

THE GAZETTE-DEMOCRAT

The Talk And Cobden Review • Serving Union County Since 1849

Thursday, June 5, 2025

Anna, Illinois

\$1.00

Volume 178, Number 26

News Notes

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

Be sure to attend Jonesboro's Junefest celebration on Saturday.

The City of Anna changed and tested some of its tornado siren batteries Sunday afternoon, June 1, starting at 2 p.m. The work included setting off the siren.

Anna-Jonesboro Community High School sophomore Jadyn Gerardi earned a sixth-place finish in the state Class 2A 400-meter run.

Anna-Jonesboro Community High School is congratulating teacher Tina Vancil, who is retiring "after nearly 24 years of inspiring students through creativity and learning. From the English and art classrooms to eventually serving as A-J's dedicated art teacher, Tina has sparked imagination, encouraged self-expression, and left a lasting impact on generations of students"; and custodian Jeff Robertson, who is also retiring after seven years of faithful service, whose "behind-the-scenes dedication helped keep our school safe, clean, and running smoothly."

Anna-Jonesboro Community High School and Anna School District 37 have announced that online registration is underway for the 2025-2026 academic year.

Shawnee Community College is welcoming Matthew White as the new coach of the college's baseball team. The college also is thanking retiring coach Ken Reichart for his years of dedicated service.

The summer semester is underway at Shawnee Community College.

Local weather observer Dana Cross reports there were 18 days with rain during the month of May in the Union County area.

Annual Junefest events scheduled in Jonesboro

A Junefest celebration is planned Saturday, June 7, in Jonesboro. Activities will take place in the Jonesboro Post Office parking lot area, with hours scheduled from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Organizers say this year's Junefest will be the best ever. The community celebration will feature food and craft vendors, live music, a corn hole tournament, a bake off, an outdoor movie, a 50/50 cash raffle and a free kids' play area.

The corn hole tournament will be a "bring your own partner" event. Participation is \$20 per person or \$40 per team. The event will have a 70 percent payout.

State officials alert public about text scams

The Illinois Secretary of State's office and the Illinois State Police are alerting the public about text message scams.

Illinois Secretary of State Illinois residents are being warned to keep on the lookout for text message scams claiming to be from the "Illinois State Department of Motor Vehicles" that threaten to suspend vehicle registration and driving privileges.

Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias issued the warning. He said the text messages are phishing attempts designed to trick residents into giving up personal or financial information. Recipients should not respond or open any links found in unsolicited texts and emails.

"Phishing scams are unfortunately an increasingly prevalent threat in our modern society, seeking to cheat Illinoisans out of their personal information and hard-earned money," Giannoulias said in a news release. "Please remain vigilant to avoid these scams and report them to protect yourself and others from falling victim to fraud schemes."

The Illinois Secretary of State's office only sends text messages to remind residents about scheduled DMV appointments. It does not send text messages regarding driver's license or vehicle

registration status.

Illinois State Police Illinois State Police Troop 10 shared on social media that text scams are on the rise. According to the Federal Trade Commission, FTC, there has been a big jump in reported fraud losses involving text scams.

Some scammers like to target people by sending text about unpaid tickets or tolls. Scammers also send phony threats about warrant for arrests to get you to click on links to enter in personal information.

The state police shared tips on some ways to avoid text scams: Don't reply to unexpected text messages. Never click links in unexpected messages.

Don't assume a text from a known company or organization is legitimate. Do your research. Reach out to the company, state tolling agency or bank using a phone number or website you know is real, not the information from the text.

If you suspect you have received a scam text, delete it immediately and report the text by using your phone's "report junk" option or forward unwanted texts to 7726 (SPAM).

Illinoisans can report scam attempts to the Federal Trade Commission by visiting reportfraud.ftc.gov and can learn more at ftc.gov/textscams.

Active weather in forecast

An active period of weather was in the forecast starting in the middle of the week for the Southern Illinois, Southeast Missouri and Western Kentucky region.

The National Weather Service office in Paducah advised Tuesday morning that daily chances of showers and thunderstorms returned to the forecast starting on Wednesday and continuing through Sunday. Rainfall totals of 1 to 3 inches are possible through the weekend. A few stronger storms are possible Friday.

A lake wind advisory was in effect for parts of the region on Tuesday. South winds of 15 to 20 miles per hour were expected, along with gusts up to 25 mph.

The Weather Service also advised that smoke from Canadian wildfires may have mixed down closer to the surface during the afternoon hours on Tuesday.

May's weather in region highlighted by severe storms



Tornado on May 16

A photograph of a tornado which occurred on May 16 north of Sikeston, Mo., was posted online by the National Weather Service office in Paducah. The photograph was courtesy of Eric Matthews.

Outbreaks of severe weather highlighted May's weather in the Southern Illinois, Southeast Missouri and Western Kentucky region.

The National Weather Service office in Paducah also reported in a May climate summary that temperatures for the month were below normal. Precipitation varied throughout the region.

Severe Weather

A significant severe thunderstorm and tornado outbreak occurred on the afternoon and evening of May 16. Large hail ranging from golf ball to softball sized occurred in several locations, along with 10 tornadoes (seven of which were strong, rated EF-2 or stronger).

An EF-4 tornado struck southern Williamson County (south of Marion), which was the strongest tornado to impact the forecast area for the weather service office in Paducah since Dec. 10, 2021, when a violent, long-track tornado struck Western Kentucky.

Two EF-3 tornadoes also were reported on May 16. One hit north of Sikeston, Mo., and another touched down just

south of Morganfield, Ky.

Another severe thunderstorm event impacted the region on May 20, which came in two separate waves. The first occurred during the overnight hours early on the 20th with the second happening in the afternoon. Two tornadoes occurred with this event, including an EF-1 that hit the north side of Cape Girardeau just after 1 a.m. There were also scattered reports of wind damage and a few minor flooding reports.

Temperatures

Temperatures finished below normal by 1 to 2 degrees in May. The diurnal range was less than usual, with high temperatures 3 to 4 degrees below normal, while lows were actually right near or slightly above normal.

The coolest periods were focused around May 3-6 and 23-27, when high temperatures were routinely in the 60s or low 70s and overnight lows fell into the 40s or low to mid 50s.

The warmest stretch was from May 11-20, when high temperatures reached the low to mid 80s many of these days

Record warm low temperatures were observed on May 15 at four of the weather service office's five long-term climate stations, with readings only falling into the low 70s.

This was the first May since 2003 in which temperatures failed to exceed 85 degrees in Paducah and Cape Girardeau. Typically, the region averages around six days above 85 degrees in May.

Precipitation

Precipitation was near normal or drier than normal across northern portions of Southeast Missouri and much of Southern Illinois. Much of this area received anywhere from 3.5 to 6 inches or rain.

Meanwhile, it was a wetter than normal May across portions of Southeast Missouri near the Arkansas border and across much of Western Kentucky. There was also a smaller corridor which finished wetter than normal along the Route 13 corridor in Southern Illinois. Amounts in these areas ranged from 5 to 8 inches, or anywhere from 0.5 of an inch to 3 inches wetter than normal.



Kick off events held for Stinson Library Summer Reading Program

Kick off events were held in Anna and Cobden for this year's Stinson Memorial Public Library Summer Reading Program. A kick off event was held Friday afternoon/evening, May 30, at the main library in Anna. The event featured free hot dogs, a bounce house and an opportunity to sign up for the Summer Reading Program and other activities. The Cobden Lions Club joined with Stinson Memorial Public Library for a summer reading program kick off event Monday afternoon, June 2, at the park in downtown Cobden, where the photograph was taken. The kick off featured free hot dogs, chips, snacks, water, bounce houses and a bubble party, along with a chance to sign up for the program.

Readers of all ages are invited to participate in this year's Summer Reading Program. Age-specific reading challenges will be offered for Little Learners, ages 0 to 5; kids, ages 6 to 12; teens, ages 13 to 17; and adults, those 18 years of age and older. The program will offer personalized reading challenges, suggested reading lists for each age group, activities, mini-games, special events and community activities. Participants will be able to earn points, badges and prizes. Signup is available at the library and online at stinson.readsquared.com.



THE GAZETTE-DEMOCRAT

THE TALK AND COBDEN REVIEW

Serving Union County Since 1849

(USPS 215-280)

ISSN 2834-6165 (Print)

2834-6173 (Online)

Published weekly on Thursdays

by Southern Illinois LOCAL Media Group, LLC

112 Lafayette St.

Anna, Illinois 62906-0529

618-833-2158

news@annanews.com

Periodical postage paid at Anna, Illinois 62906-0529

ILLINOIS Press Association

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Association 1909-2019

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS EDITORIAL ASSOCIATION

1909-2019

Benjamin Marxer.....Editor

Miguel Paredes as Trustee of the Paddock Publications, Inc.

Employee Stock Ownership Trust

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Per Year • July, 2022

In Union County.....\$54.00

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Per Copy.....\$1.00

E-edition.....\$54.00

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Ribbon cutting
The Union County Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony for Whimsy, Windings & Wares, located at 104 S. Main St. in Anna. The shop is a platform for creators to showcase their talents. WWW is a collaboration of area artists making wearable, usable, displayable and play-with-able creations. Whimsy, Windings & Wares offers a diverse range of art, crafts, clothing, and more. They also offer classes and a “make and take” area where you can try a new art or craft.

Wellness on Wheels Van Clinics planned

Southern 7 Health Department has announced the schedule for June Wellness on Wheels, WOW, Van Clinics in the Southern Illinois area. The schedule includes visits to Union County.

The schedule for the month includes:

- June 11. Dollar General Store, Olive Branch. 9:30 a.m. to noon, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
- June 18. Wolf Lake city hall, Wolf Lake, 9:30 a.m. to noon. Lotus Natuescapes, Ware, 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- June 25. Cornerstone Grocery, Golconda, 9:30 a.m. to noon. Dollar General Store, Golconda, 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Free services available on the WOW Van include NAR-CAN training, blood pressure checks, home colorectal cancer tests (FIT), medication disposal packets, COVID test kits and condoms.

Charged services which are available include blood lead, hemoglobin and cholesterol screenings; STD tests (including chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis); HIV, pregnancy and TB skin tests; TD/Tdap shots for adults; well water tests; and hereditary genetic cancer testing.

Charged services, excluding a well water test, require a health insurance card. All services, both free and charged, will be offered while they are available on day of service.

Flu shots will be provided

to patients based on vaccine availability the day of the clinic and while supplies last during flu season. Health insurance cards are required. Those requesting a COVID booster are advised to contact their local Southern 7 public health clinic for details.

Through a grant funded by the Illinois Department of Public Health, IDPH, S7HD provides many healthcare services through IDPH Wellness on Wheels Van Clinics.

The WOW Van rotates throughout high, health-risk communities each Wednesday in the lower seven counties in Illinois.

The WOW Van, a multi-disciplinary mobile unit, is available to S7HD through a partnership with IDPH to provide health screenings and other services. IDPH partners with health agencies and hospitals to provide staff and services on the WOW Van at sites where people can come for medical services.

No appointment is needed for services. Walk-ins are welcome. Clinic dates, times, and available services are subject to change without notice.

For information about WOW Van services, upcoming dates and how to become a sponsoring location, contact Sharyl Betts at 618-634-2297, extension 970154, download the Southern 7 app or visit www.southern7.org.

Paducah Weather Service office plans major computer upgrades

The National Weather Service office in Paducah plans to conduct a required, scheduled update to its Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System, AWIPS, system Monday through Wednesday, June 9-11.

The NWS uses the AWIPS computer system to display and integrate weather and water information and to send life-saving information, such as weather and water warnings, to the public.

During the time of this update, forecast and warning operations will be conducted by the Paducah office's service back-up offices in Davenport, Iowa, and Louisville, Ky., to minimize any potential interruption to services. No impacts to the Paducah office's core services of forecast products and weather watches, warnings and advisories are expected during this period.

The KPAH, KVWX and KHPX radars will remain operational and products will continue to be distributed as normal. The NWS Paducah office will remain open and staffed at all hours throughout this update period to help support its backup offices, answer public and partner phone calls and additional functions that can be completed without AWIPS.

However, impacts will occur to the NOAA Weather Radio transmitters that are maintained by the NWS Paducah office and serve Southeast Missouri, Southern Illinois, Western Kentucky and southwest Indiana.

Beginning at around 8 a.m. Monday, June 9, all of the NOAA Weather Radio broadcasts provided by the NWS Paducah office will go offline for the duration of this update. A listing of NOAA Weather Radio transmitters that are broadcast from the NWS Paducah office can be found online at http://weather.gov/nwr/wfo_list?WFO=PAH. NOAA Weather broadcasts are expected to return to service sometime on Wednesday, June 11.

During periods of planned or unplanned outages, the Weather Service advised that it is important to have multiple ways to receive warning information. These alternative sources include local television/radio, weather apps on mobile devices, such as the FEMA or Red Cross app and at the NWS website at weather.gov/pah.

Spring very active severe weather season in region

Spring has been a very active severe weather season in the Southern Illinois, Southeast Missouri and Western Kentucky region.

In a review of spring weather, the National Weather Service office in Paducah reported temperatures and precipitation both were above normal.

Several tornado outbreaks have impacted the region during the spring: on March 14-15, April 2 and May 16. A total of 54 tornadoes touched down from March through May with a “mind boggling 557 miles of tornado tracks across our 58 county area,” the weather service office reported. This shattered the previous annual record for most miles of tornado tracks, which was 449 miles set in 2011.

The weather service office issued a combined 462 warnings (severe, tornado and flash flood) during the spring season. This surpassed the 452 warnings issued in the spring of 2006 for the most in a single season in the

office's history dating back to 1995.

Temperatures averaged above normal by 2 to 2.5 degrees. This resulted in a top 10 warmest spring in Paducah and Cape Girardeau. Both March and April averaged above normal, while May was below normal.

Several locations registered a top five warmest March, as temperatures were 5 to 6 degrees above normal. April averaged about 2 to 3 degrees above normal. Then the switch was flipped, with temperatures 1 to 2 degrees below normal in May.

Precipitation finished much wetter than normal across the region. Most locations observed amounts anywhere from 15 to 25 inches of rain, which was 2 to 10 inches above normal. A few locations exceeded 25 inches across Western Kentucky. The highest observed amount in the Paducah office's forecast area was 30.86 inches at a CoCoRaHS station in Muhlenberg County in Kentucky.

Anna Moose Lodge awards Larry Burnett Memorial Scholarships



The Anna Moose Lodge #1346 awarded two \$1,000 Larry Burnett Memorial Scholarships to Nicholas Lingle and Clayton Smith, 2025 graduates of Anna Jonesboro Community High School. For over 25 years, the Anna Moose Lodge has proudly awarded two \$1,000 scholarships for high school graduates registered to attend college in the fall. Students graduating from Anna-Jonesboro, Cobden, Dongola and Shawnee High Schools are eligible to apply for the scholarship. The scholarships are made possible through donations and fund-raising activities undertaken by the Anna Moose Lodge.

†

"The Preaching Pen"

Are you a "True Friend" of Jesus?

†

Throughout life, we have occasions to meet several people. Whether at work, social activities, or even at the grocery store, we come across people we know each day. But how many of them would we consider to be our “true” friends?

In John 15:14, Christ outlines who he considers to be his friend. “You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.” Our Savior put it in clear, easy-to-understand wording. We can sum it up in one word: obedience. If we are loyal to God, it will naturally lead to obedience; in essence, our obedience is a manifestation of our loyalty to God and Jesus. Luke 6:46 records Christ saying, “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord’ and not do the things which I say?” Who is the Lord of our lives? Who is our Master? Can we still be loyal to God and Jesus if others are more important in our lives? James 2:22 tells us to be doers of the word. What have you done lately?

†

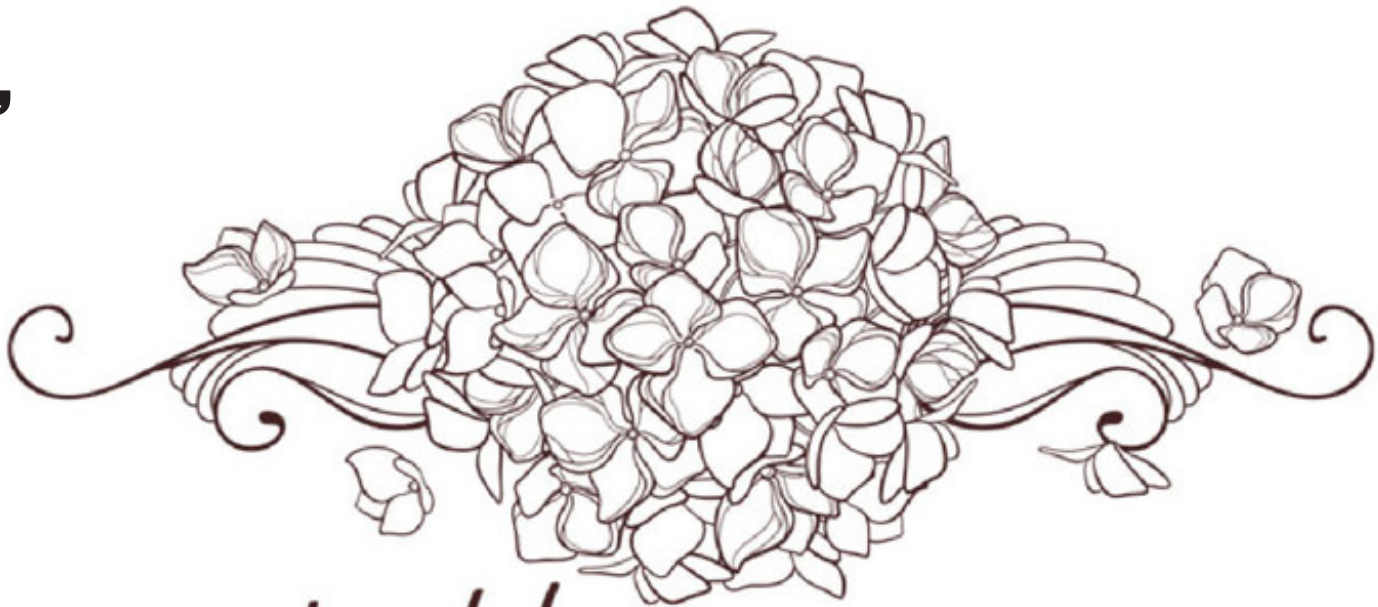
Ryan Thornsberry,

Anna Church of Christ

†

Saturday,
June 14,
2025

9:00 AM
to
9:00 PM



Annabelle FESTIVAL

DOWNTOWN ANNA, IL

Annabelle Festival Returns to Downtown Anna on June 14, 2025

The Union County Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development, in partnership with the City of Anna, is excited to announce the return of the Annabelle Festival, taking place Saturday, June 14, 2025, from 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM in downtown Anna, Illinois. This year's festival also features several special events scheduled throughout the weekend — beginning Thursday and continuing through Sunday.

A true celebration of local pride, the Annabelle Festival brings together families, friends, and visitors for a full day of food, live entertainment, tours, shopping, and community connections — all set in the heart of Union County.

Main Festival – Saturday, June 14 Highlights:

Live music from Diamond Dog and Deja VooDoo Free Car Show with classic and custom vehicles Art exhibits and events at the Shawnee Hills Arts Council Walking and bus tours showcasing Anna’s rich history Food trucks, crafters, KidFest area, and vendors lining Davie Street Self-Guided Annabelle Tour

Additional Festival Events:

• Thursday, June 12: Annabelle Pageant, 6:00 PM at Shawnee Hills Art Council

• Friday, June 13: Landscaping with Annabelles, 7:00 PM at AJ Garden Club Park Tombs at Twilight Historic Cemetery Tour, 7:30 PM Bus Loading at AJ Garden Club Park

• Sunday, June 15: Disc Golf Tournament at the City of Anna Disc Golf Course, Registration begins at 8:30 AM

“This festival is a cherished Union County tradition that grows every year,” said Tracey Smith, Executive Director of the Union County Chamber of Commerce. “From historical tours to live bands, and from community pageants to disc golf, there truly is something for everyone. Come enjoy a weekend full

of tradition, entertainment, and community spirit at the 2025 Annabelle Festival — we can’t wait to welcome you to Anna!”

• Festival Location: Davie Street, Downtown Anna

• Special Events: Anna-Jonesboro Garden Club activities, P.A. S. T Historical tours, KidFest, Vendors

• Live Music: Performances by Diamond Dog and Deja VooDoo

• Free Car Show: Showcasing classic and custom cars

• Date and Time: Saturday, June 8, 2024, from 9 AM to 9 PM

• Additional Activities: Details available on our website

Don't miss out on this incredible opportunity to celebrate our community and experience the best of what Anna has to offer. For complete event information, please visit unioncounty.biz.

For more information or media inquiries, please contact Tracey Smith at 618-833-6311 or info@unioncounty.biz

Stay connected with us on social media for the latest updates and announcements. We look forward to seeing you at the Annabelle Festival!

Union County Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development 301 S. Main Street Anna, IL 62906 www.unioncounty.biz



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Local scouts earn Eagle Scout rank



Joshua Rochon

Two local scouts have earned the rank of Eagle Scout from Scouting America (formerly the Boy Scouts of America). Benjamin Hauser and Joshua Rochon are members of Scouting America Troop 44, sponsored by Mt. Moriah Church in Anna. Less than 4% of kids that join Scouting America achieve the rank of Eagle Scout.

In his career as a scout, Joshua Rochon has served in several leadership positions, including assistant patrol leader, assistant senior patrol leader, senior patrol leader, historian, bugler, Wundchenneu Ney A Ti Chapter Chief



Benjamin Hauser

and Wundchenneu Ney A Ti Chapter 1st Vice. His accomplishments include national youth leader training, Order of the Arrow Brotherhood membership and 44 merit badges earned.

Benjamin Hauser has served in the leadership positions of assistant patrol leader, assistant senior patrol leader, senior patrol leader, instructor, Wundchenneu Ney A Ti Chapter Secretary. Hauser has completed national youth leader training, received Order of the Arrow Brotherhood membership, earned 37 merit badges and received the Bit Muddy District Youth Leadership Award in 2023.

Coffman’s raises money for charity at 13th annual Break-A-Thon



Funds raised from the event were presented to Ginger Meyer (middle), director of CMMHRN Extension center in Anna. Pictured with Meyer are Grandmaster Heather Coffman (left), owner of Coffman’s Martial Arts, and Grandmaster Robert Cutrell (right), Founder of ChunJiDo and ChunJiDo International.

Coffman’s Martial Arts Academy in Anna raised money for the Children’s Medical and Mental Health Resource Network (CMMHRN) with their 13th annual Break-A-Thon.

Twenty-two students participated the event, which raised \$1,800 for the charity. CMMHRN at SIU Medicine provides specialized medical evaluations and support for children who are reported victims of child abuse or who are at risk of child abuse. They work with many other organizations and professionals in the community to provide support for the most vulnerable youth.

The event was held in honor of Grandmaster Robert

Cutrell’s son, Jason Cutrell. Jason Cutrell passed away 2 1/2 years ago from an aggressive form of cancer that metastasized to his brain and spinal column. One of the last statements to his dad was that he only wished there was a way to give back to the community that helped him and his family so much.

“Jason died a warrior and this is how we help honor his last wish,” the academy expressed in a press release.

“A huge THANK YOU to everyone who donated and participated.”

A check was presented to Ginger Meyer, the director of the Children’s Medical and Mental Health Resource Network Extension center in Anna.

Spending plan raises over \$1 billion in revenue, New taxes on sports bets, nicotine products as Democrats pass \$55.2 billion state budget

By Ben Szalinski and Jerry Nowicki
Capitol News Illinois

SPRINGFIELD – Giving almost no time for public review, Illinois Democrats pushed through a \$55.2 billion budget for next fiscal year late Saturday, May 31, bolstering coffers with new taxes on sports bets, nicotine products and businesses.

The \$55.2 billion spending plan is supported by \$55.3 billion of revenue, including just over \$1 billion in new taxes and revenue changes.

The four bills making up the budget and capital spending plan, were part of a flurry of thousands of pages of legislation that went from introduction to passage in the final 48 hours of the legislative session.

The budget marked a roughly 3.9 percent spending increase from the current year, while Republicans criticized it for containing few cuts. It raises about \$500 million more in new revenue than what Gov. JB Pritzker proposed in February to make up for declining base revenues.

The minority party also aired frustration with supermajority Democrats for providing next to no time for public review of the massive spending plan and other major bills.

“We’re rushing this process like we always do. ‘Let’s hide this stuff. Let’s hide it so that the public doesn’t see it until it’s too late,’” Rep. John Cabello, R-Machesney Park, said.

Democrats said it was the best budget they could manage in a difficult year. To address potential uncertainties stemming from federal policy changes, they gave the governor authority over a new \$100 million “emergency” fund. And they frequently lobbed criticisms at President Donald Trump and Republicans in Congress.

“I am very pleased to be able to present a balanced budget crafted to be fiscally and socially responsible, because we see the decisions made in Washington right now are neither,” House Majority Leader Robyn Gabel, D-Evanston said. “Erratic leadership in Washington has affected our economic outlook, our revenue projections, and even threatened federal funding for our most crucial services.”

The GOP also took issue with the tax increases, although the measure did not raise or create new sales, income or service taxes.

Instead, the measures expand state taxes on foreign and out-of-state income for businesses, raise tax rates on tobacco, vapes and sports gambling, and sweep fund balances from several lesser-known and utilized state funds.

The spending measure, Senate Bill 2510, passed the House 75-41 just before 10 p.m. The Senate followed around 11:30 p.m. with a 34-23 vote. The revenue and tax changes, House Bill 2755, and the budget implementation bill, House Bill 1075, both passed with relative ease before the constitution’s midnight deadline and only Democratic votes as well. Gov. JB Pritzker issued a statement saying he would sign it.

Another spate of tax increases included in a transit governance overhaul bill

surfaced late but sputtered. The failed measure would have added a \$1.50 fee on food and package deliveries and taxed electric vehicle charging statewide among other changes. Talks on that bill could resume later this year.

New Taxes on Vaping, Gaming, Deliveries

The revenue bill creates a tax of 25 cents per wager for a sports betting licensee’s first 20,000 wagers accepted, and 50 cents per wager after that.

Consumers will also see new taxes on tobacco products. The tax rate will rise to 45 percent from 36 percent. Vape products and nicotine pouches would also now be included under the tax.

The revenue plan amends state law to tax sales from all businesses that transact in the state, rather than only businesses with a physical presence in Illinois. The plan also eliminates a “safe harbor” exemption for businesses that move money outside the state.

Businesses that move profits to other countries would also be subject to the state’s corporate income tax. The federal government currently taxes half of income moved offshore and Illinois would tax the other half under the revenue plan.

Businesses outside Illinois that sell \$100,000 or more to people in the state must also collect Illinois sales taxes even if the business doesn’t have a physical location in Illinois. This would apply to businesses like Amazon.

“I will not support this betrayal of hard-working Illinoisans,” Sen. Don DeWitte, R-St. Charles, said. “And if you care about the people who sent you here, if you truly represent them, you’ll vote no too. Enough is enough. It’s time for this body to stand with taxpayers, not stand up against them.”

Another source of new revenue is a delinquent tax payment incentive program designed to help the state recuperate overdue tax payments. It will generate \$228 million, Rep. Will Guzzardi, D-Chicago, said.

The state would also pause the final transfer of motor fuel sales tax revenue to the road fund in order to free up \$171 million, according to the governor’s office’s estimate.

A separate bill designed to lower prescription drug prices calls for levying a fee on pharmacy benefit managers based on the number of patients they insure. Money from that fee would go into a fund for the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to award up to \$25 million a year in grants to independent pharmacies and pharmacies located in rural counties. The remaining money would go to the state’s general revenue fund.

The measure also extends the state’s Hotel Operators’ Occupation Tax to short-term rentals like Airbnb and Vrbo.

Immigrant Health Cuts

A controversial program that provides health insurance to more than 30,000 noncitizens between ages 42 and 64 will be cut in FY26. The program’s elimination saves the state \$330 million, but a \$110 million program for seniors will remain in place.

Together, the two programs have cost the state at least \$1.6 billion, according to an audit released in February, far exceeding budgeted costs for

the program.

“We had to make some tough decisions here. That program grew at greater rates, financially, than we thought it would, and we had to make some hard decisions,” Gabel said.

Federally Qualified Health Centers are set to receive \$40 million in the budget. The centers provide health services to low-income and uninsured people. Democrats touted that increase to provide care for immigrants who would have qualified for the health care program.

Illinois still risks losing some Medicaid funding under a proposal in Congress that threatens to slash reimbursements for states that provide health insurance to people illegally in the United States. But Gabel noted it’s possible those reductions won’t take place until 2027.

The budget also increases funding for safety-net hospitals with federal Medicaid funding cuts possible.

Education Spending

The state’s evidence-based funding model for K-12 schools calls for \$350 million in additional funding each year, with a portion of that going to a property tax relief fund and the rest directly to schools. The proposed budget fully funds the K-12 education portion at \$307 million but does not add \$43 million in property tax relief funds, according to Democratic leaders.

Funding for the Illinois Community College Board would also decrease by \$24 million, mostly because lawmakers reduced spending on a workforce development grant that Democrat leaders said was not being fully utilized.

Funding for state universities would only increase by 1 percent. Pritzker proposed a 3 percent increase for higher education even as most other areas of his budget would’ve increased by 1 percent. Senate Democrats’ budget leader Sen. Elgie Sims, D-Chicago, said the budget allows for an additional 2 percent increase in FY26 if the federal government eliminates substantial funding.

Pensions

Despite more than a year of discussions, Illinois lawmakers did not tackle pension reform this spring. Illinois’ Tier 2 pension system is likely out of compliance with Social Security’s “safe harbor” law that requires pension benefits to be at least equal to Social Security.

Part of the budget package created a new Tier 2 reserve fund that can be accessed if there are violations of the “safe harbor” law. Lawmakers appropriated \$75 million for the fund this year, in line with Pritzker’s proposal.

“Emergency” Fund, Raises, More

Notably not in this year’s budget is an increase to the “rainy day” fund. Pritzker has taken pride in the fund’s increases in recent years, as it’s grown to a balance of \$2.3 billion, up from less than \$60,000 when Pritzker took office. The FY26 budget would suspend the monthly transfer for one year, freeing up \$45 million for general fund use.

The budget package also establishes a new \$100 million fund that the governor can tap into “in the event of unanticipated delays in or failures of revenues.” The

measure, an apparent nod to the uncertainty of federal funding amid ongoing congressional budget negotiations, will come from money swept from other funds.

“That will allow us to respond to actions by the federal government and challenges that present themselves and costs that have been diverted from the federal government to the state government,” Sims said in a committee hearing.

The attorney general’s office would get \$116 million from the general fund. Attorney General Kwame Raoul asked lawmakers to boost funding for his office as he engages in a growing number of lawsuits against the Trump administration. Raoul was hoping to receive \$120 million in funding.

Direct service providers are in line for an 80-cent per hour wage increase, but Republicans said calling it a funding increase is “sleight of hand,” because the measure would also reduce work hours for DSPs by the hundreds of thousands. That makes the increase negligible, Sen. Chapin Rose, R-Mahomet, said in committee.

“It’s not a great budget, but it is a good budget and it is the budget we need for this very difficult moment,” Rep. Lindsey LaPointe, D-Chicago, said.

Lawmakers will see their salaries rise as part of the budget, going to a \$98,304 base salary from roughly \$92,000. That’s an annualized rate of increase that is set by law.

“You raised our pay, you gave yourselves hundreds of millions of dollars of our taxpayers funds to spend on your pet projects,” Rep. Amy Elik, R-Godfrey, said. “So I simply don’t believe you anymore that you ever intended to be fiscally careful.”

No Bears Stadium Funding

Lawmakers did not appropriate funding for the Chicago Bears to build a new stadium. But NASCAR would be the recipient of a \$5 million grant ahead of the sport’s third downtown Chicago race in July, and the PGA Tour would receive a \$1 million grant as part of hosting the 2026 President’s Cup in DuPage County. Those were two economic development measures criticized by Republicans during the Senate committee hearing.

The budget also contains \$200 million to prepare unused state properties to be repurposed for development, Sims said. Lawmakers removed another \$300 million that Pritzker had sought in spending aimed at offloading surplus property.

Gabel said the state’s employee management department has negotiated more than \$100 million in health care cost savings as well.

Any remaining federal pandemic relief funding would also be sent to recipients that have not received payments in previous years before the funding expires in 2026.

Jade Aubrey contributed to this story.

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.

View Obituaries Online at annanews.com

Shawnee College announces reaffirmation of accreditation

Shawnee Community College on June 2 announced the reaffirmation of its accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission, HLC. The college said in a news release that the accreditation is an achievement that underscores the confidence, strength and dedication of its faculty, staff, and leadership.

For the first time in its history, Shawnee Community College also has been placed on the Open Pathway, which reflects institutional trust, stability and a focus on continuous quality improvement.

“This reaffirmation confirms what we already know at Shawnee – our people are exceptional,” said Dr. Tim Taylor, president of Shawnee Community College. “Our faculty and staff are deeply committed to student success, and this milestone validates their professionalism, passion and pride. To be reaffirmed with no findings, no follow-up reports and no additional visits is a powerful endorsement of the work happening on our campus every day.”

The 10-year reaffirmation process included a comprehensive evaluation of the institution’s mission, governance, academic programs, student support services and financial and operational integrity. Shawnee Community College received strong marks in all areas, with HLC reviewers highlighting the college’s inclusive practices, commitment to lifelong learning and student-centered culture.

Dr. Kristin Shelby, accreditation liaison officer and dean of transfer and adult education at the college, noted the broader significance of this moment.

“The ability to move to the Open Pathway is a significant milestone in the College’s accreditation history. It demonstrates that Shawnee not only meets, but exceeds the Higher Learning Commission’s

guiding values for institutional excellence. It was an honor to lead such a phenomenal group throughout the reaffirmation process. I’m incredibly proud of my team and the hard work and dedication of our entire campus in order to make this possible,” Shelby said.

“On behalf of the Board of Trustees, we are extremely grateful to the HLC Team and the entire College community for their contributions that have made this incredible achievement possible,” the college’s board of trustees chairperson, Steve Heisner, said.

“Having had the honor to serve on the Board over the past 35 years and to have worked with many amazing professionals who have guided this effort in the past, when the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools was our accrediting body, we look to those efforts, also, as having laid a firm foundation for this award-winning process.

“I would want our constituents to know that over the past five years, we have made a 180-degree turnaround from our position then, and not only have we accomplished a never-before milestone, but we also have had members of the administration and board to serve as presenters at HLC Conferences telling our amazing story of success. This honor is one we celebrate, but moreover, we view it as a stepping stone to further successes as we continue to build a plan for the future to serve the constituents of our district.”

Shawnee Community College extended sincere thanks to the many students, employees, board members and community partners who contributed to this achievement. Soon, the college will announce plans for a public celebration of this milestone as its focuses on the growth and development of programs.

Illinois State Library reading room named in honor of former governor

The reading room at the Illinois State Library in Springfield has been named in honor of a former governor. Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias honored the legacy and impact of former Governor and Secretary of State Jim Edgar May 28 with the formal dedication of the Jim Edgar Reading Room at the Illinois State Library.

Giannoulias, who also serves as State Librarian, was joined by a bipartisan group of state officials, including Gov. JB Pritzker and Congresswoman Nikki Budzinski, to dedicate the Reading Room and celebrate Edgar’s vital contributions to Illinois’ library and literacy programs.

“It’s a privilege to honor the legacy of Governor Jim Edgar, an incredible statesman, advocate and friend. For his career of service to our state and its citizens,” Giannoulias said. “The Jim Edgar Reading Room enshrines the former Governor and Secretary of State’s legacy and indelible contributions to our state’s library, which continue to have a profound impact throughout our state.”

Giannoulias drafted House Joint Resolution 0025, which formally names the Reading Room in Edgar’s honor. The bipartisan resolution was adopted unanimously in April.

“Governor Jim Edgar has a relentless passion for upholding our political institutions, and a seemingly unlimited energy to continue bettering them,” Pritzker said. “From the construction of the new Illinois State Library, to extensive rural library investments, to his nationally-renowned adult literacy program, Jim has connected so many across our state with new opportunities to learn, read, and grow. There is no more fitting tribute to him than the Illinois State Library Reading Room, a place that

Anna Arts Center schedule drama camp and art camps

The Shawnee Hills Arts Council will be offering a free drama camp at the Anna Arts Center in June. The arts center is located on the 100 block of West Davie Street in Anna.

The free camp is made possible thanks to a grant from Artspace 304’s Southern Arts Fund, plus grants from the Illinois Arts Council through federal funds provided by the National Endowment of the Arts, as well as Good Chaos and private donations.

The camp is scheduled for June 9 to 27 and is open to all

kids aged kindergarten to 12th grade. The camp will explore set design, lights and sound, acting, singing and dancing.

The camp will culminate in the production of the musicals “Barnyard Musicals” and “Destination America” on Saturday, June 28 and Sunday June 29.

To sign up, contact Lee Hackney at vabchlee@gmail.com or 904-625-1109 with the child’s name, phone number, email, allergies and the grade the child is entering in August.

The arts council will also

Jonesboro Public Library hosts free events in June

The Jonesboro Public Library will be hosting a variety of free events for patrons throughout June.

The library is located at 412 S. Main St. in Jonesboro. Regular hours are scheduled from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

The schedule of weekly events at the library in June include:

Starting June 10, the library will be hosting its

summer reading program at 2 p.m. on Tuesdays. The event is open to all ages and features story time, crafts and snacks while tracking 1,000 minutes of reading.

Starting June 11, Wednesdays at 2 p.m. will be the “Teen Scene” for ages 13 to 16, featuring teen activities and a smoothie bar.

Starting June 12, “Crafternoon” will take place all day on Thursdays. Crafternoon allows patrons

One-day household chemical collection set in Carbondale

The Jackson County Health Department has announced that a one-day household chemical collection is planned Saturday, June 7, at the south parking lot of the Banterra Center (the former SIU Arena) in Carbondale.

Illinois residents can safely drop-off waste at the site from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. by appointment only. This is a rain or shine event. For questions, or to make an appointment, contact the Jackson County Health

Department at 618-684-3143, extension 128, for more information, or visit www.jchdonline.org.

Items to be accepted at the collection include paint thinner, aerosols, household cleaners, pesticides, insecticides, herbicides, automotive fluids (such as antifreeze, motor oil and old gasoline), rechargeable batteries, solvents, polishes, pool chemicals, lawn chemicals, oil-based paints, e-cigarettes/vapes, propane

Grand Levee scheduled at Vandalia Statehouse

The Vandalia Statehouse State Historic Site is scheduled to host the annual Grand Levee on Saturday, June 14. The event is an annual celebration of grand receptions held during the 1800s to honor government dignitaries and important visitors.

The Grand Levee, which features an entire day of activities and entertainment, is free and open to the public. The historic site is at 315 W. Gallatin St. in Vandalia.

Festivities are scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. on the lawn of the Vandalia Statehouse with period arts and crafts

demonstrations, including blacksmithing, pottery, wool spinning, silk embroidery, hand-carved spoons, brooms and more.

The Ewington Chapter of the Illinois Society Sons of the American Revolution will display 16 flags used during the American Revolution and give a unique perspective on the period.

Inside the historic site, visitors can enjoy tours of the Vandalia Statehouse. Brian Fox Ellis will portray Lincoln the lawyer with Billie Herndorn at 11 a.m.

The Vandalia Historical Society will offer a historic

IDNR, Conservation Police urge life jacket use, sober boating

The Memorial Day weekend marked the unofficial kickoff to the summer boating season, and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, IDNR, and Illinois Conservation Police are urging people to wear life jackets anytime they're on the water and to only operate boats while sober.

National Safe Boating Week was commemorated May 17-23, the week leading up to the Memorial Day holiday weekend, to raise awareness of boating safety.

"As the boating season approaches, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Office of Law Enforcement, reminds all waterway enthusiasts that safety is a shared responsibility. Every boater plays a vital role in creating a secure and enjoyable environment on the water," said Office of Law Enforcement director Jed Whitchurch.

"Understanding and adhering to boating regulations such as navigation rules, safety equipment requirements, designated no-wake zones, and staying informed about weather conditions are essential to ensuring positive experiences for all who enjoy the state's waterways.

In 2024, there were 63 reportable boating accidents on Illinois waters, resulting in 15 fatalities and 32 injuries, according to statistics

compiled by the Illinois Conservation Police. Prior years' statistics:

- 2023: 70 boating accidents with 12 fatalities and 37 injuries.
- 2022: 52 boating accidents with 6 fatalities and 40 injuries.
- 2021: 93 boating accidents with 16 fatalities and 28 injuries.

Annual boating accident statistics are compiled based on the federal fiscal year from Oct. 1 through Sept. 30.

Statistics show most boating accidents occur between noon and 6 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays between June and August. Conditions are usually clear with good visibility, light winds, and calm water.

Most accidents involve operators between the ages of 20 and 40 who have more than 100 hours of boating experience but little or no classroom boating safety instruction. They also usually involve open motorboats cruising in a careless or reckless manner, culminating in a collision with another boat.

IDNR offers free boating safety courses that provide a review of boating laws and regulations, as well as instruction on the safe and attentive operation of watercraft. The department encourages boaters of all ages to take a safety course. Anyone born on or after Jan. 1, 1998, must pass a course

be offering two art camps in June.

The first camp will be exploring art techniques from around the world and will be held from June 9 to 13 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. The cost for 3 children is \$120 or \$50 for one child. Students can also attend individual days for \$10 per day.

The second art camp is titled “Art the Next Level” and will take place from June 23 to 27 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Students will create 2-D art by paintings, drawing and

collages, then combine their art with photographs campers take with their phones or with cameras provided. This camp is free thanks to funding from a grant from the Foreground Rural Initiative grant through the Illinois Humanities Council, distributed through Artspace 304.

Both art camps will have their works featured in an exhibit on June 27 at the Anna Arts Center.

For questions on any of these events, contact Lee Hackney at 904-625-1109.

to create new crafts or work on new projects. All ages welcome.

Starting June 13, Fridays will be adult craft day starting at 2 p.m. Patrons aged 16 and up will be making fairy gardens in a teacup.

Saturday, June 7, the library will be participating in Junefest in Jonesboro from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. next to the Jonesboro Post office.

Saturday, June 14 at 2

p.m. will be sensory play day, featuring fidgets, kinetic sand, bubbles and chalk. All ages welcome.

Saturday, June 21 will be giant game day, featuring an assortment of giant games. All ages welcome.

Saturday, June 28 at 2 p.m. will be the monthly book club. The book for the month will be “Song of Achilles” by Madeline Miller for adults aged 18 and up.

collection set in Carbondale

and helium tanks and Mapp-gas cylinders. Mercury-containing devices, such as thermometers, thermostats and fluorescent and CFL bulbs, are also being accepted.

The health department advised in a news release that items which will absolutely NOT be accepted at the collection include latex paint, explosives, ammunition, fireworks, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, farm machinery oil, medical waste, electronics, alkaline and lead-

acid batteries, appliances, tires and radioactive material, syringes, needles and medical waste. For information about medical waste disposal resources, visit <https://www.hsidn.org/medication-disposal-resources>.

No business, agricultural or government wastes are accepted. Eligible participants wanting to dispose of materials in containers larger than five gallons must contact Jackson County Health Department prior to the event.

home trolley tour and tours of the little brick house from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Fayette County Museum and the National Road Interpretive Center also plan to host tours.

Unity Baptist Church and Porkorney will have food and beverage available for purchase.

Other activities are scheduled to include the World Bird Sanctuary and caricature art by Dan Wild at 11 a.m. Wild Foam Adventures will have giant bubbles from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Lucky R Mobile Zoo will have a petting zoo onsite from noon to 2 p.m.

Local folk band Heritage Blue will also provide live entertainment from noon to 2 p.m.

A trivia contest with Abraham Lincoln, played by Randy Duncan, will be held in the House of Representatives chamber at 1 p.m. Teams can have up to five members.

The Grande Levee is sponsored by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Old Capital Foundation. For a schedule of events and more information, visit the Vandalia Statehouse State Historic Site on Facebook or call 618-283-1161.

and have a valid Boating Safety Certificate to operate a motorboat (with over 10 horsepower). State law also requires boating safety education for people ages 12 to 17 to operate a motorboat.

"Safety should be the first priority of those enjoying Illinois waterways this summer," said Cody Gray, safety education program administrator for IDNR.

"IDNR's mandatory boating safety classes are free and offered most weekends during the summer at multiple locations across the state."

Free safety courses are taught by volunteer instructors and are available throughout Illinois. A schedule of courses can be found on the IDNR website at dnr.illinois.gov. For a fee, online boating safety courses are also available.

As part of the Illinois Conservation Police boating safety enforcement effort, officers strictly enforce laws regarding operating under the influence, OUI, for boat operators.

Operating a boat under the influence is in some ways riskier than operating a motor vehicle under the influence. On waterways, there are no lane markers, boats have no seatbelts, and there is little protection for occupants should a collision occur.

In 2024, Illinois Conservation Police officers arrested 84 boaters for OUI,

an 11 percent increase from 2023. Four of the 15 boating-related fatalities in Illinois in 2024 involved alcohol or drug impairment.

Previous years' OUI arrests included 72 boaters in 2023, 81 boats in 2022 and 65 boats in 2021.

State law requires life jackets on board. Wearing a life jacket is the most important action boaters and paddlers can take to ensure their safety and that of others on board.

Illinois law requires that personal flotation devices, or PFDs, be available for each person aboard a boat or other watercraft. The law also requires Illinois law requires everyone to wear a PFD while operating a personal watercraft or jet ski.

Under the Boat Registration and Safety Act, no person may operate any watercraft unless an approved and appropriately sized wearable U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device is being properly worn at all times by each person under the age of 13 on the deck of a watercraft or in an open watercraft. However, this requirement shall not apply to people who are enclosed in a cabin or below the top deck on a watercraft, on an anchored watercraft that is a platform for swimming or diving, or aboard a charter "passenger for hire" watercraft with a licensed captain.

Obituaries

Shane Ray Parker (The Bear)

Shane Ray Parker (The Bear), 68, of Metropolis, formerly of Grand Chain, Ill., passed away on Friday, May 30, 2025 at the Southgate Nursing & Rehabilitation Center in Metropolis.

He was born on Jan. 16, 1957 to Warren Ray (Hoot) and Lynda Parker in Cairo, Ill.

Survivors include sons, Dakota Parker and Hunter Parker and Brother Kerry (Chrystal) Parker; grandson Sage Parker (Dakota); nieces Karly Parker Burk, Katie Parker Barfield and their children and many other cousins, nieces, nephews. He is also survived by many close friends and their families.

Shane was preceded in death by his parents Hoot and Lynda Parker. He was also preceded in death by his paternal grandparents Alvin Ray “AR” and Leona Parker and his maternal grandparents Arthur and Dillie (Hawkins) Dick. He was also preceded in death by his Aunt Jeanette (Parker) Choate and Uncle Jean Dick and many great-uncles, great aunts and cousins.

When he was a small child, Shane’s family moved to Arizona for a few years where his brother Kerry was born. The family moved back to “Tick Ridge” in Grand Chain where Shane attended grade school.

For a couple decades Shane’s parents Lynda and Hoot ran “Hoots” drive-in located at the Karnak spur. The family lived in the back of the drive-in for several years before moving “up the hill” and converting the living quarters to a dine-in restaurant.

They were famous for pizza, catfish, Italian Beef sandwiches, plus the best burgers and fries.

Hoot was beloved for his jokes and wry comments. Little Shane followed in his dad’s comedic footsteps but also shared the work ethic and big heart that his momma Lynda had.

As a Child, Shane attended Ohio Chapel Church, on Tick Ridge Road, with his parents, grandparents and other relatives. He remained affiliated with the church for his entire life.

In his youth he was part of the Karnak-Ohio Chapel Methodist Youth Fellowship (MYF), going on several campouts at Little Grassy Lake and Beulah Church Camp. The MYF did a free work-day that led to the creation of J.I.P. Enterprise (Jarrett-Inman-Parker) to make money hauling trash, hauling hay and doing odd jobs, even comedy.

Shane was active in sports at Century High School, playing Catcher in Baseball and Power-Forward in Basketball. He was known for mashing long home runs. He received trophies in the Century Beta Club Talent show several times, foreshadowing his later career in Comedy and the Entertainment Industry.

Bear graduated from Century High School in 1975 and attended Shawnee Community College. At Shawnee, he was known for being in plays and being the Jester in several Madrigals.

He also competed nationally in speech competitions, going to San Francisco and Chicago. He was the USA Champion of After Dinner Speaking, winning gold in the National Junior College Association of Forensics.

Shane was the Shawnee College “Distinguished Alumnus of the Year” in 2007. A detailed tribute is viewable at Shawnee Colleges’ Facebook Page.

A f t e r graduating from Shaw-



nee, Shane attended Millikin University in Decatur. Shane left Millikin and headed to Chicago where he became director of promotions and entertainment at “Faces” nightclub. At Faces, he became acquainted with local celebrities like Harry Caray and Oprah Winters (she was a local TV personality at that time).

He also worked with national celebrities such as Rich Little, Cher, Mr. T. and Bill Cosby. Bill flew Bear out to Pennsylvania where Bear was included in some of the “Picture Pages” shows.

Bear also was involved with some of the major radio and TV stations in Chicago and even appeared in some movies.

In 1985 Bear returned to his Southern Illinois and Tri-State Roots. Shane is well known throughout the Tri-State Area as the “Bear on the Air” having been a DJ on WKYQ. He worked closely with Dr. Jeff and others at WKYQ.

He was famous for outlandish TV commercials, Bad Dad Jokes, and his Deep Mellow Bass Voice. He was Master of Ceremonies for many events at the Carson Center, connecting with Celebrities like Charlie Daniels. Some of Bear’s work is viewable at Bear on the Air Facebook.

As part of his community relations, he started catering Bar-B-Que for charities and other events. In later years, Bear teamed up with his younger son, Hunter Parker. They did many Bar-B-Que catering events and provided DJ services at weddings. Hunter became known as the “Bear Cub.”

The following tribute was Posted by the WestKentuckyStar.com:

“Parker was a fixture on the radio in the area after launching his career in Chicago. Even during that time in the Windy City, he never forgot where he came from. Eventually, the pull of Southern Illinois proved too strong. Bear came home and found a home on the airwaves of WDDJ 97 FM with an extremely popular evening show.

Bear took some time away from radio fueled by another passion. He opened a restaurant, following in the footsteps of his parents who owned and ran restaurants.

A return to the airwaves was inevitable as Bear found a new radio home at 93.3 WKYQ, before moving to sister station WLLE FM, WiLLiE 102.

Health concerns slowed but did not stop him. Bear continued contributing to the station and he also continued his charity work. His annual toy drive set a new record, last year. Bear wanted to make sure every child had a Merry Christmas.

The Bear on the Air will be missed by generations of listeners across the area.”

Bear loved his Family. He loved his Friends. He loved his Fans. They will all miss him and his humor dearly.

There are no plans, at this time, for a formal service. However, Bear pre-recorded parts of his eulogy, some of which is shared on this site. More videos will be released on YouTube or shared with Friends.

Crain Funeral Home in Ullin is in charge of arrangements.

Mrs. Opal Estelle L. Hodges

Mrs. Opal Estelle L. Hodges, of Cairo, Ill., age 96 (one day from 97), passed away peacefully at home on Saturday, May 24, 2025 with her children by her side.

One would think, what a celebration awaiting her to be with the Lord, her husband, Herbert, and son, Philip on her birthday, the 25th.

Opal was born in Palestine, Ark. She was a beloved mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and great great-grandmother especially to her children. She was known to be a people person, friendly to all.

Mrs. Hodges worked at the Cairo Theater with her husband Herbert prior to working a P.N. Hirsch as a cashier and sales clerk.

Her career then took her to Shawnee Development Counsel (JTPA) as coordinator over five counties until her retirement.

Opal was of the Baptist Faith and a member of Cairo Baptist/ Mighty Rivers Regional Worship Center.

Opal was preceded in death by her husband, Herbert Hodges; her parents, Lester and Mae Chrisenberry; son, Philip Hodges; grandson, Charles Allen Caldwell, Alex Patterson, Bobby Johnson, Jr.; son-in-law, Ralph Allison; and sister and brother-in-law, Velma and Harold Upshaw.

Mrs. Hodges is survived by her children, Janice (Ronald) Sutton, Kaye Allison, Vickie Caldwell, Mike Hodges, Byron (Phyllis) Hodges, and daughter-in-law, Doris Hodges. She is also survived



Shirley C. Barringer

Shirley C. Barringer, 89, of Champaign, Ill. passed away on Monday, May 26, at Carle Hospital.

Shirley was born in Anna, Ill. on Jan. 7, 1936 to Frank and Lucille Womick.

She married D. Dean Barringer on Sept. 9, 1955.

Dean preceded her in death on Oct. 2, 2005.

Shirley attended Anna-Jonesboro High School, and then went onto pursue her bachelor’s degree in home economics from SIU in Carbondale.

Her Christian faith guided and directed her life in every way. She truly had a servant’s heart and loved spending time with her family and friends.

Shirley is survived by her daughters, Tina Elizabeth (Bryan) Cox of Normal, Ill., and Michelle (John) Olden of Savoy, Ill. She was also a proud grandmother to her grandson, Austin Blake Cox.

She is survived by her sister, Judy Roth of Springfield, Ill.; her niece, Laura (Brad) Hessing; her nephews, Eric Roth of Springfield, Ill., Rick (Jan) Womick and family of Tennessee, and Mike (Ruth Ann) Womick and family of Ohio. Additionally, she leaves behind other nieces and nephews in Southern Illinois and New Mexico.

Visitation and services were held on Monday, June 2, at Morgan Memorial Homes, at 1304 Regency Drive W, Savoy, IL 61874

Flowers arrangements can be ordered through Abbott’s Florist, 1119 W Windsor Rd, Champaign, IL 61821.

In lieu of flowers donations can be made to Temple Baptist Church, 1100 Broadmoor Drive, Champaign, IL 61821.

Condolences may be offered at www.morganmemorialhome.com.

News from

Jonesboro First Baptist Church

On June 1, Pastor Perry Williams spoke during the morning service. His message spoke on the importance of standing up for what is right. His text was on the story of David and Goliath found in the seventeenth chapter of 1st Samuel in the Old Testament.

Music Director, Dee Rose, led in worship accompanied by The Praise Team, Sharon Morgan, Marion Hill, Rodger Goines and Kim Benefield. Our pianist was Debbie York. David Pedigo sang a special, “God Be With You Until We Meet Again,” accompanied by Robert McCain on the guitar.



by her Grandchildren, Kim (Mike) Brown, Andrea Vinson, Herbert Vinson, James Vinson, Adam (Chelsea) Hodges, Sara (Esley) Cornelius, Jr., April (Robert) Moore, Christopher (Veronica) Jackson, Cynthia (Robert) Johnson, Bryan Hodges, Candance Hodges, Bryan Hodges, Glenn (Alisha) Hodges; and numerous great-grandchildren and great great-grandchildren, along with many nieces and nephews.

Funeral services for Opal Hodges were held on Thursday, May 29, 2025 with Rev. Larry Potts officiating at Crain Funeral Home in Cairo.

Interment followed the service at Green Lawn Memorial Gardens in Villa Ridge, Ill.

The family requests with gratitude that memorial contributions be made to Mighty Rivers Regional Worship Center and/or St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital.

Crain Funeral Home in Cairo is in charge of arrangements.



Ann) Womick and family of Ohio. Additionally, she leaves behind other nieces and nephews in Southern Illinois and New Mexico.

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Flowers arrangements can be ordered through Abbott’s Florist, 1119 W Windsor Rd, Champaign, IL 61821.

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Condolences may be offered at www.morganmemorialhome.com.

Jackie Lee (Simms) Dillow

Jackie Lee Dillow, age 80 of Perryville, Mo., went home to her Lord and Savior, Saturday, May 31, 2025 at her home.

She was born Feb. 19, 1945, the daughter of James Harold and Mary Lee Simms.

She married James William Dillow on June 3, 1978 in Anna.

He preceded her in death on Dec. 29, 2024.

Jackie is survived by her two daughters, Lynn (Buddy) Hellman of Perryville, Lea (Randy) Wright of Anna; four grandchildren, Dylan (Alanna) Hellman, Blake Hellman, Madison (Bradley) West, and Jacob Wright; two great-grandchildren, Carter and Lenna Hellman; three halfsisters, Debra McClinton, Donna Essner, and Denise Hopkins; nieces and nephews; other extended family and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, James Dillow; son, John Wagoner; brother, James Thomas Simms; and sister, Wanda Lue Simms.

Jackie worked many years for Kroger, retiring in 2000.

She was a member of the **RENDLEMAN & HILEMAN** First Baptist Church in Jonesboro. FUNERAL HOMES



Jackie had a deep appreciation for her faith and love in Jesus and valued her relationships with her church family.

She enjoyed time with her grandchildren, family gatherings and sewing.

Jackie and James enjoyed traveling and camping, making unforgettable memories on each adventure.

Funeral services were on Tuesday, June 3, 2025 at the Rendleman & Hileman Funeral Home in Anna with Pastor Nate Ammon and Pastor Perry Williams officiating. Interment was in the Anna Cemetery.

Memorial contributions are preferred to the First Baptist Church in Jonesboro. Envelopes will be available at the funeral home.

News from

Anna First Baptist Church

Anna First Baptist Church met for worship on Sunday, June 1, with Pastor Lupe greeting everyone in the Sanctuary.

Bro Perry Wright led in the opening prayer

Announcements were read and the prayer list was gone over and prayer was said over the sick in the congregation.

The Call to Worship was on The Lord’s Supper. “For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said; Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me.

“After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup; ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come.” 1 Corinthians 11: 23 - 29

The Worship Team led in three songs, “Yeshua Hamashiach,” “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” and “In Jesus Name.”

Pastor Lupe’s sermon in continuing in the Book of Revelation, was titled “Diabloical Duo.” Highlights from his sermon included, the Antichrist and the False Prophet form a diabolical duo in Revelation 13, working

Holshouser, June 06. Happy birthday to all!

Happy Anniversary to Darrell and Cindy Pender who celebrate 35 years of marriage on June 2; and to David and Carla Whitaker, married 21 years on June 5.

Currently, our regular schedule for worship at Jonesboro First Baptist includes Sunday School classes on Sundays at 9 a.m.; Sunday morning worship at 10 a.m.; Sunday evening worship at 6 p.m. Youth meet both at 6-7 p.m. on Sundays, and 6-8 p.m. Wednesdays. Our Adult Prayer Meeting and Bible Study also meets on Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m.

News from

Camp Ground Church, Community

The sermon Sunday was “His Word Over Ours: Not Forsaken” with scripture selection Joshua 1:5-9. This is the third in a series of sermons titled “His Word Over Ours...”

When we accept Christ as our Savior, we get a new name – we become a Child of God; we are also made into a new creation – to be a witness to God’s mercy and His offer of Salvation.

We don’t have to live our life in fear because God is in control. God wants us to be victorious in our daily lives.

When fear assails us, Jesus said He would not forsake us. Only with God will we be invincible.

Matthew reiterated that Jesus will be with us: “Do not be discouraged, for the Lord our God will be with you wherever you go...to the end of time.”

Mary Robinson rang the bell to begin worship.

Vodra Gerard and Kayton Crane took up the morning tithes and offering

Our Elder for June is Sandra Boaz.

Happy birthday to Nathan

Smith who turned 7 Tuesday, the 3rd.

Congratulations to Dennis and Jennifer Herren whose wedding anniversary is today, the 5th.

Congratulations to Raelynn Bonner, Aldi Gerard and Vodra Gerard who attained High Honor Roll this past semester, and to Addi Bonner and Reed Crane who also made Honor Roll.

In celebration of Mothers’ Day and Fathers’ Day, our congregation went to Giant City Lodge following Worship Sunday for lunch and fellowship.

Aldi and Vodra Gerard participated in Troop 44 Scout Troop’s Court of Honor Sunday afternoon. Both young men received Merit Badges that they had earned the past year.

We invite you to join us each Sunday, beginning with fellowship and coffee at 9:15 a.m., Bible study for all ages at 9:30 a.m. followed by Morning Worship at 10:30 a.m.

The church is located at the intersection of Camp Ground Road and Tunnel Lane east of Anna, north of Route 146.

Illinois Department of Natural Resources notes June events

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources, IDNR, is sharing news about upcoming events and activities for June.

The Fort de Chartres Rendezvous, a popular annual tradition in Randolph County, will take place June 7-8 at the Fort de Chartres State Historic Site near Prairie du Rocher. Rendezvous hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, June 7, and from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, June 8. Highlights include a flintlock muzzleloader shooting competition; period food, drink and entertainment; artisan and craft demonstrations; 18th-century children's games; militia and military events.

Free fishing days are scheduled June 13 to June 16 in Illinois. Anglers of all ages and skill levels are invited to fish for free throughout Illinois. No fishing license or stamp is required to participate one weekend each year.

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



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Photo Credit istockphoto.com/Berc

Weekly Scripture Reading

Isaiah	Isaiah	Isaiah	Joel	Joel	Joel	Joel
6.1-13	61.1-11	62.1-12	1.1-20	2.1-17	2.18-32	3.1-21

Scriptures Selected by the American Bible Society

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HELP WANTED: Nursing Instructor for CNA program for Five County Regional Vocational System at Shawnee Community Center - Anna location. Qualifications: RN with at least 2 years experience, one of which includes long-term or chronic care, and necessary requirements for Illinois licensure. Interested persons should send letter of application and resume to: Patrick Harner, Five County Regional Vocational System, P O Box 70, Tamms, IL 62988 or patrickpharner@fivecountyrvs.com, 618-747-2703.

The Union County Housing Authority is taking applications for (3) bedroom apartments in our Dongola development. We are also accepting applications for (2) bedroom apartments in Anna and (3) bedroom apartments in Jonesboro, IL. All Union County Waiting Lists are open now. You may add your name to any waitlist. Rent is based on income.

Quickly apply online at: www.myucha.com. Call 618-833-5129 or email robbin@ucha.email or sara@ucha.email. Union County Housing Authority is an Equal Opportunity Provider.

HELP WANTED

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

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Hadley’s Haven



Schools from the region celebrated the end of the school year with a trip to Hadley’s Haven in Anna City Park in Anna. Hadley’s Haven is an all-inclusive playground designed to be enjoyed by all children, regardless of their abilities. The park is named in honor of the memory of Hadley Chase Ashby.

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Opening of new enclosed horse arena at Giant City Stables celebrated

The opening of a new enclosed horse arena at Giant City Stables near Makanda was celebrated Thursday, May 15. Gov. JB Pritzker joined the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, IDNR, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, DCEO, State Sen. Dale Fowler, R-Harrisburg, and local leaders for the event.

The new enclosed facility, part of Giant City State Park in Southern Illinois, will offer year-round therapeutic horse-riding for youth, veterans and individuals with disabilities, as well as riding lessons and trail rides for the park’s visitors. The design offers greater privacy for therapeutic riding lessons, while preserving the dignity of clients and their families.

“My administration has worked hard to invest in facilities and programming like the ones at Giant City State Park: those that are mission-focused and community-oriented,” the governor said. “Over many decades, Giant City Stables has helped countless individuals, their families, and their communities find a sense of peace, strength,

and confidence through horse-riding. Thanks to cross-agency collaboration to fund new facility upgrades, Giant City Stables will be able to continue these therapeutic services year-round, reaching more state park visitors than ever before.”

The enclosed arena at Giant City Stables was made possible through a \$322,000 in funding from DCEO and IDNR, along with support from private donors, the Illinois Conservation Foundation, ICF, and Laborers’ International Union Local 773. The total cost of the project was about \$430,000.

“Today is a proud moment and a prime example of what can happen when we invest in Southern Illinois,” Fowler said. “I was honored to secure funding to make this expansion possible, and I’m incredibly grateful to all the partners who joined in to bring this vision to life. This new arena will improve access to critical therapeutic services and will be vital to bringing hope and healing to area veterans, children and individuals with disabilities.”

The new facility will be named after Richard

A. Kelley, the original member of the Kelley family to operate Giant City Lodge and one of the people who conceived of horseback riding at the park in 1982. Kelley has been an ardent supporter of Giant City Stables and the therapy services it has offered since 1995.

Giant City Stables has provided therapeutic riding to individuals with disabilities for more than 30 years and to veterans for more than 20 years, including through a partnership with the Marion VA since 2014. The new enclosed arena will allow these services to continue into the winter months, providing essential support for those in need.

The announcement came as Illinois state parks and historic sites attracted over 41 million visitors in 2024, which was the highest number of visitors in nearly 15 years. The surge coincides with increases in investments and efforts by IDNR and the Illinois Office of Tourism to attract local, national, and international travelers by improving recreational opportunities, investing in park facilities and infrastructure and featuring Illinois parks and historic sites prominently in the

state’s Middle of Everything tourism campaign.

“As a health care provider, I have seen how beneficial different types of therapy can be for individuals. I’m thrilled that IDNR can play a part in ensuring Southern Illinoisans who benefit from equine therapy will not only have access to it but will be able to enjoy it in the best conditions possible year-round,” IDNR director Natalie Phelps Finnie said.

“This investment is a testament to the importance of collaboration and prioritizing developments that improve the quality of life for all Illinoisans,” DCEO director Kristin Richards said. “DCEO is proud to be partners in this project ensuring Giant City Stables can continue to provide therapeutic services year-round.”

“Giant City Stables has offered trail rides and therapeutic programs that change lives for over four decades...one hoof-beat at a time,” said Ramona Twellman, owner of Giant City Stables and a certified riding instructor. “We’re honored to work with amazing partners like the Marion VA Medical Center, the Autism Society of Southern Illinois and

many others who help us reach even further into our community.”

“As the nonprofit partner to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and a proud champion of Illinois State Parks, we work to bridge public and private support for projects just like this one,” ICF executive director Jenny Vaughn said. “We were honored to be part of this effort because it reflects our mission of expanding access to the outdoors and strengthening Illinois’ conservation legacy for generations to come.”

In addition to the announcement at Giant City Stables, recent improvements at Illinois state parks and historic sites have included a massive shoreline stabilization project at Illinois Beach State Park, installation of electric vehicle chargers at parks around the state, the opening of Illinois’ first off-highway vehicle trail system at Sahara Woods State Recreation Area in Saline County, renovation of the Old State Capitol State Historic Site in Springfield, new roofs and plumbing upgrades at dozens of park buildings and campgrounds, installation of kayak launches and more.

County Line News

(Mill Creek and Upper Elco)

By Suzan Harvel

In a hurry to get things done...sounds like an Alabama song...anyway, I typed the wrong date yesterday. Instead of 2025 I typed 2205. I corrected it, but it made me wonder... what will my great-what-ever grandchildren do 180 years from now?

What will jobs be like...will robotics be the norm? What will the family dynamic consist of? What will Earth look like? Will it be an apocalyptic wasteland? Will the continents look the same? We’ll never know, and unfortunately, all too many don’t care.

I care. Those that come after me matter. I hope my individual legacy is worth reading about in family history. I know I relish every bit of my ancestor’s legacy from 180 years in the past. In 1845 my great-great grandparents were building their families, western expansion led some to moving from the eastern states into the south and into territories that weren’t states yet. Florida and Texas became states in 1845, Edgar Allan Poe’s poem The Raven was published, the Great Potato Famine began in Ireland, and the sewing machine was invented. Your history lesson for the day is now over.

A fire last week left the former Cheekwood Inn in Ullin, off of I-57, destroyed. The fire was extensive enough that fire departments from many area towns were called to assist. The motel was no longer in use and the cause of the fire is under investigation.

Memorial Day events were held in many areas

locally. I attended the one in Vienna which my DAR chapter sponsors. We had excellent attendance and the guest speaker, James Jones, U.S. Army, Retired was the guest speaker.

Afterwards, I headed to St. John’s cemetery to change out the spring flowers for summer ones and to make my donation to the cemetery on behalf of myself and my brother-in-law, Gary Lott. Flags were flying at the main archway across from the church and military graves were all marked with flags. I appreciate the dedication of those that volunteer for these great acts of respect several times of the year. St. John’s houses the graves of from Revolutionary War veterans to some of more recent conflicts, so there were a great many flags. Thank you.

Later that evening we were invited to our nephew Sam Harvel’s home for a fish fry and visit with his family, his wife Bethany’s parents, Joe and Patty Cohen, along with a family friend, Dallas. The children entertained us with antics created from a bubble machine’s output, as well as Edmund the lamb, who also enjoyed the bubbles. A few sprinkles came down, but nothing that hampered a great meal and great fellowship.

In other news, the members of P.A.S.T. met on Tuesday, May 27 with twelve members present. Finalization of plans for participation in the Annabelle Festival were held. A bus tour of the Anna Cemetery will be on Friday, June 13. A

bus will be available for those interested at the Garden Club Park (formerly Hindman Park) for the tour to begin at 7:30. P.A.S.T. will have a display table set up with brochures and books for sale at the corner of Main and Davie Street by T & I. Discussion for future events were also held, along with fundraising ideas. Carla Smith was voted in as Archivist. The next meeting will be held on June 24 at 6 p.m.

Lula Belle and Junior Tripp were pleased have all her brothers and sisters come this a weekend for a get-together. Her brother, Jim Dillow, had a daughter bring him down from up north, so they could continue this tradition.

Richard, Suzan and Shirely Harvel invited Chuck and Martha Harvel over for a cookout Sunday evening. Suzan and Richard’s daughter’s family from Cape was also to attend, but one of the children got ill that morning, so they stayed home. Needless to say, there was plenty of food and Martha’s contribution of fresh fruit salad was much appreciated.

Mill Creek Baptist church members and visitors met Sunday, June 1 to hear Brother Bobby Richardson bring the message from Matthew 9: 9-13. These passages talk about who Jesus was meeting with, namely tax collectors and sinners. You know, the usual ones He sought out. Jesus reminds us that those are the ones He came for, not the so called “righteous”, to lead to repentance. He wasn’t changed by hanging out with them; they were.

You need to be mind-

ful of who you hang out with, in that you don’t let them change you, but be a positive influence so that they might be changed instead.

On our prayer list, the following were added: the family of Kevin Newman in his passing; my friend, Patricia Colbert, in the loss of her husband; Rita Hull for the loss of her mother; Godfrey Bates for health; Alexa Poole for health; Sally Casey for recovery from surgery; Charlotte Craft for recovery from surgery; Dean Short for recovery from back surgery; Donnie Duckworth for cancer; Debbie Long for cancer; Mary Powles, who sees her doctor this week; and Lily Stone who has serious health issues.

A reminder that Mill Creek Baptist will be having a short Bible School held June 11 to 13 from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. This is a western theme titled: “YEE-HAW! Celebrating God’s Greatest Gifts!” The Jonesboro Public Library will also be hosting a variety of

events throughout April.

The library is located at 412 S. Main St. in Jonesboro. Regular hours are scheduled from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

The March schedule of weekly events at the library include:

“Crafternoon” every Tuesday from 1 to 5 p.m. All ages are welcome to bring a craft to work on or start a new one.

Teen Hangout every Wednesday at 3:30 p.m.

Homework Hangout, every Thursday at 3:30 p.m.

Adult Craft every Friday at 3:30 p.m.

In addition, the library will be holding special Saturday events throughout the month.

Saturday, April 12, the library will hold Bubbles and Storytime at 2 p.m.

Saturday, April 26, the library will hold Sunflower Storytime at 2 p.m. A meal will be served each night. Friday is family night so that parents can see what their child has been up to. Come join the fun! Call 573-208-9692 for more information.

Union County Fixin’s

Teriyaki Steak Skewers

- 1/3 cup bottled teriyaki sauce
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1 pound flank steak, cut across the grain into ¼ inch thick strips
- 4 scallions, white and light green parts, sliced on the diagonal
- 1 Tablespoon toasted sesame seeds
- Combine teriyaki sauce, garlic, and pepper in a large ziplock bag.
- Add steak, seal, and turn several times to coat with marinade. Let stand

for 15 minutes at room temperature.

Preheat grill to high.

Thread meat onto metal or bamboo skewers. If using bamboo skewers, soak in water for 30 minutes prior to using.

Grill steak, turning once, until cooked to desired doneness (1 to 2 minutes per side for medium-rare).

Transfer skewers to a serving platter. Sprinkle with scallions and sesame seeds.

Serve with rice and vegetables. Serves four.

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS

Locality

Anna Arts Center to host drama camp and art camps in June

The Shawnee Hills Arts Council will be offering a free drama camp at the Anna Arts Center in June. The arts center is located on the 100 block of West Davie Street in Anna.

The free camp is made possible thanks to a grant from Artspace 304’s Southern Arts Fund, plus grants from the Illinois Arts Council through federal funds provided by the National Endowment of the Arts, as well as Good Chaos and private donations.

The camp is scheduled for

June 9 to 27 and is open to all kids aged kindergarten to 12th grade. The camp will explore set design, lights and sound, acting, singing and dancing.

The camp will culminate in the production of the musicals “Barnyard Musicals” and “Destination America” on Saturday, June 28 and Sunday June 29.

To sign up, contact Lee Hackney at vabchlee@gmail.com or 904-625-1109 with the child’s name, phone number, email, allergies and the grade the child is entering in August.

The arts council will also be offering two art camps in June.

The first camp will be exploring art techniques from around the world and will be held from June 9 to 13 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. The cost for 3 children is \$120 or \$50 for one child. Students can also attend individual days for \$10 per day.

The second art camp is titled “Art the Next Level” and will take place from June 23 to 27 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Students will create 2-D art by paintings, drawing and collag-

es, then combine their art with photographs campers take with their phones or with cameras provided. This camp is free thanks to funding from a grant from the Foreground Rural Initiative grant through the Illinois Humanities Council, distributed through Artspace 304.

Both art camps will have their works featured in an exhibit on June 27 at the Anna Arts Center.

For questions on any of these events, contact Lee Hackney at 904-625-1109.

Television Listings

THURSDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM :30	Local Programs	Local Programs	Local Local	Local Programs	Sports Update	Bang (HD) Bang (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	Big City Big City	“Dredd” Karl Urban.	“Hercules” (‘14) (HD)	“Tigerland” (‘00) (HD)
7 PM :30	NBA (Live)	Marriage Ghosts	Burgers Grimsburg	Transplant (HD)	College Softball “WCWS Finals Game 2” (Live) (HD)	Bang (HD) Bang (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	Phineas Big City	★★★★ “GoodFellas” (‘90, Crime) Robert De Niro. (R) (HD)	“The Huntsman: Winter’s War” (‘16) (HD)	“Jack Reacher” (‘12, Crime) Tom Cruise. (HD)
8 PM :30	2025 NBA Finals “Game 1” (Live)	Matlock “Pregame”	Family Guy (‘31) North	America’s Got Talent “Auditions 2” (HD)		Bang (HD) Bang (HD)	★★★★½ “Jurassic World Dominion” (‘22, Adventure) Chris Pratt.	StuGo Kiff			
9 PM :30		Elsbeth (HD)	Local Programs Local info.		SportsCenter (HD)	Bang (HD) Bang (HD)		ZOMBIES Miraculous		(:55) “Blue Beetle” (‘23) Xolo Maridueña. (HD)	The Chi “More Life”
10 PM :30	Local Jimmy Kimmel Live	Local (:35) Late Show (HD)		Local (:35) Tonight (HD)		“Pineapple Express” (‘08) Seth Rogen. (HD)		Wizards Wizards	To Be Announced Info unavailable.		“Green Book” (‘18) Viggo Mortensen. (HD)
11 PM :30	Nightline	Midnight	Local Programs	Late Night	SportsCenter (HD)		Law & Order: SVU	Bluey Bluey		“Sherlock Holmes”	

JUNE 5, 2025

FRIDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM :30	Local Programs	Local Programs	(5:00) Local Programs	Local Programs	NCAA Women’s (Live)	Bang (HD) Bang (HD)	(3:58) “Jurassic” (‘22)	Big City Big City	“Home Again” (‘17)	(5:09) “Denial” (‘16)	“Dark Fate” (‘19) (HD)
7 PM :30	Late to Party	Fire Country (HD)	MasterChef (HD)	Place Place	College Softball “WCWS Finals Game 3 (If NEC)” (Live)	★★½ “Just Go With It” (‘11, Comedy) Adam Sandler. (HD)	WWE Friday Night SmackDown (T) (HD)		“Movie”	“Mortdecai” (‘15) Johnny Depp.	The Chi “More Life”
8 PM :30	20/20 Investigative news. (HD)	Dua Lipa (HD)	Gordon Ramsay’s Secret Service (HD)	Dateline NBC Investigative news. (HD)				(:35) Kiff		(:47) ★★½ “Jupiter Ascending” (‘15) Channing Tatum. (HD)	Couples
9 PM :30		Hollywood Squares			SportsCenter (HD)	Shallow Hal		Kiff	Real Time with Kiff		Couples
10 PM :30	Local Jimmy Kimmel Live	Local (:35) Late Show (HD)	Local Programs	Local (:35) Tonight (HD)	SportsCenter (HD)		Resident Alien (HD)	Hamster Hamster	To Be Announced		★★★ “The Last Samurai” (‘03, Drama) Tom Cruise. (R) (HD)
11 PM :30	Nightline	Midnight	Local Programs	Late Night	Sports		(:02) Resident Alien	Big City Big City	Real Time with (HD)	(:55) “Logan” (‘17) (R)	Couples

JUNE 6, 2025

SATURDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM :30	Local	Local	157th	Local Programs	College Baseball (HD)	“We’re the Millers”	(5:30) “Black Panther” (‘18, Action) Chadwick Boseman.	Big City Chiverse	“Bullet Train” (‘22)	“Problemista” (‘23)	“Rambo III” (‘88) (HD)
7 PM :30	Local	WNBA	MLB Baseball “Regional Coverage-Teams TBA” (Live) (HD)	Destination X (HD)	UFC Countdown (Live)	Bang (HD) Bang (HD)			“Movie”	To Be Announced Info unavailable.	“The Nice Guys” (‘16) Ryan Gosling. (R) (HD)
8 PM :30	Conners			American Ninja Warrior “Qualifiers 1” (HD)		Bang (HD)	★★½ “Black Panther: Wakanda Forever” (‘22, Action) Lupita Nyong’o. (PG-13)	Miraculous		“Dinner for Schmucks” (‘10) Steve Carell.	
9 PM :30	Conners	48 Hours (HD)			Top Rank Boxing on ESPN (Live)	Bang (HD)		Miraculous	(:05) ★★★★★ “GoodFellas” (‘90, Crime) Robert De Niro. (HD)	“Magic Mike’s Last Dance” (‘23)	“BlackKkKlansman” John David Washington.
10 PM :30	Local Programs	Local Programs Local info.	Local Next Level Chef (HD)	Local Saturday Night Live (HD)		Bang (HD)		Miraculous			
11 PM :30	Local Programs		Local Programs		SportsCenter (HD)	★★★ “We’re the Millers” (‘13) Jennifer Aniston.		Jessie Chiverse		“Wilson” (‘17) Woody Harrelson.	The Chi “More Life”
								Big City	“Fight Club”		

JUNE 7, 2025

SUNDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM :30	Videos NBA (Live)	60 Minutes (HD)	(5:00) UFL Football DC vs St. Louis (Live)	Destinat	(5:30) MLB Baseball Boston Red Sox at New York Yankees (Live) (HD)	“Rush Hour 3” (‘07)	Law & Order: SVU	Kiff Big City	To Be Announced	The Knick “Whiplash”	“The Godfather” (R)
7 PM :30	2025 NBA Finals “Game 2” (Live)	The 78th Annual Tony Awards		Saturday Night Live “SNL50: The Anniversary Special” (HD)		★★★½ “Avengers: Infinity War” (‘18, Action) Robert Downey Jr. (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	Big City Big City	(:55) The Mortician	“Black Adam” (‘22) Dwayne Johnson. (HD)	The Chi “More Life”
8 PM :30			Animal Dutch				Law & Order: SVU	Phineas Wizards	The Mortician (HD)		The Chi (HD)
9 PM :30	Postgame		Local Programs		SportsCenter (HD)		Day of the Jackal	Wizards Big City	The Mortician (HD)	(:05) “Blue Beetle” (‘23) Xolo Maridueña. (HD)	MobLand (HD)
10 PM :30	Local Programs Local info.	Local Programs	Local Programs	Local Local Programs Local info.	SportsCenter (HD)	“Avengers: Infinity War” Robert Downey Jr.	Law & Order: SVU	Big City	Last Week		The Chi (HD)
11 PM :30		Local Programs	Local Programs		SportsCenter (HD)		Law & Order: SVU	Kiff Kiff	(:41) The Mortician Last Week	“The Death of” (‘18)	“Green Book” (‘18)

JUNE 8, 2025

MONDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM :30	Local Programs	Local Programs	Local Programs	Local Programs	College Baseball “NCAA Baseball Super Regionals” (Live) (HD)	Bang (HD) Bang (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	Miraculous Miraculous	(:19) Last Week (HD)	“Drag Me to Hell”	“The Nice Guys” (‘16) Ryan Gosling. (R) (HD)
7 PM :30	Jeopardy! Masters	Neighbor. Neighbor.	Lego Masters (HD)	American Ninja Warrior Endurance course.		Bang (HD) Bang (HD)	Law & Order: SVU		“Parthenope” (‘25, Romance) (HD)	★★½ “Out of the Furnace” (‘13) Christian Bale.	
8 PM :30	Jeopardy! Masters	FBI “Descent” (HD)	The Quiz with Balls			Bang (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	To Be Announced			The Chi (HD)
9 PM :30	Jeopardy! Masters	FBI: Most Wanted	Local Programs Local info.	Yes, Chef! (HD)	SportsCenter (HD)	Bang (HD) Bang (HD)	Law & Order: SVU		(:20) The Mortician (HD)	(:57) “Edge of Darkness” (‘10) Mel Gibson.	“12 Years a Slave” (‘13) Chiwetel Ejiofor. (HD)
10 PM :30	Local Jimmy Kimmel Live	Local (:35) Late Show (HD)		Local (:35) Tonight (HD)	SportsCenter (HD)	Bang (HD) Bang (HD)	Law & Order: SVU		“Horizon: American Saga 1” (R)		
11 PM :30	Nightline	Midnight	Local Programs	Late Night	SportsCenter (HD)	Dad (HD) Dad (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	Bluey Bluey		“Anthropoid” (‘16) (R)	(:15) “Gangs” (‘02) (R)

JUNE 9, 2025

TUESDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM :30	Local Programs	Local Programs	(5:00) Local Programs	Local Programs	Sports Countdown	MLB on TBS MLB Baseball	Law & Order: SVU	(5:05) “Movie”	(5:59) The Mortician	“Eye in the Sky” (‘16)	“Dark Fate” (‘19) (HD)
7 PM :30	Celebrity Wheel of Fortune	NCIS “Moonlit” (HD)	The 1% Club (HD)	America’s Got Talent Talent search. (HD)	WNBA Basketball Chicago vs New York (Live)	New York Yankees at Kansas City Royals (Live) (HD)	Law & Order: SVU	(:05) “Movie”	“Eternal Sunshine of Mind” (‘04)	“Oracle” (‘23, Horror) (R) (HD)	“First Blood” Sylvester Stallone.
8 PM :30	Celebrity Wheel of Fortune	NCIS: Origins (HD)	(:02) The Snake				Law & Order: SVU				
9 PM :30	Celebrity Wheel of Fortune	NCIS: Sydney (HD)	Local Programs Local info.	Destination X (HD)	SportsCenter (HD)		Law & Order: SVU	(:05) “Movie”	(:50) “The Brutalist” (‘25, Drama) Adrien Brody. (R) (HD)	(:26) ★★½ “Midsommar” (‘19, Horror) Florence Pugh. (HD)	★★½ “Rambo: First Blood II” (‘85)
10 PM :30	Local Jimmy Kimmel Live	Local (:35) Late Show (HD)		Local (:35) Tonight (HD)	SportsCenter (HD)	Family Family	Law & Order: SVU				(:15) “Rambo III” (‘88) Sylvester Stallone. (HD)
11 PM :30	Nightline	Midnight	Local Programs	Late Night	SportsCenter (HD)	Family Family	Law & Order: SVU	Bluey Bluey		“The Souvenir” (‘19)	

JUNE 10, 2025

WEDNESDAY

	ABC	CBS	FOX	NBC	ESPN	TBS	USA	DISN	HBO	MAX	PARSHO
6 PM :30	Local Programs	Local Programs	(5:00) Local Programs	Local Programs	College Track & Field “Outdoor Track & Field Championships Men’s Day 1” (Live) (HD)	Bang (HD) Bang (HD)	(4:30) “Movie”	Big City Big City	“The Double” (‘14)	“3 Days to Kill” (‘14)	“Risky Business” (R)
7 PM :30	NBA (Live)	Hollywood Squares	MasterChef (HD)	Chicago Med (HD)				Big City	To Be Announced Info unavailable.	“Logan” (‘17, Action) Hugh Jackman. (R) (HD)	★★★★ “The Last Samurai” (‘03, Drama) Tom Cruise. (R) (HD)
8 PM :30	2025 NBA Finals “Game 3” Team TBA at Team TBA (Live)	Raid The Cage (HD)	(:02) Secret Service	Chicago Fire (HD)		AEW: Dynamite “Summer Blockbuster” (Live)	“Movie”	Big City StuGo Kiff			
9 PM :30		The Equalizer (HD)	Local Programs Local info.	Chicago P.D. (HD)				Kiff			
10 PM :30	Local Jimmy Kimmel Live	Local (:35) Late Show (HD)		Local (:35) Tonight (HD)	SportsCenter (HD)	AEW: Dynamite	“Movie”	Miraculous	(:05) “Cop Out” (‘10, Comedy) Bruce Willis.	(:18) ★★½ “Prisoners” (‘13, Thriller) Hugh Jackman. (R) (HD)	(:35) “Jack Reacher” (‘12, Crime) Tom Cruise.
11 PM :30	Nightline	Midnight	Local Programs	Late Night	SportsCenter (HD)	Family Family		Bluey Bluey	(:55) “Jackie” (‘16) (R)		“Vanilla”

JUNE 11, 2025

Clean out the closet, yard sale season is here!

To place your ad call 618-833-2158

THURSDAY

7:00pm
PARSHO Jack Reacher ★★★ (2012, Crime) Tom Cruise, Rosamund Pike. A homicide investigator takes his job to another level while trying to figure out why a trained military sniper shot five innocent individuals. PG-13 (HD)

8:55pm
MAX Blue Beetle ★★½ (2023, Action) Xolo Maridueña, Adriana Barraza. A young man is chosen as the host of an ancient alien relic and gains unpredictable superpowers that make him the target of a malevolent organization. PG-13 (HD)

FRIDAY

7:00pm
NBC Happy’s Place “Pilot” A woman is shaken to learn she has a half-sister her late father never told her about, and he intends for the two women to run his tavern together. TVPG (HD)

9:00pm
PARSHO The Last Samurai ★★★ (2003, Drama) Tom Cruise, Ken Watanabe. A cynical Civil War veteran who is haunted by his memories of killing American Indians, learns to embrace the samurai culture he was hired to destroy. R (HD)

SATURDAY

7:00pm
ABC The Conners “It’s Gonna Be a Great Day” Darlene hopes to spend more time with Ben; Jackie realizes the family can sue the pharmaceutical company responsible for Roseanne’s addiction. TVPG (HD)

8:30pm
USA Black Panther: Wakanda Forever ★★½ (2022, Action) Lupita Nyong’o, Letitia Wright. The people of Wakanda search for a powerful herb, but quickly realize that others invaded their homeland in search of the same thing. PG-13

SUNDAY

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

10:00pm
TBS Avengers: Infinity War ★★½ (2018, Action) Robert Downey Jr., Chris Hemsworth. When an intergalactic tyrant arrives on Earth, the Avengers must reunite and join forces with new superheroes to oppose the threat of universal destruction. PG-13 TV14 (HD)

MONDAY

7:00pm
CBS The Neighborhood “Welcome to Pickleball” The Butlers and Johnsons can’t sleep at night due to their new neighbors; Courtney tells Marty about her dating plans. TV14 (HD)

9:00pm
PARSHO 12 Years a Slave ★★½ (2013, Drama) Chiwetel Ejiofor, Michael Fassbender. Before the American Civil War, a free black man is abducted, sold into slavery and made to work for a series of slave owners under abhorrent conditions. R (HD)

TUESDAY

8:35pm
PARSHO Rambo: First Blood Part II ★★½ (1985, Action) Sylvester Stallone, Richard Crenna. A soldier is sent to look for POWs in Vietnam with the expectation that he won’t find any, and when he locates one, the U.S. Army leaves him to die. R (HD)

9:00pm
CBS NCIS: Sydney “Back in the USSR” After a long-missing U.S. Naval engineer’s corpse is discovered in concrete, the team contacts an old friend of Doc Roy to help them discover the culprit. TVPG (HD)

WEDNESDAY

7:00pm
MAX Logan ★★★★★ (2017, Action) Hugh Jackman, Patrick Stewart. In the future, Logan is caring for Professor X in a secret hideout, but his attempts to hide fail after encountering a young mutant who is being pursued. R (HD)

9:05pm
HBO Cop Out ★★½ (2010, Comedy) Bruce Willis, Tracy Morgan. A thief robs a New York police officer of the rare baseball card he needs to finance his daughter’s wedding, so the man and his partner set out to find him. R (HD)

Opinion and Commentary

Ways to keep cool, offset energy price increases

The Illinois Commerce Commission, ICC, is alerting Illinoisans on ways to keep cool and offset coming energy price spikes. Summer costs were expected to rise June 1 for ComEd and Ameren customers alike following a regional increase in energy supply prices.

"Energy affordability is always top of mind at the ICC, and we want ratepayers to be aware of higher summertime rates so they can safely plan to reduce energy usage and improve energy efficiency around their homes," ICC executive director Jonathan Feipel said in a news release.

"Higher energy supply rates are not unique to Illinois. Unfortunately, electric consumers from Louisiana to Minnesota will be paying more for electricity – not due to state policy decisions, but regional supply and demand."

PJM Interconnection, the power grid operator for Northern Illinois, and Midcontinent Independent System Operator, MISO, the operator for Central and Southern Illinois, experienced drastically higher than normal energy supply pricing at their annual capacity auctions. Both grid operators have issued summer preparedness warnings for possible grid supply shortages and elevated risk in their respective regions.

The average residential ComEd customer can expect a monthly increase of about \$11 per month. The average residential Ameren customer will see summer bill increases closer to \$45 per month. Come fall, Ameren's bill increase will drop to around \$4 a month.

The ICC shared the following tips on how to beat the heat and help offset the increased costs this summer:

Contact your utility about programs to reduce energy usage during peak hours. Install a programmable thermostat to control the temperature overnight. Schedule regular AC maintenance visits and replace filters regularly. Close curtains and other window treatments to block the sun. Use ceiling or box fans to keep cool. Caulk or weatherstrip around doors and windows to seal any leaks.

Anna VFW hosting fish fry fundraiser

The Veterans of Foreign Wars Carroll P. Foster Post No. 3455 is having an all-you-can-eat fish fry fundraiser on Friday, June 6 at the Post from 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Dine in, carry out and drive thru orders will be available. Tickets are \$15, and children under 12 eat free (dine in only).

Everyone who attends will be given a ticket to nominate a local (within Union County) charity, school group (art club, band, Beta Club, student council, sports, booster club, PTO, etc), church fundraising group, local fundraiser for medical needs, Anna Arts Center (they are raising money for a new roof), Boy Scouts

or Girl Scouts, 4H, etc. It can be any group trying to raise money within our County.

At 7 p.m., a ticket will be drawn, and that group will receive 10% of the sales plus all tips received that night.

The post hopes that the various groups will contact people within their groups to come out. The more people that nominate any group, the better the chances are of winning.

If you have any questions or would like to order drive thru please feel free to call Linda at 618-833-7737. Delivery options to the hospital, nursing home or high rise are available for 5 orders or more. Call



Fountain on the Jonesboro Square

The fountain on the Jonesboro Square once again is in operation, offering a sure sign that warmer weather has arrived in Southern Illinois. Jonesboro plans to host its annual Junefest celebration on Saturday, June 7. A wide variety of special activities will be offered for those of all ages.

Please read this...

By Geof Skinner

Night lights...and a picture from long ago.....

Did you happen to see the Northern Lights last Sunday night? Supposedly, thanks to what was probably some sort of AI generated phenomenon somewhere out in the vast expanses of space, those of us here in the Land Between the Rivers might have had an opportunity to see the Northern Lights in the dark of night on the first day of June.

I looked. And looked. At one point, I drove over to a nearby park, where a big picture of the sky can be seen. No Northern Lights there. So, I headed out of town, away from the lights of urban civilization and into the dark creepiness of a rural night. I saw lots of bugs, including many fireflies which were putting on a show in a field not far from town. Some of the fireflies could be seen off to the north. So, I suppose, in a manner of speaking, I did see some northern lights.

Meanwhile...

Long ago...no...make that long, long ago, a young, wannabe photographer starting shooting a picture or two...

That young wannabe photographer was yours truly. Truth be told, I cannot honestly remember what got me interested in photography. The possibility that taking pictures would actually be a way to make a living would not have entered my mind. It also never would have occurred to me that writing stories would be a nice way to bring home the bacon. Then again, I have never really considered taking pictures and writing stories to be "work."

Anyway...at some point, between July of 1965 and 1970, I acquired by first camera...a Polaroid "Swinger." Camera snobs, who are into such things, when asked, probably would have said that they were using a Model 20. "Swinger" would not have been snooty enough.

Pinpointing the years 1965 and 1970 was made possible thanks to that wonderful tool of the 21st century, the internet. While conjuring up this column, I did a quick search on Google for "Polaroid Swinger." The search took me to Wikipedia (because, of course it did), where I learned that the "Polaroid Model 20 'Swinger' was a popular Land Camera produced by the Polaroid Corporation between July 1965 and 1970. At \$19.95 (equivalent to US\$199 in 2024) and weighing only 21 ounces, it was the first truly inexpensive instant camera, a fact that helped fuel its enormous popularity and made it one of the top-selling cameras of all time. The Swinger was especially successful in the youth market due to its low price, stylish appearance, catchy Meet the Swinger jingle, as well as getting the camera into drugstores."

Back in those days, I would have been included in that youth market and I was certainly all about having a stylish appearance, which would explain why our daughter thought I looked like a geek in my high school graduation picture. And I can say with complete confidence that yours truly no longer has a niche in the youth market.

By the way, I also learned on Wikipedia that the "catchy Meet the Swinger jingle" in commercials for the Swinger...I mean the Model 20...was sung by some guy named Barry Manilow. I wonder if he made it big...

The Polaroid Swinger...um the Model 20...was pretty nifty. You took a picture and, voila, a moment later you had the image in your hand. The picture was in black and white, which was OK, since color was not invented until sometime in early 1971 or 1972.

So, sometime between the summer of 1965 and 1970, I acquired one of the top-selling cameras of all time and started taking pictures. One of the first pictures I shot was taken at what is now called Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site in Petersburg, not far from our state capital, Springfield. We had gone to New Salem on a family adventure. The dust bin which makes up my memories would suggest that the adventure probably happened sometime closer to 1970 than to 1965. Besides, I had pretty well fine tuned being stylish by the time the 1970s arrived.

That picture I took was of a statue of Abraham Lincoln which stands at the historic site. Mr. Lincoln is seated on a horse. He is reading a book. The statue, "On the Circuit," was created by Anna Hyatt Huntington.

That statue came to mind as I was reading a book last week titled "Land of Lincoln." The book's subtitle is "Adventures in Abe's America." Andrew Ferguson is the author. The book was published in 2007. I acquired "Land of Lincoln" at a library book sale...in Anna...or maybe Carbondale.

When I got to Chapter 2, on page 38, there was the picture of "On the Circuit." The picture looked like the one I had taken sometime between 1965 and 1970. I am pretty sure that the picture I took was probably better than the one that was in the book.

Those first pictures are in a little album which, I think, is in a box somewhere in our humble abode. Seems like I have actually seen the little album recently. Or not.



One of many, many, many pictures of squirrels the photograph has taken over the years. There could be millions of 'em. This squirrel was quite pleased with this year's mulberry crop.



A statue of Mr. Lincoln...in the snow...early on a February day in the not too distant past...right here in Union County. The photograph was not taken with a Polaroid Swinger...um Model 20...camera.

At this point on The Journey Through Life, I have taken thousands of photographs. Up until around the year 2000 or so, the photograph involved film, a darkroom and mysterious combinations of chemicals. The arrival of a new century was accompanied by the availability of digital cameras. Thousands of more photographs have been taken using digital equipment.

Oh...that first camera, the Polaroid Swinger...Model 20...was given to a very accomplished photographer who collected what we will call "vintage" photography equipment. I hope he still has it...

By the way...if you like to read...find yourself a copy of "Land of Lincoln." It's 267 pages of time well spent.

Our Critter Sightings for the week included a happy family Canada geese on an outing at a local pond, wrens and bluebirds in our backyard that are continuing to take care of their families, too, and squirrels which seem to be really enjoying this year's mulberry crop.

We'll close this week with a personal note...happy anniversary to my sweetheart. Let's see...it's been...um...well...a whole bunch o' years... Who would have thunk it? Certainly not that young photographer...

June events set for Anna-Jo Garden Club

By Julie O. Murphy
AJGC Secretary

Gardening season is upon us. Club workdays help maintain both the Anna-Jo Garden Club Park and Anna City Park.

Hydrangeas in front of the pool house at the Anna City Pool are gorgeous this year.

Go Blue Dolphins! We hope you have a safe and amazing season.

Stop by and see, and visit garden park too. Blooming beautifully with nice shade.

The Anna-Jo Garden Club will be holding a Garden Walk on Thursday, June 26 at the Anna-Jo Garden Club Park in Anna.

AJGC will also be offering education and Annabelle sales at the Annabelle Festival on Saturday, June 14.



Hydrangeas

The Hydrangeas are in bloom in front of Anna City Pool, courtesy of the Anna-Jo Garden Club.