THE GAZETTE-DEMOCRAT

The Talk And Cobden Review • Serving Union County Since 1849

Thursday, September 25, 2025 | **Anna, Illinois** | **$1.00** | **Volume 178, Number 42**

News Notes

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

The National Weather Service office in Paducah is promoting the observance of Fall Severe Weather Awareness Week, which is Sept. 29 through Oct. 3. The week offers an opportunity to increase awareness and to promote preparedness about severe weather hazards during the fall season, which started Sept. 22, and to generate an increase in the level of response to watches and warnings.

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High and low temperatures recorded on Sept. 18 in Union County ranged nearly 40 degrees, from a low of 57 to a high of 95.

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In an effort to address thefts, a free bicycle registration program is being considered in the City of Anna.

***

Happy homecoming week to everybody at Anna-Jonesboro Community High School.

***

Homecoming Spirit Week activities started Sept. 22 and are scheduled to continue through Sept. 26 in Anna School District 37. Friday is A-J Wildcats day; everyone is invited to dress in blue and white, which are the school colors for A-JCHS.

***

News, stories, photos and other highlights are featured in The Cat's Eye, a new digital publication offered by A-JCHS. The Cat's Eye can be viewed online at https://aj81.net/news-publications/.

***

Physics students at A-JCHS took their learning outside one day last week with a hands-on speed and acceleration lab in front of the school. Students discovered that in the school zone, where the posted speed limit is 20 miles per hour, most vehicles were traveling above that limit.

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The opening of a time capsule created in 1998 will highlight an event planned from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, today, in the lower gymnasium at Anna Junior High School.

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Anna School District 37 has issued a reminder that all kindergarten students and students who are new to the district and have never attended an Illinois school are required by the State of Illinois to have an eye exam by a licensed physician which must be turned into the school nurse by Oct. 15.

***

The student council at Anna Junior High School was scheduled to have its first meeting Friday morning, Sept. 19.

***

Third grade students in Anna School District 37 went on a nature walk one day last week. They recorded observations about a variety of plants which were seen.

(continued on page 2)

Illinois to issue its own guidelines for vaccines

By Peter Hancock
Capitol News Illinois

SPRINGFIELD – Illinois is among a growing list of states that are issuing their own vaccine guidelines that could supersede those of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Gov. JB Pritzker issued an executive order this month directing the Illinois Department of Public Health to work with other state agencies to develop vaccine guidelines.

Specifically, Pritzker's directive calls on IDPH director Sameer Vohra, in consultation with the Illinois Immunization Advisory Council, to issue "standing orders" that authorize eligible health care providers, including pharmacists, to administer vaccines that IDPH deems appropriate.

Those will include vaccines for seasonal respiratory illnesses such as COVID-19, flu and RSV. They will also include routine child and adult vaccines such as the MMR vaccine for measles, mumps and rubella, and Hepatitis B.

The standing orders will also spell out the authority providers will have to administer vaccines across various age groups, based on IDPH recommendations.

In a statement, Pritzker said he was responding to several recent federal actions initiated by U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

Among those were the Food and Drug Administration's decision in August to rescind emergency use authorizations for COVID-19 vaccines. That meant removing approval of the vaccine for children and adults ages 6 months to 64 years who have no underlying risk conditions. The latest guidelines also removed a recommendation for vaccination for pregnant patients.

Pritzker also noted Kennedy's recent firing of top CDC administrators, including the agency's director Susan Monarez, as well as the abrupt dismissal of the entire board of CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

"This is about making sure no family in Illinois is left wondering if they can protect themselves against preventable serious illness," Pritzker said in a statement. "When the federal government abandons its responsibility, Illinois will step up. We will follow the science, listen to medical experts, and do everything in our power to enable families to receive the care they need."

Action in Other States

Pritzker's executive order comes at the same time several other states have taken action to shield their health care sectors from CDC's changing standards.

On Wednesday, Sept. 17, the West Coast Health Alliance, made up of California, Oregon, Washington and Hawaii, announced its own guidelines for flu shots, COVID-19 vaccines and other common vaccination protocols.

According to published reports, Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Nevada, Pennsylvania and Virginia have also begun endorsing alternative vaccine recommendations.

In an email statement to Capitol News Illinois, IDPH said its guidelines are not mandatory for health care providers or the general public.

"The goal is to provide practitioners and the public with the best evidence-informed and science-based guidance so that they can make appropriate clinical and personal decisions," the agency said. "To the extent that guidelines from the CDC are backed by scientific evidence and review, IDPH will recommend them. If those guidelines deviate from those standards, IDPH will offer appropriate guidance to Illinois providers and families."

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.

Rain bring some relief from drought conditions in region



Corn growing in Union County

In the midst of ongoing drought conditions, corn which has grown tall was seen last weekend along a rural road in Union County. The drought has led to impacts on crops, including a possible reduction in yields.

The first day of fall brought some much-needed rain to the Southern Illinois, Southeast Missouri and Western Kentucky region. Fall started Monday, Sept. 22.

The National Weather Service office in Paducah reported that a wetter pattern was emerging in the region, with an increase for daily rain chances. Rainfall amounts this week could exceed 2 inches in many locations. Localized amounts over 3 inches are possible. Rain was in the forecast for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday in the Union County area. A slight chance for rain also is possible for Thursday, today.

An increase in rain chances meant more clouds and a cooling high temperature trend as well. The temperature reached 94 degrees Thursday afternoon, Sept. 18, in the Southern Illinois area. High temperatures this week in the Union County area were forecast to be in the 70s and low 80s.

The U.S. Drought Monitor reported on Sept. 18 that moderate drought conditions were being experienced in the northern half of Union County, extreme southern Jackson County, extreme east-central and southeastern Johnson County, extreme southwestern Pulaski County and all of Massac County.

Severe drought conditions were reported in the southern half of Union County; most of Jackson, Johnson and Pulaski counties; and all of Williamson and Alexander counties.

Drought is expected to continue and may worsen more over the coming weeks. Drier than normal conditions may continue during fall.

The Weather Service reported that as of Sept. 18, a prolonged period of drier than normal conditions had resulted in drought conditions continuing to worsen in the region. This followed on the heels of what was one of the wettest starts to the year on record through early July.

Limited rainfall over the previous 30 to 60 days allowed drought conditions to worsen. Nearly the entire region was experiencing at least moderate drought conditions. Severe drought had expanded across most of Southern Illinois, Southeast Missouri and Western Kentucky. Extreme drought was reported in the bootheel of Southeast Missouri and in southwest Kentucky.

In the seven days prior to Sept. 18, most of the region had received very little, if any rain. Isolated pockets of rainfall had been reported in parts of southwest Illinois, Southeast Missouri and Western Kentucky. Temperatures averaged above normal during the period, with highs in the 90s.

River levels have steadily fallen throughout the region since the beginning of August. Soil moisture has continued to deteriorate across the lover Ohio and middle Mississippi valleys. The Weather Service posted that Condition Monitoring Observer Reports had increased over the preceding couple of weeks. Reports indicated dry ponds, dead grass, crop impacts and potential reduced crop yield in areas experiencing moderate, severe and extreme drought conditions.

SIU welcomes area students

More than 800 students from 19 area high schools had an opportunity to meet faculty and staff to get a closer look at resources and academic programs at Southern Illinois University Carbondale during SIU Day, which was scheduled Wednesday, Sept. 24. Students from Union County area high schools were among those planning to visit the university.

After a welcome, students were scheduled to take part in academic breakout sessions, which included hands-on activities, in various locales on campus to see academic programs in action.

High school students could visit labs, tour campus, experience technology and view creations by SIU students. Students also could choose from myriad sessions and topics.

For SIU Days, students from Anna-Jonesboro Community High School, Cobden High School, Egyptian Community High School in Tamms, Goreville Community High School, Shawnee High School in Wolf Lake and Vienna High School were among those from the Southern Illinois area planning to attend.



Homecoming 2025

Anna-Jonesboro Community High School's annual homecoming celebration is planned this week on Friday, Sept. 26. The theme this year is "Cats in Candyland." A-J is scheduled to host Benton in this year's homecoming football game. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m. Coronation of the homecoming queen and king is panned during halftime of the football game. A homecoming dance is planned Saturday, Sept. 27.

Homecoming kind and queen candidates are, from left, Aiden Colson, Raegan Jones, Henry Hoehner, Mariah Downs, Ethan Plott, Kansas Craig, Aidan McFadden, Reese Jones, Angel Guijon, Caydence Ferguson, Foster Needling and Drue Teske.

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

Benjamin Marxer.....Editor

Miguel Paredes as Trustee of the Paddock Publications, Inc.
Employee Stock Ownership Trust

SUBSCRIPTION RATES
Per Year • July, 2022

In Union County.....$54.00
Elsewhere in 629 Zip Code.....$56.00
Out of Area.....$64.00
Per Copy.....$1.00
E-edition.....$54.00

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
The Gazette-Democrat
112 Layfayette St.
Anna, Illinois 62906-0529

Advertising rates given on application.
The Gazette-Democrat | Monday's Pub.
www.annanews.com
facebook.com/gazettedemocrat






Homecoming court representatives

Anna-Jonesboro Community High School has elected the class representatives for the Homecoming Court for the 2025 football season. Pictured are, from left, freshmen representatives Gwendelynn Eastman and Smith Wilson, sophomore representatives Molly Roach and Matthew Miller, junior representatives (because of a tie in voting) Jadyn Gerardi and Hunter Craft, and Mackenzie Barnhart and Blake Abernathy.

News Notes

(continued from page 1)

Dongola School's volleyball team is planning to host a Pink-Out event Tuesday evening, Sept. 30, to honor those who are battling breast cancer. Donations will be be accepted for Breast Cancer Angels. An honor walk is planned at 5:45 p.m., prior to Dongola's match against Cairo.

***

Cobden High School's volleyball team plans to host its sixth annual Purple Out Game on Oct. 3. All of the proceeds generated by the event will support the Taylor Tomazzoli Memorial Scholarship.

***

The Donnie Campbell Memorial Cobden golf team four-person scramble is scheduled Saturday, Sept. 27, at the Union County Country Club in Anna. A shotgun start is set for 8 a.m. All proceeds will go to support the Cobden junior school and high school golf teams.

***

Lick Creek School is looking forward to its Fall Festival, which is scheduled Saturday, Oct 4.

***

The Anna City Council last week approved a bid totaling $15,200 from Illini Asphalt for annual oil and chip work.

***

As of last week, the City of Anna was looking to fill a vacancy on the city's zoning board of appeals.

***

Stinson Memorial Public Library in Anna recently moved nonfiction items to the public computer area.

***

The Alto Pass metropolitan area was a busy place last Saturday afternoon. Looked like lots of families were out enjoying the nice day.

***

Area high school students will be participating in a regional band festival which is scheduled Thursday, Oct. 16, at Shawnee Community College near Ullin. A concert, with a Halloween theme, is set for 7 p.m. that day.

***

Shawnee Community College reports that its recent Saints Golf Challenge was "the biggest in the event's history."

***

Work was scheduled to start this week on a new concession near the gym on Shawnee Community College's main campus near Ullin. Students are invited to submit names for the new concession area.

***

The bookstore at Shawnee Community College's is featured in the September/October issue of The College Store Magazine.

***

A Student Fall Fest with games and food was planned Wednesday, Sept. 24, at Shawnee Community College.

***

The Illinois Department of Public Health, IDPH, is reminding the public to take appropriate precautions against tick bites after an Illinois resident became seriously ill with Powassan, which is a tickborne illness that had not previously been detected in this state. IDPH and the local health department are currently investigating whether the resident was exposed to the illness through a tick bite in Illinois or in a different state. IDPH says the case serves as a reminder for everyone to protect themselves against any and all illnesses associated with ticks.

Southern 7 plans drive-thru flu, COVID shot clinics in area

Southern 7 Health Department is planning to offer drive-thru flu and COVID-19 vaccination clinics throughout its service region in Southern Illinois starting Sept. 30 through Oct. 25 for those 18 and older.

The health department encourages area residents to get their shots to reduce the overall burden of respiratory illnesses. According to the CDC, it is possible to have the flu, as well as other respiratory illnesses, including COVID. at the same time.

The health department announced the following schedule for the drive-thru:

Sept. 30: Vienna City Park, Vienna, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Oct. 2: East Davie Street parking lot, Anna, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Oct. 8: Rise Market parking lot, Cairo, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Oct. 9: Goreville City Park, Goreville, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Oct. 15: Golden Circle Senior Center, Golconda, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Oct. 15: Tamms Park, Tamms, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Oct. 22: Golden Circle Senior Center, Elizabethtown, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Oct. 24: Massac County Fairgrounds, Metropolis, 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

To be scheduled: Southern 7 public health clinic, Ullin.

Single dose, trivalent regular and high dose flu vaccine (for those 65 and older) and the new COVID vaccine will be available without an appointment at each drive-thru clinic while supplies last. Patients can receive one or both vaccines during their visit. Those getting a shot are asked to wear clothing that does not restrict access to the upper arm.

The CDC recommends getting a flu vaccine by the end of October before flu season begins; however, vaccinations can be given any time during the flu season. Flu vaccines have been used for more than 50 years in the United States. The composition of U.S. flu vaccines is reviewed annually, and changes for most seasons.

Trivalent flu vaccines protect against three different influenza viruses. Trivalent flu vaccines in the United States will include vaccine viruses or viral proteins from one influenza A(H1N1) virus, one influenza A(H3N2) virus and one influenza B/Victoria lineage virus.

The updated COVID vaccines more closely target the JN.1 lineage of the Omicron variant and other currently circulating strains, offering improved protection against the strains that are most prevalent now and could restore protection against severe COVID that may have decreased over time. CDC anticipates the updated vaccines will be more effective at fighting currently circulating variants. A prior infection with suspected or confirmed COVID or flu does not protect a person from future infections.

Vaccines are covered whole or in part by most insurance companies. Those who plan to get a vaccine are reminded to bring their insurance card with them.

Those who are under 18 or are unable to attend a drive-thru clinic are advised to contact a local Southern 7 public health clinic to make an appointment. For more information, call Southern 7 Health Department at 618-634-2297, download the Southern 7 app or visit www.southern7.org.

Southern 7 Health Department is a public health department that serves communities in the seven southernmost counties in Illinois, focusing on disease prevention, promoting of healthy lifestyles and ensuring access to healthcare services for the region.

Shawnee College program receives excellence award

Shawnee Community College was honored with the inaugural Excellence in Innovation Award for Career and Technical Education at the Illinois Community College Board's recent annual Forum for Excellence event. The award recognized outstanding achievement in the category of Career Technical and Adult Education: Building Pathways for All Students.

The Excellence in Innovation Award highlights Shawnee Community College's commitment to expanding educational access and workforce training that equips students with the skills needed to thrive in today's rapidly evolving economy. Through forward-thinking initiatives and strong partnerships with local employers, the college continues to strengthen pathways for students of all backgrounds to succeed in high-demand career fields.

"This recognition demonstrates the dedication and creativity of our faculty and staff who continually develop innovative ways to serve our students and community," said Kristy Stephenson, dean of career and technical education at Shawnee Community College, in a news release. "We are committed to building pathways that not only prepare our students for meaningful careers but also meet the workforce needs of southern Illinois and beyond."

Shawnee Community College's Career and Technical Education and Adult Education programs serve as a cornerstone for regional growth, offering training in healthcare, agriculture, automotive technology, welding, business, truck driving and other critical industries.

By combining hands-on learning, industry-recognized credentials and wraparound student support, Shawnee Community College ensures that all learners, traditional and adult, have the opportunity to achieve success.

Shawnee Community College vice president of academic affairs Dr. April Teske said the recognition reflects the college's mission of providing comprehensive, high-quality education. "Our students, faculty, and staff are the heart of this award. This honor affirms the life-changing work happening every day at Shawnee," Teske said.

The Forum for Excellence is sponsored by the Illinois Community College Board and hosted by the Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support at Illinois State University and the Southern Illinois Professional Development Center at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. The forum brings together educators, administrators, and policymakers to celebrate best practices and recognize outstanding programs throughout Illinois.

AJ Garden Club hosts cleanup event

The Anna-Jonesboro Garden Club (AJGC) is calling on local residents to show their community pride by joining the upcoming "Trash Blast" litter cleanup event.

Set for Saturday, Sept. 27 at 9:30 a.m., rain or shine, the event aims to clean up leftover candy and other debris following the homecoming parade.

Volunteers will gather in the downtown parking lot at 346 B S. Main St. in Anna before heading down the hill between A-JCHS and the square. Gloves will be provided, and participants can look forward to pizza after the cleanup.

For more information or to volunteer, contact Zack at 309-826-6888.

Weather

High of 95, low 57; 1.46 inches of rain

The Union County area received some much-needed rain during the period of Sept. 16-22. Rainfall during the period totaled 1.46 inches. Temperatures ranged from a high of 95 degrees to a low of 57.

Following are highlights for the period as recorded by local weather observer Dana Cross near Jonesboro:

Tuesday, Sept. 16: high 94, low 63.

Wednesday, Sept. 17: high 93, low 60.

Thursday, Sept. 18: high 95, low 57.

Friday, Sept. 19: high 82, low 63.

Saturday, Sept. 20: high 87, low 61.

Sunday, Sept. 21: high 87, low 63.

Monday, Sept. 22: high 83, low 66. 1.43 inches of rain.



Ribbon cutting planned

Plans for a ribbon cutting for the new downtown plaza and pavilion along East Davie Street were discussed at last week's regular meeting of the Anna City Council. The meeting was Tuesday evening, Sept. 16, at Anna City Hall. The city subsequently announced on social media that a ribbon cutting ceremony has been set for 10 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 11. The ceremony will kick off ColorFest weekend in Anna. The new plaza and pavilion, which will have multiple uses, was scheduled to be completed Sept. 19.

Union County Alliance of Churches
Recommendations

1 Thanksgiving Worship, Kornthal, Sun 11/23 - 2PM
Potluck later at Old Depot-Anna at 6PM

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

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

Alliance of Churches (618)-614-2974

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is given of a public hearing to be held by the Union County Board of Commissioners on Tuesday, October 7, 2025 at 11:00 am at the Union County Courthouse Community Room located at 309 West Market Street, Jonesboro, IL 62952. The Union County Board of Commissioners will consider an application for siting permit pursuant to Union County ordinance 2025-02 titled "Ordinance Amending An Ordinance Governing Commercial Solar Energy Facility Siting". The application is brought by Wild Cat Solar 22 LLC, acting on behalf of property owner Barbara Throgmorton. A copy of the application is available at the Union County Clerk's office for examination. The solar project will be located on a 16-acre portion of land on parcels 05-16-03-234 & 05-21-03-725 situated off of Lick Creek Road in Union County. All interested persons are invited to be heard.



Block party

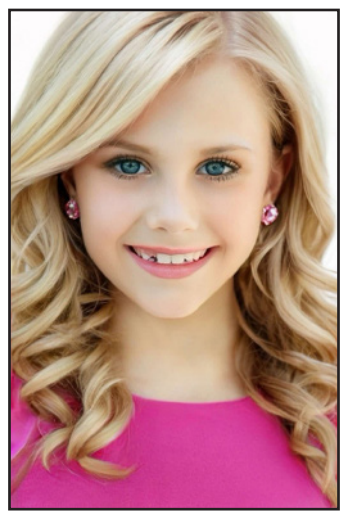
Steve Hornbeak and Jeff Landis provided musical accompaniment during a block party held in downtown Anna on Friday, Sept. 19.

Anna resident earns prestigious pageant title

Eight-year-old Jewels Railla Watson, representing Southern Illinois, captured the title of Ultimate Grand Novice Supreme at America's Best Pageant's (ABP) prestigious Toyfest National Pageant. The event was held in Nashville, Tenn. from Sept. 5 to 7.

Jewels is from Anna and holds the title of Little Miss Southern Illinois, scoring high with judges in talent, personality, and poise.

Along with her Supreme crown, Jewels earned additional honors, including: most photogenic, community service title winner, first runner-up in print model photo, winner of popstar/rockstar category, first runner-up in neon wear, t-shirt showcase finalist, best artist, poster winner and best eyes.



Jewels Railla Watson

Of all her achievements, Jewels and her family are most proud of her community service title. Over the past year, the list of Jewels' contributions to her community includes collecting over 300 lbs. of non-perishable food items for her local food pantry, donating over 450 lbs. of dog food to local animal shelters and raised more than $200 for the American Heart Association.

She has also gathered 259 toiletries for active duty military members and collected 240 essential items for a homeless shelter. Jewels is also known for creating gifts and giving encouragement to her fellow candidates.

Jewels is the daughter of Thomas Watson Jr. and Jessi Clark Watson of Anna and the granddaughter of Terry and Ramona Clark of Jonesboro, and Tom Watson, Sr. of Shawneetown, Ill. Her family has expressed that they are beyond proud of her accomplishments on the national stage and the kindness she continues to spread at home in Southern Illinois.

Local scouts earn ranks, merit badges

Members of Scouting America Troop 44 held a Court Of Honor on Monday, Sept. 15 at Jonesboro park.

Scouts Aldi, Vodra, Billy and A.J all advanced from Scout to Tenderfoot rank and presented their parents with a pin, which is a scout tradition.

The following merit badges were awarded:

David and Wyatt received Citizenship in the Nation.

David, Frank, Jack and and Trysten received Citizenship in the World.

Trysten received Communication.

AJ, Frank and Jack received Emergency Preparedness.

AJ and Wyatt received First Aide.

Aldi received Game Design.

Aldi, Vodra, Billy and David received Rifle Shooting.

Trystan received Rowing.

Frank received Shotgun Shooting.

Remmington and Vodra received Swimming.

Aldi and Vodra received Wilderness Survival.

Jack received Wood Carving.

Troop 44 meets Monday night at 7 p.m. at Mount Moriah Church in Anna. The troop has members from all around the area. Anyone interested in Scouting America is encouraged to attend meeting to learn more.

The Gazette-Democrat Serving Union County Since 1849.

ANNUAL TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE VILLAGE OF COBDEN FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING APRIL 30, 2025

REVENUES SUMMARY: Property Tax 60213; TIF 70405; Sales and Local Use Tax 106568; Utility Tax 49416; State Income Tax 186665; Replacement Tax 6422; Excise Tax 8447; Video Gaming Tax 8604; Licenses/Fees and Fines 137066; Interest 30448; Donations 67725; Miscellaneous 5804; Water, Sewer, Gas Fees and Services 873022; MFT 48524; Grants/Loans 222161; TOTAL REVENUE: $1,881,490

EXPENDITURES SUMMARY above $2500: ACI X 503808; Ameren Illinois 44679; City of Anna 15000; Anna Quarries 4140; Axon Enterprise, Inc 3054; J. T. Blankinship, Inc 17238; Brown Electric, INC 12909; Blaine W Burk 7200; Cambridge Tech 6345; City of Carbondale 8425; Complete Equity Markets 2892; Republic Services 98512; Document Management Solutions 4703; Donnellon Mccarthy Enterprises 4721; Electrical Control Components 5368; Scott Escue Construction 58375; Euclid Managers 2547; Frontier 8213; Cobden Municipal Gas System; 12674; Glenwood Equities 6476; Hach Company 2519; Hawkins Inc 7100; Health Alliance 82257; Derek Hogue 7200; Illinois Power Marketing 26533; Horner & Shifrin 28068; Illini Asphalt 8500; Illinois Central Railroad Comp 4800; IMGA 82968; IMCO Utility Supply 8980; City of Jonesboro 9625; Kemper CPA Group LLP 25675; Martins Sharp-All Shop 16867; Municipal Equipment CO 3095; Omega Industrial Supply Inc 6114; Postmaster 5495; Pro-1 Auto Body 13458; RMA 68183; Rusty's Home Center 45468; Schulte Supply 9983; Mike Sweitzer 4790; T's Trees 10700; Cobden Municipal Gas System 13033; Union County Treasurer 14651; Utility Safety & Design 33441; Wex Bank 18454; TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS ABOVE $2500: $1,385,236 Personal services less than $25000: Andrew Brumleve, Austin Sellars, Brenda Childers, Coy Girtman, Carmela Martinez, Caleb Clover, Cody Hand, Dennis Maze, Eric Ralls, Emilio Patino, Jean Britt, Jesse Vicente, Larry Hackethal, Lucas Salazar, Logan Ebersohl, Patrick Brumleve, Paul Tomazzoli, Ryan Stillman, Seirra Brumleve; $25001-39999: Marina Newberry, Stephanie Murillo; $40000-59999: David Craig, Thomas Ebenhoh, Timothy Smith, Tyler Hess, Waylon Logsdon; Over $60000: Karen Winzenburger, William C. Eads.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Excerpt from Comptroller Report)

	GENERAL	SPECIAL	FIDUCIARY	ENTERPRISE
Beginning Fund Balance	41,233	89,091	189,113	2,703,055
Revenues	637,868	121,864	25,222	1,096,536
Less Disbursements/ Expenditures	(551,757)	(74,530)	(45,395)	(908,617)
Operating Transfers	30,000	(4,800)		(25,200)
Ending Fund Balance	157,344	131,625	168,940	2,865,774

Subscribed and sworn on this 3rd day of September, 2025.

Seirra Brumleve, Village Treasurer

I, Karen M. Winzenburger, Village Clerk of the Village of Cobden, Union County, Illinois, do hereby certify the above is a true copy of the Annual Treasurer's Report for the fiscal year ending April 30, 2025.

Karen M. Winzenburger, Village Clerk

AVAILABILITY OF AUDIT REPORT
VILLAGE OF COBDEN

The Audit Report for the Village of Cobden for the period of May 1, 2024 through April 30, 2025 as prepared by Kemper CPA Group is available for public inspection at the Cobden Village Hall, 112 East Maple Street during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Southern Illinois business plan competition welcomes participants

Entrepreneurs with a great idea to launch or grow a business in Southern Illinois are invited to check out the Southern Illinois 2025 Business Plan Competition Powered by Regions, where more than $20,000 in cash and in-kind services are up for grabs.

"Now in its fourth year, the Southern Illinois Business Plan Competition Powered by Regions has grown from one location to five," said Melissa Ray Roach, director of business incubator programs at Southern Illinois University Carbondale's Office of Innovation and Economic Development. "What makes it so special? Small businesses say it has helped them make real progress. Progress is motivating; it keeps you going, and ultimately, that is invaluable."

The competition was established to move new and existing businesses forward by providing vital funding and resources. Event organizers include Southern Illinois University Carbondale's Office of Innovation and Economic Development, the Illinois Small Business Development Center, SBCC, at SIU and the SIU Foundation. Anyone in the Southern Illinois region who has a concept to create or expand a small, for-profit business focused on innovative ideas, products or services can participate.

"The Southern Illinois Business Plan Competition Powered by Regions is your opportunity to bring that vision to life," said Michael Jessup, director of the Illinois SBDC at SIU.

Apply Now

Applications for the 2025 competition are due Sept. 29. Signup is available online at forms.office.com. All participants must attend three educational workshops in October, which will provide crucial information about business plans, financials and pitching a business. Workshop sites are scheduled to include Carbondale, Harrisburg, Marion, Mount Vernon and Robinson.

The first competition round is set for Nov. 12-14, when a panel of judges will evaluate all entries on the business plan content, business viability and a 90-second pitch. Two winners from each location competition location will advance to the regional competition at Dunn-Richmond Economic Development Center at 1740 Innovation Dr. in Carbondale.

Participants Welcome

The competition typically draws a wide variety of business concepts, as different and unique as the participants. Contestants must be located in one or more of these Illinois counties: Alexander, Clay, Crawford, Edwards, Franklin, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Jackson, Jasper, Jefferson, Johnson, Lawrence, Marion, Massac, Perry, Pope, Pulaski, Randolph, Richland, Saline, Union, Wabash, Wayne, White or Williamson.

The 2024 winners included Rolling Oak Alpaca Ranch, E-Ventures and New Earth Composting. Taking top honors in the local competition were also Inspector Pro, Pharoah Boxing and Wellness, Your Mom Away from Home, Essential Integrative Health and Wellness, and Willow Farms.

There are just a few restrictions. The contest is not open to businesses involving cannabis, gambling or lobbying activities. In addition, public governmental entities, nonprofit organizations, public and private schools, and higher education institutions aren't eligible.

December event will feature prize announcement

The regional competition winners will be announced during the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Showcase, set for 4:30 p.m. Dec. 4 at SIU, and they will receive financing and professional services to advance their business goals.

First-place winners in the location competitions will receive $1,000 while second-place winners claim $500. The top prize of the regional competition is $5,000, 10 hours of marketing consulting with the Arthur Agency worth $2,000, a one-hour strategy session and five hours of legal work from Legal Advocacy Headquarters valued at $1,000 and a professionally produced promotional video less than two minutes from Brand Advocacy worth $3,500.

The second-place winner will receive $3,000 and a one-hour strategy session with three hours of legal work from Legal Advocacy Headquarters, worth $700. The third-place prize is $2,000 along with a one-hour strategy session and one hour of legal work from Legal Advocacy Headquarters worth $300.

To learn more about the Southern Illinois 2025 Business Plan Competition Powered by Regions, visit the website at sbdc.siu.edu or contact the Illinois SBDC at SIU by email at sbdc@siu.edu or by calling 618-536-2424.

Event sponsors include Regions Bank, the Office of Innovation and Economic Development, the SIU Foundation, the Illinois SBDC at SIU, the Illinois SBDC at Southeastern Illinois College, the Illinois SBDC at Illinois Eastern Community Colleges, Arthur Agency, SI Now, Legal Advocacy Headquarter, Brand Advocacy Group, Carbondale Chamber of Commerce, Gina Mills Country Financial, First Southern Bank, Legence Bank, EThOs at the Citadel, the Jefferson County Development Corporation and SomerCor.

SIU's Illinois SBDC is funded in part through a cooperative agreement between the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and SIU.

Diaper Drives continue in region's communities

To help draw attention to an unmet need in the lower seven counties in Illinois, Southern 7 Health Department has scheduled "Bundles of Joy" Diaper Drives throughout its service region during September. Donations will support families served through the department's Head Start and WIC programs.

Donations will be accepted at locations throughout the region. The schedule, and locations, include:

Through Sept. 30: Edward Jones, 1000 Leigh Ave., Suite C, Anna.

Sept. 24-27, Kroger store, Anna.

Sept. 29-Oct. 1, Dollar General Store, Cobden.

In addition to diapers, monetary donations to purchase diapers will be accepted at each Diaper Drive location, except for Edward Jones in Anna. For those who are unable to visit a Diaper Drive in their area, donations can also be delivered to the Southern 7 public health clinics and Head Start sites in Alexander, Hardin, Johnson, Massac, Pope, Pulaski and Union counties through the end of September.

Clean diapers are a basic need of every baby and toddler. The lack of clean diapers is seen as a growing problem in the United States. According to new data from the National Diaper Bank Network, one in two U.S. families can't afford enough diapers to keep their infant or child clean, dry and healthy. As a result these babies are more vulnerable to painful rashes, urinary tract infections, toxic stress and more trips to the doctor.

The American Academy of Pediatrics reported that on average newborns need 10 to 12 diapers per day, or 300 for the first month of life, with an average cost of $90 per month. The average child will use about 7,100 diapers before being potty trained, with a cost of $78 to $90 per month, and the total average cost per year of $936. Such added expenses are often difficult for the families served through Southern 7.

This is the second year for the "Bundles of Joy" Diaper Drives. In 2024, over 8,900 diapers were collected, along with various baby cleaning essentials and nearly $1,000 to purchase more diapers.

For more information about the "Bundles of Joy" Diaper Drives, contact Shawnna Rhine at 618-634-2297, extension 971161, or visit Southern 7 on Facebook and Instagram.

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Obituaries

Hazel Virginia Vaughn



Hazel Virginia Vaughn, 92, of Anna, Ill. passed away peacefully surrounded by her family on Sept. 13, 2025, at Anderson Hospital in Maryville, Ill.

Hazel was born the third child of seven in Thebes, Ill. to Harry Bennett and Margaret Edmundson Bennett on Oct. 11, 1932.

She attended school in Tamms, Ill. She was a licensed realtor and co-owner of Carl's Furniture and Appliance along with her husband, Carl in Mounds, Ill. for 30 years.

She was united in marriage to Carl E. Vaughn on Feb. 17, 1950. To this union was born three children, Michael, Carla and Rhonda.

Hazel had a strong faith in Christ which guided her every step. She will be remembered for her joyful spirit and love for God's word, which she freely shared with countless people.

She was a wonderful example to all those who knew her. She left a legacy of love wherever she went. She attended First Baptist Church of Cobden, Ill. before moving to the Voyage Senior Living in Anna, where she participated in the bible study group and enjoyed singing in their community choir.

She is survived by her children, Michael E. Vaughn (Becky) of Bethalto, Ill., Carla J. Tally (Mike) of Anna, Ill. and Rhonda L. Tally of Fayetteville, Tenn.

Grandchildren, Amy Heflin (Brett), Marc Vaughn (Jessica), Jon Tally (Rachel), Dan Tally (Heather), Nicki Graham (Justin), Kristen Biggerstaff (Bronson) and Ryan Tally (Jessica). Great grandchildren, Zach Vaughn, Nic Vaughn, Tyler Vaughn, Lauren Vaughn, Kyleigh Heflin, Ian Heflin, Trent Heflin, Dawson Tally, Jake Tally, Dylan Ahlberg, Luke Tally, Jacob Graham, Logan Graham, and Madelyn Ahlberg. Great great grandchild, Semara Tally. Sister-in-law, Emma Dell Bennett, along with numerous nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her parents, Harry Bennett and Margaret Bennett Jordan, husband, Carl Vaughn, siblings, Mary Chester, Charles Bennett, Jack Bennett, Ella Tullock, June Plumb and JoAnn Benefield and son-in-law, Dicky Tally.

Funeral services were held at Jones Funeral Home in Villa Ridge, Ill., on Saturday, Sept. 20, 2025 with Pastor Michael Vaughn officiating.

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

Memorials may be made to St. Jude 501 St. Jude Place Memphis, TN 38105.

Jones Funeral Home Villa Ridge is in charge of the arrangements.

Ray George Schluter



Ray George Schluter, age 88, of Dongola, Ill., passed away on Monday, Sept. 15, 2025 at 2 a.m. in Marion, Ill.

He was born on June 9, 1937 in Dongola on the Schluter Farm to his parents Harold and Beulah George Schluter.

Ray was a Dairy Farmer that sold milk to Prairie Farms. He was the oldest (and still very active) member of the First Lutheran Church in Dongola.

Survivors include his wife of 69 years, Julia Rogers Schluter; children, Kathy (Jeff) Schluter McClellan and Donald (Sharon) Schluter; one brother, Bob (Sandra) Schluter of Cobden, Ill.; five grandsons and five great-grandchildren; along with other nieces, nephews, and family members.

He was preceded in death by his parents and one sister, Ludene Hargis Rice.

Funeral services were held on Saturday, Sept. 20 with Rev. Cherie Riedel officiating at the First Lutheran Church in Dongola.

Crain Funeral home

Interment followed the service at the American Legion Cemetery in Dongola, Ill.

The family requests with gratitude that memorial contributions be made to the First Lutheran Church in Dongola.

Crain Funeral Home in Dongola is in charge of arrangements.

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

Reynaldo Calderon Garcia



Reynaldo Calderon Garcia, age 70 of Cobden, passed away Monday, Sept. 8, 2025 at Memorial Hospital of Carbondale.

He was born on April 18, 1955 in Guanajuato, Mexico, the son of Arcadio Calderon Nava and Isidra Garcia Guzman. He married Susana Diaz.

Reynaldo is survived by his wife, Susana; children, Maria Cruz Calderon Diaz, Geraldo Calderon Diaz, Rosa Calderon Diaz and Cleto Calderon Diaz; grandchildren, Noe Zamora, Brisa, Alina, Eliana, Camila Sarai and Anthony Calderon, Jose Manuel and Fernando Lopez and Jhonathan and Bryan Portillo; father, Arcadio Calderon Nava; brothers, Angel, Joventino, Pino, Isidro and Pedro Calderon; sister, Maria luz Calderon; nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends. He was preceded in death by his mother.

Reynaldo was a member of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Cobden. In the past, he worked for the Anna Nursery.

Rendleman & Hileman Funeral Homes

Funeral mass for Reynaldo Calderon Garcia was held on Friday, Sept. 12, 2025 at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Cobden with Father Uriel Salamanca as celebrant.

Interment followed in St. Joseph Cemetery.

To visit Reynaldo's memorial page and leave online condolences for his family, please visit the Rendleman and Hileman Funeral Home website at rendlemanhilemanfh.com

View Obituaries online at AnnaNews.com

Carl Edward "Eddie" Mixen



Carl Edward "Eddie" Mixen, age 58, of Jonesboro, passed away on Tuesday, Sept. 16, 2025 at Deaconess Heartland Medical Center in Marion, Ill. surrounded by his family.

He was born on Nov. 9, 1966 to Bobby Lee and Lydia Joan (Dirden) Mixen in Cape Girardeau, Mo.

Eddie was a 1984 graduate of Anna-Jonesboro Community High School.

On Nov. 21,1992, he married Mary Marie Stevson and they shared over 32 years together.

He retired from District #37 as a custodian in 2018 after previously being employed at Transcraft.

During this time, he served as a coach spanning over a decade which touched the lives of many, coaching numerous youth sports, but knew his passion lay in football, having spent all of those years in the Jr. Wildcat program and volunteering in the booth to maintain the clock and keep score.

Eddie once held the record for the longest punt in a state title game, having come in 1983 and was a Moons Mullins Award winner.

Survivors include his wife, Mary; two sons, Ryan Mixen and Austin Mixen; sister, Carla (Mike) Cremeens; nephew, Brayden Cremeens; two aunts, Janet Mixen and Margie Mixen; along with numerous cousins and in-laws.

Crain Funeral home

Along with his parents, he is preceded in death by his in-laws, Lynn and Paul Steveson.

Funeral Services were held on Monday, Sept. 22, with Rev. Mark Goins officiating at Crain Funeral Home in Anna.

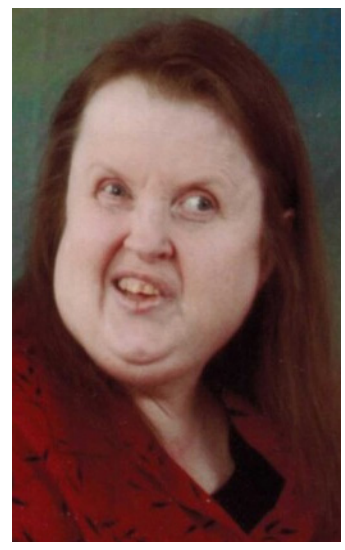
An inurnment will be held at a later date at McGinnis Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests with gratitude that memorial contributions be made to Crain Funeral Home to help offset expenses.

The cremation of Carl Edward "Eddie" Mixen will be personally handled by the staff of Crain Funeral Home.

Crain Funeral Home in Anna, Illinois is in charge of arrangements.

Theresa C. Warden



Theresa C. Warden, age 59 of Anna, passed away Thursday, Sept. 18, 2025 at Saint Francis Medical Center in Cape Girardeau, Mo.

She was born on Dec. 23, 1965 in St. Louis, Mo., the daughter of Vernon Leon and Betty (Eads) Warden.

Theresa is survived by her parents, Vernon Leon and Betty Warden; sister, Lisa Turner; brother, Dean (Christina) Warden; maternal grandmother, Juanita Eads; aunts, Judy Guffey and Darline Reeves; uncle, Calvin Warden; several nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends. She was preceded in death by a brother, Deon Warden and sister-in-law, Tina Warden.

Theresa was a member of the Tamms Pentecostal Church. She had a servant's heart and enjoyed helping with the rose ministry. She also helped care for handicapped children. She loved her church and spending time with her family. She will be missed.

Funeral services for Theresa Warden were held on Monday, Sept. 22, 2025 at Rendleman and Hileman Funeral Home in Anna with Rev. James McLane officiating. Interment followed in the Cobden Cemetery.

Rendleman & Hileman Funeral Homes

Memorial contributions can be made to the family of Theresa Warden to assist with final expenses. Envelopes are available at Rendleman and Hileman Funeral Home.

To visit Theresa's memorial page and leave online condolences for her family, please visit the Rendleman and Hileman Funeral Home website at rendlemanhilemanfh.com

News from

Anna First Baptist Church

Anna First Baptist Church met for worship on Sept. 21 with Pastor Perry leading our opening prayer.

Our Call to Worship was on Dedication and was taken from the Book of Romans. "I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present yourselves as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

Do not be conformed to this world but be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."

Our Worship Team led us in three songs as we honored and worshiped Jesus, "Reckless Love," "Mighty to Save" and "Good, Good Father."

Pastor Lupe's sermon was titled "Living Sacrifice – Romans 12." Highlights of his sermon included, Paul calls believers to present their bodies as a living sacrifice, meaning every aspect of life—time, actions, and desires—belongs to God daily. Unlike dead sacrifices of the Old Testament a living sacrifice is ongoing, requiring constant surrender and obedience to Christ. To live as a sacrifice means resisting conformity to the world and instead allowing God to transform our minds through His Word. Such a life is not about self-centered pursuits but about being holy and acceptable to God, which Paul says is our "reasonable service."

Living as a sacrifice reflects gratitude for God's mercy, showing the world a life shaped by worship, humility, and love.

Our Sunday School begins at 9 a.m. on Sunday morning and is for all ages. Our Worship service and Children's Church begins at 10:15 a.m. Our Wednesday evening Prayer Time begins at 6 p.m. Our bus runs for all of these services.

We also have other activities and programs, please call our church office during the hours of 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. to ask about a program you may be interested in.

Our church is located at 409 Morgan Street in Anna. Our phone number is 833-5416.

Our facebook is Facebook.com/AnnaFirstBaptistChurch Our email is fbcanna409@gmail.com.

We invite you to stop by or give us a call, let us share Jesus with you.

Come share a service with us, meet our church family.

God Bless You – God Loves You – So Do We.

David Lee Bruchhauser



David Lee Bruchhauser, age 61, of Highland, Illinois, passed away Tuesday, Sept. 16, 2025.

He was born March 14, 1964 to William August and Kay Lee (Roeder) Bruchhauser in Anna, Ill.

He was preceded in death by his father, William August Bruchhauser.

David will be remembered for his outgoing and charismatic personality. To know him was to be pulled into his orbit, as life with him was lived on his terms.

From a young age, David was a wild thing with a love for adventure and fun. He was an avid outdoorsman – having a beehive before it was fashionable, planting hundreds of trees, stocking lakes, gardening, hiking, canoeing, and SCUBA diving.

David loved to cook and developed his techniques early alongside his grandmother. As a member of the Lucky Clovers 4-H Club, his Illinois State Fair award-winning grilling recipes became family favorites.

He was known for creating impressive dinners for family and friends, sharing his culinary love especially with his children, ever encouraging them to try new foods (except liver).

In 1983, David won the distinguished Illinois State 4-H Citizenship award to attend the 4-H National Club Congress where he would meet the West Virginia Citizenship delegate, Deborah Martin in an elevator. The two later married and had three wonderful children who look exactly like them both.

David studied finance at Southern Illinois University Carbondale and served in financial services as owner of Bruchhauser Financial in Belleville, Illinois and as a broker for over 35 years with New York Life. David was also the developer of the Lakes of Brookfield subdivision in Highland, Ill.

Crain Funeral home

David served and volunteered for many years with the Boy Scouts of America. He was an Eagle Scout and Silver Beaver recipient. He was especially proud of his two sons for also achieving the rank of Eagle Scout.

Scouting and 4-H led David to be civic minded. He formerly served on the Fairview Heights Public Library Board and also served as President of St. Clair Associated Vocational Enterprises (S.A.V.E.).

David is remembered and survived by his three children, Elizabeth Christine Bruchhauser, Alexander David Bruchhauser, and Benjamin David Bruchhauser (Alexis); his mother Kay Lee Bruchhauser, his big sister Debra Lynn (Larry) Walter, little sister Rebecca Jane (Spencer) Bruchhauser Farris, his former wife Deborah Martin, and many lifetime friends.

As David was not a traditionalist, there will not be a customary funeral. His wishes will be honored with a celebration of life at a later date.

With gratitude, the family requests memorial contributions be made to Hospice of Southern Illinois, 305 South Illinois Street, Belleville, IL 62220.

Crain Funeral Home in Anna, Illinois is in charge of arrangements.

News from

Camp Ground Church, Community

Bro. Bradley's sermon Sunday was "Foreigners of Faith" with the main scripture selection Hebrews 11:13-16.

Faith is an absolute knowledge that something better is to come. What is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

In the selected scripture, the writer of Hebrews was reminding the recipients of this "letter" that before Christ came to earth, the Patriarchs walked by faith rather than sight.

At the time of the fall of Adam and Eve, humankind became separated from God. But God still cared for them, and He cares for us too.

Satan always has been, and continues working overtime to bring down the followers of Christ. He fills persons with the spirit of hate, envy, revenge, etc. causing murder, terrorism, and all evil in the world.

We must be constantly in prayer and prepared as we are in a battle with evil every day.

God has prepared a home for those who are his children. We are foreigners in this world, looking toward our Heavenly home.

Rodney Miller is our leading elder during September.

We have no birthdays nor anniversaries in our congregation this week.

Our community was saddened by the accidental death of Cash Quick who lived near our church as does nearly all his immediate family. Others of his extended family are active members of our congregation.

The church, assisted by others, served a meal to the family Tuesday evening following the burial service in Camp Ground Cemetery.

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

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

Note: this article was written for Sept. 18.

Stinson set to hold book sale at Colorfest

The annual Colorfest book sale is coming to Stinson Library from Oct 10 to 12 as part of Union County's Colorfest activities.

The event begins off on Friday, Oct. 10 with a friends appreciation sale from 4 to 6 p.m. This special presale is open to members of the Friends of the Library. Memberships are available at the sale for just $5.

The public sale follows on Saturday, Oct. 11, running from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. The library's bag sale will take place on Sunday, October 12, from 1 to 3 p.m. For just $5 per bag (bags provided), you can take home as many books as you can fit.

All proceeds support Stinson Library's programs and services. The library is located at 409 South Main St., Anna, IL. For more information, call 618-833-2521.

Leyerle Cemetery meeting set

The annual Leyerle Cemetery clean-up and business meeting will be held at the cemetery on Saturday, Oct. 11.

Cleanup begins at 10 a.m. with a picnic lunch to follow at noon. The business meeting will begin after the meal.

Everyone interested is welcome to attend. The cemetery is located along Little Creek Lane, off U.S. Route 51, Dongola.

The event will be canceled if it rains. For updates, follow us on Facebook at "Leyerle Family Cemetery Association Dongola IL."

News from

Anna Nazarene Church

The morning worship service was held at 10:35 a.m. on Sept. 215. Announcements were given by Emily Wilson.

Today we welcomed Rev. Jim Book in the absence of Pastor Wright who was attending the Reignite and Renew Adult Retreat at the Pinecrest Camp & Conference Center in Fredericktown, Mo. along with his wife, Lea and several others of our congregation.

The message "Walk By The Spirit" was brought by Rev. Jim Book from Galatians 5:13-18.

There was no Sunday Evening Service.

Celebrating birthdays this week is September 21st Glenda Zaharias, 27th Connie Sadler.

Celebrating an anniversary this week is September 25th – Marshall & Yvonne Ramage.

Saturday, Sept 27

Women'a Ministry Gathering at Hebrewz Coffeehouse at 11 a.m.

Sunday, Sept 28

Breakfast - 9:00 a.m.

Sunday School - 9:30 a.m.

Morning Worship Service-10:35 a.m -$5 Sunday - Communion

Sunday Evening Service-6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 1

Wednesday Night Service will be held at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary.

Youth Group in the Fellowship Hall at 6:30 p.m.

Saturday Oct. 4

Baby Shower for Trey & Sarah Morrison's Twin Baby Boys at 1 p.m.

You can find the baby registery on my.babylist.com.

Sunday, Oct 5

Churches lay the foundation through Alabaster Offering for places where people worship, heal, and learn by encouraging global participation each year. Every Alabaster project grows from joint effort, love, and shared support of local contribution, bringing tangible presence and a sense of long-term commitment to a community. No Alabaster funds are used for administrative costs.

Friday and Saturday, Oct 10 and 11

Yardsale. Help support the teens. Here at the church.

If you have donations for the yard sale, please contact Trey Morrison for more details

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

West Nile virus-related in Illinois

The Cook County Department of Public Health on Sept. 17 confirmed the first human West Nile virus-related death in suburban Cook County and Illinois this year. A suburban Cook County resident, whose age was in the 60s, has died. Laboratory testing confirmed that West Nile virus was a contributing factor to the resident's death. West Nile virus occurs in humans when they are bitten by mosquitoes that contracted the virus by feeding on infected birds.

Since May 11, when surveillance period began, through Sept. 6, suburban Cook County had recorded 33 cases of West Nile virus , almost twice the number of cases from last year. Last year, 19 West Nile virus cases and five deaths were reported in suburban Cook County.

Overall, the State of Illinois had recorded 69 human cases of West Nile virus, including 50 in Cook County, which includes the City of Chicago, and 13 fatalities last year.

Most cases of West Nile virus infection have either mild or no symptoms and may go unreported, so case counts are underestimates.

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

Lost in the Dark



Photo Credit Istockphoto.com/Ugreen

When the lights go out it's hard to find your way around…you can get lost in the dark. If you have ever had this experience you know how helpless it feels. Sometimes we all feel just as helpless stumbling about in our lives. Maybe we have a dilemma and we don't know which way to turn, there doesn't seem to be a solution. Isaiah 2.5 says, "Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord." Through prayer and meditation and the study of God's word, we can find light. Solutions will appear and life will make more sense. Step into the light of the Lord at your House of Worship.

Weekly Scripture Reading

Matthew	Matthew	Matthew	Matthew	Matthew	Proverbs	Proverbs
7.1-14	7.15-29	13.1-17	13.18-32	13.33-52	1.1-33	8.1-36

Scriptures Selected by the American Bible Society

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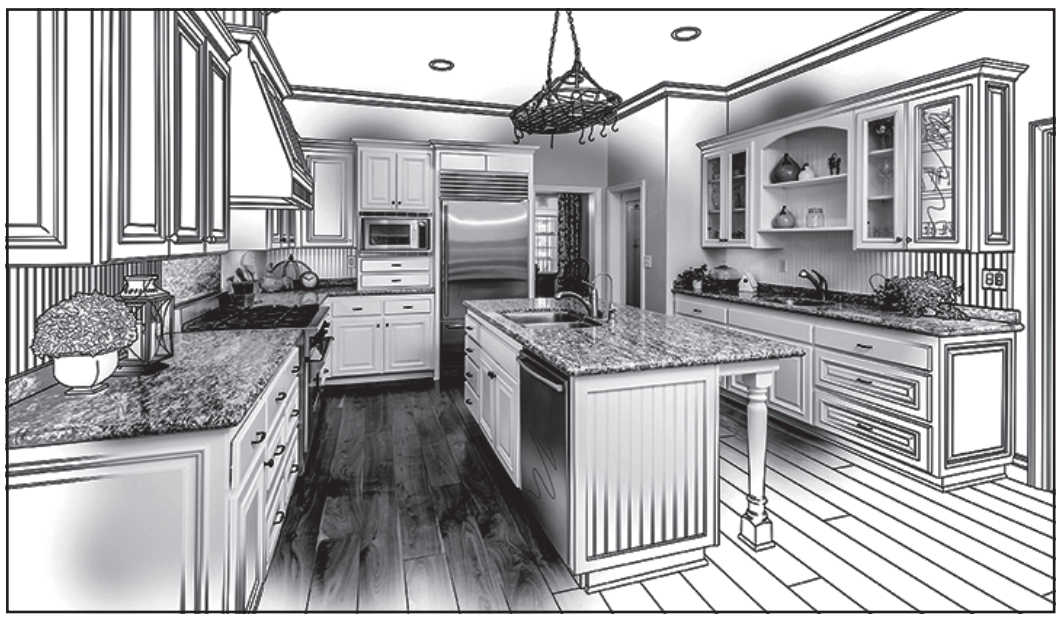
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4 things to know about kitchen renovations

Kitchens are often described as the most popular room in a home, and that's not mere conjecture. A 2022 survey from House Digest asked participants to identify the room they consider most important in their homes, and roughly 41 percent chose the kitchen.

Residents tend to congregate in kitchens in the morning and then again in the evening when meals are prepared and, in homes without formal dining rooms, eaten. With so much time spent in the kitchen, it's no wonder that the 2022 U.S. Houzz & Home Study: Renovation Trends found kitchens to be the most popular interior room to upgrade. With so many people interested in kitchen renovations, the following are four things homeowners should know about these popular improvement projects.

1. Expect to spend some money. Most home improvement projects require a significant financial investment, but kitchen renovations are among the more expensive undertakings. The overall cost of a project will depend on a host of variables unique to each home, including homeowners' preferences, but HomeAdvisor estimated the average kitchen remodel in 2023 cost between $14,611 and $41,432. Homeowners considering an upscale kitchen remodel may receive six figure estimates for such projects.

2. Expect a good return on investment. If sticker shock settles in when receiving an initial kitchen remodel estimate, perhaps it can help homeowners to know that such a project may provide a strong return on investment (ROI). According to Remodeling magazine's "2024 Cost vs. Value Report," a minor kitchen remodel provides a 96 percent ROI. A major kitchen remodel mid-range (49 percent) and a major kitchen remodel upscale (38 percent) did not provide as notable a ROI.

3. Expect the project to take some time. Kitchens are large rooms with a lot of components, so renovating these spaces can take some time. Estimates vary depending on the size of the room, the scale of the remodel and the materials chosen, but Angi reports a kitchen remodel for most homes takes six weeks to four months. That's a sizable window, and it reflects the likelihood that unforeseen issues like supply chain interruptions or the discovery of mold will arise at some point during the renovation. Though it's impossible to determine precisely how long a project will take before it begins, homeowners renovating their kitchens may want to plan for the project to take two months if not longer.

4. Expect to use your kitchen during the renovation. If the timeline of a renovation is scary, homeowners should know they will likely be able to use their kitchen even after the project begins. Though the room might not remain a popular gathering space once the work starts, Angi notes kitchens are typically out of commission for around six weeks during a renovation. That still requires some pre-planning in relation to meals, but it also suggests homeowners won't be without a kitchen for months on end.

Kitchen renovations are popular projects. Homeowners who know what to expect before such projects commence can make it through a renovation more smoothly.

Did you know?

Homeowners with an eye on home improvement projects should know that kitchens and bathrooms tend to be the most costly rooms to renovate. An affiliate of the National Kitchen and Bath Association told Architectural Digest in 2023 that kitchens and bathrooms require the most labor-intensive renovations, which contributes significantly to the high costs of such projects. Labor is indeed a significant cost when renovating a home, as the Construction Labor Market Analyzer indicates labor cost percentages in construction are between 20 and 40 percent of the total budget of a given project. The final cost of any renovation project will depend on a host of variables unique to each home, including the square footage of the room being remodeled and the materials homeowners choose. However, homeowners looking for less costly renovations may want to consider revamping their dining rooms and closets, each of which are projects that can make a difference and tend to require a less significant financial commitment than projects like kitchen and bath remodels.



Build your gift list for DIY enthusiasts



Rising prices have pushed people to look for new ways to save money. The do-it-yourself approach to home repairs has long been seen as a potential avenue to save money, and holiday shoppers can consider DIY when shopping for loved ones this year.

A recent survey by the remodeling company Allstar Home reported that 70 percent of Americans have recently engaged in DIY home improvement projects. Similarly, a new Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of the DIY Network found that 73 percent of Canadian homeowners have done a renovation project themselves in the past. With so many homeowners tackling projects around the home on their own, DIY-related products may be just what's needed to hammer down the perfect gift. The following are some potential home improvement presents for DIY enthusiasts.

• Magnetic wristband: Keeping items close at hand takes on new meaning when one utilizes a magnetic wristband. The BinyaTools Magnetic Wristband is just one of the versions of this handy tool that's ideal for wrangling screws, nails, washers, and any other ferrous items. It's also a great option for crafters and jewelry makers.

• Painting essentials kit: Painting is an easy and effective way to transform a room. For those DIYers who have yet to compile all of their painting gear, local home improvement retailers often package kits that include a dropcloth, assorted roller sizes, brushes, a paint tray, and even painter's tape to get started on projects.

• Rolling work bench: People serious about projects will need a place to store all the tools they have collected. A rolling work bench, such as the Gladiator nine-drawer work bench, has drawers to store tools and a wooden top on which smaller tasks can be tackled. Roll it where needed.

• Hearing protection: Drills, sanders and other power tools can be noisy. DIYers will want to protect their hearing, and a set of workshop earmuffs can be a thoughtful gift. Some, like the 3M WorkTunes headphones, even come with Bluetooth technology to offer both hearing protection and the ability to listen to tunes while working.

• Headlamp: DIYers need both hands to tackle jobs effectively, which can make holding a flashlight to illuminate the area challenging. Hands-free lighting is possible with an LED headlamp. The light is easily focused where the user is looking.

• Laser measuring tape: A smart measuring tape utilizes a laser to increase measuring size, calculate distances and ensure that every home improvement project lines up.

• Sawhorse: DIYers working on large projects can benefit from an adjustable saw horse to support materials and ensure safer cuts. The ToughBuilt C700 is an option to consider since it has support pegs that fold out of the legs to allow for greater ease of use.

The list of gifts for DIYers is endless. Tools and additional gear can help people nail holiday shopping this year.

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Container gardening: *The Basics*

Gardening is a rewarding hobby that has been linked to health benefits like reduced stress and improved mental well-being. Gardening also can lead to an inviting home landscape full of attractive blooms and/or delicious foods.

Backyard gardens have long been planted after clearing a plot of land, tilling and amending the soil, and planting rows of favorite crops. However, gardening can be less labor-intensive and even more successful when people consider the many benefits of container gardening.

What is container gardening?

As its name implies, container gardening is growing plants inside of containers. These containers can be flower pots, rectangular deck boxes or even large raised garden beds.

Pros to container gardening

One of the advantages of container gardening is that plants can be moved in and out of sunlight to ensure the right growing conditions. This isn't as easily achieved when gardens are stationary. Also, beginner gardeners may be more able to control soil conditions inside of a small container rather than a vast ground-based garden, which will require a good deal of manual labor. Pots and boxes also can be grouped together to create eye-popping displays, usually at lower costs than the sheer volume of plants that would be needed to fill out an expansive landscape.

Cons to container gardening

Container garden plants will not have direct access to the ground, so they need gardeners to create the ideal growing conditions. Developing the right care formula can be challenging. Home and garden resource guides say that drainage is an important factor in container gardening, and most containers do not offer enough drainage holes. If water cannot escape the soil, the roots of the plants can rot and die. It's not enough to add stones or gravel to the bottom of containers. Drill additional holes in the bottom (1/2-inch in diameter for small or medium-sized pots; one inch in diameter for larger pots). Also, be sure to check on soil moisture so that watering can be adjusted. During hot stretches, plants may need to be watered more frequently.

Plan for plants that play well

Grouping plants together can create visually stunning combinations. However, it is important to choose plants that require the same amount of light and moisture. Look at plant tags when visiting the garden center and select complementary plants, or ask a store employee. Mixing different plant shapes, colors and leaf textures, as well as plants of various heights, can help containers look filled out.

Feed plants accordingly

Plants need nutrition to thrive in containers. Quality potting mixes will contain fertilizers, but nutrition will wane over time. Every couple of weeks, container plants will need either fresh potting mix or granular fertilizer added to feed them. It is suggested to use a slow-release fertilizer or worm castings several times throughout the season.

Container gardening is a great way to add plants to smaller patios, reduce the workload involved in maintaining expansive gardens, and customize conditions for optimal growth.

How to make renovation projects go smoothly



Homeowners are spending big bucks on home renovations. According to the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University, home improvement project spending continues to increase. It's predicted to go from $472 billion spent in 2022 to $485 billion in 2024.

Those targeting a specific home renovation likely know there is much that goes into the process from start to finish. Patience is a requisite virtue with any remodel, as even a thoroughly conceptualized plan can encounter a few bumps along the way. Although there is no way to completely remove renovation-related obstacles, there are ways to make projects go more smoothly.

• Establish a clear plan from the beginning. Now is not the time to be on the fence about details. A vision for the renovation is essential, and should include details about layout, materials, colors, and design.

• Manage your expectations. Again, this speaks to a need for patience with a project but also involves flexibility. Being too rigid when choosing materials can require waiting for back-ordered supplies to come in. Wanting contractors to bend to your schedule can delay the project even further. Creativity and flexibility are key.

• Establish a budget. It can be easy to spend beyond one's means, especially when issues crop up. Black House Real Estate stresses the importance of creating a budget before starting a renovation, which may involve working with a local professional to help. Houzz advises preparing for worst-case scenarios by adding anywhere from 1 percent to 20 percent to the budget. Commit to sticking to the budget no matter what comes down the pike.

• Assemble a good team. Thoroughly research all contractors who will be involved with the renovation. These include designers, architects, builders, and more. Be sure they come highly recommended and research online reviews. A good team removes some stress from the project because you'll know the work is in experienced hands.

• Prepare the space for the remodel. Any work you can do will help save on labor costs and make it easier for the team to get started on the project. Clear out clutter and personal items. Ask if it would be helpful for you to handle some demolition, whether that's pulling up old tile, removing drywall or another task.

• Have an escape hatch at the ready. Home renovations can cause upheaval to daily life, and that can mean stress on top of already chaotic schedules. If money and situation allow, plan a getaway during a particularly tough stretch of the project so the noise, mess, and disruptions will not induce headaches. Consider spending a few nights at a hotel or a friend or relative's house to escape the constant grind of the project.

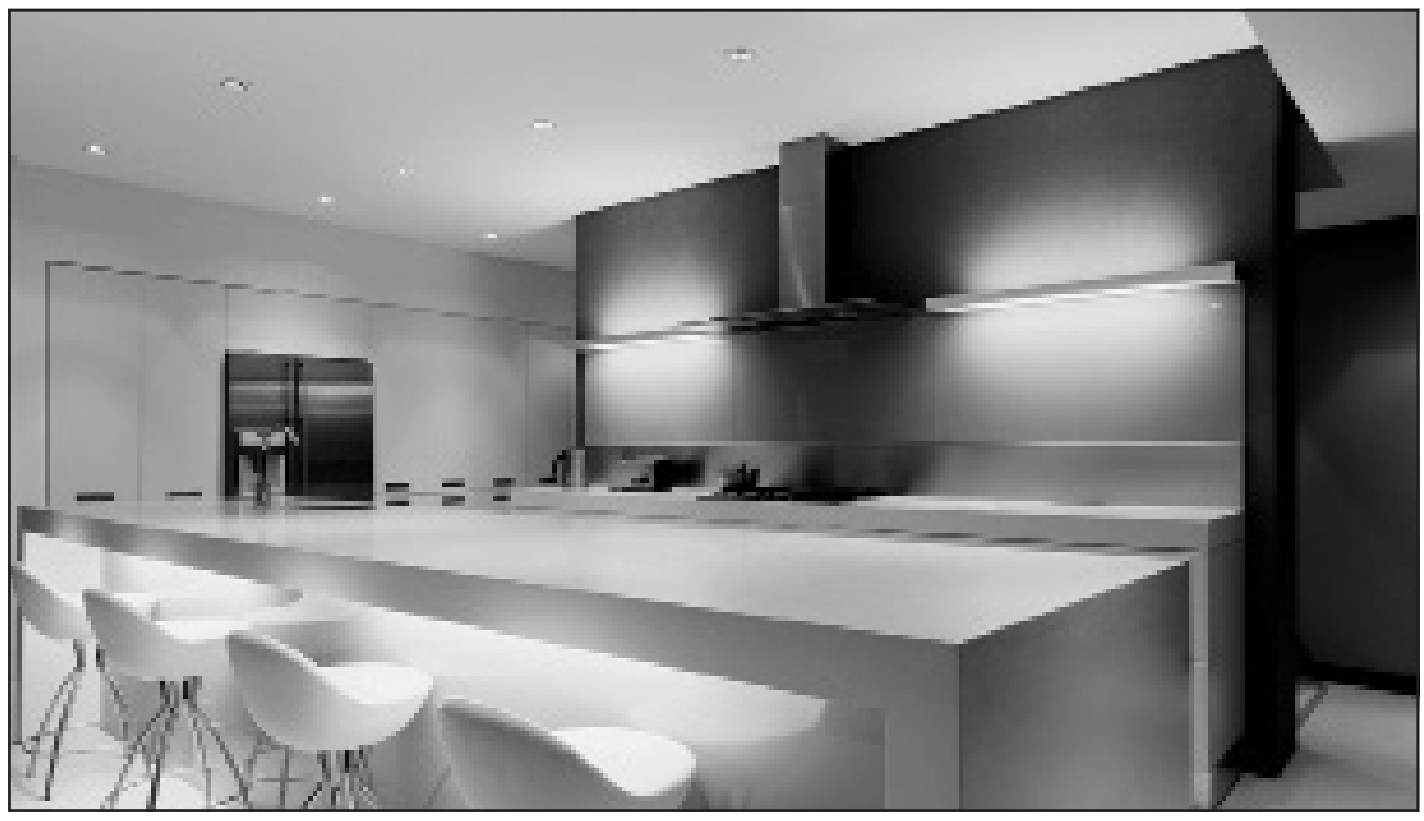
Home renovation projects add value and functionality to homes. Such undertakings can go more smoothly with some sound planning.

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FAQ about garage remodeling



Homeowners tend to want to maximize all of the space they have in their homes. For some this may involve turning a garage from a utilitarian space into one that serves multiple purposes.

According to The Mortgage Reports, a home-buying and improvement resource, garage renovations can increase the value of a home and add living space. Garage remodels can create additional storage space, provide an area for a home gym or even create room for a home office. Prior to beginning a garage remodel, homeowners may have some common questions about the process.

How much does the renovation cost?

Several factors will ultimately determine the final price of a garage remodel, but HomeAdvisor says the national average for a garage remodel falls between $6,000 and $26,000. Most homeowners come in at around $15,000 for a total garage conversion.

Will I recoup the investment?

A garage conversion adds value to a home if it creates new and usable living space. The firm Cottage, which pulled together a team of builders, architects and technologists, advises the average garage conversion provides an 80 percent return on investment. That ROI varies depending on location.

How can I upgrade the flooring?

Garages traditionally feature concrete floors. Although durable, concrete floors can feel damp, hard and cold underfoot. Both vinyl plank and epoxy flooring options can elevate the design and functionality of the garage.

Can I have the best of both worlds?

Sometimes a garage needs to serve many purposes. Lofting the garage means a homeowner can still park cars or utilize the lower space as a living area, all the while items are stored overhead. Some flip this design scenario and have the loft area as a bedroom or finished living space, while the lower portion remains a traditional garage area. Another thought is to finish only a portion of the garage. This works well for two- or three-car garages where there will be room to park a car and the remainder will serve another purpose.

What are other ways to improve the garage?

Installing more windows or improving on the lighting in the garage can be important. The garage improvement experts at Danley's say window installation enables people to circulate air in the garage without having to open the garage door. Improving the lighting means the garage can still be enjoyed or utilized after dark. Spread out lighting in the garage, and use a combination of overhead and task lighting just as one would in the home itself.

How do I deter bugs or other pests from entering?

Insects often want to hunker down in garages, and they may find it easy to get inside a garage. Keeping the garage clean and organized is the best way to deter pests and to spot infestations before they become problematic, indicates Mosquito Joe pest control company. Reducing water and humidity in the space, weatherproofing at the base of the garage door and other entry spots and utilizing insect repellents to make the garage less hospitable also can decrease the risk of insect infestation.

Remodeling a garage can add value and plenty of usable space to a home. Whether a garage houses cars or hosts neighborhood game night, a garage renovation can be well worth the investment.

How to choose the right lighting for your home

Lighting in a home serves both practical and aesthetic purposes. It's easy to maneuver around a well-lit home, reducing the risk of slips and falls, and the right lighting can help homeowners create their desired ambiance, which typically changes depending on which room you're in.

When choosing lighting for their homes, homeowners must walk a fine line between appearance and functionality. A fixture in the foyer that instantly impresses visitors likely won't prove as awe-inspiring if it's installed in the living room. When choosing lighting for a home, some general rules about what works in each room can help homeowners make the most informed decision.

Kitchen

Kitchens are often the busiest room in a home, so lighting here can be especially important. A kitchen often benefits, both practically and aesthetically, from different types of lighting. For example, pendant lighting above kitchen islands can make meal preparation easier and safer, but such lighting likely won't work in breakfast nooks and informal dining areas in the kitchen. Recessed lighting works best in such areas. In kitchens with no island, under-cabinet lighting can be used to illuminate countertops and simplify meal preparation.

Formal dining room

Many people enjoy the look of chandeliers in formal dining rooms, and such fixtures can be installed directly above the dinner table. Chandeliers should be hung approximately 33 inches above the table in dining rooms with eight-foot ceilings, adding three inches for each additional foot above eight feet. Darkened dining areas may be ideal in restaurants, but homeowners may want to split the difference at home and choose dimmable chandeliers for their dining rooms. This allows homeowners to dim the lights for romantic dinners but turn them up for family gatherings with lots of people around the table.

Living room

Adaptability also is important in the living room, where homeowners may host anything from movie nights to book clubs to parties for the big game. It can be a tall order to accommodate such a wide range of activities, and many homeowners come down to deciding between recessed lighting and track lighting. If the living room currently has neither style, homeowners should recognize that it will cost considerably less to install track lighting than recessed lighting. Flexible track lighting provides ambient, task or accent lighting, and track lights can even be moved to change lighting schemes at any time, making them a budget-friendly option for homeowners whose living rooms are multi-purpose spaces. Recessed lighting also works well in living rooms, especially ones with low ceilings. That's because recessed lighting is installed into the ceiling, meaning it does not take up any visual space in the room. That can help living rooms feel bigger.

Bedroom

Some home improvement experts note that bedroom lighting should provide enough light when getting dressed, but also be able to be toned down as residents prepare for their bedtime routines. Both portable and installed lighting can be used in bedrooms to serve these various functions. Recessed fixtures that dim can ensure there's ample light to get dressed in the morning, but they also can be dimmed at night as residents try to get ready to sleep. Portable nightstand lights can make it easier for couples sharing a bedroom, allowing one person to stay up and read while the other goes to sleep.

Homeowners have many options and many needs when choosing lighting for their homes. A professional consultation with a lighting expert or interior decorator can help homeowners find lights that provide both practical and aesthetic appeal.



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HELP WANTED

Dongola Unit # 66 is seeking applicants to fill the following position: Paraprofessional Specifics of the position are • 9 month position • Benefits include sick, personal and bereavement leave

• Health, dental and vision insurance is available • Board paid life insurance policy

• Applicant must be able to: work at a fast pace, able to lift heavy objects, possess some computer skills for required paperwork, display good organizational skills, possess a good work ethic and the ability to develop a positive rapport with students and co-workers.

Applicants must submit a letter of interest addressed to Dr. Paige Maginel, resume, valid paraprofessional license and three letters of reference to: Jamie Flores, District Secretary

Administrative Building Dongola Unit School #66 1000 High Street Dongola, IL 62926

Or emailed to jflores@dongolaschool.com DUSD # 66 is an equal opportunity employer.

Position will be filled as soon as possible.

Pastor Needed Congregational Church of Alto Pass. We are seeking a Pastor. Mornings only. Time is flexible. Submit Resume to Congregational Church of Alto Pass 5 Poplar St Alto Pass, IL 62905.

Site Manager for Union County $17-$19 per hour, 30-35 hours per week

Southern Pride Senior Program will be accepting applications for the position listed above. Provide outreach and assistance in Union County, Support and participate in events throughout the community (may take place during evenings or weekends), Perform other job-related duties as assigned, Familiar with Excel and database management systems, Must be able to manage multiple assignments and projects at the same time, Manage staff and participate in senior activities with the congregation, Must be willing to get the Serve safe Food Handler's Certificate, Must become SHIP (State Health Insurance Program) certified, Must hold a valid Illinois State Driver's License and meet minimum vehicle insurance from the Illinois State insurance requirement for personal vehicle; $100,000 Bodily Injury per accident single person) /$300,000 Bodily Injury per accident max (multiple persons) / $25,000 Property Damage,

MISC.

Notice is hereby given of the sale of the following described personal property which is stored at Busby Storage (Anna Location) 215 B East Vienna St. Anna, IL 62906.

Name of Occupant: Andrea Ellison Storage Units: 7 & 8 Property to be sold: Miscellaneous personal property Time/Place/Manner of Sale: October 11, 2025 at 9 a.m. by Public Auction at Busby Storage 215 B East Vienna St. Anna, IL 62906 Phone: 618-833-3983 or 618-833-0238

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT UNION COUNTY, ILLINOIS ESTATE OF JAMES W. TIERNEY, DECEASED. NO. 2025-PR-16 IN PROBATE NOTICE OF DEATH INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION, AND CLAIM DATE

NOTICE IS GIVEN to creditors of the death of James W. Tierney, of Buncombe, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued on September 18, 2025, to Angeline Couture, 2159 W. 129 PL, Crown Point, IN 46307 as Independent Executor, whose attorney is Elvis C. Cameron, 205B N. Main St., Anna, Illinois.

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

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

Notice is further given to Michael Tierney, and Christy Tierney, believed to be the niece and nephew of James W. Tierney, as to all rights afforded to them under the Illinois Probate Act.

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

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of this court at the Union County Courthouse, 309 W. Market St., Jonesboro, Illinois, or with the Independent Executor, or both, on or before March 25, 2026, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the Executor is required by Section 5/18-3 of the Probate Act of the State of Illinois, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the Executor and to the attorneys within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

Dated: September 19, 2025
ANGELINE COUTURE
CAMERON LAW FIRM, LLC
ELVIS C. CAMERON
ATTORNEY FOR INDEPENDENT EXECUTOR
205B N. MAIN ST.
ANNA, ILLINOIS 62906
PHONE: 618-833-2220
ARDC# 6244394
8221-958214

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN by the Board of Education of CCSD #43, in the County of Union, State of Illinois, that an E-Learning plan has been written for the school years 2025 - 2028. This 3 year period will be covered by the E-Learning plan that will be submitted to the state. NOTICE IS FURTHER HEREBY GIVEN that a public hearing on said E-Learning plan will be held at 6:30 P.M. on the 16th day of October, 2025 at the Board of Education meeting room, 309 Cook Avenue, Jonesboro, Illinois, in this School District #43. Dated this 25th day of September, 2025. School Board of School District #43, in the County of Union, State of Illinois.

8221-958283

Budget and Appropriations Ordinance Ordinance 26 - 01

Annual Budget And Appropriation Ordinance for the Fiscal Year (FY26) Beginning

the 1st Day Of July, 2025 and Ending the 30th Day of June 2026

Whereas, The Board of Trustees of the Dongola Public Library District, Union County,

Illinois, has prepared or caused to be prepared a tentative form of the Annual Budget and

Appropriation for said Library District for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026 and the same has been conveniently available for public inspection for at least thirty (30) days prior to final action thereon; and

Whereas, a public hearing was held as to such Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance on August 12, 2025, notice of which was given at least thirty (30) days prior thereto; and

Whereas, all other legal requirements have been duly complied with by the Board of Trustees of the Dongola Public Library District;

Now, Therefore, Be It Ordained by the President and Board of Trustees of the Dongola Public Library District, in the County of Union and State of Illinois, as Follows:

Section l: That the following sums, or so much thereof as by law may be authorized, be and the same are hereby budgeted, set aside, and appropriated for the specified Library Purposes for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026; and the objects and purposes for which said appropriations are made and the amounts thereby appropriated are as follows; to wit:

For Corporate Purposes [75 ILCS 16/35-5]:
1. For staffing expense
a. Staff salaries $35,311
b. Social security contributions $ 2,699
c. Worker's compensation $ 755
d. Unemployment Compensation Insurance $ 244
2. For library materials
a. books $ 5,314
b. periodicals $ 193
c. audiovisual $ 1,057
d. software $ 490
3. For operating expense
a. insurance $ 2,824
b. library supplies $ 3,304
c. accounting and auditing $ 2,388
d. postage $ 240
e. telephone and telecommunications $ 6,610
f. utilities $ 6,610
g. repairs and maintenance $ 7,628
4. For staff and board development (Travel expenses) $ 511
5. For advertising $ 1,906
6. For contingencies $ 1,999
7. For dues/fees (SHARE) $ 4,449
TOTAL $ 84,532
For Special Reserve Fund [75 ILCS 16/40-50]
1. Building Fund $19,345
2. Contingency $ 0
TOTAL $19,345

Section 2: Appropriated for the foregoing expenses from the following estimate of revenues, by source, anticipated to be received by the Library District in the fiscal year:

Projected cash on hand July 1, 2025 $ 0
Tax for General Corporate Library purposes $78,352
From Special Reserve Fund $19,345
Special purpose grants
1. Per Capita Grant $ 2,627
2. E-rate funds $ 3,553
Expected cash on hand June 30, 2026 $ 0

Section 3: Any unexpended balances in the General Library Fund appropriations will be deposited into the Special Reserve Fund pursuant to a plan in accordance with Article 40 of Chapter 75, Illinois Compiled Statutes.

Section 4: The Secretary of the Dongola Public Library District is hereby authorized and directed to publish this Ordinance at least once in a newspaper of general circulation in the district.

Section 5: This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect after its passage, approval and publication as provided by law.

Passed by the Board of Trustees of the Dongola Public Library District and approved by the President the ninth day of September, 2025.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF DONGOLA PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT
By: Leslie Treat
President
ATTEST:
Laura Sadler
Secretary
STATE OF ILLINOIS
SS.
COUNTY OF UNION
CERTIFICATE

I, Laura Sadler, do hereby certify that I am the duly appointed, qualified, and now acting Secretary of the Dongola Public Library District in the County of Union and State of Illinois; that attached hereto is a true and correct copy of the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance No.26-01 for the fiscal year July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026.

I further certify that the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance was duly passed by the Board of Trustees of said Library District at a meeting thereof held on the ninth day of September, 2025; that said Ordinance was duly passed by yea and nay vote thereon with at least a majority of all the Board of Trustees having voted yea on the adoption and passage thereof and approved in accordance with the laws of the State of Illinois pursuant to the notice and publication thereof as required by law.

I further certify that said Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance contains an estimate of revenues, by sources, anticipated to be received by the Dongola Public Library District in the fiscal year. In Witness Whereof, I have signed my name in my official capacity as the Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the Dongola Public Library District, at Dongola, Illinois, this ninth day of September, 2025.

Laura Sadler
Secretary,
Dongola Public Library District
8221-958120

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT UNION COUNTY, ILLINOIS DALTON DAVID MILLER, Petitioner, v. MOLLY ANN MILLER, Respondent.

No. 2024-DN-24 PUBLICATION NOTICE

Notice is given of the Petition of Dissolution of Marriage filed on July 29, 2024, by Petitioner, Dalton David Miller, against Respondent, Molly Ann Miller a/k/a Molly Ann Redman.

Notice is given to Molly Ann Miller a/k/a Molly Ann Redman, who is named in a Petition filed in the above proceeding and whose address is unknown and not stated in the Petition.

YOU ARE REQUIRED to file an answer in this case or otherwise file your appearance on or before October 20, 2025, in the Office of the Clerk of this Court at the Union County Courthouse, 309 W. Market St., Jonesboro, Illinois 62952.

IF YOU FAIL TO DO SO, A JUDGMENT OR DECREE BY DEFAULT MAY BE TAKEN AGAINST YOU FOR THE RELIEF ASKED IN THE PETITION FOR DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE.

Mark A. Kochan
Kochan & Kochan, P.C.
1220 South Park Avenue,
Suite C
Herrin, IL 62948
Tel. (618) 942-8850
Fax (618) 942-8601
Email: service@kochanlaw.com
8221-957871

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT UNION COUNTY, ILLINOIS ESTATE OF WILLIAM E. MOREFIELD, DECEASED. NO. 2025-PR-15 IN PROBATE NOTICE OF DEATH INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION, AND CLAIM DATE

NOTICE IS GIVEN to creditors of the death of William E. Morefield, of Anna, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued on September 11, 2025, to Scott Hickam, 139 W. Vienna, Anna, IL 62906 as Independent Executor, whose attorney is Elvis C. Cameron, 205B N. Main St., Anna, Illinois.

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

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

Notice is further given to ANNE MOREFIELD, believed to be the daughter of William E. Morefield, as to all rights afforded to her under the Illinois Probate Act.

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

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

Dated: September 15, 2025.
SCOTT HICKAM
CAMERON LAW FIRM, LLC
ELVIS C. CAMERON
ATTORNEY FOR INDEPENDENT EXECUTOR
205B N. MAIN ST.
ANNA, ILLINOIS 62906
PHONE: 618-833-2220
ARDC# 6244394
8221-958085

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE 1ST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT UNION COUNTY - JONESBORO, ILLINOIS Freedom Mortgage Corporation PLAINTIFF Vs. Uzair Ahmed; et. al. DEFENDANTS No. 2025FC3 NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on 06/18/2025, the Sheriff of Union County, Illinois will on October 29, 2025 at the hour of 9:00 AM at Union County Courthouse 309 West Market Jonesboro, IL 62952, or in a place otherwise designated at the time of sale, County of Union and State of Illinois, sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash, as set forth below, the following described real estate:

THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED PROPERTY IS LOCATED IN UNION COUNTY, ILLINOIS:

A PARCEL OF LAND BEING A PART OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 3, TOWNSHIP 12 SOUTH, RANGE 2 WEST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN. SAID PARCEL IS PART OF PROPERTY DESCRIBED AND RECORDED IN BOOK 143, PAGE 276 IN THE UNION COUNTY COURT HOUSE IN THE NAME OF GEORGE PATRICK MYERS, DATED MAY 28, 1997. SAID PARCEL BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

COMMENCING AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF SAID QUARTER-QUARTER SECTION, SAID CORNER BEING MARKED BY AN ALUMINUM FOREST SERVICE MONUMENT FOUND; THENCE N 87 DEGREES 48' 57" W, 367.87 FEET ALONG THE NORTH LINE OF SAID QUARTER-QUARTER SECTION TO AN IRON ROD SET. THIS BEING THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF SAID PARCEL AND THE POINT BEGINNING; THENCE N 87 DEGREES 48' 57" W, 572.34 FEET CONTINUING ALONG SAID QUARTER-QUARTER SECTION LINE TO AN IRON ROD SET IN THE EAST RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF STATE ROUTE 127; THENCE WITH SAID EAST RIGHT OF WAY LINE THE FOLLOWING FOUR (4) CALLS; THENCE ALONG A CURVE TO THE LEFT WITH A CHORD BEARING S 04 DEGREES 24' 53" E, 125.21 FEET, A RADIUS OF 11,394.19 FEET, AN ARC LENGTH OF 125.21 FEET TO A POINT; THENCE S 04 DEGREES 43' 46" E, 276.20 FEET TO AN IRON ROD SET; THENCE S 85 DEGREES 16' 14" W, 15.00 FEET TO AN IRON ROD SET; THENCE S 04 DEGREES 43' 46" E, 150.00 FEET TO AN IRON ROD FOUND AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF THE LESLIE AND MICHAEL GRUBBE, PROPERTY (SEE BOOK 5, PAGE 101); THENCE WITH THE GRUBBE PROPERTY THE FOLLOWING TWO (2) CALLS; THENCE N 85 DEGREES 16' 14" E, 200.00 FEET TO AN IRON ROD SET; THENCE S 04 DEGREES 43' 46" E, 155.00 FEET TO AN IRON ROD SET; THENCE ALONG NEW LINES THE FOLLOWING FOUR (4) CALLS; THENCE N 84 DEGREES 22' 45" E, 48.14 FEET TO AN IRON ROD SET; THENCE N 39 DEGREES 04' 53" E, 152.86 FEET TO AN IRON ROD SET; THENCE N 17 DEGREES 20' 30" E, 295.54 FEET TO A POINT; THENCE N 20 DEGREES 28' 12" E, 279.14 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.

PIN 08-03-05-706-C
Improved with Residential
COMMONLY KNOWN AS:
2650 State Route 127 N
Cobden, IL 62920

Sale terms: 10% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the auction; The balance, including the Judicial sale fee for Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund, which is calculated at the rate of $1 for each $1,000 or fraction thereof of the amount paid by the purchaser not to exceed $300, in certified funds, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.

If the property is a condominium and the foreclosure takes place after 1/1/2007, purchasers other than the mortgagees will be required to pay any assessment and legal fees due under The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4).

If the property is located in a common interest community, purchasers other than mortgagees will be required to pay any assessment and legal fees due under the Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1).

If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney.

Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser shall receive a Certificate of Sale, which will entitle the purchaser to a Deed to the real estate after Confirmation of the sale. The successful purchaser has the sole responsibility/expense of evicting any tenants or other individuals presently in possession of the subject premises.

The property will NOT be open for inspection and Plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the Court file to verify all information.

IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW.

For information: Examine the court file or contact Plaintiff's attorney: Codilis & Associates, P.C., 15W030 North Frontage Road, Suite 100, Burr Ridge, IL 60527, (630) 794-9876. Please refer to file number 14-25-01950.

I3273214
8221-957922

REAL ESTATE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE 1ST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT UNION COUNTY - JONESBORO, ILLINOIS Freedom Mortgage Corporation PLAINTIFF Vs. Uzair Ahmed; et. al. DEFENDANTS No. 2025FC3 NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

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Improved with Residential
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I3273214
8221-957922

Villa Ridge American Legion to host patriotic UTV ride

American Legion Post 178 in Villa Ridge is planning its fourth Annual Stars and Stripes UTV ride on Saturday, Oct. 4, 2025 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

The ride will begin and end at the American Legion Post, located at 1853 Olmsted Road in Villa Ridge.

A donation of $20 per vehicle and driver (plus $5 for each passenger) includes the ride, food and drink for all participants and eligibility for prizes.

Registration and food service will begin at noon on the day of the event at the Legion Hall.

Members of the American Legion Auxiliary will be serving food, beverages and cookies before the ride.

Each vehicle will be entered into a drawing for cash attendance prizes, and the auxiliary will award $50 prizes for the most patriotically decorated vehicle, as well as, for the first time this year, the most patriotically dressed person.

The public is invited to come out and participate in this event, which is being held in memory of former Post 178 Commander Darrell Kerr, who originated the idea for the ride and was the champion for the first ride prior to his passing in Oct. 2022.

Proceeds from the ride will be used to support local veterans' groups.

The Cat's Meow

by Cobden Spay and Neuter Coalition

Purr-fect day last Saturday at the Cobden Community Block Party! We earned over $500 toward spays and neuters of community cats, and the wonderful dunk tank was most of it.

Our sincere thanks to Bounce Blast Rentals for setting up the tank, and donating proceeds of the game to CSNC. Great thanks also goes to all the brave "dunkers" who volunteered their time and did a wonderful job antagonizing ball throwers.

As always, we want to thank the volunteers who helped with our setup and running our booth for the day. We cannot do what we do without the community's help.

Next up is Colorfest Oct. 11 in Anna. No dunk tank, but we'll have other fun activities to raise funds. It will also be another opportunity to present ourselves to the community, and educate them about our critical work.

Please visit our website, cobdenspayneutercoalition.org, or our facebook page to see what we're up to and to make contributions to our work. You may also drop off donations at Meller-James & Associates. CSNC is a 501c3 nonprofit organization, and donations are tax-deductible.

CSNC is hosting a general meeting open to the public on Tuesday, Sept. 30, at 6 p.m. at Kiki's Coffeehouse in downtown Anna. Come learn about our mission and work and see how you can help. We are in critical need of volunteers for trapping and transport teams and for fundraising.

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

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS BUY LOCALLY

Send Classified Ads and Legal Notices to classifieds@annanews.com

THE GAZETTE-DEMOCRAT
The Talk And Cobden Review • Serving Union County Since 1849

REMEMBERING OUR HEROES

A Salute To Our Veterans,
publishing Thursday, November 6th, 2025

Filled with photographs of our vets and highlighting some of their heroic stories, this commemorative section will honor the accomplishments of area men and women, living and deceased, who have served our nation in the armed forces.

Please complete the form below and send us a photo to include your vet in this keepsake publication. Copies of photos are encouraged, however, if you send us an original, we'll return it to you. Deadline for submission is Friday, October 24.

VETERANS DAY

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

The Gazette-Democrat

(618) 833-2158

Area Veterans To Be Honored

Area veterans, both living and deceased, will be honored in a special section of The Gazette-Democrat to be published in conjunction with Veterans Day. All are invited to submit pictures and information about military service to be included in the section at no charge.

To be included all you have to do is:

1. **Submit a picture** with your name printed on the back. Newspaper clippings and photo copies won't work. We'll take good care of your photo and return it to you.
2. **Provide information** about your military service using as much as you can of the form below.
3. **Repeat last year's article and photo.** You may update information or photos. **You must let us know if you want last year's article repeated!**

Current information on veteran or person submitting form

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Please send this form with photo to:
The Gazette-Democrat
P.O. Box 877
Carbondale, IL 62903
You may also email photo and information to veterans@localsouthernnews.com

Military Service

Veteran's name _____

Branch of service _____ Years in which you served _____

Military unit _____ Rank _____

Military job/specialty _____

Primary places of service _____

_____

Campaigns or operations_____

_____

Awards or achievements _____

Is veteran living or deceased?_____

Additional notes and comments:_____

_____

_____

_____

Anna VFW post conducts National POW/MIA Recognition Day ceremony



Ceremony participants

Participants in the National POW/MIA Recognition Day ceremony held Friday evening, Sept. 19, at Veterans of Foreign Wars Carroll P. Foster Post No. 3455 near Anna gathered at a Table of Honor. They included, from left, Clarence Caraker, VFW state POW/MIA chairman, district commander and post senior vice commander; Mark Haddick, post chaplain; Diana Steele, district Auxiliary chaplain; Phillip Wright, post Auxiliary president; Lori Crites, 15th District Auxiliary president; and James Hall, post commander.



Posting of Colors

An honor guard Posted the Colors at the National POW/MIA Recognition Day ceremony held Friday evening, Sept. 19, at Veterans of Foreign Wars Carroll P. Foster Post No. 3455 near Anna.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL THE FLOWER"
FORMER FLORIST SHOP REAL ESTATE AUCTION



215 W Vienna Street, Anna, IL 62906
Begins to End: September 16th, 2025 Tuesday 2:00 PM

This mixed-use property auction features the former Jan's House of Flowers, a 1900-built frame building located in Anna, Illinois. The property offers 1,154 square feet on the main level and 800 square feet on the second floor, plus an additional 450 square foot two-story building that requires rehabilitation. Situated on a 0.3-acre lot with R-2 zoning, the main building includes a shop front area, backroom with two walk-in coolers (not currently running), and an 18' x 18' work area. The property presents opportunities for residential conversion, continued commercial use, or mixed-use development for buyers willing to invest in renovations.

Seller: Autumn Winn Funkhouser

To Pre-Bid or for More Information Please Visit www.ollisauction.com
Call us today to schedule a showing 1-800-272-9791

JOE OLLIS AUCTION SERVICE LLC
400 New Hope Road Buncombe, IL 62912
(618) 833-2227 Toll Free (800) 272-9791
Joe Ollis Auction Service, LLC IL Lic #444.000380
Information Herein Believed To Be Accurate But Not Warranted



Table of Honor

Lori Crites, VFW 15th District Auxiliary president, pointed out items on a Table of Honor which highlighted symbols related to POWs and MIAs.

Check out The Gazette-Democrat online at
annanews.com

County Line News

(Mill Creek and Upper Elco) **By Suzan Harvel**

Another trip to St. Louis. I'm hoping it was the last of this year. Traffic was worse than a week or so ago and we had storms and rain to deal with on the way home. Of course, once we got home…no rain.

We had a brief shower one morning and that's been it. We need rain, but it keeps dancing around us. Guess I'll be watering with the hose for a while longer. The good news is we don't need to mow. The grass is dead. Sort of like the leaves that are falling out of the trees. Not much color either, just dead brown. Bummer. Oh well, better luck next year.

The Village of Mill Creek had their monthly meeting on September 16th. The village has new residents and Matt Phalin and family are welcomed to the area. Mulch has been laid in the park and new signage has been added. More signage will be erected in areas warning folks to be mindful on curves and hills where children might be riding bikes or playing. The next meeting will be October 21, 2025 at 7 p.m.

Members of P.A.S.T. of Union County met at the Heritage House in Jonesboro on Sept. 18 to do a deep cleaning in preparation for upcoming events. Another will be held on Sept. 25 at 9 a.m. to finish up. The regular monthly meeting will be at 6 p.m. on Sept. 30. New members are always welcome.

I attended a ribbon cutting in Vienna Sunday, Sept. 21 for the opening of the new location of the Johnson County Historical Society. Its new location is on the Vienna Square at 120 North 4th Street. The building itself dates back to 1900. Approximately 40 plus people attended the ribbon cutting and were able to see what documents, books, videos, photos, are currently on display.

The board is still unpacking from their move from the old Paul Powell House, which is being converted, I'm told, into a bed and breakfast eventually. The new location is spacious and very organized and I look forward to doing a lot of research there in the future. Go online to: https://johnsonctyilgenhist.org and learn more about Johnson County.

Mill Creek Baptist was led in Sunday service by Brother Bobby Richardson on a sermon from Mark 10: 17-27. This section recounts Jesus's conversation with the rich young ruler on what he needed to do to inherit eternal life. Jesus responded by saying to obey the commandments and when the ruler said he'd done all of that Jesus told him to sell what he possessed and follow Him. That was more than the ruler was willing to do. You see it wasn't really about what he possessed it was about the wiliness to set aside the trust in those riches and put his trust in Jesus. Jesus doesn't change…we must. Not just outwardly, but we have to rid ourselves of the sin that keeps us from fully following His path for our lives. Brother Bob asked us "Do you know, that you know, that you know, if you died today that you'd go to heaven?" If you can't answer 100% yes, you need to seek God and prioritize your choices so that you are ready when He calls you home.

Those added to the prayer list are: the family of former Governor Jim Edgar who passed and whose wife is from Anna; the Jeremiah Johnson family for strength; Carmen Henson, Harold Richardson, Jacob Starr, and Jordan Starr all for health needs; and Linda Starr who took a fall recently.

Union County Fixin's

Apple Cranberry Crumble

3 cups chopped peeled apples

2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries, thawed

3/4 cup sugar

1 cup old fashioned or quick cook oats

1 cup packed brown sugar

1/3 cup all-purpose flour

1/2 cup butter, melted

1/2 cup chopped pecans, optional

In a greased 8-inch square baking dish, combine apples and cranberries; sprinkle with sugar.

In a bowl, combine the oats, brown sugar, flour, and butter. Sprinkle over apples mixture.

Top with pecans, if desired.

Bake, uncovered at 350 degrees for 55-60 minutes, or until browned and bubbly.

Serve warm.

Traffic information shared for A-JCHS homecoming parade

The Anna Police Department is sharing information related to the Anna-Jonesboro Community High School homecoming parade. The parade is set for Friday afternoon, Sept. 26, in Anna. The department posted the information on social media and includes the following:

All roadways of the parade route and access will close promptly at 12:45 p.m. and will not reopen until approximately 3 p.m., or until the parade is complete, whichever comes first.

Parade Route

Begins at the Anna City Park at 1 p.m., turns onto Davie Street heading west to Main Street, turns southwest onto South Main Street heading for A-J Community High School, and turns south on East High Street, which is the end of the parade route.

The department asks parade participants to please remember all floats are to be returned to the Anna City Park, where any disembarking by persons shall take place. Do not stop on any side streets to allow float riders on or off the floats. Any individuals walking, please move to the sidewalks and remain clear of the roadways. This is for your safety as well as the smooth operation of this year's parade.

Detours

Traffic from Jonesboro to Anna will be rerouted onto West High Street to South Green Street, which will lead to West Vienna Street (Illinois 146).

Traffic to Jonesboro from Anna will be rerouted along West Vienna Street (Illinois 146) to West Spring Street and then onto South Main Street past the end of the parade route.

Temporary One Way Street Designations

East High Street will be a one-way road for travel from South Main Street to Freeman Street.

West High Street will be a one-way road for travel from South Main to South Green Street.

South Green Street will be a one-way road for travel from West High Street to West Vienna Street (Illinois 146).

West Spring Street will be a one-way road for travel from West Vienna Street (Illinois 146) to South Main Street.

If you live on on the following roadways, please use South Street to drive to Spring Street before attempting to enter South Main Street: South Street, Jefferson, Freeman, East High, Church and Lafayette.

Temporary Full Road Closures

Morgan Street. Walton Street. Washington Street. West Jefferson Street.

Temporary Partial Road Closures

West Davie Street (closed from South Green to South Main).

East Davie Street (closed from Market Street to South Main).

Opinion and Commentary

Prioritize safety during dry weather and harvest season

Some welcomed rain fell early this week in the Southern Illinois area, but as drought conditions continued across the Midwest, the Illinois Department of Agriculture and the Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshall urged farmers and agricultural workers to prioritize safety during this year's harvest. Because dry fields create increased fire risks, the 2025 harvest season brings challenges that demand heightened awareness and preparation.

The message was shared during the observance of National Farm Safety and Health Week, which began Sept. 21 and continues through Sept. 27. The goal of the week is to raise awareness through education with a theme of "Safety First. Avoid the Worst."

"During drought conditions, a single spark can quickly ignite a field," Illinois Department of Agriculture director Jerry Costello II said in a news release. "We want to remind farmers to treat every dry field as a potential fire hazard and to take the necessary precautions to prioritize their own safety, as well as their neighbors and first responders, during this busy season."

"Dry vegetation in fields and wildland areas creates high fuel loads that can ignite quickly and spread rapidly, putting farmers, nearby homes and surrounding property at risk," Illinois State Fire Marshal Michele Pankow said. "By following these important safety tips, we can reduce the risk of accidental fires while protecting our farmers, communities and first responders."

Machine Maintenance: Inspect equipment daily and blow off debris to reduce buildup. Lubricate bearings and chains to prevent overheating. Inspect wiring and connections for damage. Check tires for cracks or wear.

Field Safety: Harvest during cooler, less windy times of the day when possible. Carry at least two fire extinguishers: one in the cab and one accessible from the ground. Keep a tractor with a disk in a safe location, ready to help stop a spreading fire. Schedule regular breaks. Long hours and stress can impair judgment and reduce reaction times. Don't delay calling 911 if a fire starts.

Beyond the Farm: Properly extinguish cigarettes. Don't ever throw butts out of cars. Make sure chains on trailers are not dragging the ground. When operating any tools that can cause sparks, avoid areas of dry vegetation. Check your community's policy on outdoor burning. Numerous communities across the state have issued burn bans. Report any fire immediately by calling 911.

According to 2022 data for the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the agricultural sector is still the most dangerous in America with 417 fatalities. Fall harvest time can be one of the busiest and most dangerous seasons of the year for the agriculture industry. For this reason, the third week of September has been recognized as National Farm Safety and Health Week.

Health department: use caution when hiring private sewage disposal contractors

Southern 7 Health Department is advising area residents to exercise caution when hiring contractors to install, repair or replace private sewage disposal systems. The health department has received reports of unlicensed individuals misrepresenting themselves as qualified contractors and offering to complete sewage work.

The health department says that in many cases, these individuals fail to complete the work or install systems that do not meet state and local code requirements. This most often results in relatively quick failure of the system or sewage backups in the home. Improperly constructed sewage disposal systems may contaminate groundwater, create public health hazards, and result in costly legal or corrective action for the property owner.

To prevent falling victim to these scams, residents should always confirm that contractors are licensed, bonded, and insured before entering into any agreements. Verification can be obtained directly through the health department or licensing authority.

Homeowners are strongly encouraged to request written contracts that clearly outline the scope of work, payment schedule, and permit requirements. Be wary of contractors who insist on full payment in advance, pressure immediate decisions or refuse to provide documentation of licensure.

Protecting your investment and the community's health begins with hiring only qualified, reputable professionals. As a reminder, repairs, replacements and installation of new private sewage disposal systems are required to be permitted by your local health department.

For more information, contact Southern 7 Health Department at 618-634-2297, extension 973114. Southern 7 Health Department is a public health department that serves communities in the seven southernmost counties in Illinois, focusing on disease prevention, promoting of healthy lifestyles and ensuring access to healthcare services for the region.

Nominations welcomed for conservation awards

The Illinois Conservation Foundation, ICF, is planning to host the second annual Illinois Outdoor Excellence Awards, honoring outstanding contributions to Illinois' natural resources and outdoor heritage.

The awards will be presented at the annual ICF Gala in March 2026, when winners will be recognized alongside the newest class of Illinois Outdoor Hall of Fame inductees.

Nominations for the Illinois Outdoor Excellence Awards are open and may be submitted through the foundation's website at ilconservation.org. The deadline for submissions is Oct. 30.

Awards will be presented in the following categories: outdoor writer/author of the year, the outdoor volunteer organization of the year, the outdoor business/business owner of the year and the outdoor influencer of the year.

Please read this...

By Geof Skinner

Wondering about origin of 'dry as a bone'…

As has often been the case over, lo, these many years, the spark for the creation of a weekly column could change on a moment's notice… Such was the case for this week.

This week's catalyst for change involved another journey to the Trail of Tears State Forest here in Union County, which led me to wonder about the origin of a well-known adage which seemed quite appropriate to our recent lack of rain…also known as a drought.

Your writer decided to head to the state forest last Sunday afternoon. As usual, the plan was to do some walking in a creek bed at the forest, look for whatever Critters might be out and about and maybe spot a relic from long ago…as in millions and millions of years in the past.

The weather last Sunday was warm, verging on hot, with lots of sunshine. Such conditions have been pretty common in recent weeks in our little corner of the world. Then again, technically speaking, it was still summer time in our little corner of the world. Autumn arrived Monday…thank goodness.

Upon arrival at the state forest, I found my "usual" parking place, a spot in a shady area. I got out of the car…took a couple of photographs of nearby flowers for The Other Half's enjoyment…and wandered over to a nearby pool of water. The water was clear as could be. A few water striders were striding about on the pool's surface. Didn't see any crawdads doing their crawdad thing on a Sunday afternoon.

Then…it was off for a stroll in the creek bed…which was "dry as a bone," and that was quite a bit different from what was seen during another visit not all that long ago. I ended up walking quite a distance before seeing any water of all, and that was a very, very small pool in a low-lying spot in the rocks. I did try to stay in the shade, since standing in direct sunshine was a bit on the warmish side.

In addition to not seeing a whole lot of water, I noticed that leaves are starting to fall with the change of seasons. During my visit, leaves were indeed falling trees overhead. Some of the creek bed already was covered with a light layer of fallen leaves.

Next day, as in Monday, as I sat down at the computer keyboard to craft this gem, I wondered about the origin of the adage "dry as a bone." This sort of thing happens to me. A lot.

As usual, I headed for the 21st century source of all knowledge and wisdom: TikTok. Nah. Not really. Never done TikTok.

I did spend some on the internet doing what passed for "research." The initial response I saw about the origin of "dry as a bone" was an "AI Overview"…as in an Artificial Intelligence Overview. Well, that's what I think "AI" meant.

The overview explained that "dry as a bone" originated in the 16th century, which, as far as we know, was a time when there was no AI. Makes one wonder how civilization managed to make any progress. "The phrase is a simile, comparing an object to a bone, which becomes thoroughly dehydrated after it loses its soft tissue and is exposed to the elements, becoming brittle and devoid of moisture," the Overview overviewed. Furthermore… "the concept of 'dry bone' appeared as early as the 1580s." Could not prove that by me. I was pretty new at the whole column crafting thing back then.

Bottom line, based on wisdom imparted by AI, wherever it comes from, "dry as a bone" emphasizes "a state of extreme dryness, lack of moisture, or humidity in anything from the ground to drink." Yup. That was pretty much the creek bed I saw Sunday afternoon.

Well…as an actual human being who does not completely trust the idea of AI, I did a little more searching about the origin of "bone dry." Another website I visited, literarydevices.net, explained that "bone dry" originated in a book published in 1830 and meant "perfectly dry."

The website even shared a poem, "Bone Dry Every Creek," written by somebody named Francis Duggan. I hope the poet, and the folks who operate the website, don't mind if I share a few lines from the poem which caught my attention and seemed very appropriate following my visit to the creek bed last Sunday afternoon…and the weather we've been having lately:

"For miles around bone dry every creek…"

"It has not rained here now for many a day…"



A creek bed at the Trail of Tears State Forest in Union County was the proverbial dry as a bone last Sunday afternoon.



A white-tailed deer was kind enough to stand still long enough for a photo or two… Wonder if such Critters have any thoughts about droughts.

"No signs of any rain clouds for days in the sky…"

Fortunately, we finally received some rain this week…and more was in the forecast…at least for a few days… Hopefully, the great outdoors will not be "dry as a bone" much longer…

Meanwhile…

Recent Critter Sightings included…

A couple of very upset kitties who experienced undignified transport to a medical appointment, where they both had to get shots.

The deer in the photograph which accompanies this week's column. The Critter was spotted one morning last week along a street in a Union County metropolitan area.

Two goats…including one "standing" on its hind legs in order to reach what presumably was some sort of tasty treat for a goat.

Two…maybe three…little frogs in the creek bed yours truly visited last Sunday afternoon.

Pesky little bugs…heard…but not actually seen…in the same creek bed. I'm thinking they might have been mosquitoes, which seem to be doing quite well this year…drought conditions notwithstanding.

One rabbit…hopping, quickly, across the street as the evening was coming to an end.

Some Critters, existing in the past tense, which might have been thriving on a sea bed about 350 million years ago…give or take a week or two. They were in the creek bed, too.

Cobden hosts block party, village wide yard sale



Cobden hosted a block party and village wide yard sale on Saturday, Sept. 20. Block party activities took place at the park in downtown Cobden. The community celebration featured arts, crafts, music, activities for children, displays, food and more. Special memories were recalled in a display about the Cobden Connection, which, in years past, brought together Cobden communities in several nations.



Cobden village president Larry Hackethal participated in some of the fun at a dunk tank which was set up at the block party. Photo provided.



Block party activities for the kids included bounce houses.