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Vol. 20, No. 5

The Prairie News

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The Central Illinois Farmer issue debuts

By **JEFF LAMPE**
For The Prairie News

Farming and the many industries related to agriculture have a huge impact on many aspects of our lives in central Illinois.

With that in mind, The Weekly Post and The Prairie News newspapers are adding a new section we call The Central Illinois Farmer.

Our debut issue is this week on Pages 8-16 and features a variety of stories on farming and farm-related topics. Another edition is planned for this fall and, if things go well, the section could become a quarterly addition to your free paper.

In this first issue, you can read about six

generations of Elmwood’s Shissler family who have been working the land since an ancestor arrived in 1852 to homestead 80 acres of Peoria County prairie.

You can also learn more about a possible lucrative benefit for soybean producers. Will soybean-based renewable diesel mean as much to soybean growers as ethanol has for corn growers? Or will production limits proposed by the Environmental Protection Agency squelch the renewable diesel boom in its infancy?

Green energy is all the rage these days, with lucrative government incentives to find new sources of energy, including wind towers and solar panels. But what does the

solar boom mean for farmers and for the area’s prime farm land?

Speaking of farm land, cash rents and per-acre values for Illinois land reached record highs in 2022.

And what about cattle, whose numbers are low but whose prices have been increasing steadily at the Kewanee Sale Barn and other places.

Finally, how soon will we see self-driving tractors in our area?

All those stories, along with advertisements by many fine local businesses, are part of our first issue of The Central Illinois Farmer. Look for the light green pages in the middle of this week’s paper.



State revenue estimate raised \$575 million increase

By **JERRY NOWICKI**
Capitol News Illinois

SPRINGFIELD – With two months to go before the adjournment of Illinois’ spring legislative session, Gov. JB Pritzker’s state budgeting task may have gotten easier Tuesday.

The Commission on Government Forecasting Accountability increased its revenue estimate for the current fiscal year by \$575 million – yet another positive development in a monthslong streak of revenue growth.

The commission is a bipartisan, bicameral group of lawmakers and is staffed by nonpartisan economic analysts.

“You can see in every single month so far this fiscal year we’ve actually had a gain where we’ve generated more revenue in this fiscal year compared to the same time a year ago,” Eric Noggle, senior revenue analyst for COGFA, said at the commission’s Tuesday meeting.

All told, COGFA anticipates revenues
Continued on Page 2

WATER WORKS REFURBISHED



Pictured above is Aaron Kewish and his Old Water Works building, which was the first business Property Pride award which was given by the Galva. Ready to Grow committee, this past Wednesday. Kewish purchased the water works building from the City of Galva about three years ago and restored the building inside and outside. The building located at 105 N. Center Ave. is Kewish’s personal museum for many old collectables he has acquired - many pertaining to Galva. He bought a giant Manx statue which sits to the South of the building which is a statue of Viking King Orry known as the muffer man. The statue attracts many visitors according to Kewish. Photo by Carole Townsend.

Multiple civil suits filed vs. Musselman

Jane Doe plaintiffs seek damages

By **JOHN A. BALLENTINE**
and **JEFF LAMPE**
For The Prairie News

TOULON – Multiple civil lawsuits have been filed in state and federal court against Jason R. Musselman in connection with his arrest for criminal child pornography charges.

Three civil suits were filed on Feb. 1 in United States District Court, Central District of Illinois. Another suit was filed July 29, 2022, in state court.

At issue in the civil lawsuits is use of a camera near a tanning bed at Musselman’s home that he admitted using to take pictures of the plaintiffs while undressed and without their knowledge. The plaintiffs were minors when the pictures were

taken between April 2010 and March 2013.

Musselman pleaded guilty in federal court on Nov. 17, 2022, to three counts: sexual exploitation of a minor, distribution of child pornography and possession of material containing child pornography. He faces up to 60 years in prison.

Since pleading guilty, Musselman has been held at the Woodford County Jail. He was originally scheduled for sentencing on March 23, but on Feb. 28, that sentencing date was moved back to May 24 at 10 a.m.

According to court documents, Musselman has retained Prison Professors, a California group said to be
Continued on Page 2

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MUSSELMAN: Civil case seeks over \$200,000

Continued from Page 1
 “crisis managers and mitigation specialists.” To meet with Prison Professors, Musselman said he needs extra time since they will be traveling to Illinois.

As for the civil suits, one federal suit is filed on behalf of seven Jane Doe plaintiffs and seeks \$1,050,000. That figure is based on damages of \$150,000 per plaintiff, as per federal statute to remedy child pornography civil suits.

The suit claims each of the plaintiffs is depicted in

images of child pornography seized from Musselman’s possession on Jan. 19, 2022, when Illinois State Police executed a search warrant.

Two other separate federal civil suits were filed Feb. 1 on behalf of Jane Doe 8 and Jane Doe 9, seeking \$150,000 apiece.

Attorney Taylor Cascia of the Peoria firm Hasselberg, Grebe, Snodgrass, Urban & Wentworth represents the Jane Does in the federal suits and Phillip M. O’Donnell of Peoria-based Kingery, Durree, Wakeman & O’Donnell, Assoc. is defense for Musselman.

Summons for the federal civil suits were issued Feb.

2 and served on Musselman at Woodford County Jail.

On Feb. 24, O’Donnell sought an extension to April 10 to file a response to plaintiff’s complaints.

On Feb. 27, plaintiffs requested that the court deny the request for extension and set a deadline for an answer prior to March 23.

Presiding Judge Jonathan E. Hawley on Feb. 28 gave the defendant until March 23 to file a response to the plaintiff’s complaints.

In the state suit, Plaintiff Jane Doe filed a civil case against Musselman on July 29, 2022. Prior to May, 2012, the plaintiff was under the age of 18.

Court documents state Musselman installed a tanning bed at his home on or about April, 2010, to on or about March of 2013. The Jane Doe plaintiff alleges she used the tanning bed during that period.

In the state indictment, Musselman is charged with four counts, each seeking \$50,000 apiece plus punitive damages.

Patrick J. Sheehan III of Sheehan & Sheehan of Springfield represents Jane Doe in the state civil suit and O’Donnell represents Musselman. A case management conference is set for May 12, 2023.

STATE: 2024 also promising

Continued from Page 1
 for the fiscal year that ends June 30 to exceed original estimates by \$5.5 billion, rising to a record \$51.9 billion.

Much of that surplus has already been appropriated. Lawmakers allocated at least \$3.6 billion supplemental spending package in its January lame-duck session, and Pritzker proposed spending another \$490 million by the end of the fiscal year in his budget proposal for next year.

COGFA’s new estimate for the current fiscal year is \$545 million beyond the amount assumed by the Governor’s Office of Management and Budget in Pritzker’s budget proposal.

COGFA is also projecting stronger revenues in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2024 than the most recent estimate from GOMB. The \$50.4 billion COGFA estimate marks an increase of \$465 million.


Noggle said COGFA’s estimate was higher than GOMB’s because the commission had an extra half of January and all of February to factor into its projections.

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PUBLIC RECORD

Traffic citations & Ordinance violations

2-25 - Max LaCorte - Driving 15-20 mph above limit.

2-28 - Hearon L. Blevins - Speeding 26-34 mph over the limit.

Misdemeanors & Felonies

1-26 - Ordinance violation - Joshua R. Petty - Maintaining a nuisance.

2-26 - DUI - Charles E. Walker - Driving under the influence, driving 1-10 mph above the limit and improper traffic lane usage.

3-2 - Criminal felony - Noah M. Raices - Burglary and criminal trespass to a building.

3-3 - Domestic violence - Thomas J. Neufcour - Domestic battery with physical contact.

Incidents & Accidents Stark County

2-25 - Dale J. Ensley, 27, LaFayette was arrested driving without a valid driver's license, driving with no insurance, and speeding 71 mph in a 55 zone. He was released with a notice to appear.

2-25 - John P. Porter Jr., 36, Wyoming, was arrested on a McLean County warrant for failure to appear on an original charge for domestic battery/bodily harm. He was taken into custody and transported to the Stark County Jail. Unable to post a \$300 cash bond he was extradited to the McLean County Jail.

2-26 - Charles E. Walker, 64, Edelstein, was arrested for driving under the influence, speeding 64 mph in a 55 zone, and improper lane usage. He posted \$100 cash bond and his driver's license before being released with a court date to appear.

3-2 - Noah M. Raices, 23, Champaign, was arrested and charged with theft and aggravated assault. He was also found wanted on a Peoria County warrant for failure to appear on the original charge for driving while his license was suspended. His Stark County cash bond was set at \$100, along with a \$500 cash bond and in Peoria County. Unable to post he remains in the Stark County Jail.

3-2 - Anthony D. Thomas Jr., 28, Toulon, was arrested on a Woodford County warrant for failure to appear on the original offense for driving on a suspended license. He posted \$575 cash bond and was released with a new court date.

3-2 - Thomas J. Neufcour, 30, Bradford, was arrested for battery and transported to the Stark County Jail. The following day he posted \$100 cash bond and was released with a court date to appear.

3-3 - Tysha R. Crowe, 23, Kewanee, was cited for driving on a suspended registration and for speeding 71 mph in a 55 zone. She was released with a notice to appear.

3-4 - Matthew R. Koenigs, 24, Bradford, was cited for driving with no insurance. He was issued a notice



to appear.

3-4 - Calvin L. Smalls, 41, Peoria, was cited for unlawful use of vehicle registration, defective exhaust, failure to transfer a vehicle title and for driving with no insurance.

3-5 - Shajuanna S. Jones, 32, Kewanee, was ticketed for driving on an expired registration, driving with no insurance, and failing to secure a child under the age of 8 years old. She was issued a date to appear.

Galva Report

Officer dispatched:

2-27 - to the 400 block of SE 2nd Street to check the welfare of a subject who had called the Veterans hotline and was complaining of severe pain. Officer was unable to locate the subject. After calling the subject back, he was determined to be located in Ogden, Iowa, not Galva. It was referred to their jurisdiction.

2-27 - to the 100 block of NE 9th Street for a complaint involving loose dogs. Officer located the owner in the 00 block of NE 9th St. The dogs were returned.

2-27 - to speak with a subject in the 100 block of SE 3rd Street in reference to questions about an eviction.

2-28 - to a residence on NE 2nd Ave to deliver a message for Knox County.

2-28 - to the 500 block of SE Industrial Ave for a two-vehicle accident with damage only.

2-28 - to the 100 block of NE 4th Street for a possible trespassing complaint. The subjects had permission to be there.

3-1 - As the result of a traffic stop in the 500 block of West Division Street, William Gengler, 52, LaSalle, was arrested for driving while license suspended and operating a vehicle with suspended registration. He was released with a required court date.

3-1 - Officer was dispatched to the 100 block of SE 2nd Street for a disabled vehicle stalled in the roadway and causing a traffic hazard. Officer directed traffic while Tarletons removed the vehicle.

3-1 - to the 00 block of SW 2nd Street for a gas drive off. The suspect was located and returned to pay.

3-2 - to the 300 block of NE 1st Street for an accident with a deer that occurred north of Bishop Hill. Officer completed a crash report while a deputy checked for the deer.

3-3 - to assist Henry County with accessing the Lincoln House to serve an eviction notice.

3-3 - As the result of a traffic stop in the 600 block of SE 2nd Street, Randall Edwards, 21, Kewanee, was arrested on a Bureau County warrant for failing to appear on charges of criminal trespass to property, disobeying a police officer and no registration. He was released with a new court date.

3-3 - to check an unattended fire about 2 miles west of Galva. Officer located two 7-year-olds who had started the fire. A parent was in the house but unaware. The fire was put out with a garden hose.

3-4 - As the result of a traffic stop in the 800 block of SW 2nd Street, several subject were arrested for meth and weapons charges after the Galva K9 alerted on the vehicle. The driver, Amy Gerstenberger, 40, Galesburg, was arrested for possession of methamphetamine and unlawful use of weapons after a loaded handgun was found. She also was issued a citation for failure to use turn signal when required. A front-seat passenger, Josie Smith, 21, Galesburg, was arrested for possession of methamphetamine. A back-seat passenger, Bryan Clewell, 32, Galesburg, was arrested for possession of methamphetamine and unlawful use of a weapon after a taser was found. Clewell was released with an NTA. Gerstenberger and Smith were taken to the Henry County jail.

3-5 - Officer was dispatched to the 100 block of SE 3rd Street for a verbal disturbance/remove an unwanted subject complaint.

3-5 - Officer met a subject at the Galva PD and released an impounded vehicle from a recent arrest.

2-28 - Joshua Larabee, 19, Kewanee was issued a citation for having expired registration in the 900 block of NW 6th Street.

3-3 - Luciano Cantu, 29, Galesburg, was issued a citation for speeding in the 600 block of West Division Street.

3-4 - Alex Mendell, 27, Toulon, was issued a citation for illegal transportation of alcohol by a passenger during a traffic stop in the 300 block of SE 1st Street.

3-5 - Denton Autery, 22, Kewanee was issued a citation for expired registration in 500 block of SE 2nd St.

Property Transfers

2-27 - Robert S. Wilkinson to Robert S. and Janet S. Wilkinson - Pt 33-13-6 NE and SE and Pt 29-13-6 SE and SW - Consideration = \$0.

2-27 - Jack H. Bauer to Debra S. and Russell E. Jackson, Trustees - Pt 30-12-7 SE - Consideration = \$632,000.

2-27 - Carol M. Smith to Jolene B. Miller - Original Town of Wyoming - Pt. Block 5 Lots 1 and 2 - 100 S. 4th St. Wyoming - Consideration = \$40,000.

3-3 - Christopher & James J. Jr. Kunzle to Cindy and Jon Kunzle - Foster's Add'n Block B Lot 2, Bradford - Consideration = \$49,000.

NOTICE TO STARK COUNTY VOTERS

Early voting for the April 4th Consolidated Election will begin February 23rd and end April 3rd at the office of the Stark County Clerk
130 W. Main, Toulon.
Voting hours are Monday-Friday
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
We will also be open Saturday, April 1st from
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The Prairie News

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GUEST VOICES

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2023-2024

For all children who turn five on or before September 1, 2023!
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Of green new ideas, frosts & our top-down Gov.

Rambling through central Illinois, struggling to believe that the average last spring freeze date around here is not until April 18.

With a new year come new ideas. Among our 2023 brainstormings is publishing The Central Illinois Farmer, a section that debuts this week and will reappear at some point – unless everybody out there says it stinks. One notable thing about the new farm section is that the pages should look green ... but hopefully not too green. Caveats are offered because you never know exactly how colors are going to reproduce as they come off a web printing press. It would have been wise to use actual green pages, but that would have required lots of planning. So we are going for it. ... As with most ideas, none of ours is very original. The farm section is borrowed from the Clinton Daily Journal in central Illinois. And the colored pages are a throwback to The Peach, the old Des Moines Register sports section that was printed on peach-colored pages. As a kid, those peachy pages made life so much easier. I just skipped past



Jeff LAMPE

the boring news on the white pages and started reading peach-colored ones that had much-more interesting sports news. If nothing else, we hope you can find the green pages contained inside. Well, that and we hope you enjoy the new section.

Gorgeous weather on Monday had folks running around with no coats and dreaming of spring planting and summer breezes. Hah. By Saturday it will probably be snowing, stomach flu will be even more rampant and we will still have plenty of frosty days ahead of us – literally frosty days, since the latest freeze on record for the Peoria area is May 25, 1925. So keep your tree seedlings and veggies comfortable in south-facing windows for awhile longer. And stock up on Mucinex. ... Speaking of trees, The Wall Street Journal reported this week that, in parts of the country, leaves are sprouting earlier than in any year on record. In some places, leaf emergence is three weeks ahead of average. Warmer than expected winter weather is being cited as the cause. That's not happening here yet, thankfully, but it's worth watching. ... A mild winter also impacts pruning, with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources suggesting that arborists finish pruning oak trees by the end of the second week in March to prevent

the spread of oak wilt. Normally, you have until the end of March to prune. Not this year, it seems.

If you want to cross the bridge from Sparland into Lacon, you better plan a trip quick. Built in 1939, the bridge is one of the oldest that crosses the Illinois River and will close on March 18 for about eight months. Project cost is estimated at \$10 million. ... Parting shot: Have you heard of House Bill 4412, which sets statewide Illinois standards in regards to the siting and regulation of wind and solar farms. If you are a wind or solar developer, that bill would seem like a wise decision. But as someone who prefers to have a measure of local control over issues that impact my life, HB 4412 is frustrating. Actually, it reminds me of the top-down legislative style we saw through the pandemic, when the governor's office dictated policy to school boards all over the state. Now the same is happening in regards to "green power." HB 4412 sets standards counties must accept. There's no tailoring rules to fit your constituents. This is another case of urban legislators force-feeding policy to rural legislators. And while this is nothing new, being ignored is still frustrating.

Contact Jeff Lampe at (309) 231-6040 or jeff@wklypost.com

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~ Bebe Groter
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GUEST VOICES

Paying the price for living in rural America

Paying the price for being sick, old, or poor in rural America Rural America is just like the rest of America except it's older, poorer, and often sicker.

Even worse, if you're all three in rural America—elderly, poor, and ill—the odds that you will receive proper care from either a government agency or a private provider are dwindling with each passing year.

For proof, here's how the non-profit National Rural Health Association (NRHA) describes today's "cultural and social differences, educational shortcomings, (and the) lack of recognition by legislators ... [that now] conspire to create health care disparities" in rural America:



Alan GUEBERT

- There are 40 doctors per 100,000 rural Americans compared to 53 per 100,000 metro Americans.

- Income per capita in rural America is \$9,242 less than in metro America.

- 14.6 percent of rural American households receive SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits; that's 30 percent higher than in metro America.

- 18 percent of rural Americans are 65 years old or older compared to 12 percent in metro America.

- The overall poverty rate for rural America is 15.4 percent versus 11.9 percent in metro America.

Elderly rural Americans aren't the only ones impacted. According to the American Hospital Association, "about half of all rural community hospitals [do] not provide obstetrics care." Indeed, at least 89 rural hospitals dropped obstetrics care between 2015 and 2019.

As rural hospital care continues to

decline, more and more rural elder care facilities like nursing homes and memory-loss units are closing because of today's growing rural labor shortage and a failure by government to keep up with fast-rising costs.

For example, a dozen nursing homes closed in Montana in 2022. A dozen fewer nursing homes sounds like small potatoes – except in rural Montana where that's "one out of every five senior care facilities," noted Mike Jopek, a farmer, in a Feb. 22 editorial for the Flathead (MT) Beacon.

It isn't alone. According to the Iowa Health Care Association, as reported recently by the Des Moines (Iowa) Register, 13 of the 15 nursing homes that closed in the Hawkeye State last year were in rural communities.

But that's probably just the tip of a rural health care iceberg, noted the Register in its Jan. 27 story. "Nationally," it continued, "the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services reported recently that 129 nursing homes had closed in 2022" but "... the actual count was significantly higher" because "federal reports ... lag behind what's happening on the ground."

Any solution to America's growing rural health care problems—especially those with aging rural Americans—should not include cutting already insufficient federal and state aid flowing to financially-squeezed facilities.

That's especially so with today's obsessive Congressional calls to "reexamine" – really Washington-speak for "cut" – Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, and SNAP, four critical programs underwriting the rural health care economy and a substantial part of the overall rural economy.

SNAP, always a target of budget hawks, provides 41 million Americans with an average of \$230 per month in supplemental food assis-

tance. It cost \$120 billion in 2022. In 2023, however, SNAP costs will drop by \$20 billion as one-time, pandemic-pumped programs run out of funding.

Still, House Ag Republicans, in setting terms for 2023 Farm Bill talks, grumble about SNAP's "increasing" costs.

SNAP provides other community benefits. For example, every \$1 spent on SNAP generates \$1.79 in "economic activity" – mainly service jobs – in the community where it is spent.

As far as other federal dollars flowing into rural health care, "Medicaid, the government program for low-income Americans," reported the Register, "...covers the bills for more than 60 percent of people living in nursing homes."

Any cut to it, experts predict, will directly translate into more rural nursing home closures and less care for aging rural Americans nationwide.

Also, noted editorialist Jopek, many states like Montana have a "staggering one-time budget surplus in federal dollars" – largely unspent pandemic money – "intended to keep our rural nursing homes and assisted living facilities open. Why federal cash ... hasn't reached seniors is anyone's cynical and political guess."

He's being kind, even generous – which is more than can be said about today's rural political leaders.

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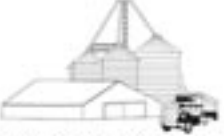
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BRIEFS

Health department hosting outreach event

The Henry and Stark County Health Departments and First Choice Healthcare remind area residents of the "12 Communities, 12 Months" outreach initiative for 2023.

The Health Department and First Choice Healthcare staff will go out to one Henry and Stark County community each month to conduct a special outreach event that will focus on all the public and clinic health services available to local residents.

A special outreach display will be hosted on Friday, March 31, from 9 - 11 a.m. in the lobby at the State Bank of Toulon, 102 W. Main St., focusing on March as National Nutrition Month. Health Department and First Choice Healthcare staff will be conducting free blood pressure checks that day. COVID-19 home tests, healthy snacks, giveaways and lots of health information will be available, all for free.

For more information about the "12 Communities, 12 Months" promotions and events call the Health Department at (309) 852-0197, or visit www.henrystarkhealth.com.

OSF Saint Luke offers scholarships

KEWANEE – OSF HealthCare Saint Luke Medical Center in Kewanee is accepting applications for 2023 health care scholarship awards. This year, \$5,000 will be awarded to area students pursuing a career in health care.

Scholarships are available to recent



Pictured above at a recent ribbon-cutting for Galva Garage Bar and Grill are (left to right): Carson Halsall, Galva Chamber of Commerce president; Heidi and Barry Millender, owners of Galva Garage Bar and Grill; Galva Mayor Rich Volkert, and City Administrator David Dyer. Photo by Carol Townsend.

high school graduates and advanced degree candidates with permanent residence in Henry, Stark or Bureau counties. Students must be pursuing health care career options, including, but not limited to, nursing, radiology, laboratory technology, respiratory therapy, physical or occupational therapy and pre-med.

Applicants must prove a demonstration of academic achievement accompanied by high school or college transcripts, volunteer or work history and health-related activities. Applicants must be planning to attend a post-secondary institution for a health career field of study.

Download a scholarship application by visiting osfsaintluke.org.

Completed applications must be returned to Samantha Rux via email at samantha.l.harkerrux@osfhealthcare.org or mailed to OSF HealthCare Saint Luke Medical Center, 1051 W. South St., Kewanee, IL

61443, by May 1.

Artifact ID day ahead at Dickson Mounds

LEWISTOWN – The Illinois State Museum announces the return of its annual Artifact Identification Day on Sunday, March 19, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at its Dickson Mounds branch in Lewistown.

For more than 40 years, this event has drawn both mundane and spectacular objects. Museum archaeologists and other experts will identify Native American artifacts and objects such as fossils, animal bones, and rock specimens.

Visitors are encouraged to bring their curiosities and questions. No appraisals will be given.

This event marks the first time Dickson Mounds has held its Artifact Identification Day post-pandemic. The last event took place in March of 2020.

CONSOLIDATED ELECTION NOTICE

Public Notice is hereby given that on Tuesday, April 4th in the County of Stark and State of Illinois, a Consolidated Election will be held. All polling places shall be open from 6 a.m. until 7 p.m. on Election Day at which time the following offices will be elected:

Municipalities/Villages: Alderman & Trustees	School Board Members
Park District Commissioners	Community College Trustees
Library District Trustees	Regional Board of School Trustees

List of addresses of Precinct Polling Places:

- East Toulon Precinct Polling Place 100 N. Main, Wyoming (Wyoming Fire Station)**
- *Essex Precinct Polling Place 104 S. 7th, Wyoming (Paramount Theater)**
- Goshen & West Jersey Precincts Polling Place 3986 State Rt. 17, Toulon (Goshen Township Building)**
- Osceola & Elmira* Precincts Polling Place 239 W. Main, Bradford (Bradford Fire Station)**
- Penn Precinct Polling Place 304 Concord, Castleton (Penn Township Building)**
- Valley Precinct Polling Place 15005 Township Rd 300 N, Wyoming (Valley Township Building)**
- West Toulon Precinct Polling Place 617 E. Jefferson, Toulon (Toulon Public Library)**

*New permanent polling location for this precinct.

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Six generations of Shisslers span gamut of farming

By JEFF LAMPE

For Central Illinois Farmer

ELMWOOD – Farming has a way of getting in the blood, of becoming almost a hereditary trait for some families. That’s certainly been the case for many members of Elmwood’s Shissler family, whose experiences working ground span the gamut of the farming experience.

The first Shissler came to the area as a homesteader and his descendants started their own seed sales business and now run successful farming operations across central Illinois. Along the way, they’ve experienced highs and lows common to farming.

Brothers Tom and Lynn Shissler and their five sons are all actively involved in farming today and make up the sixth generation of Shisslers to till the land. Their heritage dates back to George A. Shissler, who moved from Pennsylvania to the Elmwood area in 1852 at the age of 18 in order to homestead an 80-acre parcel north of Elmwood.

Shisslers have been farming north of Elmwood and elsewhere in the state ever since.

Shissler Seed Co.

Two generations after homesteader George arrived, his grandson Harold Shissler started growing seed corn in the 1930s with one-half acre of seed corn he raised for Funk Brothers out of Bloomington. Harold detasseled, harvested and dried his corn by hanging ears on coat hangers.

“Funk Brothers liked what Harold did in that half acre, so the next year he had one acre,” recalls Lynn.

Before long, as his acreage



Above is Big Orange, one of several rigs designed by Shissler Seed Co. to carry workers who detasseled seed corn. Photos courtesy of Tom Shissler.

steadily increased, Harold started Shissler Seed Co., Inc., in 1934 at age 33 and was later joined by his brother, George.

Years later, George’s two sons, Gene and Robert Shissler, bought out the founders and, by the late 1970s, were growing more seed than Funk Brothers’ did around Bloomington. Eventually, the Shisslers started marketing their own seed until selling out to LG Seeds after a disastrous drought in 1988 resulted in no crop.

Before its sale, Shissler Seed had 30 full-time employees and up to 400 seasonal workers – including generations of local high schoolers who spent summers detasseling seed corn.

In addition to seed corn and soybeans, the Shisslers raised alfalfa, sorghum, sudan grass and popcorn seed at farms strategi-

cally located in Henderson, Knox, Mason, Mercer, Peoria and Tazewell counties.

“It was a multi-county operation that didn’t always go well,” Lynn said.

By 1988, Shissler’s GR8 corn and soybean seed topped \$3 million in sales and was planted in fields in Illinois, Iowa, Missouri and Indiana.

“In their peak year, they had 7,000 acres of seed corn,” Tom Shissler recalled. “It just about killed everybody. There was seed corn everywhere, at Manito, Havana, Keithsburg and up here.”

Tom started working at the seed company at age 12 and has memories centered around sorting corn in the field, detasseling and working at the plant. His least favorite memory is cleaning oats.

“That was the all-time worse job,” Tom said. “Oats are the itchiest stuff ever. Just like insulation.”

More pleasant recollections include seeing the company’s craftsmen design and build equip-

302-bushel yield 3rd in corn contest

True to his upbringing as a descendant of seed growers, Jack Shissler credits his “seed guy” as one of the three most important in his farming operation, joining his banker and his “chemical guy.”

And Jack had plenty to be happy about last year, when a 10-acre test plot north of Yates City yielded 302 bushels to place third in the Corn Growers Association’s national yield

contest for no-till, non-irrigated acres.

Jack planted Golden Harvest’s G15J91-V after one year earlier seeing yields of 309.7 bushels with that same variety.

Noted Tom Shissler, “There’s a lot of good farmers around here. We’re not better than anybody and maybe not near as good as some. But we got by and we’re lucky to have the land we’ve got.”

ment. Two memorable inventions, Tom said, were called Big Orange and Big Yellow. Designed to carry workers in buggies hanging below a center support beam, the big implements let workers remove tassels without having to walk all day.

Lynn said Robert Shissler came up with the design and Verland Richards welded it all together.

Modern Era

Since the sale of the seed company, the Shisslers have transitioned to a more traditional life of corn and soybean farming.

Tom, 72, eventually left the seed company to begin farming on his own. Today, he and oldest son Jack farm 1,600 acres in Peoria, Knox and Fulton counties.

Middle son Andy graduated from the University of Illinois with a degree in Ag Economics and he and his wife, Wei, run their S&W Trading commodity business out of Wheaton.

Youngest son Adam farms about 2,200 acres in the Manito area for Gene Shissler and Sons Inc.

Reflecting on raising a family of farmers, Tom gives most of the credit to his late wife, Julia, who passed away in 2020.

“I could not have been able to farm at all without a great wife of 46 years,” he said. “When I first started at the seed company, I had three kids and was gone all the time and she raised them. And when things got

tough in the 1980s, we both got off-farm jobs, and that saved us.”

Lynn, 63, has two sons – Marshall, 22, and Charlie, 19 – who show signs of taking over his 700-acre operation.

“I’ve made it a point to be sure they live their lives how they choose,” Lynn said. “I’m not going to tell any of them what they have to do. I don’t think that choice was around 100 years ago. Maybe not 50 years ago.”

Lynn started as a teacher and coach, but began working in 1984 as an employee of Shissler Seed and has farmed since.

“I learned how to farm from Rollie Ekstrand, Bill Runyon and Tom Shissler,” Lynn said. “I was smart enough to ask a lot of questions and had good neighbors.

“My favorite part (of farming) is there’s nobody to blame. I either did it or I didn’t.”



Four generations of Shisslers pose for a picture in the 1970s. Clockwise from top left are Gene and his father, George, while Tom holds son Jack in his lap.



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Fridays busy at Kewanee barn

By JOHN A. BALLENTINE

For Central Illinois Farmer

KEWANEE – It's all business at the Kewanee Sale Barn once livestock enter the auction ring in lots of two to eight animals. When a winning bid is secured, the current lot of animals is herded out of the ring and, mere seconds later, more livestock enter.

In the ring is Pat Cocquit, president and operator of the Kewanee Sale Barn Corporation. He and an employee watch diligently for bidders as Pat's son Ryan barks out the ever-changing bids until a sale is completed.

Pigs, sheep and cattle were up for auction this past Friday, as farmers and livestock dealers made purchases with almost imperceptible nods of their heads. Prior to the indoor ring action, auctioning outdoors occurred where poultry, rabbits, hay, straw and miscellaneous items were sold.

The same scene is repeated every Friday as animals for auction are obtained through consignment and farmers bring livestock to the sale barn, located on Cambridge Road, 25836 N. 800 Ave., north of Kewanee. Cattle come to the auction as



Kewanee Sale Barn president Pat Cocquit seeks bids on a lot of six calves last Friday. Photo by John A. Ballentine.

feeder cattle, bred cows and market cattle.

The sale barn is geared toward farmers and Cocquit said its restaurant has the best homemade pies and meals money can buy.

Cocquit said his business has changed since he took over in 2010.

"Our numbers are way down. We've got record high prices for fat cattle, and we've got record high prices for feeder cattle and I don't see that coming down anytime soon because the numbers are going to stay tight for a couple of years with the drought and all the cows they got rid of in the south and west," Cocquit said. "So, our markets with the cattle are going to stay strong."

Winter hours are: 10 a.m.

– poultry, rabbits and misc.; 11 a.m. – hay and straw; noon – hogs, sheep and cattle. Summer hours after Good Friday are: 5 p.m. – poultry, rabbits, misc.; 6 p.m. – hay and straw; 6:30 p.m. – livestock in the auction ring.

The Kewanee Sale Barn was founded in 1938 by Lawrence Van Hyfte and partner Harry Broadbent when they held the first sale in a rented barn on North Tremont Street. In 1942, the business relocated to the present site.

Cocquit is aided by employees Pat Van Hyfte, Connie Johnson, Debbie Peel, Carol Hankins, Matt Perham, Brad Ebersole, Mark Rubright, Willie Stevenson, Cottrell Eddy, Becky Bennison, Joe Westgerdes and Steve Foerder.



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Will EPA slow soybean boom?

By **JEFF LAMPE**

For Central Illinois Farmer

Can renewable diesel made with soybean oil provide a boom similar to what ethanol has fueled for corn?

Moweaqua farmer and commodity broker Kolten Postin of AgMarket says yes for several reasons.

Speaking at an ag breakfast in Elmwood earlier this winter, Postin stressed that renewable diesel is different than bio-diesel, a product that comes with caveats about algae growth and gelling in cold weather.

“Renewable diesel is everything bio-diesel wishes it could be but never will be,” Postin said. “Renewable diesel is a direct substitute for crude oil in the making of diesel.”

Renewable diesel is fully refined, unlike biodiesel, which is usually blended with petroleum-based diesel. As a result, renewable diesel can be used as a complete replacement for petroleum diesel, according to the University of Illinois’ farmdocdaily.

Just as importantly, Postin said the oil industry is actively working to boost the production of renewable diesel by building new soybean crush plants around the Midwest.

“Big oil is behind this and investing heavily into it,” he said. “The oil industry likes it better than electric vehicles.”

Postin said in February that 17 new soybean crush plants were being built in the Midwest and are expected to boost the crush total from 2.2 billion gallons to 2.82 billion gallons.

He anticipates the demand for soybeans increasing and raising the average minimum per-bushel price for soybeans. What’s more, he said renewable diesel would help reduce producers’ reliance on the oft-fickle export market.

“We’re going to transition to another price plateau (for soybeans) that is going to be good for you guys,” Postin said.

But the Environmental Protection Agency has slowed the crush boom, at least temporarily. The EPA set a renewable volume

obligation at 2.95 billion gallons by 2025 – well under the production capacity of 7 billion gallons that ag groups predict.

“All of the sudden you don’t really need all of those renewable diesel plants,” American Soybean Association Economist Scott Gerlt said at the USDA’s 99th annual Agricultural Outlook Forum.

In response, soybean crush markets dropped precipitously, from \$4.30 per bushel last November to just \$1.50 per bushel in late February.

A final ruling from the EPA is due on June 14.

If the ruling changes, demand for soybeans could increase considerably.

“We’re really going to need the genetic industry to help us with this,” Postin said. “We’re just not going to come up with more acres to meet demand.”

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- 2/\$11** Screamin’ Sicilian or Urban Pie pizza select varieties 14 to 26.9 oz.
- 1.99** Entenmann’s Little Bites select varieties 6.88 or 8.25 oz.
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- 3.99** Ben & Jerry’s ice cream 15.2 or 16 fl. oz. or cookie dough chunks 8 oz. select varieties
- 2.49** Ritz crackers select varieties 8.8 to 13.7 oz.
- 4/\$5** with purchase of 4 General Mills Chex Mix, Bugles or Gardetto’s select varieties 6 to 8.75 oz.
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Ag land values hit records

By **JEFF LAMPE**

For Central Illinois Farmer

It's a very good time to own a farm in Illinois, but maybe not so good a time to buy one. In addition to rising prices, cash rents have steadily increased.

The USDA said average farm real estate prices per acre for Illinois increased to \$8,950 in 2022, up 12.7 percent from 2021.

But gains are even better for farm ground, according to John Leezer of Leezer Farmland Sales in Toulon. He said gains for tillable

Cash Rent

Average Illinois cash rental rates per acre.

2022	\$243	2015	\$228
2021	\$227	2010	\$169
2020	\$222	2000	\$119
2019	\$224	1990	\$100
2018	\$223	1980	\$100
2017	\$218	1970	\$36

Source: National Agricultural Statistical Service.

ground in 2021 were closer to 20 percent and slightly below that for 2022.

Also in 2022, average cash rent for Illinois increased to a record \$243

per acre according to the USDA.

Rental rates don't appear to have slowed much, with the website Common-Ground reporting a hard-to-believe \$620 per acre bid for ground in Fulton County this winter.

Fueling the increases are high commodity prices, strong demand and aggressive land buyers – some of them investors seeking to get out of the stock market.

"Land has always followed the grain market," Leezer said. "Land is worth what it produces."

As a case in point, Leezer points to an early March auction of a 33-acre Stark County farm with a productivity index of 125. The land brought \$12,400 per acre. Leezer said two years ago that farm would likely have auctioned for \$9,500 to \$10,000 per acre.

Farm sales should be just about over until after harvest, since most producers will be actively working ground. What happens when fall sales resume will depend on interest rates and commodity prices, Leezer said.

"You don't want to buy when things are high, but we don't know if it is going to keep going," Leezer said.

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Biggest foreign landowner probably not who you think it is

If an editor used standard punctuation to relate the emotion expressed by Iowa Sen. Joni Ernst in a recent Capitol Hill discussion of foreign ownership of U.S. land, it would look something like this:

“... foreign persons hold an interest in approximately 40! Million! Acres! Of U.S. ag! Land! That’s more total acres than make up my entire home state! Of Iowa!”

The alarm by Ernst was purely intentional. Foreign ownership of U.S. land has always been a hot poker to

fire up farm state politicians whenever a perceived threat, like the “Chinese spy balloon” Ernst soon referenced, comes into view.

Ernst also mentioned her “concern” of the Chinese-owned Fufeng Group’s intent to build a corn processing plant near the Grand Forks (ND) Air Force Base. Two days before the Feb. 9 Senate hearing where she expressed those worries, however, the Grand Forks City Council voted 5-0 to deny Fufeng any “infrastructure... per-

mits” for the \$700 million plant.

Still, who does have title to the 40 million acres—and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) phrasing here is important—of “U.S. ag land owned by foreign persons” and how much of America’s 900 million arable acres are owned by Chinese nationals?

In the latter case, the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act report (or AFIDA) shows that, as of Dec. 31, 2021, Chinese entities owned 383,935

acres of U.S. ag land, or just under 1 percent of the 40 million foreign-owned acres and a microscopic 0.04 of 1 percent of total U.S. farmland.

To put those percentages into some perspective, China’s holdings in American ag land amount to just half of all foreign-owned U.S. land devoted to “homesteads and roads,” reports AFIDA.

The biggest foreign owners of U.S. ag land, our northern neighbors, dwarf Chinese holdings. “Canadian investors own the largest amount of reported foreign-held agricultural and non-agricultural land, with 31 percent, or 12.8 million acres,” AFIDA notes.

Moreover, “Foreign persons from an additional four countries, the Netherlands with 12 percent, Italy with 7 percent, the United Kingdom with 6 percent, and Germany with 6 percent, collectively held 12.4 million acres or 31 percent of the foreign-held acres in the United States.” So, five of America’s strongest, most dependable allies—Canada, Italy, the United Kingdom, Germany, and the Netherlands—own 62 percent, or 62 times more than China, of all foreign-owned U.S. “ag land.”

Equally revealing is where and what those U.S. holdings are. For example, AFIDA shows that Texas is home to the largest amount of foreign-owned land (5.3

million acres) followed by Maine (3.6 million acres), and Colorado (1.9 million acres).

Didn’t think Maine or Colorado—and maybe not even Texas—would be in the top three?

This is why “ag land” and not “farmland” is the defining term to foreign ownership of U.S. land. Foreign owners seem twice as interested in the natural resources already on the land—principally timber and pasture—than any potential crop, like corn or soybeans.

Indeed, according to AFIDA, “Forty-seven percent of the reported foreign interest holdings... are timber or forest, with cropland accounting for 29 percent of the total” and “pasture and other agricultural land total(ing) 22 percent...”

That means more than two out of three foreign-owned acres in the U.S. are either in timber or pasture and that less than one in three acres are in crops.

As for Ernst’s native Iowa, 507,519 of its 35.8 million acres, or 1.5 percent, are foreign-owned. Neighboring Illinois, with almost the exact amount of farmland as the Hawkeye State, however, holds almost two times as much foreign-owned ag land.

Even more revealing is that nearly 300,000 of those foreign-owned Iowa acres, or 60 percent, belong to people from either the Netherlands or Italy. By contrast, the amount owned by the Chinese is so small that AFIDA lumps it into an “All Others” group.

But facts rarely cool heated rhetoric, especially when there are so many political points to score and so many exclamation points going unused.

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The Farm and Food File is published weekly throughout the U.S. and Canada. Past columns, supporting documents, and contact information are posted at farmandfoodfile.com.



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Ag ground switching to solar

By **JEFF LAMPE**

For Central Illinois Farmer

After harvest this year, another crop will be sprouting in farm fields across the area. No, not cover crops. Solar panels.

At least two solar fields on former ag land are on-line in Peoria County, two in Marshall County are under construction and more are slated for this fall.

Statewide in 2021, the number of solar installations nearly quadrupled from 2020. No surprise there, since the 2021 Climate and Equitable Jobs Act aims to get Illinois 100 percent carbon-free energy generation by 2050 and upped state subsidies to wind and solar projects by \$350 million.

That means solar fields will be an ongoing issue for zoning boards, landowners and politicians for years to come.

Trajectory Energy Partners has 16 private projects in Illinois, many on former cropland. That includes a 380-acre field southeast of Galesburg and one south of Monica.

Another local project being explored is a 3,200-acre solar field west of Wyoming that currently has an application with the grid operator.

On one hand, contracts

for solar projects can be very lucrative for landowners. According to Kiersten Sheets of Trajectory “the range for our area is \$800 to \$1,000 per acre and typically 30 to 40 years for a lease.”

Word is some deals have trended higher than that, up to \$1,800 per acre.

That’s a hefty payment, even given steady increases in cash rent, which according to the National Agricultural Statistics Service averaged \$243 per acre in Illinois in 2022.

Solar projects also generate a windfall for local taxing bodies, which receive property taxes from the landowner and from the leasing solar company. One solar project near Kingston Mines is generating more than \$19,000 in additional property taxes.

On the other side of the issue is a question whether using the best farmland in the world to generate solar

power is the best use of that property.

Wind turbines allow farmers to generate power while also farming. Not so solar fields, whose only current ag use after installation is as pasture for sheep and free-range poultry. Cattle and pigs are not suitable for solar pastures due to their size and habits.

Given that, what are the ramifications for young farmers and producers who rent most acres they farm? What about the aesthetics?

Adding intrigue to the issue in Illinois is the passage of House Bill 4412, which passed in January and stipulates statewide provisions that counties are not allowed to exceed for setbacks, drainage, agriculture impact mitigation agreements and decommissioning of solar and wind installations after their useful life ends.



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Automated farming on rise

By **JEFF LAMPE**

For Central Illinois Farmer

The days of farmers riding in cabs will some day come to an end.

In addition to winning innovation awards last year for its fully autonomous 8R tractor, John Deere started commercial delivery of cameras and computers for automation that can be installed on existing tractors.

This year, John Deere is pushing Exact Shot, an automated technology that uses sensors and robotics to help farmers be more precise in seeding and fertilizing. Using the system, starter fertilizer can be placed next to a seed when it is planted, instead of applying fertilizer across an entire field.

As technology spreads, farmers will be able monitor a tractor's progress via cell phone and would be needed only to add fuel or seed.

Then again, with prices topping \$500,000 for the fully automated tractors, the fancy models won't exactly be flying off the lots.

Elsewhere, FarmWise is marketing a Vulcan three-point hitch weeder it says can scan vegetable row crops for weeds using algorithms and robotic arms.

• **Bull sale** – This year's Illinois Performance Tested Bull Sale average exceeded all previous sales, averaging \$4,440 on the 49 lots offered Feb. 23 at the Illinois State Fairgrounds in Springfield.

A yearling angus bull, Kramer Farms Patriarch 2145, consigned by Keith and Brady Kramer of Farina, topped the sale at \$8,250.

The high-selling senior Simmental bull consigned by Bob Fitzpatrick of Milan sold for \$8,000.

The high-selling senior angus bull consigned by Seagraves Angus of Mulberry Grove sold for \$7,500.

The high-selling yearling Simmental bull consigned by Fox Creek Cattle of Newton sold for \$6,000.

• **Enroll soon** – Agricultural producers who have not yet enrolled in the USDA's Agriculture Risk Coverage or Price Loss Coverage programs for the 2023 crop year have until March 15 to enroll a contract.

These two programs provide income support to farmers experiencing substantial declines in crop prices or revenues.

In Illinois, producers have completed 145,399

contracts to date, representing 82.55 percent of the more than 176,139 expected contracts.

Producers who do not complete enrollment by the deadline will not be enrolled in ARC or PLC for the 2023 year and will not receive a payment if triggered.

• **Best beans** – Illinois produced the most soybeans in the nation again in 2022. The USDA estimates Illinois soybean farmers raised 677.25 million bushels on 10.75 million harvested acres with an average yield of 63 bushels per acre.

• **Farm breakfast** – After a 3 year absence, the 20th Farmers Share of the Food Dollar Breakfast will be held Saturday, March 11, at Exposition Gardens in Peoria, 7-11 a.m.

The price of the breakfast is \$1.25. The price is based on the "farm" value of the menu items.

The menu includes two pancakes, two 2-ounce whole hog sausage patties, two scrambled eggs, an 8-ounce glass of Prairie Farms milk and an 8-ounce glass of Orange Juice.

The retail value of the meal is estimated at \$12.

Other activities are also planned.

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Kewanee man gets prison years in Stark County

By JOHN A. BALLENTINE

For The Prairie News

TOULON – Jacob D. Utenage, 39, of Kewanee, was sentenced March 3 in Stark County Circuit Court during a bench trial for a burglary he committed last June 13, in Elmira.

Utenage, who is currently incarcerated in prison and has an extensive criminal history in Stark and Henry Counties, was sentenced to 4½ years in prison for entering a shed in Elmira in an attempt to steal gasoline for his vehicle.

He filled a gasoline can full of fuel that was worth over \$50 and poured the contents of the can into his vehicle. Unfortunately for Utenage, it was diesel fuel, which made his car inoperable.

Utenage was caught in the act by the homeowner

who took down his license plate number and car description and described to the Stark County Sheriff's Office the yellow shirt Utenage was wearing. Deputy Dakota Copeland responded and attempted to arrest Utenage in Elmira.

Utenage was charged with aggravated assault by reportedly shouting that he was "going to shoot" Copeland in an attempt to resist arrest. Utenage was also charged with two counts of resisting arrest because he fled on foot from Copeland and "moved his body so as not to be detained," Stark's State's Attorney Caroline Borden Campion said in Court. Those three charges were dismissed as part of a negotiated disposition wherein Utenage pleaded guilty to burglary.

The 4½-year prison sentence will run concurrently with a three-year Henry County prison term Utenage recently received for aggravated fleeing of police.

In addition, to these recent convictions, Utenage has a 2019 Cook County felony drug conviction and Henry County felony convictions from 2009, 2012, 2015, 2021 and 2022 for which he received multiple years of prison terms for obstruction of justice, forgery and domestic battery and probation for drug possession, domestic battery

and violating an order of protection.

His Stark County 2009 prison conviction was for forgery – and now burglary, which is his 10th felony conviction.

Circuit Judge James A. Mack asked Utenage last Friday if he wanted to make a statement and Utenage affirmed that he did want to speak.

"I was under the influence [of drugs]," Utenage said. "I've learned from it and this has brought me closer to God on my spiritual journey."

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps

THE PIGS DON'T SEEM TO BE EATING AS MUCH AS THEY USUALLY DO.
MAYBE I SHOULD CHANGE UP THE MENU A BIT? BUT WHAT WOULD I ADD?
I ALREADY MIX TOGETHER CORN, FRUITS, BARLEY, EGGS, ROOTS AND MORE.
A LITTLE SALT WOULDN'T KILL YA!

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering

I HAVE AN HOURGLASS FIGURE.
WHAT ABOUT ME?
YOU HAVE A CUCKOO CLOCK FIGURE.

Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps

HEY, THIS IS A GREAT MOVIE! IT'S ABOUT TIME THEY MADE A BOOK FROM IT!

GRIN & BRAG IT

"Do we make a wee widget?"

Weekly SUDOKU
by Linda Thistle

6	4		5	3	
	5	6		8	
3			4		7
	1	9	3		5
9			2	6	
	3	4			1
	9		1	4	
	6		8		1
8		7			9

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦
♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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Answers on Page 3

CryptoQuote
AXYDLBAAXR
IS
LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each week the code letters are different.

UFD CYJ MDTQ RQ UROD
VIRDQ. UFD WPPJ MDTQ RQ
KPL'BD UFD SRIPU.
— ORHFYDI YIUQFLIDB

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Trivia test

- by Filí Rodríguez
- FOOD & DRINK: Which U.S. city is known for its square pizzas with crunchy corners?
 - TELEVISION: Which character became a fugitive in the final season of "The Office"?
 - GEOGRAPHY: Which of the Great Lakes lies entirely within the United States?
 - LITERATURE: Which famous novelist wrote his last book in crayon due to poor eyesight?
 - GAMES: What are the two most valuable letters in Scrabble?
 - MOVIES: Which movie series features a character named Ellen Ripley?
 - LANGUAGE: What is a "schwa"?
 - GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: Which nation is credited for being the top beer-drinking country in the world?
 - ANATOMY: What is a common name for the axilla?
 - ANIMAL KINGDOM: What do you call an ant's home?
- Answers**
- Detroit.
 - Creed Bratton.
 - Lake Michigan.
 - James Joyce.
 - Q and Z (10 points each).
 - "Alien."
 - Unstressed vowel represented by an upside-down "e."
 - Czech Republic.
 - Armpit.
 - A nest or formicary.

TOP 10 MOVIES

- Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantumania (PG-13)
- Cocaine Bear (R)
- Jesus Revolution (PG-13)
- Avatar: The Way of Water (PG-13)
- Puss in Boots: The Last Wish (PG)
- Magic Mike's Last Dance (R)
- 80 for Brady (PG-13)
- Knock at the Cabin (R)
- Missing (PG-13)
- A Man Called Otto (PG-13)

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If you have any questions about this work, please call 1-800-755-5000 or visit our website at MySafeTrees.com. You may address your concerns in the manner specified on our website. You may also call the Consumer Services Division of the Illinois Commerce Commission at 1-800-524-0795. Maps have been provided to the mayors and the

county board chairpersons of the affected areas.

Sincerely,
Ameren Illinois Forestry
Department
Published 3/10/23

•••
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
RE: Illinois Department of
Transportation State Fiscal year
2024 Section 5311
Rural/Downstate Public
Transportation Operating
Assistance Grant Application.

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing will be held in Marshall County along with a virtual hearing where all requests and comments are to be submitted by March 30, 2023. Please email your request for information, questions, or comments to either Hannah Fuchs, Marshall County PCOM, at pcom@marshallcountyillinois.gov or Traci Dowell, MSW Projects of Henry Executive Director, at tracimswprojects@gmail.com

Date: March 22, 2023 **Time:** 11:00am **Place:** St. John's Community Center, 1301 Second Street, Henry, IL.

For the purpose of considering a project for which financial assistance is being sought from Illinois Department of Transportation, pursuant to the Illinois Department of Transportation's general authority to make such Grants.

I. Description of Project:
Application for financial assistance to provide transportation services to the general public, elderly and individuals with disabilities in Marshall and Stark Counties.

II. At the Hearing: Marshall County will afford an opportunity for interested persons or agencies to be heard with respect to the social, economic, and environmental aspects of the Project. Interested persons may submit orally or in writing evidence and recommendations with respect to said Project.

III. Marshall County requests that any hearing impaired person wishing to attend this Public Hearing notify Traci Dowell at 309-364-2287 at least one week prior to the scheduled hearing date so that arrangements can be made to provide an interpreter.

IV. Copy of the application for the state grant for the proposed project will be made available for public inspection at the MSW Projects office, 1013 Western Avenue, Henry, IL.
Traci Dowell
MSW Projects of Henry
P.O. Box 140
Henry, IL 61537
Published 3/10/23

•••
NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF AUDIT

The City of Wyoming hereby provides public notice that an audit of its funds for the period May 1, 2021 through April 30, 2022 has been made by Hjerpe & Tennison, CPA and that a report of such audit has been filed with the County Clerk of Stark County, Illinois in accordance with 30 ILCS15/0.01, et seq. The full report of the audit and Annual Statement of Receipts and Disbursements is available for public inspections at Wyoming City Hall, located at 108 E. Williams Street, Wyoming, Illinois 61491 during regular business hours 7:30-12:00 A.M. and 12:30-4:00 P.M. Monday through Friday, except holidays.
CITY OF WYOMING
Published 3/10/23

AUCTIONS

LARGE PUBLIC AUCTION OF ANTIQUES, TOYS, JEWELRY, COINS, FURNITURE, TOOLS AND MORE

The following nice variety of items will be auctioned at the
Millbrook Community Building in Laura, IL, on
SUNDAY MARCH 12TH, 2023
AT 12:00 NOON (R.E. SELLS FIRST)

ANTIQUES AND TOYS: Nice older JD pedal tractor with wagon—complete Tom Clark Gnome train w/extras—Auburn, Tonka, etc. nice old cars and trucks—Mattel Thingmaker—over 20 nice cast iron mechanical banks—misc. toys—JD flag, manuals, banners and pennants—auto, AC and other misc. signs—adv. yardsticks, ledgers, manuals and other items—2 Fordson tool boxes—movie posters—arrowheads—Texaco and Valvoline 30 gallon grease drums—BB guns—older fishing lure collection—2 turtle shells—cream can—table top pasteurizer—bottles, cartoon glasses, etc.—sm. neck yoke—old wrenches—Yamaha PSR185 keyboard—Telstar digital electronic telescope—many misc. antiques and primitives—TRAILER FULL of nice ant., primitive and other furniture pieces of all types, see pictures online at www.folgersauctionservice.com.

JEWELRY AND COINS: Lg. coll. of jewelry, mostly new but some antique—very nice 14K/blue topaz ladies ring—over 125 nice .925 rings (some are very large with much silver)—very nice Elgin Natl. Watch Co. men's pocket watch, running—nice Illinois Watch Co. men's pocket watch, running—nice Elgin ladies pocket watch Wadsworth #1204088—Howard pocket watch—very nice men's wrist watches, Seiko, Rolex repro. and more—much NB vintage costume jewelry, including Heidi Daus black beaded necklace, Erica Lyons and Joan Rivers sets—Nolan Miller, Liz Claiborne, Epiphany, Kids Folly pieces, LATR, Monet, KJL, and more—NB vintage Camrose and Kross Jackie Kennedy bracelets and necklace w/certificates—Swarovski pieces—1976 Hawaiian dollar necklace—925 Epiphany and antique pieces—925 Sincerely South lg. heart on chain and much more—COINS: 1921 Morgan dollar—1928 Peace dollar—Indian Head, Lincoln and Wheat pennies—Wartime and Jefferson nickels—Susan B's, Ikes, and \$1 Pres. Coins—1991 unc. Coin set—Defense of Freedom Valhalla coin—1877 US of America \$50 coin copy, 51 MG gold—2 cent coin, rough—1963-2003 very nice \$2 bills—Vgc 1976 star note \$2 bill—100,000 Gold Leaf Tribute cert. 1934 series, 22K Wilson note AB9109—2009 Elizabeth II Aust. 1 oz. silver dollar—208 Treasures of Tutankhamun 250 shilling coin—foreign coins—1984 Vietnam Veterans National medal—gaming coins—Kennedy Bi-Cent. And 71-78 coins—Big Game coin—PGA Partner's Club coin.

TOOLS AND GARAGE: good oxygen acet. torch set on cart, sm tanks, good hoses—50' new set of torch hoses—like new sand blaster on wheels, 3 bags of sand—14" wood band saw—cherry picker on wheels—12" Delta table saw—12" planer—chain saw chain sharpener—drill bit sharpener—2.5 x 5.5 wood workers—bench w/removable top w/ vise—10 ton portapower w/access.—Biscuit joiner—sign making kit—spiral cut saw—like new Milwaukee 7" grinder—Milwaukee sawsall—big vise on stand—stand up drill press—metal band saw—12" wood miter saw w/bag—pipe bender—Craftsman table saw—air staplers, caster wheels, pipe clamps—metal shop cart on casters—engine stand—gas engine 3000 Psi pressure washer—lg. tap & die set and others—20 ton hydraulic shop press—Dewalt chop saw—ratchet chain binders—4 sets jack stands—transfer punches—pipe dyes, elect. wire, cut off wheels, pocket hole saw, air hose, clamps, belt sander rivet guns and access.—fish camera—LP fish fry er w/pans—inversion table w/ heat and vibrator—B & D router—inspection camera, 4 like new rolling car stands—miter saw—Reese hitch—NB 3/10 jack stands—new GX22151 JD mower blades—sm. floor jack, vice, bench grinder, tow straps, power tools, hand tools—other items will be added by sale day.

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PUBLIC AUCTION

An Anything But Household live public auction will be held at 7642 Grain Bin Road Toulon, IL: SATURDAY, APRIL 1 AT 10 AM

Items to be sold include: 2003 Road King Classic 100 year anniversary Harley Davidson with 12,741 miles (nice bike well maintained), Hammerhead Titan 500 side by side w/ winch, 4x4, and windshield, pneumatic tools, 12' aluminum walk pick, 16' aluminum walk pick, large assortment of block planes, cordless tools, 12'x16' open face livestock shed, 1985 Chevy Corvette w/ t-tops aluminum rims automatic and V-8, Mayrath 10-60 pto auger, 3 point bale mover, John Deere 5 bar dolly wheel hay rake, poly water tanks, used cattle panels, fertilizer applicator, single axle sprayer, 3 section harrow, Hiniker V blade truck plow, shop tools, gas powered snowblower, pull behind leaf vac, pressure washers, 6' 3 point mower, 50 square bales of 2nd crop alfalfa, pushmowers, Keen Kutter 3 point seeder, 14' hayrack on John Deere gear w/ hoist, 6 bale round bale wagon, 16' double axle car trailer w/beavertail, moisture tester, set of scales, bachtold weed mower, H&S pto drive hay inverter, 60' galvanized swing away auger, 3 compartment beer cooler, several zero turn mowers.

Much more by sale day so call early so we can get your items advertised. There will be online bidding, a loader tractor will be onsite. Restrooms and lunch stand are always available. We accept cash, check and credit card with a 3% convenience fee.

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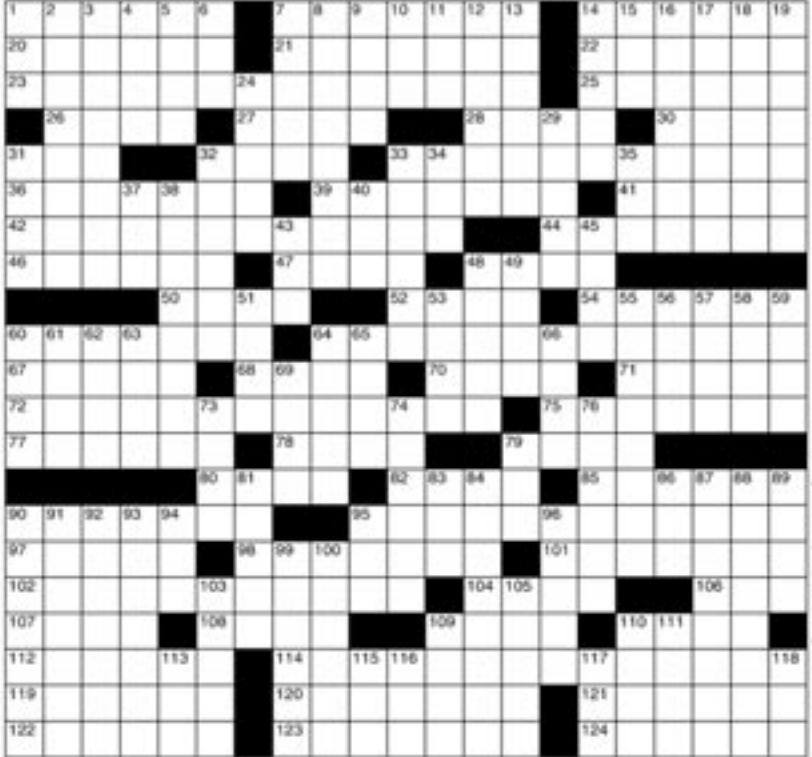
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Answers on Page 3 Super Crossword OFF THE GRID

<p>ACROSS</p> <p>1 Impetfection</p> <p>7 1970 Simon & Garfunkel hit</p> <p>14 "— Lol" (Stephen King novel)</p> <p>20 Geronimo's tribe</p> <p>21 Scouting compound</p> <p>22 Push forward</p> <p>23 Footballer from a major Kansas city?</p> <p>25 Dwell (in)</p> <p>26 Corp. VIPs</p> <p>27 Pimples</p> <p>28 "The — of the Ancient Mariner"</p> <p>30 Fashion designer</p> <p>31 Actor Brynner</p> <p>32 Strong urge</p> <p>33 Footballer ejected from a nightclub?</p> <p>36 She helped Theseus</p> <p>39 Impaired fzz to</p> <p>41 Critical</p> <p>42 Not on a footballer's right?</p> <p>44 For the most part</p> <p>46 Aristocrat's home</p>	<p>47 Formerly</p> <p>48 Liberal —</p> <p>50 Mai — (rum drinks)</p> <p>52 Salvador the surrealist</p> <p>54 Hard hitter, biblically</p> <p>60 Ship shelters</p> <p>64 Footballer with a rod and reel?</p> <p>67 PC-sent greeting things</p> <p>68 Hearing things</p> <p>70 Fast shark</p> <p>71 Bambooizes</p> <p>72 Footballer working as a sound technician?</p> <p>75 Matching pullover and cardigan</p> <p>77 Old Chrysler</p> <p>78 Think</p> <p>79 "Uh, pardon me..."</p> <p>80 Like Goodwill goods</p> <p>82 Apple variety</p> <p>85 Humiliated</p> <p>90 Expand, as a house</p> <p>95 Footballer on a plane trip?</p> <p>97 Thin pancake</p> <p>98 Envious</p> <p>composer in "Amadeus"</p>	<p>101 Iteate</p> <p>102 Visit a footballer?</p> <p>104 Labor</p> <p>106 Young fellow</p> <p>107 Flush (with)</p> <p>108 Sony Bravia or Sharp Aquos</p> <p>109 Pool hall item</p> <p>110 Piece of office furniture</p> <p>112 Plaything for Fido or Fluffy</p> <p>114 Declaration when a footballer arrives?</p> <p>119 Angry speech</p> <p>120 One casting a ballot</p> <p>121 Urge on</p> <p>122 Makes a sly verbal attack</p> <p>123 Ecstasy</p> <p>124 Feds, e.g.</p>	<p>7 Common —</p> <p>infant illness</p> <p>8 Grit played by Lily Tomlin</p> <p>9 Bambooizes</p> <p>10 Anger</p> <p>11 Quick escape</p> <p>12 Stuck going nowhere</p> <p>13 When typical workdays start</p> <p>14 Self-indulgent binge</p> <p>15 Have existence</p> <p>16 Experience a huge failure</p> <p>17 Remove hair from, as one's legs</p> <p>18 Like doctors' practices</p> <p>19 In an aerodynamic way</p> <p>24 Early Mexican</p> <p>29 '80s Golden Arches burger</p> <p>31 Bulldogs' school</p> <p>32 Scared (of)</p> <p>33 Kennel club</p> <p>classifications</p> <p>34 Flowing need</p> <p>35 TiVo device</p> <p>37 — minimum</p> <p>38 Connect-the-points puzzle</p> <p>40 Abbr. limiting a list</p>	<p>43 Canon —</p> <p>Rebel cousin</p> <p>45 Exec. helper</p> <p>48 Make — out of (rebut)</p> <p>49 Skating place</p> <p>51 "It's finally clear"</p> <p>53 Woeful cry</p> <p>55 Relatives of zephyros</p> <p>56 Clickable</p> <p>screen image</p> <p>57 Some ring wins, for</p> <p>short</p> <p>58 Sommer of "A Shot in the Dark"</p> <p>59 Take it easy</p> <p>60 A helmet protects it</p> <p>61 Take — from (do as suggested by)</p> <p>62 Units of absorbed energy</p> <p>63 Vigor, in music scores</p> <p>64 "Oedipus complex" corner</p> <p>65 Egyptian goddess of fertility</p> <p>66 Black-clad teen, maybe</p> <p>69 High point</p> <p>73 Blowout win</p> <p>74 Enshrouded</p>	<p>76 Milk's cousin</p> <p>79 "Mein Gott"</p> <p>81 "Such a pity!"</p> <p>83 Erstwhile</p> <p>space station</p> <p>84 Troublemaker</p> <p>86 Rear, at sea</p> <p>87 Marine animal's pelt</p> <p>88 Title girl of old comics</p> <p>89 Like green or purple hair</p> <p>90 Doesn't reject as a nail</p> <p>92 "Taking Woodstock" star — Martin</p> <p>93 Source of flowing water</p> <p>94 Tennis divider</p> <p>95 Shark feature</p> <p>96 Tor's wheels</p> <p>99 Pollen bearer</p> <p>100 Lowest parking garage tier, perhaps</p> <p>103 "Absolutely!"</p> <p>105 Earthy hue, to a Bit</p> <p>109 Post-Q string</p> <p>110 Fender flaw</p> <p>111 Latin "Lol"</p> <p>113 Lyrical verse</p> <p>115 Sales staffer</p> <p>116 Outer. Prefix</p> <p>117 Rio carmaker</p> <p>118 Hi- — image</p>
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Ag transport costs ease; issues linger

By DAN GRANT

Farm Week

The farm sector shouldn't see quite as many transportation-related challenges this year compared to 2022, according to industry experts at the Grain and Feed Association of Illinois' (GFAI) 130th annual convention in Peoria.

Barge freight rates eased in recent months from historic highs last fall. And trucking rates were down about 8 percent as of Feb. 21 compared to last year.

"One thing that's improved year over year is transportation," Eric Wuthrich, manager of Farmers Grain Co. in Roseville, told FarmWeek after being elected GFAI president at the event.

"Last year it seemed freight was awfully hard to come by," he noted. "It seems to have improved somewhat, especially for trucking."


That's particularly important for facilities such as Farmers Grain that don't sit on a river or rail line and rely on trucks to move all products.

"One of the main challenges now is interest rates," said Wuthrich. "We buy a lot of grain for December and January. There's a big difference between borrowing \$20 million at 3 percent interest or borrowing \$20 million at 7 percent."

Higher interest rates not only cut into grain handling margins but could also slow expansion or upgrade projects at elevators and other facilities.

Jake Brodbeck, vice president of ARTCo barge line, a subsidiary of Archer Daniels Midland, believes shipping rates in the trucking industry possibly eased in recent months due to slightly lower fuel prices and an easing of the driver shortage.

The situation is similar in the barge industry, although labor shortages mostly occurred at individual ports but not as much for long-haul crews for that mode of transportation.



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Toulon, LaFayette & West Jersey United Methodist Church

Rev. Leon D. Pomeroy
229 W. Main St., PO Box 538, Toulon, IL 61483
(812) 698-9294
Sunday Worship: LaFayette - 9 a.m. 1st & 3rd Sunday (Pastor), 2nd & 4th Sunday (Lay Speaker); West Jersey 9 a.m. 1st & 3rd Sunday (Lay Speaker), 2nd & 4th Sunday (Pastor); Toulon Sunday School: 9:15 a.m., All Ages. Sunday Worship: 10:30 am
Check us out on Facebook @ Toulon United Methodist Church

Elmira United Presbyterian Church

Rev. Art Blegen
7874 State Route 93, Toulon, IL 61483
(309) 896-3481
Services each Sunday at 9:00 a.m.
<https://www.facebook.com/Elmirachurch1852>

The Gathering Church

Location: 105 N. 7th St., Wyoming, IL 61491
Sunday mornings @ 10:30 a.m.
Mail: PO Box 322, Wyoming, IL 61491
email: info@thegathering.life
web: <https://www.thegathering.life/>
<https://www.facebook.com/thegatheringchurch.life>

1st Congregational Church of Toulon

(309) 286-4901
218 N. Henderson St., Toulon
Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.
Email fcctoulon@gmail.com
website: firstcongregationaltoulon.org

Galva Congregational Church

Pastor Marshall Jones
211 N.W. 3rd Avenue, Galva, Illinois 61434
(309) 932-3733
Service Time 10 a.m.

First Baptist Church

"faith in truth"
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New Preacher! Bryan Griem
(309) 932-2713 • GalvaBaptistChurch.com

Wyoming Nazarene Church

517 N Madison Ave. Wyoming, IL 61491
309-695-4523 leave message
Sunday School: 10:00, All ages
Sunday Worship: 11:00
Wednesday Night TBD
Check us out on Facebook: Wyoming Naz

First Congregational United Church of Christ

Pastor Ross Wyman
204 N. 7th St., PO Box 35, Wyoming, IL 61491
(309) 695-4091
Sunday Worship 10 a.m.
Check us out on Facebook
First Congregational UCC of Wyoming, Illinois

Toulon First Baptist Church

110 W. Jefferson St. Toulon
(309) 286-4611
Sunday School 9 a.m. • Worship 10 a.m.
Sunday Youth Group 5-7 p.m.
Wednesday Kid's Club 5:30-7 p.m.
Wednesday Virtual Prayer Meeting 7 p.m.
Email: pastor@toulonbaptist.com
www.ToulonBaptist.com
www.facebook.com/FirstBaptistChurchToulon
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St. Timothy Lutheran Church

Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.
16883 State Route 17, PO Box 158 - Wyoming, IL 61491
threesaints.org

Galva Messiah Lutheran Church (ELCA)

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Sunday: 9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School
9:30 a.m. Children's Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Worship
Contact: messiahlutherangalva@gmail.com
1-309-932-3346
Facebook: Messiah Lutheran—Galva, IL

Galva First United Methodist Church

Rev. Rebecca Gearhart
214 NW 2nd Ave., Galva, IL 61434
(309) 932-2460
preachinghope@gmail.com
galvafirst@gmail.com
Sunday Worship: 9:00

Wyoming United Methodist Church

Pastor Rebecca Klemm
302 North Main Street PO Box 287 Wyoming, IL, 61491-0287.
309-606-9027
Email: WyomingUMCPastor@gmail.com
Service is held at 10:30 Sunday morning.

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OBITUARIES

Dolores L. Frisby

PRINCEVILLE – Dolores Lucille Frisby, 88, of Princeville, passed away at 2:13 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 21, 2023, at Betty's Garden in Kewanee.

She was born Nov. 27, 1934, in Princeville, to parents Edward M. and Lucy (Streitmatter) Woertz. She married Arthur L. Frisby June 12, 1960, in Kewanee. He preceded her in death Jan. 3, 2021. She is also preceded in death by one sister, Violet Woertz.

Lorie had a special place in her heart for shelter dogs. A lucky handful of these dogs were adopted into the Frisby family over the years. Even neighbor's dogs were welcomed into their home to visit. Her love for these pets was evident to all who knew her.

Her graveside service and burial was Saturday, Feb. 25, 2023, at the Princeville Apostolic Christian Church Cemetery. James Plattner officiated.

Memorial contributions may be made to TAPS, The ARK in Lacon, PCAPS (Peoria County Animal Protection Services) or any other no-kill animal shelter. Memories or expressions of sympathy may be shared on Dolores' tribute wall at www.haskellfuneral.com.

Haskell Funeral & Cremation Services is in charge of arrangements.

Thomas J. Torbert

GALVA – Thomas Jay Torbert, 42, of Galva, passed away peacefully, surrounded by family during his final moments. He demonstrated strength, courage, and bravery until his final breath during his 18-month battle

with lung cancer.

Tom was born July 22, 1980, in Peoria, the son of John Torbert III and Linda Torbert. He is survived by his wife Kelly (Townsend) and 5-year-old son Skylar of Galva, parents John (Sue) Torbert of Nekoma, Linda Torbert of Galva, brother Neil (Wendy) Schmitzer-Torbert of Crawfordsville, Ind., sister Hannah Torbert (Zach Wagner) of rural Bishop Hill, stepbrother Jason Rice of Toulon, and many aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephew.

He was preceded in death by his paternal grandparents, John and Francine Torbert; maternal grandparents Eugene and Dorothy Thomson; aunts Sherry Thomson and Diane Stone; uncle Dave Brown, and cousins Shanna Thomson and Nathan Torbert.

Tom attended Galva High School, graduating in 1998. Kelly and Tom were high school sweethearts and began dating in 1996. A short 26 years later, they were wed in Dec. of 2022, in Bishop Hill on the 26th anniversary of their first date.

Tom worked with his father at Torbert Electric after graduating from high school, before learning the trade of vinyl graphic installation from a local company. He was employed at TKO Graphix as an installer for many years, until his cancer diagnosis in October of 2021.

The most important job Tom held was that of being a father. Tom loved his son, Skylar, immensely. And Skylar loves his dada just as much. Tom enjoyed hunting, fishing, gardening and spent much of his time sharing his love of nature with his son. Tom and Skylar had many good days together riding to check trail cameras, looking for antler sheds, and cleaning

fish.

Tom was also passionate about his many hobbies, and was an avid collector of coins, antique jars, marbles and comic books.

Funeral services will be held at 6 p.m., Thursday, March 9, at Rux Funeral Home in Galva. Visitation will be held prior to the service from 4-6 p.m. Cremation will be accorded and a burial at Galva Cemetery will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations may be directed to the Tom Torbert memorial fund, to be used to support Tom's family, and also to give back to the local community. As Tom and his family were so grateful for the support of so many during his illness, the family wishes to remember him through helping others.

This obituary may be viewed and private condolences left at www.rux-funeralhome.com.

Carole L. Donath

PRINCEVILLE – Carole L. Donath, 80, of Princeville, passed away on March 3, 2023, at Goldwater Nursing Home in Pontiac.

Carole was born in Peoria on March 6, 1942, the daughter of Walter and Mildred (VanOrder) Clauson. She married Robert "Donut" Donath on June 23, 1990, on horseback at Jubilee College State Park in Brimfield. He passed away on Jan. 30, 2014, in Peoria.

Carole is survived by her son, Troy (Laura) Williamson of Pontiac; two grandsons; one granddaughter; two great-grandchildren; and sister-in-law, Judy Clauson of Peoria.

A memorial service will be at 11 a.m. Saturday, March 18, 2023, at the Princeville United Methodist Church. The Rev. Zach Waldis will officiate. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service at the church.

Condolences may be left for Carole's family on her tribute wall at www.haskellfuneral.com.



Frisby



Torbert

MOWING/TRIMMING BIDS

The Village of LaFayette is accepting bids for mowing and trimming of the village park. Term will be for the 2023 season and should specify cost per time. Contractor must provide proof of insurance with written bid, and supply their own equipment.

Bids must be received by March 31, 2023.

Please mail bids to: Village of LaFayette
P.O. Box 116
LaFayette, IL 61449

Any questions feel free to contact Chris Smith at (309) 509-2522.

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2023 All-America winners offer planting options

By **BRUCE J. BLACK**

Illinois Extension

Another Illinois winter comes to a close after rain, thunderstorms, and snow replenish the soil moisture. A welcome cure for those winter blues has been the arriving garden catalogs and planning for spring.

Review your garden records from previous years to aid in planning. Using a plant map, think about where you could incorporate your theme or where your new plants should go. My starting place is the new additions of All-America Selections.

All-America Selections is a non-profit organization that releases several trialed plants each year as AAS Winners. AAS tests new varieties every year at private and public trial sites located around the U.S. and Canada. Currently, there are four trial locations in Illinois, with three northern and one central.

Independent judges, who are professional horticulturists in geographically diverse areas, evaluate trial entries against comparison plants. The results and observations are compiled, and winners are chosen.

This year, there are 11 AAS winners and six are suited for Illinois – three vegetables and three flowers.

Vegetables

- **Pepper jalapeno San Joaquin F1**



(Capsicum annuum var. San Joaquin F1) – This is a thick-walled jalapeno setting about 50 fruits per plant.

Good for preserving or roasting, holds taste and firmness until harvest. 2,500 to 6,000 Scoville units. It has 60 days to harvest from transplant.

• **Squash kabocha Sweet Jade F1** (Cucurbita maxima var. Sweet Jade F1) – This is a single-serving-sized, fall harvest squash. High yielding, 1- to 2-pound squash. Jade colored outside with deep orange flesh perfect for an edible bowl. It has 85 days to harvest from transplant.

• **Tomato Zenzei F1** (Solanum lycopersicum var. Zenzei) – This is a high-yielding, early-maturing Roma, plum type tomato. Its uniform, fleshy, easy-to-harvest tomatoes are good fresh or for preservation, and born on bushy indeterminate plants.

Less disease issues than other tomatoes. It has 70 to 80 days to har-

vest from transplant.

Flowers

• **Coleus Premium Sun Coral Candy** (Solenostemon scutellarioides var. Premium Sun Coral Candy) – A National Winner, this is the first seed coleus to be an AAS Winner. This flower is a compact, multicolored foliage plant with narrow, serrated leaves that holds color well in full sun. Perfect for a 14- to 16-inch container or hanging basket.

• **Salvia Blue by You** (Salvia hybrida var. Blue by You) – This National Winner is a perennial salvia with blue flowers blooming up to two weeks earlier. It is both heat tolerant and winter hardy. Blooms late spring into fall with deadheading of spent blooms. It is pollinator friendly and not deer or rabbit friendly.

• **Snapdragon DoubleShot™ Orange Bicolor F1** (Antirrhinum majus var. DoubleShot™ Orange Bicolor F1) – This National Winner is an intermediate-height, double-flowered annual snapdragon. It has warm shades of orange and orange-red, that transition to dusty shades on strong stems producing more branching and a higher flower count. Perfect for containers or in-ground plantings.

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The Prairie News Sports



The Stark County 7th grade girls volleyball team won a 7-2A regional championship on Feb. 28, beating regional host Brimfield, 26-24, 25-15. Stark County (12-5) lost its sectional match to Table Grove VIT (19-5) on March 6 at Brimfield Grade School, 25-6, 26-28, 25-16. Pictured above are, Front row (left to right) – Natalia Pinacho, Madison Ensey, Kamiyah Webster and Annalynn Terwilliger. Back row (l to r) – Coley Johnston, Hallie Newton, Darilis Knoblach, Cambri Holmstrom, Gracie Rowell, Taylor Price and Laikyn LaCorte.

Local girls earn all-LTC honors

By The Prairie News

Several local girls basketball players received all-conference honors based on a vote of Lincoln Trail Conference coaches.

Named to the all-LTC first team were Lexi Stone of Galva and the Princeville duo of Destinee Harwood and Brianna Brodie. Stone finished as Galva's all-time leading girls scorer with 1,212 points.

Other first-teamers were Shelby Bowman of West Central, Brook Pieper of A-Town, Clara Bella VanOpdorp of Annawan, Kennady Anderson of Wethersfield, Kaylee Celus of Annawan, Carolyn German of ROWVA-Williamsfield and Ciarra Shreeves of Knoxville.

Kylee Frisby of Stark County was voted to the all-LTC second team, along with

Sydney Lamkin of Mercer County, Lajaya Angel of Wethersfield, Olivia Goodley of Annawan, Hailey Redding of A-Town, Harlee Hains of West Central, Lexi Hunter of A-Town, Mya Brown of Ridge-wood, Gabriella McPeek of Mercer County, Lainy Manuel of Annawan and Lizzie Johnston of R-W.

Kali Yelm and Ava Strom of Galva and Leah Wieland of Princeville were special mention picks, along with Reece Bertelsen of United, Addie Orr of Knoxville, Paige Huffman of Wethersfield, Emma Seiboldt of R-W, Maddie Hofmann of Mercer County, Katie Flynn of United, Avery Rigg of R-W and Jaydn Wise of Annawan.



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Stark County Republican Central Committee

Saturday, March 18 • 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
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Congressman Darin LaHood

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- 37th District State Senator WIN STOLLER
- 73rd District State Representative RYAN SPAIN
- 93rd District State Representative TRAVIS WEAVER

Please join us for our annual Lincoln Day Luncheon program featuring Congressman Darin LaHood

CONTACT / INFO: MIKE BIGGER 309-238-0113 MICHAELBIGGER1955@GMAIL.COM

Paid for by the Stark County Republican Central Committee. A copy of our report is, or will be, available at the Illinois State Board of Elections.

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