anna. A Friends Appreciation Sale for members of the group is planned from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Friday. Memberships will be available at the sale. A public sale is scheduled from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday. A bag sale is planned from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday.

Apparently, we are going to have six more weeks of winter...if you believe in a groundhog as a weather forecaster. That means we should have lots of time to read a good book...or two...or three...

Meanwhile...

A Critter Sighting Update...or two...or three...or four...

Coyote wandering down our street. Yup. Right there in front of our house. I didn’t spot the critter...a fellow traveler on The Journey Through Life shared the sighting. I guess it makes sense that a coyote would wander down our street. One afternoon last summer, Bob and I saw a fox doing the same thing. Still haven’t seen a bear...

Whole bunch of crows hanging out on the Clear Creek Levee Road. Yup. Last Friday while heading home after a journey to the Show Me State.

Immature bald eagle. Yup. Well, maybe. Not far from where the crows were hanging out on Clear Creek Levee Road. The bird was flying over the levee.

A pileated woodpecker. Yup. Twice. Once while on a daily walkabout. The second time while motoring through the Union County State Fish and Wildlife Area early last Friday afternoon.

Meanwhile...

Now, let’s get to the “good stuff”...

I really did not think that a squirrel would be an inspiration for what I wanted to share this week...



Sorry...another photo of a pileated woodpecker. The critter was spotted in a tree that, presumably, had been damaged by our recent little ice storm.

'Nation's Report Card': Illinois school results shared

By Peter Hancock, Capitol News Illinois

SPRINGFIELD – Fourth and eighth grade students in Illinois generally scored as well or better than the national average in reading and math, according to results of the latest round of national test results. But their scores remain below pre-pandemic levels and, in the case of reading, continue to decline steadily.

The results also showed significant achievement gaps in Illinois between racial and ethnic groups, especially between white and Black students, which were among the widest achievement gaps in the country.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress, often referred to as the Nation’s Report Card, is a set of standardized tests administered every two years to a representative sample of fourth and eighth students nationwide.

The program is mandated by federal law and is managed by the National Center for Education Statistics, within the U.S. Department of Education and the Institute of Education Sciences.

Because the tests are administered uniformly nationwide, it allows for accurate comparisons between states and over time. However, because it is administered to only a sample of students, the results are subject to a margin of error and so minor differences between one set of scores and another are sometimes not statistically significant.

In Illinois, the 2024 tests involved approximately 150 schools and 2,700-2,800 students per subject for each grade.

Eighth Grade: Results of testing done in 2024, which were released Tuesday, Jan. 28, showed that among eighth grade students in Illinois, the average math score rose two points, to 277 out of 500, compared to 2022. That was five points higher than the national average, which was down one point from the 2022 exam.

But both the state and national averages were lower than they were before the pandemic in 2019, The averages were also below their peak more than a decade earlier, in 2013, when the average score in Illinois was 285, one point above the national average at that time. Illinois also saw an increase in the percentage of students scoring in the top two achievement categories in math, “advanced” and “proficient.”

Nearly one-third of those tested in 2024, 32 percent, scored at or above the “proficient” level in math. That’s the level at which an eighth grader can solve Pythagorean theorem problems and solve problems involving capacity, area and weight, according to NAEP officials. That was 5 percentage points higher than in 2022 and 5 points higher than the national average.

The percentage of Illinois eighth graders scoring at or above the “advanced” level also rose to 11 percent. That’s the level



Look closely...real closely...and, hopefully, you’ll see the squirrel that was busy with some home improvement work one day last week.

Last Friday morning, I watched a bushytail keeping busy in what I think is an oak tree which can be seen outside one of our “new” upstairs windows.

To be honest, the squirrel was busy doing something I don’t think I had seen before. And, as you know, I like to watch squirrels. They are cute. I digress. As usual.

The squirrel was plucking brown leaves which were still on the branches of the oak tree. After plucking the leaves, the squirrel carried his treasures about 20 feet up the tree, where he/she was working on its home place.

What does this week’s column have to do with a squirrel? I can only assume that the critter was focused on the here and now...and on the future, too...

Which is what I plan to be doing starting Friday, February 7...

That is the day I will be taking a big step into the future, at least when it comes to “retirement.” The time has come. After putting off such a decision for a while, I have decided that the seventh day of February will be my last day as editor of this publication. As of this particular moment in time, my plans include continuing to write some stories, taking some pictures and conjuring up a column... Instead of “retirement,” I see it more as turning the page to a new chapter on The Journey Through Life...

Words are not adequate to express my gratitude and thanks when it comes to the time I have spent at The Paragraph Factory. I am grateful that Lewida and Jerry decided to take a chance on young, wannabe journalist. I am grateful to have had an opportunity to work with some wonderful folks.

I am grateful, and thankful, for the many, many people I have met over the years. Some were “famous,” most were not.

I am grateful for The Other Half’s continuing support, wisdom, patience and understanding for all these years. And I am grateful that The Other Half and yours truly found a place we now call home...

Moving forward, in addition to writing and taking pictures, I’ll be doing things like celebrating National Serpent Day (which I learned was on February 1) and, thanks to that little squirrel’s inspiration, focusing on the here and now...and the future. I don’t think The Other Half will want me bringing any leaves into the house...

at which a student can perform tasks such as analyzing and critiquing “graphical displays to justify appropriateness and solve problems,” according to test officials.

The average Illinois eighth grade reading score, meanwhile, stood at 262, unchanged from two years earlier, and slightly above the national average of 257.

In a statement, Gov. JB Pritzker said those scores for eighth graders were cause for celebration. “Illinois students are proving what we’ve always known – that when we support our schools, our kids thrive,” he said. “The 2024 Nation’s Report Card shows our 8th graders outperforming the national average in both math and reading, a testament to the great strides Illinois students are making academically.”

Fourth Grade: There was less cause for celebration, though, in results of the fourth grade exams where average reading scores dropped, both in Illinois and nationally, to 214.

That was a four-point drop over two years in the average Illinois score and a two-point drop in the national average. Further, both the state and national averages have been on a steady, continuous decline since 2015, when the Illinois average was 222, one point higher than the national average.

According to the National Assessment Governing Board, which oversees the assessment, no state saw gains in NAEP reading scores in either fourth or eighth grade.

There was no change in the average fourth grade math score in Illinois, which stood at 237. Only 30 percent of those taking the test scored at or above the “proficient” level, down 3 percentage points from two years earlier.

Achievement Gaps: The 2024 results also showed significant achievement gaps among different subgroups of students in Illinois. In fourth grade math, for example, there was a 32-point gap between the average score for white and Black students: 248 for white students versus 214 for Black students. Only Wisconsin and Washington, D.C., had statistically significant wider gaps.

Eighth grade math assessments had a similar 32-point gap between the average score for white students, 286, and Black students, 254. Only three other states and Washington, D.C., had statistically significant wider gaps.

The gap between white and Hispanic students, at 23 points, was slightly smaller but still significant. Only five other states and Washington, D.C., had statistically significant wider gaps.

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.