



19 FOOD | Classic French toast



20 THEATER | Nerds' night out



22 IT PICK | Voices of America

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Tourism is up, but downtown is hurting

While Illinois' capital still grapples with post-pandemic challenges in the city center, officials anticipate record tourism numbers

By Erika Tulfo and Jacques Abou-Rizk, Medill Illinois News Bureau

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Tackling chronic absenteeism

State's Attorney's Office joins new effort to to keep kids in school as a means of reducing crime

EDUCATION | Scott Reeder

A new joint initiative between the Sangamon County State's Attorney's Office and the Regional Office of Education is taking a tougher, more coordinated approach to chronic truancy. It combines social services with a stark warning: get children back in school or face legal consequences.

The effort, spearheaded by Sangamon County State's Attorney John Milhiser and Regional Superintendent Shannon Fehrholz, was on display April 10 during a meeting inside a courtroom at the Sangamon County Building. Parents and guardians of chronically absent elementary school students were summoned not for prosecution — yet — but for what officials described as a final opportunity to change course.

"We're doing this because we care that much about our community," Milhiser said. "We care about these children. We know they're better off if they're in school."

The initiative stems from years of collaboration among schools, law enforcement and social service agencies. Milhiser said those discussions increasingly pointed to one conclusion: keeping children in school is one of the most effective ways to prevent crime and improve long-term outcomes.

National data underscores the urgency. According to education researcher Nat Malkus, a senior fellow with the American Enterprise Institute who was interviewed by *Illinois Times*, chronic absenteeism — defined as missing 10% or more of the school year — has surged since the COVID-19 pandemic. Before the pandemic, roughly 15% of U.S. students were chronically absent. That figure peaked at about 28.5% in 2022 and, while improving, remains elevated at roughly 22.8% today.

"That's still about 50% higher than where we were six years ago," Malkus said. "We've seen it everywhere."

Malkus said the causes are complex, ranging from poverty and transportation issues to illness. But he argues the pandemic fundamentally changed habits and expectations around school attendance.

"I think what really changed is the cultural expectation around attendance," he said.

That shift, he said, has proven difficult to reverse — even among younger students who were not yet in school during pandemic shutdowns.



FILE PHOTO BY ZACH ADAMS

"There are at least 800 chronic truants in all the school districts in Sangamon and Menard counties," Fehrholz said.

"The pandemic didn't just cause short-term changes. It changed habits," Malkus said. "And those habits have not snapped back."

Inside the Sangamon County courtroom, Associate Judge Karen Tharp delivered a blunt message to parents, many of whom had already been contacted multiple times by schools.

"You have not been charged with anything yet — and I stress yet," Tharp said. "But this is your last opportunity to avoid having an actual court case filed."

Under Illinois law, a child is considered chronically truant after nine unexcused absences in a school year. Tharp said some children in the group had far exceeded that threshold.

"Some of the children in this group have over 100 unexcused absences so far this year," she said. "The lowest I could find was 32. That is totally unacceptable."

Tharp outlined both the legal risks for parents — including criminal charges, fines and possible jail time — and the long-term consequences for children.

"Being a chronic truant in elementary school is one of the major predictors of who will end up as a high school dropout," she said. "This is your wake-up call. We are done asking. We are done pleading."

Malkus cautioned that while legal consequences can play a role, they are unlikely to solve the problem on their own.

"There are so many more kids chronically absent now that there simply isn't the capacity in the legal system to handle it at this scale," he said. "Even if it were a good idea, we're not up to the task."

Still, he acknowledged that accountability measures can send an important signal.

"Trying to get kids back to school without signaling that this is serious is difficult," Malkus said. "There need to be some consequences — but they need to be reasonable."

That balance between enforcement and support is at the heart of the Sangamon County initiative.

Fehrholz emphasized that the April 10 meeting was not just about warnings, but about connecting families with help. Representatives from schools, mental health providers, youth services and homelessness programs were on hand to assist parents.

"We're here to support you," Fehrholz told those gathered. "If there are barriers, let us help you remove them."

Milhiser said identifying those barriers is key, whether they involve transportation, housing instability, health issues or family challenges.

"There are a whole host of reasons," he said. "That's why these meetings are important— so we can connect families with providers and eliminate as many of those barriers as we can."

Still, the initiative carries real consequences. Parents who fail to improve attendance could face prosecution or neglect petitions in juvenile court. In extreme cases, children could be removed from the home.

Tharp said those steps are not theoretical. "I have sentenced parents to jail time," she said. "I have removed children from their homes. And if it's necessary, I would do it again."

Attendance at the initial session was limited — about half of those summoned appeared — but officials say more meetings are planned, and more families will be contacted.

Milhiser said the stakes are too high to ignore.

"Is this going to work? I don't know," he said. "But we have to try everything we can."

For Malkus, the challenge ultimately comes down to rebuilding a shared commitment between families and schools.

"School works best when there's a handshake between parents and educators," he said. "When that breaks down across a large group, it's very hard to fix."

For Sangamon County officials, the hope is that a mix of pressure, resources and renewed expectations will help restore that partnership before more students fall behind. □

Scott Reeder, a staff writer for Illinois Times, can be reached at sreeder@illinoistimes.com.

Strategy, not charity

World Affairs Council of Central Illinois program addresses USAID

FOREIGN AID | Karen Ackerman Witter

“Why Foreign Assistance Matters” was the topic of the April 14 World Affairs Council of Central Illinois program at Illini Country Club.

Chris Milligan, retired senior foreign service officer, told a packed audience “when used effectively, foreign assistance is strategy, not charity.” Milligan discussed the importance of the United States Agency for International Development and the impact of its dismantlement.

USAID was created in 1961 by President John F. Kennedy. It ceased operations on July 1, 2025.

Milligan worked for USAID for 31 years. He was a mission director in Madagascar and Burma, led the U.S. government’s response to the 2010 Haiti earthquake and served in Iraq, Indonesia, Zimbabwe and Ecuador. From 2018-2021 he was counselor to USAID – a senior-level adviser in the Washington office, providing strategic guidance on policy, management and operational issues. He is now cochair of the USAID Alumni Association.

Milligan gave an impassioned talk about USAID and how it benefits the U.S. He said supporting a stable and prosperous world advances U.S. security and prosperity, particularly amid today’s global challenges. Milligan argues that we are living in a pivotal moment in history – the most consequential since the end of WWII, with the U.S. now questioning the post-WWII system it constructed.

USAID is about diplomacy, defense and development. USAID saved billions of lives and lifted hundreds of millions out of extreme poverty. Child mortality was cut in half. HIV/AIDS treatment saved 25 million lives.

Investments also protect U.S. interests by defending against pandemics and preventing health and agricultural threats coming to the U.S. For example, USAID helped control a pneumonic plague outbreak in Madagascar which prevented its spread to the U.S. It also contained wheat rust in Ethiopia and developed wheat rust-resistant strains.

Milligan described how USAID is a frontline tool to national security. The U.S. presence helped strengthen societies and, in turn, reduced extremism. Giving people jobs and hope increases stability and also reduces drivers of illegal migration. USAID helped countries become democracies and provided support for free and fair elections. Countries with instability evolved into global partners. This led to export growth and American job creation.

“A lot of Americans didn’t understand what



Chris Milligan, center right, meets with, from left, Lanphier High School students Kendall Barnes and David Depper, WACCI board member Kathy Johnson, Lanphier student Brady Hodapp and Lanphier social studies teacher and WACCI board member Brad Hodapp. PHOTO BY KAREN WITTER

USAID did and how it protected America,” Milligan said, citing myths and misinformation. Foreign assistance is less than 1% of the federal budget. Highly accountable systems were in place to oversee spending. USAID employees had the highest educational level of any federal agency – including NASA.

One misinformation claim was that USAID sent \$50 million to Gaza to buy condoms for Hamas. In reality, USAID funded programs, including contraceptives, to combat HIV in the Gaza Province in Mozambique, Africa, a country with one of the highest HIV rates in the world.

Milligan never mentioned President Donald Trump’s name, but the July 1, 2025, shutdown of USAID was caused by the Trump administration and DOGE, led by Elon Musk. The 13,215-member staff was reduced to less than 100. The State Department assumed some remaining responsibilities, which Milligan says it is not equipped to handle.

Loss of life, increased conflict and waning American influence are the results. Milligan says we are now in an era of democratic backsliding and international cooperation is weakening. “We’ve walked away from countries and people have died,” he said. The estimate is 500,000-1 million worldwide. By 2030, an additional 14 million deaths could occur.

Milligan says China is filling the vacuum and taking our seat at the table. As the U.S. is reducing its diplomatic presence, China has the largest diplomatic network. It is now the world’s

largest creditor. China produces more steel and dominates in renewal energy, shipbuilding and rare earth minerals. It has surpassed the U.S. in investment in research and development and is attracting international students. China is the top trading partner with 120 countries while engaging in predatory deals, impinging on other countries’ sovereignty.

Milligan believes the U.S. is no longer the uncontested leader and isn’t the economic power we think it is. Other countries are making alliances, such as BRICS, an alliance among Brazil, China, Russia, Indonesia, South Africa and others. The European Union has signed trade agreements with South America and India.

At this defining moment in our history, he asks, “Who will shape the world that comes next?” Milligan cites the importance of American leadership and says that the choices we make now will determine whether we remain a global leader, whether democratic values continue to shape the international system and what kind of world we leave behind. The U.S. leads in innovation, technology, higher education and finance. Milligan says we need to double down on these advantages. We also need to restore accountability and go back to core democratic values.

The entire USAID was totally dismantled and is gone, but Milligan believes the industry will come back. It will need to be something new. “As a world power, we need this tool,” he said.

“USAID was created with the belief that helping nations build their own stability and growth was both a moral responsibility and a strategic imperative,” Milligan told *Illinois Times*. “For more than 60 years, Democrats and Republicans came together in support of that vision.”

He is encouraged that when the Trump Administration proposed cutting foreign assistance by 50% in the FY 26 budget, “Republicans and Democrats came together to pass a strong foreign assistance budget — an unmistakable bipartisan affirmation of the importance of American leadership in the world.” □

Karen Ackerman Witter is aware of the many benefits of USAID through her connections with Rotary. She also has a friend who worked in the global health industry, including international projects to address tuberculosis, who lost her job and career when USAID was dismantled.

What is WACCI?

The World Affairs Council of Central Illinois hosts a speaker series with recognized experts providing lectures on critical international issues. Students from area high schools, Lincoln Land Community College and University of Illinois Springfield are also invited to participate.

Prior to his formal remarks, Chris Milligan met with three students from Lanphier High School and their social studies teacher, Brad Hodapp. All had an interest in international affairs and asked highly insightful questions. Milligan shared his life experiences and advised students to “follow where your heart is leading you.”

“I was genuinely impressed by the depth of understanding the high school students demonstrated on both national and global issues, Milligan told *Illinois Times*. “Their questions were thoughtful, sophisticated and often quite complex — reflecting a level of engagement that one does not see often. Many of the topics they raised do not lend themselves to simple answers, and I appreciated both their curiosity and their willingness to grapple with that complexity. I also greatly enjoyed my conversation with WACCI members and engaging with such a well-informed audience on important national issues.”

For more information about WACCI and upcoming programs, go to <https://mywacci.org/>.



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Caribbean Buffet cost: \$45 members of WACCI/ \$55 non-members. Reservations are due by April 27 by sending to WACCI, Box 2233, Springfield, Illinois 62705 or online (preferred) at www.mywacci.org

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Logan County considers data center regulations

60-day moratorium on the acceptance of zoning applications for data centers ends this week

DATA CENTERS | Dean Olsen

Logan County officials could take action in May to change local zoning requirements to both accommodate developers of large-scale data centers and protect the public.

The Logan County Zoning Board of Appeals is scheduled to meet at 7:30 p.m. May 8 at Oasis Senior Center at 2810 Woodlawn Road in Lincoln to consider nonbinding recommendations to add requirements for data centers in the wake of interest by Miami-based Hut 8 Corp. to build a \$5 billion, 500-megawatt data center on 200 acres of farm ground in Laenna Township near Latham.

The meeting could set up a final vote by the Logan County Board on the new zoning rules later in May. A 60-day moratorium that the County Board approved on the acceptance of zoning applications for data centers ends this week.

Michael DeRoss, a Lincoln resident who sits on the 12-member, all-Republican County Board, told *Illinois Times* that the moratorium was designed to help board members become better informed and thoroughly review any proposals in the future.

"We could use some more time. This is new," DeRoss said. "There are people on both sides of the issue. This is not a done deal. We need to do a cost-benefit analysis."

The 9-2 vote on the moratorium at the County Board's Feb. 24 meeting was prompted by ongoing questions from the public about, and opposition to, the Hut 8 proposal.

The company said the project would create about 200 permanent, full-time jobs and more than 1,500 temporary construction jobs.

Some Logan County residents asked for a 90-day moratorium, but board members at the time indicated they might extend the 60-day moratorium if they believe they need more time.

When Hut 8 was asked its reaction to the 60-day moratorium and potentially other delays in decision-making by Logan County officials, company spokesperson Gautier Lemyze-Young said: "Hut 8 remains committed to working collaboratively with local stakeholders on the proposed Logan



Cathy Starr, center, with her husband, Al Starr, show their opposition to a proposed Hut 8 Corp. data center in Logan County during an April 20 rally sponsored by Logan County Indivisible outside the county courthouse in Lincoln. PHOTO COURTESY OF RONDA SHELTON

County data center, and we are encouraged by the opportunity to deliver meaningful economic and community benefits."

About 100 people demonstrated against the Hut 8 project during an April 20 rally organized by Logan County Indivisible outside the Logan County Courthouse in Lincoln. Opponents of the potential project have tended to outnumber supporters at Logan County government meetings in recent months.

DeRoss said county officials will "pay attention" to the views of their constituents, though he added, "It's just being pushed by the Democratic Party of Logan County."

Lincoln resident Ronda Shelton, chairperson of the county's Democratic Party, said the party

hasn't taken a stand on the data center, and there are Democrats on both sides of the issue.

Shelton said she opposes the Hut 8 proposal and noted that a man wearing a shirt supporting Republican Donald Trump's 2020 campaign spoke out against the proposal at the rally.

"This is not about politics," Shelton said. "It is really about community."

Shelton said critics of the proposal have various reasons for opposing it: Some object to prime farm ground being taken out of production while others worry that the additional electricity needed to power the data center and artificial intelligence applications it will support will contribute to more increases in electric rates. Still others worry that the center could put local water supplies in jeopardy and would cause

unwanted disruptions in rural life, she said.

In Sangamon County, a different company, Dallas-based CyrusOne, received approval from the Sangamon County Board in March for its proposed 634-megawatt data center in a rural area southwest of Springfield in Talkington Township.

About 100 permanent, full-time jobs will be created, CyrusOne officials said, and Sangamon County officials said the project's accompanying increase in assessed valuation would generate \$5 million to \$6 million in additional property taxes for various taxing bodies.

Officials from Hut 8 and CyrusOne have defended their individual cost estimates, including Hut 8's projection of up to \$65 million in additional annual property taxes in Logan County.

The conditional use permit option, adopted by the Sangamon County Board in July 2025, would give Logan County officials more of a say on details surrounding data center construction and related preparations, according to Allan Green, Logan County zoning officer.


Central Illinois construction trade unions have supported both data center projects.

Both Hut 8 and CyrusOne said the water to cool computer servers housed at the centers would be cooled through "closed-loop" systems that recirculate water trucked in from elsewhere, so local water systems wouldn't be overburdened.

At Green's request, Hut 8 officials voluntarily withdrew their initial zoning application in December so the public could be more adequately informed after rumors, some of them false, spread on social media about the project. Hut 8 remains interested in resubmitting an application, DeRoss said.

The potential amendment to Logan County's zoning law is modeled after Sangamon County's changes but includes more details. For example, Logan County is considering including a section requiring an applicant to have a financial plan for what would happen to a data center site if the site is closed down in the future. Sangamon County's zoning ordinance doesn't address that issue. □

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New leadership for County Democrats

New chair elected, Marc Bell rejoins sheriff's race

POLITICS | Dean Olsen

A Chatham resident and union activist will head the Sangamon County Democratic Party for the next two years, succeeding longtime Democratic stalwart Bill Houlihan.

Diana Carlile, 64, a former Illinois Bell operator and AT&T engineering department employee who retired in 2011, was unanimously elected April 15 in a weighted vote of the local Democratic Party's precinct committeepersons.

Carlile, a former member of the Communications Workers of America and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, will take over the volunteer role from Houlihan, 72, a Springfield resident.

Houlihan had served as the chair of the Sangamon County Democratic Party since 2021, the same year he stepped down as state director for U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin after 25 years of service. He was also the county chair of the Democratic party from 1988-1994. In between, the role was held by Doris Turner, who went on to become a state Senator, and Dan Kovats of Chatham.

Houlihan had wanted to continue as party chair through what is hoped to be Turner's reelection campaign for Illinois Senate in 2028, but illness made it too difficult for him to continue those duties, according to Kovats, the immediate past 1st vice chair. It was Houlihan's decision not to seek another two-year term while he recovers from liver and kidney transplants in January in Chicago, Kovats said.

Houlihan's departure from leadership will be a loss for Sangamon County Democrats, Kovats said.

"He's forgotten more about Democratic politics than I'll ever know," said Kovats, whose full-time job is executive director of the Springfield-based Illinois Democratic County Chairs' Association. "He taught me everything I know about organizing, and you know that this is a game of addition and trying to bring as many folks to the table as we can.

"Bill is also a very skilled fundraiser and the reason we've been able to be very competitive here locally. And yes, we've still got a lot to do locally, but we've been able to raise significant amounts of money because of Bill's connections,



Bill Houlihan, left, did not seek reelection as chair of the Sangamon County Democratic Party and Diana Carlile was unanimously elected April 15. CREDIT: SANGAMON COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY

and that's allowed us to help a lot more of our candidates than we've done before."

Houlihan will still be involved in the local Democratic Party "when he's ready to come back," Kovats said.

Carlile is a good friend, Kovats said. "She's going to have to step up on her own and kind of chart a new path for us, and I think she can," he said.

Carlile served as an elected member of the Chatham Township Board from 2017 to 2021 and is former president of the Springfield and Central Illinois Trades and Labor Council. She was unopposed as a candidate for Sangamon County Democratic Party chair, as were the other officers elected in April.

Deb Grant was elected as 1st vice chair, Richard Thompson will be 2nd vice chair, Micah Miller will be 3rd vice chair, Mike Lopez will be secretary and Neil Calderon will serve as treasurer, Kovats said.

Carlile previously was 3rd vice chair under Houlihan. She said she was asked to run by the party leadership and considered it a "good opportunity to start leading the county party."

She said, "We've got a lot of growth right now and movement, and I want to continue to get Democrats elected."

Democrats lost their lone countywide officeholder when former county recorder Josh Langfelder was defeated in his reelection bid in November 2024 by former Springfield city clerk Frank Lesko. Lesko won the election by 31 votes with more than 98,000 votes cast.

But Kovats said local Democrats have made gains on other fronts in recent years with the election of more Democrats on the GOP-controlled Sangamon County Board and elections of Turner to the Illinois Senate and the election and reelection of Nikki Budzinski to the U.S. House.

"We're still looking to recruit candidates for county treasurer and for other County Board seats that are open" in November, Kovats said.

Local Democrats' best hope for countywide office is Marc Bell, the Democratic nominee for sheriff, Kovats said.

Bell on Feb. 9 announced his intention to withdraw from the race as the only Democratic candidate in the March 17 primary. He posted on his campaign's Facebook page that a lack of financial support from the Democratic Party was the reason for his decision. He wouldn't elaborate at that time.

Bell, 62, a Springfield resident and retired Illinois State Police master sergeant, told *Illinois*

Times on April 17 that he didn't end up filing the necessary paperwork to formally withdraw his candidacy because he was curious how many votes he would receive in the primary.

Bell ended up receiving 11,736 votes, while the Republican incumbent, Sheriff Paula Crouch, received 9,283 votes and Crouch's GOP challenger, retired sheriff's deputy David Timm, received 7,850 votes.

Even though there hasn't been a Democratic sheriff elected in Sangamon County since 1974, Bell said the results show he has an opportunity to win over some Republicans, energize Democrats who don't vote in primaries and win in November.

"Voters are looking for a change," Bell said. "They are not happy with the status quo."

Crouch, who retired after a long career in the Springfield Police Department before being appointed sheriff to replace the retiring Jack Campbell in 2024, has said he considers

herself an outsider who brings a fresh perspective for the sheriff's office. Her critics question that characterization and noted she was endorsed by the county's Republican Party and by Campbell himself.

Kovats said local Democrats could be smiling after the Nov. 3 election as a side effect of voter dissatisfaction with Republican President Donald Trump.

"I believe that we are going to see a massive anti-Trump year," Kovats said. "Sangamon County is a Republican county right now, but it's not MAGA Republican. I think people are going to push back against Trump and the Republican Party that's enabling him, and if we were ever going to win countywide, this is our best opportunity."

Diana Barghouti Hardwick, a Springfield resident who was reelected chairperson of the Sangamon County Republican Party this month after serving the past five years, disagreed with Kovats' prediction.

"We definitely do have two different opinions on the president" among county voters in general, Barghouti Hardwick said. "There are people who love him and some who hate him."

□

The 25th ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE



Left to right: Julia Rollens as Logainne, Phillip Hepe as William, Hannah Cobb as Olive, Jacob Deetz as Chip, Tony Nelson-Pisano as Leaf and Savannah Watts as Marcy in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, a musical about a small-town spelling bee and the cast of fiercely competitive children vying for first place. PHOTO BY EMILY NOEL

GOOD PLAY, BAD JOKE

I saw the *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* musical put on at the Hoogland Center for the Arts. I thought it was mostly terrific and that the cast did an excellent job. I had a good time watching it. I did, however, not love one joke made in reference to the casinos of Indigenous Americans. I won't repeat it here, but suffice to say it referenced the fact that many reservations have casinos and implied that tribes have always planned it to be that way.

The fact of the matter is that much of Indigenous tribal behavior has been in response to the mass colonization and slaughter of Indigenous lands and their people. Indigenous people were often forced onto reservations with few resources and promised – but often denied – offers of self-governance and sustainability.

Indeed, this very region of the country has a history of indigenous mockery. I myself attended University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and while I am proud of graduating there, I cannot deny the harmful legacy of promoting an Indigenous figure as a mascot without true reparations and support for Indigenous Americans.

I know it is no fun to only hear the bad about a show you are in. I did overall very much enjoy the production and will continue to support Springfield Theatre Centre. I just hope that in the future, STC and all of us can be more sensitive to communities that we and our ancestors may have actively harmed – and try to make it right by them.

Editor's note: Read the full review on p. 19. The production continues April 24-26.

Mike Gascoigne
Springfield

WONDERFUL EXHIBIT

As usual, Tara McClellan McAndrew has written a well-researched and informative article citing well-respected, current printed resources ("Mary Lincoln's dress of defiance," April 9). Quotes from authoritative staff at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum further enhance and add additional substance to the column. Readers should take time to see the dress, as it is quite fragile and not often on display; it will be well worth it. The cited exhibit is excellent as well.

Editor's note: "Lincoln: a Life and Legacy that Defined a Nation" is on exhibit at the ALPLM through April 26.

Kathryn Harris
Via illinoistimes.com

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OPENINGS ON URBAN FORESTRY COMMISSION

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Mary Frances
Springfield

NEED RESIDENTS

I'm skeptical that we actually need more hotel rooms when there is adequate capacity already ("A collaborative effort for downtown," April 2). If you want to "save" downtown, then people have to live there, not just visit to shop. More affordable apartments and condos in walking range of the downtown core brings you people who consume goods and services right there, every day, year-round, instead of counting on transitory tourism income that grows and shrinks with the economy. Downtown relied on heavy state worker flow but those days are gone and not coming back. A base of residential in the downtown is going to sustain the shops, bars, restaurants and clubs. Convert the entire Wyndham to residential and see downtown respond.

Mark Suszko
Via [Facebook.com/illinoistimes](https://www.facebook.com/illinoistimes)

Symphony
When I was small my mom would lie on the couch on Sunday afternoon with a cloth over her eyes and listen to the symphony on the radio. This made me uneasy: mothers shouldn't lie down with their eyes closed. The domestic ship might run aground with no one at the tiller and who, who was taking care of me? There was obviously a power here, filling the room, to make her behave like this. Later, I learned very well what that power is!
2026 Jacqueline Jackson

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Voters support data center regs

POLITICS | Rich Miller

In a mid-March poll, 68 percent of likely Illinois voters said they would support legislation to “regulate data centers to minimize their impact on our utility bills, climate, and water while still allowing them to be built.”

But while 21 percent opposed the legislation, more than half of those opponents (56 percent) said they did so because they “Oppose allowing data centers to be built at all.” That means 80 percent either want guardrails or oppose any new construction.

So, yeah, it’s not looking great for anyone who might want to fend off regulation. As you’ll see below, this is an 80-plus percent issue pretty much across the board.

Global Strategy Group conducted the survey of 800 likely voters March 16-19 on behalf of the Illinois Clean Jobs Coalition, which is pushing the “POWER Act” legislation (SB4016/HB5513). The survey had a margin of error of +/- 3.5 percent.

The proposal was initially supported by large bipartisan majorities, the poll found, as well as in all regions of the state. Democrats and independents supported it the most (71 percent), while Republicans support was strong, but not by as much at 61 percent.

And 56 percent of Republicans who said they opposed the bill told the pollster they did so because they didn’t want any data centers built, period. The same was said by 64 percent of likely Downstate voters. Keep in mind that the margin of error for voter subsets is substantially higher.

Organized labor has asked the governor to not pursue his proposed two-year moratorium on state data center construction tax breaks. The governor stood by his proposal, but did offer the possibility of a compromise.

Whether the enviros’ bill is the answer remains to be seen. But it seems clear from the poll that Illinoisans want some real regulation of this industry.

For example, 96 percent said they agreed that the state should “Ensure data centers pay their fair share of water infrastructure costs,” with 85 percent strongly agreeing. Ninety-three percent say data centers should be required to “use efficient cooling systems to reduce water consumption,” with 75 percent strongly agreeing. You almost never see poll numbers like that on anything.

Ninety-one percent said they want to “Prohibit data centers from shifting their energy costs to consumer bills,” and 91 percent also said they want to “Require data centers to provide their own clean energy and

storage to power their operations.” The only difference was intensity. Eighty-four percent strongly agreed that cost-shifting should be outlawed, while 70 percent strongly support requiring the centers to provide their own clean energy and storage.

It goes on from there. “Require an analysis that a data center won’t increase harmful health, water, and environmental impacts on vulnerable communities before a project moves forward,” received 92 percent support with 79 percent strong support. Another 86 percent agreed that rules should be tightened which allow backup diesel generators for data centers to limit their use during “true emergencies.”

And a whopping 97 percent said data centers should be required to report their water sourcing and usage. That’s about as close as you can possibly get to unanimous in a poll.

New technologies and the companies behind them are quite unpopular, but not as much as you might expect after seeing those numbers above.

Thirty-nine percent of respondents said they had a favorable view of artificial intelligence (25 percent “very favorable”), while 51 percent had an unfavorable view (25

percent “very unfavorable”).

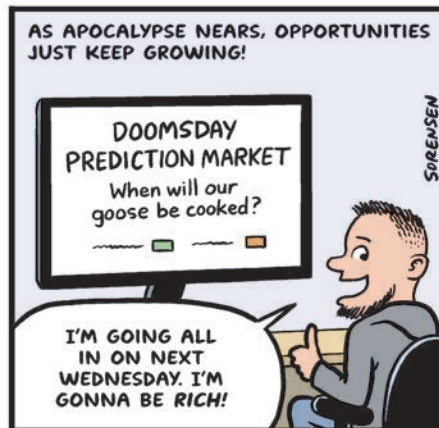
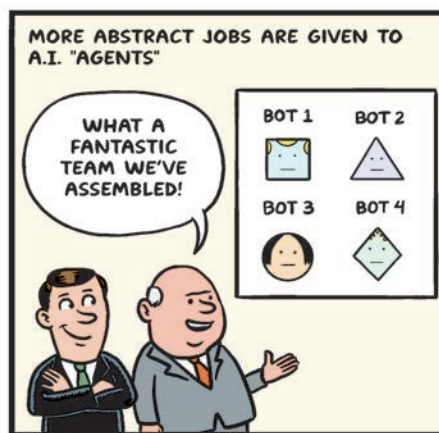
Thirty-five percent rated “big tech companies” favorably, while 55 percent rated them unfavorably.

And just 30 percent rated data centers favorably, while 51 percent rated them unfavorably (32 percent “very unfavorably,” which was the highest of all three).

The House held a hearing on the chamber’s version of the POWER Act earlier this month. The Senate held a marathon hearing over two days the same week on a large number of bills dealing with artificial intelligence (which uses lots of data centers), social media, etc.

Many of these bills appear to come from a desire to address the all too obvious anger of the electorate. Some lobbyists are hoping that the usual legislative “wait and see” inertia sets in. And, if the poll is accurate, voters have not made this a huge priority when it comes to their own state legislators.

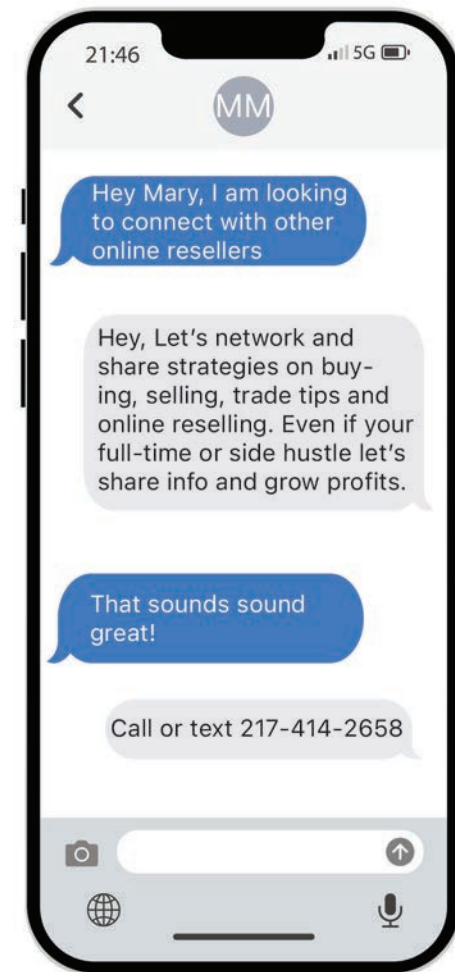
According to the poll, just 37 percent said they’d view their legislators more favorably if their members supported the bill, while 17 percent said they’d view them less favorably. Almost half, 48 percent, said it made no difference either way. □



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OPINION

A case for data center growth

GUESTWORK | Tony DelGiorno

This month's CyrusOne zoning petition vote was not partisan, and the Democrats on the Sangamon County Board split evenly on this vote. The Board had to decide if a proposal meeting zoning standards should advance while demanding strong building-code enforcement, transparency and accountability.

Data centers are part of the infrastructure of modern life. Our phones, online banking, telemedicine, digital records, cloud storage, social media and public services all depend on secure facilities that store and process data. That reality does not mean every project is good or that every concern should be brushed aside. It does mean we should evaluate the facts, not the loudest rumors.

Opponents have tried to treat this project as if it were interchangeable with every troubling data-center story found online. It is not. CyrusOne's proposed site in Talkington Township, about 30 miles from downtown Springfield, is in a rural area where the closest home is roughly a half mile from the property line. That is a very different setting from the densely populated locations often cited by critics.

The county also has tools to address legitimate concerns. Zoning and building codes are not the same thing. This petition was a zoning matter. CyrusOne has not yet filed for a building permit. That gives Sangamon County the opportunity to continue tightening building standards and enforcing state and local requirements before construction begins.

Some have compared this proposal to Springfield's Pillsbury plant or to the company's Aurora campus. Those comparisons do not hold up. Pillsbury was an economic engine for the city for decades before it was sold off for scrap and became blighted. As for the CyrusOne Aurora facility, it was acquired by CyrusOne; the company did not build it from the ground up, and it sits only 300 feet from nearby homes.

Just as important, I have also worked with county leaders and our regional planning staff to review the health and safety concerns raised by objectors and to address them through proposed changes to the zoning and building ordinances. Responsible government should not dismiss objections out of hand, but it should separate genuine issues from misconceptions and respond with rules that are clear and enforceable. State law already

requires strict environmental and public safety standards for most of the concerns raised, and where county authority exists, we can still strengthen our building codes.

This project also comes with local benefits that should not be ignored. Construction is expected to support hundreds of union tradespeople over several years, and the finished facility would create more permanent jobs on site and related maintenance work afterward. I was part of conversations with the developer resulting in their significant funding commitment for STEM education, apprenticeship and workforce pipeline development, and minority recruitment and employment so local students and workers can benefit from these opportunities.

Environmental and utility questions deserve careful attention, but the facts matter here, too. The project is planned with existing electrical infrastructure from the 4,000-acre solar farm across the street. Rural Electric Convenience Cooperative and the MISO regional grid have certified ample capacity, and the Electric Cooperative commits that rates can be held steady because of this large new customer. Water is provided by another rural cooperative, and the project will use a one-time-fill closed-loop cooling design. The project will use Tier 4 diesel generators (the EPA's strictest emissions standard) for emergency backup only, so the actual environmental impact is far more limited than critics suggest. That is not the same as the worst-case assumptions being circulated online.

Government must follow evidence and law, not fear or internet-driven misinformation. Sangamon County can welcome responsible investment with strong standards and firm enforcement — not reflexive opposition. Last year's unanimously-passed data center ordinance set the bar after months of work and opportunity for public comment through our Zoning Committee. This project meets those requirements. That does not mean that the work ends to monitor the progression of this development and enforce the law to protect the citizens of Sangamon County. For these reasons, I supported the zoning petition. □

Tony DelGiorno is an attorney in private practice who serves as the Democratic Caucus leader and a Sangamon County Board member for District 23.

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Invest in residents first

Downtown is more than tourism

GUESTWORK | Jay Shanle

Downtown Springfield is the heart of our city, but more importantly, it is a neighborhood. It belongs first to the people who live here, work here, study here, worship here and return here again and again because it feels like theirs. Tourism is a vital piece of downtown's economy, and we're glad to welcome visitors. But if we treat tourism as downtown's primary purpose, we will keep chasing weekend wins while missing the daily life that makes a downtown resilient. The long-term success of downtown Springfield depends on serving Springfield residents first, because when a downtown works for locals, it becomes magnetic to everyone else.

I'm in my first month as executive director of Downtown Springfield, Inc. (DSI), but I'm not new to downtown. Like many, I've built routines and memories here: grabbing coffee before a meeting, stopping in for lunch or dinner, showing visitors the places that remind me why this city matters. That's why the recent conversation about declining foot traffic and the real hardship it creates for downtown businesses hits home. These concerns aren't abstract. They're lived realities for owners and employees working to keep the lights on, make payroll, and keep doors open.

Here's the truth I want us to say out loud: tourism is not, and cannot be, the main service downtown provides. Tourism is an outcome of a healthy downtown ecosystem, not the foundation. A downtown designed around residents creates the kind of authenticity visitors can feel. A downtown designed around visitors alone often feels like a stage set, busy in bursts, quiet when the buses leave, and too fragile when trends shift.

Imagine downtown as a garden. Visitors are welcome to admire it. Some will take photos. Some will tell friends. Some will come back year after year. But visitors are not the ones who plant the seeds, pull the weeds, or water the beds. Residents do that. Local businesses do that. Workers, artists, students and families do that by showing up on ordinary days, not just special weekends. If we build a downtown that residents rely on and love, tourism will follow. But if we build a downtown mainly for tourism, we risk neglecting the very people who sustain it through every season.

This resident-first mindset is exactly why DSI has been evolving its mission to serve the entire downtown community, not just a subset of stakeholders. We are community-focused and expanding our impact so downtown works better for the people who use it every day. That shift matters because it aligns our work with what downtown needs most right now: stronger civic pride, more consistent daily activity, and a broader sense of shared ownership.

So what does "resident-first development" actually look like?

First, it means listening and then acting. Our planning work has shown that downtown has an image problem and that perceptions can be outdated or exaggerated. You don't fix that with slogans. You fix it by addressing the everyday friction points like parking, safety, identity and having places that invite people to linger. To put action behind these priorities, DSI is hosting a community conversation, "AMA with Jay," on April 30. It's a chance to share our vision, hear directly from residents, and begin taking concrete steps forward together.

Second, it means placemaking that is authentic and community-driven. This includes creative tools like banners, murals and public art, not as decoration for decoration's sake, but as ways to make downtown feel alive and welcoming. The goal is to create spaces where residents feel proud to bring friends, take their kids, spend an hour or run into someone they know. When people start saying "let's go downtown" without needing a special reason, foot traffic becomes steadier and businesses gain the confidence to plan, staff and invest.

Third, resident-first development means economic growth that is strategic, not scattershot. New businesses are always welcome, but we can't treat recruitment like tossing seeds onto unprepared ground. Entrepreneurs need the right conditions to succeed: support systems, clear information and a pipeline that helps good ideas become sustainable storefronts. DSI has done this work before and is preparing to build on it. Momentum on Main began as workshops that helped entrepreneurs move toward opening brick-and-mortar locations downtown, covering topics like financing, permitting and navigating city processes. Our partnership with Isringhausen Imports to deliver the DRIVE Grant, supporting startup costs such as remodeling, inventory and equipment, does the same. These are resident-first strategies because they build local capacity and help Springfieldians start and sustain businesses that serve Springfieldians.

Fourth, it means using partnerships to strengthen our downtown economy. DSI is committed to being a connector, working closely with organizations like the Springfield Sangamon Growth Alliance, Innovate Springfield, the Small Business Development Center, the Office of Planning and Economic Development and the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce. Simply "filling vacancies" is not a strategy. Real strategy means understanding spaces and markets, reducing barriers and supporting businesses that meet community needs whether that's services, retail, food, arts or experiences that make everyday life in Springfield richer.



Downtown Springfield, Inc. will host an Ask Me Anything event with new executive director Jay Shanle from 5:30-7:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 30, at First Presbyterian Church in downtown Springfield. There is no cost to attend, but those interested in participating are asked to make a reservation at illinoistimestix.com. PHOTO COURTESY DSI

Finally, resident-first development means planning for change instead of being surprised by it. Downtowns everywhere are adapting to remote work, shifting office footprints and evolving retail habits. The answer isn't nostalgia, and it isn't doom. It's resilience. That is more housing downtown, more reasons to be there outside of 9-to-5 and more public spaces that support family life and community connection.

If we do this well, tourism grows with downtown. Visitors don't travel for empty streets and checklists alone. They travel for place: districts that feel alive, cared for and distinct. When downtown meets residents' everyday needs through safety, beauty, small business growth, creative

programming and spaces people genuinely use, tourism becomes an added benefit of a strong local core.

Downtown Springfield doesn't need to choose between residents and visitors. It needs to remember the correct order. Invest in locals first. Build the garden for the people who tend it daily. And then proudly open the gate to everyone who wants to experience what Springfield has built together. □

Jay Shanle is the executive director of Downtown Springfield, Inc. He previously served as DSI's director of communications and program director for the Springfield Area Arts Council.

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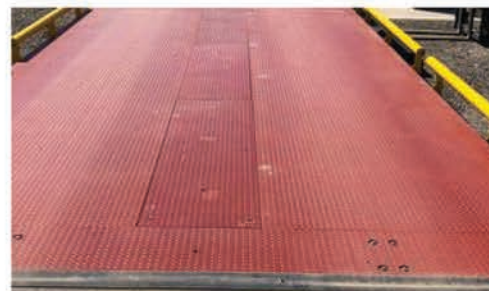
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Tourism is up, but downtown is hurting

While Illinois' capital still grapples with post-pandemic challenges in the city center, officials anticipate record tourism numbers

DOWNTOWN | By Erika Tulfo and Jacques Abou-Rizk, Medill Illinois News Bureau



The 400 block of East Adams Street in downtown Springfield is pictured on June 20, 2024, a day after a fire destroyed one building and damaged several adjacent properties. Several nearby businesses later closed, citing a drop in foot traffic following the fire. PHOTO BY ZACH ADAMS

From his view on East Adams Street, Prairie Archives owner Robb Paul has witnessed firsthand how downtown Springfield has evolved. His secondhand bookstore at 522 E. Adams St. has been in the same spot since 1992, straight across from the Old State Capitol and just a couple doors down from Abraham Lincoln's old law office.

He's seen his share of restaurants opening and closing, businesses coming and going, and more than enough shuttered windows. But he said it wasn't always like that.

"During the summer, 15 years ago, you would have 50 or 60 people having lunch on the square," he said. "Nowadays, you have two or three."

Still, this year may be different. Data from Visit Springfield, the city's official destination marketing organization, shows that visitor numbers are high as anticipated events such as the Route 66 Centennial and the opening of the Scheels Sports Park this year are expected to boost foot traffic. According to Visit Springfield director Scott Dahl, the city expects a record year in travel expenditures, forecasted to exceed \$650 million.

Business owners in downtown Springfield, however, say they aren't seeing or feeling those numbers, citing their struggles to bounce back from the pandemic and a recent fire on Adams Street that left several buildings vacant, compounding a trend of tourists flocking to other parts of the city following the closure of downtown's largest hotel.

Residents say the shutdown of the Wyndham Springfield City Centre last year, also on East Adams Street, has played a major role in the drop in downtown visitors. The building suffered extensive flooding damage, which the building's insurer has accused its owner of intentionally perpetrating.

The now boarded-up hotel is the city's tallest building and boasts over 300 rooms. Even the Starbucks connected to the hotel is now boarded up, too, with no signs of imminent reopening as legal disputes over the property are tied up in court.

Dahl said that, overall, Springfield has 3,500 hotel rooms available, which is more than other cities of the same size. But he added that the Wyndham's closure was a private matter

that could only be resolved by its owner and insurance company.

"With the Wyndham closure, some of the visitors have moved to the perimeter of Springfield, because that's where the hotel rooms are," he said. "The city of Springfield is at their mercy at this time. And you know, we want to see (the Wyndham) open sooner than later."

When asked about the number of vacant state-owned buildings in downtown Springfield, Gov. JB Pritzker pointed to his "Surplus to Success" initiative, which aims to convert unused and underutilized state buildings for other uses, including housing.

"We're looking at all the properties across the state that the state owns where we can convert them into something useful and not just an empty thing that we're paying for," he told Capitol News Illinois.

"Our capital ought to be one of the great cities in the state of Illinois. I think it is, but there's so much more we can do," Pritzker said.

Springfield Mayor Misty Buscher, Sangamon County Board Chair Andy Van Meter and state leaders held a March 31 press conference to pledge bipartisan support for a bill that would help facilitate an expansion of a downtown convention center and construction of a new hotel.

"The goal is to provide economic tools that will finance and fund the development of a new full-service hotel and the expansion of the Bank of Springfield Center," bill sponsor state Sen. Doris Turner, D-Springfield, said, according to Illinois Times. "Without a doubt, this is true economic development that will bring jobs and tourism dollars to downtown without Springfield residents having to pay any new taxes."

The measure would allow for a Sales Tax and Retail bond structure in the newly created Capital Area Tourism Authority to help fund the development and own the hotel.

However, several members of the Springfield City Council have publicly expressed opposition to the structure of the potential new government authority, which would give the city only one appointed member on the board – the same number as the Springfield Metropolitan Exposition and Auditorium



The Wyndham Springfield City Centre is the city's tallest building and has more than 300 hotel rooms. It closed suddenly in March 2025 following extensive flood damage, which the building's insurer has accused its owner of intentionally perpetuating, and is now part of an ongoing legal dispute. PHOTO BY ZACH ADAMS

Authority – while the Sangamon County Board gets three appointees.

Ward 2 Ald. Shawn Gregory, whose ward includes a portion of downtown, told *Illinois Times* he had been in touch with Turner about his opposition to the bill and argued it would be an overreach. Gregory also filed a formal witness slip as an opponent to the bill.

“These are expansive governmental powers, including fiscal and land-related authorities. Critically, the list of powers do not contain any requirement that the city of Springfield must approve of these actions,” he said. “It’s something that we as a community are going to have to look into from not only an aldermanic standpoint, but even a class action (perspective).”

Downtown fire damage lingers

Along with the Wyndham’s closure, retailers pointed to the fire on Adams Street in 2024 as another hit to foot traffic in the area. The blaze ripped through a historic building housing several businesses, including a tattoo parlor and a cat cafe, prompting city officials to close the street for demolition work.

That section of East Adams Street was closed for a little under a year, which devastated neighboring businesses. The Kidzeum of Health & Science children’s museum, for example, located just across from the burned-down building, reported losing about \$30,000 in revenue.

Not long after, other restaurants along the block once collectively promoted as the Adams Family shuttered, leaving the street mostly empty. Cafe Moxo, a downtown restaurant staple, moved to a strip mall a few miles west of downtown. Buzz Bomb Brewing Co., a popular bar that regularly hosted karaoke and other events, closed permanently. The Wakery, a late-night coffeehouse and nonalcoholic bar, also closed its doors as foot traffic fell following the fire.

“Downtown businesses were struggling before,” Elizabeth Wake, the owner of The Wakery, told *Springfield Business Journal*. “Unfortunately, the fire created further setbacks, and our business has not been able to bounce back.”

Tricia Schlosser, one of the owners of the clothing store Itty Bitty Fashion Trunk on East Adams Street, said she specifically chose that location to set up shop because of its proximity to the restaurants, hoping it would bring in more customers.

While her store was spared from the flames, she said the aftereffects of the fire heavily affected her business.

“Before that fire, this block was booming. And now we’re the only people on this block other than the Kidzeum,” she said. “On an average day, especially this time of year, you could go days, Monday through Friday, with nobody coming in.”

Post-pandemic challenges remain

Dahl said a large percentage of tourists visit Springfield to see the sites related to Abraham Lincoln. Historic Lincoln markers, statues and tour sites are sprinkled throughout the downtown area, and the Illinois State Capitol Building looms majestically in the city center, with a statue of the former president in front.

So, the decline in downtown foot traffic, then, might be best represented by the drastic drop in visitors to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, located a few blocks from the Old State Capitol, where Lincoln gave his famous “house divided” speech.

Data from the museum shows that visitor numbers have decreased 66% since its opening in 2005. While numbers from 2025 are slightly higher than 2024, the museum hasn’t been able to return to pre-pandemic attendance levels.

Sen. Dave Syverson, R-Cherry Valley, who sits on the Senate Special Committee on Tourism, said the post-pandemic work-from-home culture has affected Springfield more than other cities in Illinois.

“Certainly over the years, Springfield tourism has relied a lot on government-related tourism,” Syverson said. He added that the shift of state business toward Chicago, coupled with the convenience of conducting meetings over Zoom, created “less of a need for people to come to Springfield for meetings.”

It was a pattern he said started under Democratic Governors Rod Blagojevich and Pat Quinn. Blagojevich was criticized for the day-trip flights he would take to Springfield from Chicago, and Quinn faced backlash for cutting state workers. The number of state workers in Sangamon and Menard counties dropped from 23,000 in 1990 to 17,000 in 2009 under Quinn. Republican Bruce Rauner’s adversarial relationship with state workers and the two-year budget impasse he presided over also didn’t help matters.

Since 2019 when Pritzker took office, the number of state workers in Sangamon County alone has grown from 8,887 to 12,031, according to state data. Even so, many of those workers have offices miles from the heart of downtown.

The state spent \$80 million to repurpose a 186,000-square-foot former Sears department store in a shopping mall west of the city’s center and relocated the headquarters for the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency there at the end of 2024. That same year, the state spent \$6 million to purchase a 176,000-square-foot former Wells Fargo office building at the far western edge of the city. It has become the new headquarters for the Illinois Department of Central Management Services.

Syverson also said he doesn’t expect much state activity to shift back to in-person in Springfield anytime soon.

“It’s the new way of communication,” he said. “We just have to be creative in the

different opportunities and the type of events that go on.”

But business owners like Paul of Prairie Archives said that tourism marketing can only go so far.

“I firmly believe in people working in offices. You can offer promotions and new themes to bring people downtown, but ultimately, we need the people,” he said. “And I’ve never met anyone that said their goal is to put the office workers back in offices.”

Momentum for 2026

This year holds promise for Springfield businesses and tourism, Dahl said, noting the centennial celebration of Route 66 will have 20 co-branded events, and that the nation’s 250th birthday is expected to bring more visitors than ever.

Centennial events kick off on April 30 along Route 66, which starts in downtown Chicago, heads south through Springfield and then west through Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico and Arizona, ending in Santa Monica, California, and covering more than 2,000 miles.

For America’s 250th birthday, organizations around Illinois and in Springfield are planning events to mark the moment, celebrate history and draw tourists to the state and its capital city.

In addition, for the first time, the city of Springfield will also attract sports tourists with the grand opening of the \$75 million Scheels Sports Park at the intersection of I-55 and I-72, a sports megaplex with eight fields for baseball, soccer and more, an indoor sports dome, multiple courts and 2,500 parking spaces.

“We’re talking about 100-team tournaments that will be coming to Springfield this summer,” Dahl said. “We have never seen anything like that.”

Jay Shanle calls it a transition period for Springfield. Shanle was recently named executive director of Downtown Springfield Inc., a nonprofit dedicated to strengthening the downtown area, following Carlos Ortega’s departure.

In May, the City Council approved the Springfield Downtown & Mid-Illinois District Master Plan — a 278-page document outlining development of the city as a hub for health care, tourism and urban living over the next few decades.

Shanle said he admits that “tourism comes and goes,” so Lincoln and Route 66 are “not enough to overcome that gap that we lost with state employment.” But he hopes DSI can help build an identity for downtown centered around the city’s arts and culture staples coming off the master plan.

“We always look at downtown through the lens of what it was: state workers, central shopping district,” Shanle said. “But



Jay Shanle, pictured in front of the Old State Capitol, was recently named executive director of Downtown Springfield, Inc., a nonprofit dedicated to strengthening the downtown area. PHOTO BY ZACH ADAMS

when you take these things away and you do asset mapping... you realize it has all the components to be an arts, culture and entertainment district.”

Some Springfield residents have even begun taking matters into their own hands.

Leah Wilson, executive director of the Kidzeum, along with other local business owners, came up with the idea for a campaign called “My Heart’s Downtown.” They launched the grassroots movement last month to revitalize downtown Springfield and get residents and tourists excited about the area.

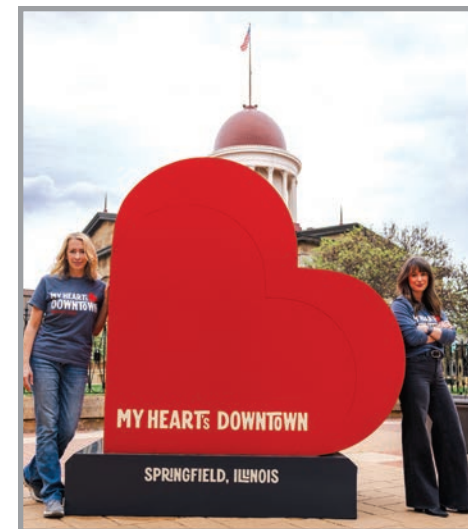
The campaign provided businesses with a marketing package, such as a logo to display in windows or feature on social media, and a calendar to stay up to date on special events.

Wilson said beyond obvious fixes like

improving infrastructure and making public parking more accessible, the city and its residents needed to think about the big picture.

“I thought it could be a powerful reminder for people that the heart of Springfield is in its downtown,” she said. “If you look at the number of cultural and historical assets that we have, those are in downtown. The stories that we love to tell about Springfield are downtown. Not in the strip malls on the west side of town.”

Erika Tulfo and Jacques Abou-Rizk are graduate students in journalism with Northwestern University’s Medill School of Journalism, Media and Integrated Marketing Communications, and are fellows in its Medill Illinois News Bureau



Left, Kidzeum executive director Leah Wilson and Elisa Fox, director of development and marketing, with the My Heart’s Downtown sculpture that Ace Sign installed on the Old Capitol Plaza. PHOTO BY ZACH ADAMS

A mission for downtown

A brand is more than a marketing campaign. It is more than a logo, a T-shirt or a social media graphic. Though it has those pieces, a brand is a mission. The mission of My Heart’s Downtown began simply: How can we capitalize on increased foot traffic on Kidzeum’s free admission day (Valentine’s Day) and encourage patrons to visit other businesses?

Mission arises from a need or opportunity. Kidzeum has been here since 2018 and has watched Adams Street get quiet. We see the need, because we feel it as well.

That need spurred the collaboration that is now the My Heart’s Downtown campaign. The T-shirts, bumper stickers and the incredible heart sculpture in the Old State Capitol Plaza are powerful visual unifiers in that mission. I truly believe that good design can change people, places and ideas. That’s why I love doing it. But the real work is done when we all sit at the table together, all with our individual strengths, and decide what can be done about it.

We aren’t the first ones with this mission. Organizations, businesses and residents have been showing up for this place even when it hasn’t made sense to everyone else. My Heart’s Downtown is an effort to connect that work, and others like it – to make it visible and turn parallel efforts into a unified voice for what downtown Springfield is and all that it could be.

The next step is keeping the momentum going, with more partners at the table finding opportunities to build on and leverage our successes.

I believe in Adams Street, and I believe in downtown. And I believe that when we stop waiting for someone else to save the day, and start showing up for each other, something shifts. My Heart’s Downtown is a powerful symbol that we have shifted, and I invite you to be a part of it.

Elisa Fox

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Classic French toast

FOOD | Ashley Meyer

Brunch season is upon us! Whether you're in the mood for laid back and lazy or showstopping and decadent – classic French toast is a deliciously reliable dish that seldom fails to please. Its first recorded history dates back to a fourth century cookbook from the Roman Empire, though it's likely that versions of this dish have existed as long as there's been leftover bread. Various versions of bread soaked in egg and milk abound, some with clever names such as the German arme ritter (“poor knights”) and French pain perdu (“lost bread”). Day-old bread works best for this preparation as it results in a finished product that is fluffy and custardy as opposed to soggy and stodgy. Crusty baguette or luxe brioche-type bread is ideal, but really any type works well. For a protein-packed breakfast with staying power, consider using fiber rich, sprouted whole grain sandwich bread.

French toast in my house growing up was always seasoned with freshly ground black pepper and nutmeg rather than cinnamon. Black pepper may seem like a surprising inclusion, however it plays incredibly well with nutmeg and is a classic, harmonious combination, especially in egg-based dishes. While many may think of French toast as a super sweet dish laden with whipped cream, syrup and fruit, it performs equally well as a savory dish topped with nutty Swiss cheese, herbs or mushrooms.

One variation that leans both savory and sweet is the Monte Cristo sandwich. A

southern California take on a French croque monsieur (a ham and Gruyere sandwich that's slathered with bechamel sauce before being broiled), it was featured on Disneyland's Blue Bayou Restaurant menu in 1966. Served dusted with powdered sugar and a dollop of jam, the Monte Cristo sandwich has since become widely popular around the country. Serve it in the classic sweet-savory style or make it your own with additions like caramelized onions, pickled peppers or roasted mushrooms for an earthy vegetarian alternative.

Classic French toast

Ingredients:

Four eggs, divided
1 ½ cups whole milk
½ cup half and half or whipping cream (or just use 2 cups milk)
A generous pinch of salt
⅛ teaspoon finely ground black pepper
⅛ teaspoon finely grated nutmeg
8-10 slices bread

Sweet or savory toppings to serve, such as powdered sugar, cinnamon sugar or maple syrup, fresh fruit and whipped cream. Savory topping ideas include minced herbs, Gruyere cheese or a simple mushroom white wine sauce.

Turn the oven onto warm and place a sheet pan topped with a wire rack inside. Crack two of the eggs into a shallow baking dish. Separate

the remaining two eggs. Being careful not to break the yolks, crack those eggs into a small bowl and pluck out the egg yolks. Add the egg yolks to the baking dish with the whole eggs (freeze the remaining egg whites for future use or discard). Add the milk, cream, salt, black pepper and nutmeg and whisk thoroughly to combine.

Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium-low heat and add a small knob of butter. While the butter melts, place two or three slices of bread into the egg mixture. Flip them a few times until they are fully saturated with the egg mixture. When the butter in the pan is sizzling, gently lift a slice of the soaked bread out of the pan and give it a few seconds for excess egg mixture to drip away, then carefully transfer to the pan. Continue until the skillet is filled, making sure to leave some room in between the slices so they brown properly. Cook the slices for about two minutes over medium-low heat, until they release from the pan and are beginning to brown.

Flip the bread (you may want to add a bit more butter at this point depending on what's in the pan) and continue cooking until it's golden on the bottom and they spring back in the center when pressed lightly with a finger. Serve immediately or hold in a preheated oven and top as desired.

Monte Cristo variation

To the above ingredients, add:
6 ounces each thinly sliced ham and turkey

(roasted mushrooms is a delightful vegetarian substitute)

2 tablespoons each mayonnaise and Dijon mustard
8 ounces sliced Swiss cheese (Gruyere or Emmenthal are good)

Mix together the mayonnaise and mustard in a small bowl. Spread the mayo mustard mixture onto the insides of the bread, then top half the slices each with three ounces of meat and two ounces of the cheese. Top with the remaining bread.

Heat a large skillet over medium low heat and add a knob of butter. Dip two of the sandwiches into the baking dish with the egg-milk mixture on both sides. Allow the egg mixture to evenly saturate the bread but do not soak. When the butter is sizzling, carefully place the two sandwiches into the skillet and press down gently with a spatula. Cover the pan and cook on low for about three minutes, then flip and cook for two or three minutes more, adding more butter as needed. Transfer the cooked sandwiches to the rack on the warm oven and repeat with the remaining sandwiches.

Serve lightly dusted with powdered sugar and jalapeno jam on the side, if desired. □

Ashley Meyer is a chef and freelance writer based in Springfield.

Nerds' night out

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee delights at the Hoogland

THEATER | Courtney Wick

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee – or, *Putnam*, as it's lovingly referred to by theater connoisseurs on a time crunch, is a sweetly funny but sincere musical about a small-town spelling bee and the cast of fiercely competitive children (all played by adults) who are vying for first place. It is essentially a comedic *A Chorus Line* with acne and braces.

Co-directed by first-time Springfield Theatre Centre directors and real-life boyfriend/girlfriend Shelby Bayless and Jake Hankins, *Putnam* proves to be an easy transition from their personal lives.

"We both work in education so the setting and working with school-age kids really spoke to us," said Bayless. This is especially apparent in Hankins' set, which evokes both a generic, Midwestern tiered classroom and the classic tri-fold posterboard used for school projects of yesteryear. Kyle Bolinger's lighting design further anchors the show's chaotic plot with situational precision as the opening's fluorescent glow is so authentic one can almost hear the nostalgic hum of a grade-school gymnasium.

If that isn't enough to transport you, the thrill and surprisingly nerve-wracking audience participation will revive those begrudged memories of sweaty eighth-grade anxiety. Each night, four volunteers join the cast onstage for much of the first act, braving the spelling rounds (and choreography) without the safety net of a script. This is the true genius of the show: creating genuine spelling bee jitters and palpable suspense as the rest of the audience can't help but root for one of their own. At the reviewed performance, there was a wave of triumph as the final guest, Jordan DePatis overstayed his welcome by successfully spelling "gnocchi," forcing the officials to pivot to a harder word just to get him off the stage.



Left to right: Jacob Deetz as Chip, Hannah Cobb as Olive, Julia Rollens as Logainne, Savannah Watts as Marcy, Phillip Heppe as William, and Tony Nelson-Pisano as Leaf. PHOTO BY EMILY NOEL

There is no "star" of *Putnam* as it's an ensemble cast comprised of six quirky bookworm students and three adults presiding over the event, but there are standouts. Chrissy Mauck plays the bee's well-coiffed and professional host, Ms. Rona Lisa Peretti, with impeccable perkiness and an enchanting vocal prowess. Her unscripted line deliveries are also a highlight – playfully poking fun at the audience contestants and keeping her co-host, Doug Panch, played by the delightful Jim Dahlquist, on his toes.

"Getting to stretch my improvisational muscles has been my favorite part. It's a different show every night," Mauck said.

Relative newcomer to the Springfield theater

scene, Tony Nelson-Pisano, who commutes from Bloomington, portrays the strange and home-schooled Leaf Coneybear with an unbridled, animated enthusiasm.

"I very much resonate with Leaf and his ADHD-isms," Pisano said. His character wears a homemade cape outfit reminiscent of the psychedelic 1960s, and he appears to become occasionally possessed by a drug demon in order to correctly spell words. Pisano delivers each mini-scene hilariously, as if he's just recently microdosed another mushroom. He owns every part of the stage with a whirlwind of comedic energy and is a joy to watch. This reviewer looks forward to seeing him in future productions.

Although each of the six students are

somewhat dutifully given an emotional or moral epiphany to round out an otherwise silly show, Hannah Cobb's portrayal of Olive Ostrovsky's abusive childhood most painfully tugs at the heartstrings. Her large second act number, "The I Love You Song," is a gut-punching stunner with Nate King and Mauck playing her parents and providing beautiful harmonies. Cobb's resonant delivery is profound and moving, and entirely unexpected considering the first song of the second act is about an erection (comically sung by Jacob Deetz).

The talented Phillip Heppe, Julia Rollens and Savannah Watts complete the cast, who all perform with sly humor to showcase the kids' hopeless braininess without turning them into stereotypical caricatures. None fall victim to becoming part of a sentimental after-school special, and the audience gets drawn into the spirit of competition – silently hoping for their favorite character to win. This production has a lot of whimsy and heart, and for those of us who participated in spelling bees (or lettered in Scholastic Bowl), *Putnam* reminds us there's a certain magic in the camaraderie of simply being "one of the nerds." □

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee continues its run at the Hoogland Center for the Arts April 18-19 and April 24-26 in the LRS Theatre. Friday and Saturday performances start at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday matinees begin at 2 p.m. Tickets are available by calling 217-523-2787 or visiting HCFTA.org <https://www.hcfta.org/tickets>

The show is considered PG13+ and promises interactive fun for audiences. It continues March 20-22 and 27-29 in the Peggy Ryder Theater at the Hoogland Center for the Arts. Tickets are available at HCFTA.org.



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Thursday Apr 23

Karaoke Night with DJ Nattie Beats
Benderz, Auburn, 8pm

Open mic with Bob the Brewer
Decatur Brew Works, Decatur, 6:30-10pm

Karaoke Night
Goodfellas Pub, 8pm

Thursday Night Karaoke
Harry's Adult Day Care, 10pm-1am.

Verviers and Marble Teeth
Hoogland Center for the Arts Club Room, 6:30pm

JCB Entertainment Karaoke
La Fiesta Chatham, Chatham, 6-10pm

After School Special
Mother Road Diner, Route 66 Hotel & Conference Center, 6-9pm

Karaoke at The Cidery
Obed & Isaac's The Cidery, 6-8pm.

Open mic with Silas Tockey
Spirited Republic/Limerick Brewing Company, Lincoln, 7-10pm

Kortney and friends open mic
The Blue Grouch, 7-11pm

Karaoke
The Topsy Toad, 8pm-12am

Jason Eady
Twisted Tree Music & Event Hall, Jacksonville, 7pm

Friday Apr 24

Jim Quisenberry
48 Inn Sports Bar & Grill, Decatur, 8-11pm

2nd Street Harmony
AJ's Corner, Chatham, 6pm

Open mic hosted by Micah Walk
Bar Bella, 5-8pm

The Cocktails
The Blue Grouch Pub, 7-10pm

Timothy Duggan
Boone's, 5:30-8:30pm

Robbie Mitchell
Buckhart Tavern, Rochester, 8-11pm

Karaoke Night with Party Time DJ
Bunkers Bar, Illiopolis, 8-11:30pm

Thomas J Beverly and Geoff Ryan
Butternut Hut, 6pm

CT Jazz with Steve Schepper and Manley Mallard
Decatur Brew Works, Decatur, 7-9pm

Travis Ried Band
George Rank's, 8-11pm

Elvis Himselvis
Harvest Market Farmhouse Brews, 6-9pm

Angel Brown's Smooth N' Blue Duo
Lime Street Cafe, 7-10:30pm and April 25, 7-10:30pm

Line dancing lessons
Locals Bar, Pawnee, 7-9pm

Karaoke
The Lumpia House, 5-11pm

Meetup at The Main Gate Hip Hop Show
Main Gate Bar & Grill, 8-11pm

After School Special
Oak Hills Country Club and Winery, Girard, 6-9pm

Karaoke
Pickles Package and Pub, Pawnee, 9pm-2am

Karaoke with T&C Music Factory
Pier 55 Lounge, 8pm

Jay Larson Band
The Bird Tavern, 7-10pm

Joel Honey
Whiskey Ridge Saloon, Breckenridge, 7-10pm

Saturday Apr 25

Double H Karaoke
American Legion Post 32, 7-11pm

Wolf Crick Boys with Tyler Landess
The Backroom Lounge, Riverton, 7-9pm

Blackout Betty: Armed & Dangerous
BB's BFE, Latham, 7-10pm

Lick Creek
Boondocks, 9pm

John Wahl
Boone's, 5:30-8:30pm

Marble Teeth
Brentford Distillers, Decatur, 6-9pm

Prairie State of Mind
Brookhills Golf Club, 2-5:30pm

West End Boogie Project
Bunkers Bar, Illiopolis, 7-10pm

Pizzazz
Camouflage Bar, VFW Post 99, Decatur, 7:30-10:30pm

White Lightnin'
Coyote Den, Salisbury, 6-9pm

Karaoke Night
Crazy Dog Saloon, Cantrall, 7-11pm

Seager Shymansky
Curveside Bar & Grill, Athens, 6-9pm

Big Love - A Tribute to Fleetwood Mac
Danenberger Family Vineyards, New Berlin, 8pm

Hat Trick
DH Brown's, 7pm

Brandy Kristin Band
Dockers Tavern, Spaulding, 5-7pm

Severance, Practically III, Winning Ticket, Patron Saints, Burning Limbs
Dumb Records, 7pm

Stefan Huffman
Harvest Market Farmhouse Brews, 6-9pm

Lady Luck
JB's Hideout, Blue Mound, 8-11pm

Angel Brown's Smooth N' Blue Duo
Lime Street Cafe, 7-10:30pm

YYNOT
Lincoln Square Theater, Decatur, 7pm

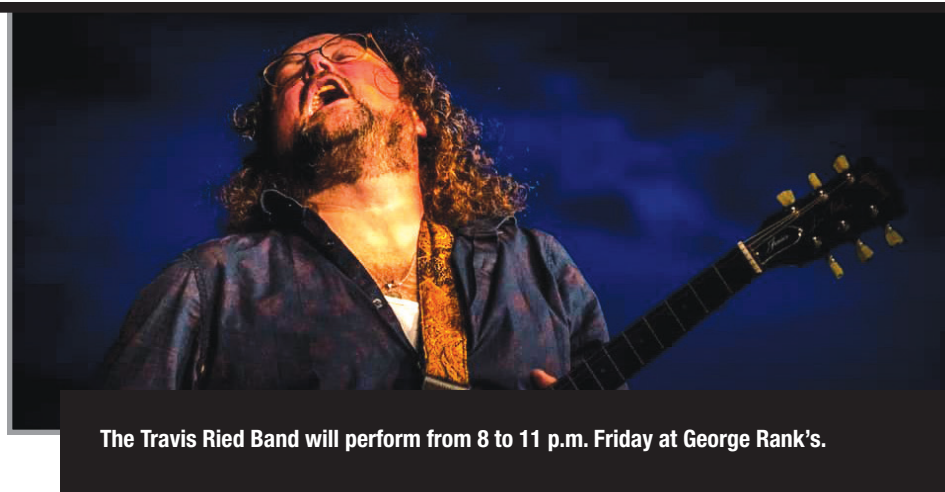
Hi-Tek Redneck Karaoke
Locals Bar, Pawnee, 9pm-1am

Al and Kathy Kitchen
Mother Road Diner, Route 66 Hotel & Conference Center, 6-9pm

Satellite
Mowie's Cue, 7-10pm

Renegade Karaoke
Northern Lights Lounge, 8:30pm-1am

James Crosby
Patriots Pub, Waverly, 8pm



The Travis Ried Band will perform from 8 to 11 p.m. Friday at George Rank's.

Peaches and Bacon
Pease's at BUNN Gourmet, 3-5pm

Big Mo & The Phat Groove
Pop's Place, Decatur, 7-11pm

Chris Camp and John Drake
The Range Bourbon & Brew, Chatham, 7-10pm

Blue Sky Revival
Route 66 MotorHeads Bar & Grill, Museum & Entertainment Complex, 8-11pm

Motown and Soul Music Show
Sliderz Bar & Grill, Decatur, 7pm

Open mic
Stella Coffee & Tea, 10am-12:30pm

The Remedy
The Blue Grouch, 8pm

Grant Barnett, Tom Irwin and Amy Battles
The Railyard, 6-9pm

Joel Honey
The Shed, Pawnee, 8-11pm

Revel in Red
Twisted Tree Music & Event Hall, Jacksonville, 8pm

Branded
Weebles Bar & Grill, 7:30-11pm

Tom & Geoff
Whiskey Ridge Saloon, Breckenridge, 6-9pm

The Meerkats
The Winery, Decatur, 8:30-11:30pm

Sunday Apr 26

SOLD OUT Laid Back Country Picker with Chuck Mead and The Stalwarts
The Backroom Lounge, Riverton, 6pm

Mid-October
Buckhart Tavern, Rochester, 3-6pm

Rod Teaney
Hill Prairie Winery, Oakford, 2-5pm

Johnnie Owens
It's All About Wine, 3-6pm

Larry Watson
Mother Road Diner, Route 66 Hotel & Conference Center, 5-8pm

Angel Brown's Smooth N' Blue Duo
Pease's at BUNN Gourmet, 12-2pm

Stefan Hillesheim
Pop's Place, Decatur, 3-6pm

Jazz Night with B. Douglas and The Travelers for Peace
Sky Lounge, 5-8pm

Keith Dunlap
The Shed, Pawnee, 2-5pm

Jason McKenzie
The Topsy Toad, 1-4pm

Robert Sampson
Trails End Saloon, Curran, 3-6pm

Molly Seaton
Whiskey Ridge Saloon, Breckenridge, 2-5pm

Monday Apr 27

Mike Anderson - the Dulcimer Guy
Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum, 10am-1pm and April 28, 10am-1pm

Stefan Hillesheim
The Alamo, 7pm

Al and Kathy Kitchen
Fulgenzi's Pizza and Pasta, 6-9pm

Rockin' Robin Karaoke
Mother Road Diner, Route 66 Hotel & Conference Center, 6-9pm

Open mic with Mike Metz
The Bird Tavern, 6:30-9pm.

Tuesday Apr 28

Mike Anderson - the Dulcimer Guy
Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum, 10am-1pm

Karaoke Night hosted by Alan Livengood
Fluid Lounge, 7pm

Allan Harris
Fulgenzi's Pizza and Pasta, 6-9pm

Open jam with Smokestacks
George Rank's, Fourth Tuesday of every month, 8-11pm

Open Mic Night with Billy Malone
Golden Fox Brewing, Decatur, Fourth Tuesday of every month, 6-9pm.

Karaoke
Main Gate Bar & Grill, 7-10pm.

Karaoke with Suzi
The Rusty Rail Pub, Lincoln, 8pm-12am

Wednesday Apr 29

Open mic with Joel Honey and Silas Tockey
Boone's, 7-10pm

Butter Jam Wednesday
Butternut Hut, 7-10pm

Karaoke
Clique, 9pm-1am

Midweek Music Meetup open mic with Tom Irwin
Harvest Market Farmhouse Brews, 6-9pm

Al Kitchen and Tricia Giacomini
Mother Road Diner, Route 66 Hotel & Conference Center, 6-9pm

Jason McKenzie
Obed & Isaac's The Cidery, 6-8pm

MUSIC



After School Special plays Mother Road Diner on Thursday, Oak Hills Country Club (Girard) on Friday and Vixen Hill Winery (Palmyra) on Sunday.

April ending music

NOW PLAYING | Tom Irwin

As we wind up our last weekend in April for live music adventures, the weather looks good as outdoor events are on the rise. I also see several concerts happening of varying genres, plus a slew of regulars playing up a storm along with a variety of styles at various venues as the Springfield scene is wont to do, just as we want it to do. Let's take a peek at the goings on.

Thursdays are too cool for words these days with open mics, karaoke, concerts and gigs all on board. Special mention for ticketed events goes to Verviers and Marble Teeth getting crazy cool (cinematic chamber folk?) at the Hoogland Club Room and Jason Eady keeping country cool at Twisted Tree in Jacksonville. After School Special, the way cool duo of Aasne Daniels and Jerry Setnicky, start their busy weekend run at Mother Road Diner, stop in Girard on Friday at the Oak Hills Country Club, take a break on Saturday, then cruise to Palmyra Sunday to visit the Vixen Hill Winery.

Friday drips with all kinds of cool, too, from ticketed concerts by Jon Langston and Brian Fuller at Boondocks, James McMurtry with Betty Soo at the Castle in Bloomington and the Session R&B Jam Sneaker Ball at Danenberger Family Vineyard to our usual suspects in familiar places like Micah Walk hosting an open mic at Bar Bella, Tom & Geoff getting it at Butternut Hut and Timothy Duggan digging in at Boone's.

Bands on the run include The Cocktails serving up the rock 'n' roll at Blue Grouch, Elvis Himselvis dialing in the King at Harvest Market, Travis Ried Band delving into original rock, blues and funk at George Rank's and Jay Larson Band flying high at The Bird.

To continue our exciting adventures, look for Meetup at the Main Gate, an all-ages hip hop show of local artists hosted by Kennon Penn, CT Jazz with Steve Schepper and Manly

Mallard at Decatur Brew Works, the UIS Flute Choir and Jazz Ensemble at the Polly Roesch Music Room in the Visual and Performing Arts Building on the UIS campus and Organ Concert: A Semester in Review performed by Carlo van Ulft on the house organ at St. John's Lutheran Church.

For a one-of-a-kind experience, the Springfield Choral Society produces a double bill this weekend presenting Voices of America: "I, Too, Sing America" with a small vocal ensemble plus Wild Columbine at the Old State Capitol on Friday, then kicks in with the full choir concert at First Presbyterian Church on Saturday night for "This Land is Your Land." Find all you need to know about this special show honoring 250 years of America in song, including schedules, the full set lists and ticket information at SpringfieldChoralSociety.org.

Saturday comes with a rush of over 50 shows scattered throughout the area in bars, wineries, restaurants and churches, plus Prairie State of Mind distributing the good vibes at Brookhills Golf Club, to add one more type of venue to the mix.

Also, Brandy Kristin Band conjures up an acoustic show at Docker's in Spaulding, while the Wolf Crick Boys and Tyler Landess drift into the Backroom Lounge just a shot away in Riverton and The Whiskey Killers and Seager Shymansky deliver their shows to the Curveside Bar & Grill near Athens as the new venue in an old spot kicks up live music as well.

I was hoping to get Sunday, but this week's column is filled up, out the door and headed for home. Be sure to check out our listings for the Funday specials and more happening all over the place. See you later, gator. □

THE CALENDAR



Voices of America Festival "I, Too, Sing America" | Fri., April 24, 7:30-10:30 p.m. Foundation Hall, Old State Capitol

Voices of America Festival "This Land is Your Land" | Sat., April 25, 7:30-9:30 p.m. | First Presbyterian Church, 321 S. Seventh St. springfieldchoralsociety.org.

SPECIAL MUSIC EVENTS | Celebrate America's birthday with choral music

it Celebrate America's 250th birthday with the Springfield Choral Society this weekend as it takes a two-night journey across the landscape of American singing. On Friday, experience an inspiring evening of American choral music as the Springfield Choral Society Small Ensembles join with Wild Columbine for a celebration of our nation's musical heritage. "I, Too, Sing America" explores the voices, stories and traditions that have shaped America through folk song, spirituals, sacred music and contemporary works. Saturday is the culmination of the event. In this evening of song, the full chorus gives voice to the spirit of a nation – its beauty, struggle, hope and enduring promise – through a tapestry of American choral music. Admission is \$20 both nights. See the society's Facebook page for more info and ticket link.

Special Music Events

Capital Area Concert Band
Tue., April 28, 7-8pm. Celebrating America's 250th anniversary, the band will perform patriotic medleys. Free. LLCC Trutter Center, 2400 Millennium Dr., 217-971-5008.

Jon Langston with Brian Fuller
Fri., April 24, 8pm. Musician Jon Langston takes the bold and the brash attitudes from classic '90s country and turbocharges his tunes with a 21st-century rock sound. \$20 advance tickets, \$99 VIP. Boondocks, 2909 N. Dirksen Pkwy., 217-679-0145.

Making His Own Magic: Luke McQuillan
Thu., April 23, 7:30pm. Actor, author and composer Luke McQuillan returns to his alma mater for an evening of songs and a reading from his debut novel, *Love in the Light: A Musical Novel*. At the ICEBOX Theatre in the Kirby Learning Center. Illinois College, Jacksonville, 1101 W. College Ave., 217-245-3259.

Organ Concert: A Semester In Review

Fri., April 24, 7-8pm. An evening of music performed by Carlo van Ulft. From thunderous power to the softest whisper, hear the organ fill the sanctuary with breathtaking sound. Free. St. John's Lutheran Church, 2477 W. Washington St., 217-793-3933.

The Session R&B Jam Sneaker Ball

Fri., April 24, 6-10:30pm. A night of live R&B, soul and vibe. Lineup includes DJ Captain, then J'Lyn Hope's powerful one-woman show and headliner The Session R&B Jam. Pair your freshest sneakers with your best formal or fashion-forward outfit for a Sneaker Chic vibe. Food and drinks available, free parking, 21+ (16+ with guardian). eventbrite.com. \$33.85. Danenberger Family Vineyards, New Berlin, 12341 Irish Road, 2179934998.

The Glenn Miller Orchestra
Tue., April 28, 7pm. Glenn Miller was one of the most successful dance band leaders back in the

Swing Era of the 1930s and 40s. Today, the 18-member ensemble continues to play many of the original Miller arrangements both from the civilian band and the Army Air Force Band libraries. hcfta.org. \$39. Hoogland Center for the Arts LRS Theatre 1, 420 S. Sixth St., 217-523-2787.

UIS Chamber Concert

Sun., April 26, 6pm. Features UIS music students. Free. UIS Student Union Ballroom, 2251 Richard Wright Dr., 217-206-6240.

UIS Flute Choir and Jazz Cafe

Fri., April 24, 7pm. The Flute Choir and Jazz Ensemble team up for this show. Polly Roesch Music Room, Visual and Performing Arts Building, UIS, One William Maxwell Lane, 217-206-6240.

UIS Solo Concert

Sat., April 25, 7pm. UIS music students will perform. uis.edu/music. Polly Roesch Music Room, Visual and Performing Arts Building, UIS, One William Maxwell Lane, 217-206-6240.

Williamsville Jazz Dinner and Silent Auction

Sat., April 25, 5-8pm. This evening will feature live jazz music, a dinner, dancing and a silent auction. Proceeds will support Williamsville band students. \$25. Williamsville High School, Williamsville, 900 S. Walnut St, Williamsville, IL 62693, 217-566-3361.

Books & Authors Come Out and Write

Fourth Monday of every month, 6:30-8pm. Write in a supportive space and connect with others. No reading aloud necessary. For those 16 and older. phoenixcenterspringfield.org. Free. Phoenix Center: Out On Second, 120 E. Scarritt St., 217-528-5253.

Sci-Fi book signing event with Mark Suszko

Sat., April 25, 11am-1pm. Mark Suszko will sign copies of his space opera novel *LAIR* and his latest book, *Boring Alice*. Children and adults can get free crew patch stickers and miniature spaceship models from the book while they last. Free. Prairie Archives, 522 E. Adams St., 217-522-9742.

Tony Wright

Sat., April 25, 3-4:30pm. Meet Tony Wright, author of *Things Aren't Right: The Disappearance of the Yuba County Five*. Wright will discuss his true crime book and explore the disappearance of five young men who were reported missing after attending a basketball game at California State University on Feb. 24, 1978. Lincoln Library, 326 S. Seventh St., 217-753-4900.

Theater & Comedy Comedy on the Mezz

Mon., April 27, 7-8:30pm. Clean comedy with some of the best local and regional standup comedians. Located in the store mezzanine. Accessible by elevator. goharvestmarket.com. Free. Harvest Market, 3001 S. Veterans Pkwy., 217-793-3601.

Comedy Open Mic

Sun., April 26, 7pm. Sign ups at 6:30pm. Show at 7pm. Hosted by comedian Cassandra Simpson. The Thirsty Rooster, Middletown, 104 S. Madison St., 217-445-2085.

Jane Austen's Emma

Fri., April 24, 7pm, Sat., April 25, 7pm and Sun., April 26, 2pm. Enjoy a night at the theater in this historic house museum. This year's play is a classic adaptation from Jane Austen's original novel, one of only six she ever wrote. \$10 SAA members, \$15 non-members. Edwards Place, Springfield Art Association, 700 N. Fourth St., 217-523-2631.

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee

Fri., April 24, 7:30pm, Sat., April 25, 7:30pm and Sun., April 26, 2pm. An eclectic group of six mid-pubescents vie for the spelling championship of a lifetime. \$20-22. Hoogland Center for the Arts LRS Theatre 1, 420 S. Sixth St., 217-523-2787.

Art & Architecture "Up to Eleven" reception

Thu., April 23, 6-8:30pm. "Up to Eleven" features work by senior visual arts majors at UIS. The reception will take place in two locations: The UIS Visual Arts Gallery in the Health and Sciences building as well as the Access Gallery in the lobby of the Visual and Performing Arts building. University of Illinois Springfield Visual Arts Gallery, 1 University Plaza, HSB 201, 217-206-6600.

Mini Paint Brunch

Sat., April 25, 11am-3pm. Small canvas, big fun. Paint mini masterpieces in a safe, all-inclusive space in this self-led, mini paint brunch. LGBTQ+ and allies welcome. phoenixcenterspringfield.org. \$15. Phoenix Center: Out On Second, 120 E. Scarritt St., 217-414-8953.

History

Elijah Iles House Tours

Saturdays, 12-4pm. Through Nov. 14. Tour the oldest house in Springfield. Groups wishing to tour Springfield's oldest home at other times can call for an appointment. The house was built in 1837 by Iles, one of the city's earliest settlers. Free. Elijah Iles House, 628 S. Seventh St., 217-494-0640.

The Steinway Reawakened: Historic 1880s Piano Returns to Life

Sun., April 26, 3-5pm. This open-house event will celebrate the restoration of C.H. Moore's 1880s Steinway & Sons baby box grand piano. A pianist will perform on the newly restored instrument, allowing guests to experience the piano as it resonates through the historic home once more. chmoorehomestead.org. Free, donations accepted. C.H. Moore Homestead DeWitt County Museum, Clinton, 219 E. Woodlawn St., 217-935-6066.

Whose Right to Counsel

Sat., April 25, 12-1pm. Dr. Raff Donelson will trace the evolution of the right to counsel from its early roots in English law to the landmark Supreme Court case Scott v. Illinois. Free. Lincoln Library, 326 S. Seventh St., 217-698-6090.

Faith & Philosophy Community Worship and Picnic in the Park

Sun., April 26, 10:30am-12:30pm. Help Douglas Avenue UMC celebrate its third anniversary as a reconciling church and the

loving work being done in the community. Includes worship at 10:30am, picnic lunch and children's activities. Free. Duncan Park, 500 N. MacArthur, 217-546-4631.

Holiday Happenings New Beginnings Apostolic Church Mother's Day Tea

Sat., April 25, 2-5pm. Celebrate the mothers and mother figures in your life. This ladies' tea is open to the community. Chelsea Coffield will be the speaker. RSVP. Free. New Beginnings Apostolic Church, 3121 E. Elm St., 217-717-4959.

Fundraisers & Galas Annual Spring Gala

Fri., April 24, 6-8pm. Annual Faith Coalition for the Common Good event. \$60, students \$35, tables of 8 \$480. Erin's Pavilion, Southwind Park, 4965 S. Second St., 217-585-2941.

Women's Power Lunch Against Cancer

Fri., May 1, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Celebrate strength, hope and power of women coming together to make a difference in this event to benefit the Simmons Cancer Institute at SIU Medicine. Heather Land, a comedian, storyteller and author, is the guest speaker. Event includes networking, raffle and door prizes. \$65, \$650 for table of 10. <http://aesbid.com/ELP/SIUWPL26> President. Abraham Lincoln Hotel & Conference Center, 701 E. Adams St., 217-545-7337.

APL Annual Upscale Collectible Sale

Fri., April 24, 12-7pm, Sat., April 25, 9am-4pm and Sun., April 26, 9am-12pm. Support homeless pets while scoring amazing finds at the APL Upscale Collectible Sale at the former Party City. Shop furniture, antiques, home goods, kids' items, pet supplies and more. All items 50% off on Saturday. Sunday is the clearance sale. Bring a bag, wagon or cart. Admission is \$10 on Friday, \$5 Saturday, Free Sunday. Old Party City Building, 3329 S. Veterans Pkwy., 217-361-6212.

Color Me Holi 5K Run/Walk

Sat., April 25, 9am. Celebrate color, culture, community and the Earth with this run/walk. Inspired by the spirit of Holi, the Hindu Festival of Colors. Proceeds benefit Motherland Community Project. \$35. Washington Park, 1501 S. Grand Ave. W., 217-544-1751.

Red Shoe Gala

Sat., April 25, 5:30pm. Join Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Illinois in celebrating 40 years of service to families with children receiving medical care. \$150, table of 10 \$1,500. Crowne Plaza Springfield, 3000 S. Dirksen Pkwy., 217-528-3314.

Springfield Catholic Charities Annual Fundraiser

Sat., April 25. "Get Your Groove On." A groovy throwback to the 1970s. Includes 50/50 raffle, silent and live auctions, 70s trivia, costume contest, hors d'oeuvres, wine, beer and soft drinks. \$50, \$350 for table of 8. Columbian Grand Hall Knights of Columbus 364, 2200 S. Meadowbrook Road, 217-523-4551.

Springfield Jaycees 2026 Lawn Mower Clinics

Sat., April 25, 9am-12pm. Get that push lawn mower ready for the season. Cost includes blade sharpening, oil change and spark plug change. Air filter replacement is an additional \$10. O'Reilly Auto Parts, 699 W. Stanford Ave. More info can be found on the Facebook Page or by emailing splfdjaycees@gmail.com. \$70-80.

Community Organizing Food Not Bombs Potluck Meeting

Mon., April 27, 6:30pm. Food Not Bombs SPI is holding this vegan potluck-style meeting to plan upcoming free meal shares, events and community initiatives. New members are welcome. Please email foodnotbombs.spi@proton.me if you have questions. First Church of the Brethren, 2115 Yale Blvd., 217-523-5212.

Free Meal and Produce

Sat., April 25, 4-6pm. Food Not Bombs SPI is providing a free vegan meal and fresh produce. All are welcome, no questions asked, no documents needed. Bring reusable bags, to-go container and travel mugs if possible to help reduce waste. Meal Distribution Site, southwest corner of Seventh Street and Capitol Avenue.

Good Trouble Alliance Meeting

Every fourth Saturday, 12-1pm. The Good Trouble Alliance strategizes bold, creative, nonviolent initiatives to challenge local institutions that weaken democracy. Bring ideas. Snacks provided. Lincoln Library, 326 S. Seventh St., 217-801-0209.

Ward 2 Clean Up Day

Sat., April 25, 10am-12pm. Opportunity for neighbors, businesses, homeowners and renters to take pride in their community and help keep Ward 2 clean and beautiful. Lunch provided. Rain date is April 26. Southtown, 1031 South Grand Ave East and 11th St., 217-789-2151.

Local Government

SMTD Board of Trustees
Mon., April 27, 4:30pm. Monthly meeting of the Sangamon Mass Transit District Board of Directors. SMTD Board Room, 928 S. Ninth St., 217-522-8069.

Springfield City Council Committee of the Whole

Tue., April 28, 5:30-9pm. The Committee of the Whole meets twice a month at 5:30pm Tuesdays. Municipal Center West, 300 S. Seventh St., 217-789-2151.

Children's Corner

Dia de los Ninos

Sun., April 26, 1-4pm. Celebrate Día del Niño, or Children's Day, with games, art, entertainment, community groups and more. Presented by the Illinois State Museum and Hispanic Women of Springfield. Free. Illinois State Museum, 502 S. Spring St., 217-782-7386.

Grant Visits the Oglesbys

April 27-May 1. This annual play for fifth-graders welcomes area students to visit the mansion and learn about Grant's 1880 visit. Students get a tour of the mansion and a chance to visit with the actors. Teachers encouraged to make reservation. Governor Oglesby Mansion, Decatur, 421 W. William, 217-791-0405.

Kaison Care's Autism Awareness Event

Sun., April 26, 3-5pm. In this event, families and community members can learn, connect and access meaningful resources related to autism awareness. Includes children's activities, early childhood resources, mental and behavioral resources, giveaways and food. Hosted by Tiki Tots Learning Center in partnership with Birth to Five Illinois. Free. The Salvation Army of Springfield, 1600 Clear Lake Ave., 217-789-4653.

Nature, Science & Environment 2026 Earth Fair

Sat., April 25, 11am-3pm. Annual event featuring children's activities, food trucks and more designed to showcase and encourage Earth stewardship. Presented by the city of Springfield and Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum. Free. Union Square Park, 212 N. Sixth St., 217-789-2255.

Adoption Event and B.A.R.K Ranger Program

Sat., April 25, 11am-3pm. The Lincoln Home National Historic Site will host this animal adoption event and B.A.R.K. Ranger program, which encourages responsible outdoor recreation with pets. The APL's Mobile Adoption Unit will be on-site with adoptable cats and dogs. Free. Lincoln Home National Historic Site, 413 S. Eighth St., 217-391-3201.

Earth Day Presentation Celebrating the Emiquon Preserve

Fri., April 24, 5:30-8:30pm. The Nature Conservancy's Randy Smith will tell the ongoing story of

the Emiquon Preserve, a 6,700-acre wetland restoration along the Illinois River. Social hour at 5:30pm. Presentation at 7pm. Registration not needed. Free. Hoogland Center for the Arts, 420 S. Sixth St., 217-481-0432.

Star Party

Sat., April 25, 8:30-10pm. Celebrate Astronomy Day with telescopes on the Cawley Meadow. Free. No reservations. lincolnmemorialgarden.org. Free. Lincoln Memorial Garden, 2301 E. Lake Shore Dr., 217-529-1111.

Lectures & Meetings Citizens Club of Springfield: The Health of Local Healthcare

Fri., April 24, 8-9am. A panel discussion on the trends affecting health care and the state of health care in the Springfield area. Opens at 7:30am for free coffee and networking. Free, open to public. Hoogland Center for the Arts Club Room, 420 S. Sixth St., 217-523-2787.

Sangamon Pathways to Learning Inaugural Meeting

Wed., April 29, 3-4:30pm. Sangamon Pathways to Learning is about ensuring that individuals and families experience learning as a connected, intentional pathway rather than a series of fragmented programs. United Way of Central Illinois, 1999 Wabash Ave. Suite 107, 217-726-7000.

Bulletin Board

Abraham Lincoln Pilgrimage

Fri., April 24, 3pm, Sat., April 25, 3pm and Sun., April 26, 3pm. A weekend of activities and remembrance as Scouts gather to honor Abraham Lincoln. Activities include a 20-mile hike to Springfield, visits to Abraham Lincoln-related museums, the tomb of President Abraham Lincoln and more. alincolnbsa.org/. Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site, Petersburg, 15588 History Lane, 217-529-2727.

Rob O'Neill

Sat., May 2, 6:30 p.m. Rob O'Neill, the former Navy SEAL known for firing the shots that killed Osama bin Laden, will be the keynote speaker for the first event in the "Heroes at Home Plate" speaker series. \$40-\$55, VIP meet and greet \$150. Shoebaseball.com. Robin Roberts Stadium, 1415 N. Grand Ave. E., 217-679-3511.

Lucky TomCat Club Cat Show

Sat., April 25, 9am-4pm and Sun., April 26, 9am-3pm. See many purebred breeds and more. Includes vendors of cat trees, toys, T-shirts and more. Adults \$10, children 5-12 \$6, seniors \$6, families \$25, children 4 and younger free. Illinois Building, Gate 1 (Main Gate), Illinois State Fairgrounds, 1101 E. Sangamon Ave., 309-369-3683.

MARKETPLACE

HOME AND GARDEN

Garden tilling and grass seeding, gutter cleaning, shrub and tree trimming, lawn mowing, brush removal and landscaping. Black dirt delivered. Clearing of overgrown lots. Serving Springfield and surrounding areas.

217-741-1340

Real Estate Foreclosure

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS ROCKET MORTGAGE, LLC F/K/A QUICKEN LOANS, LLC, Plaintiff,

vs. RAYMOND C. MORRIS; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS; Defendant(s).

CASE NO. 2025FC000183 Property Address: 908 N. 4th St. Springfield, IL 62702

NOTICE OF SHERIFF SALE

Public notice is hereby given that in pursuance of a judgment of said Court entered in the above-entitled cause on February 11, 2026, I, Sheriff Paula Crouch of Sangamon County, Illinois, will hold a sale on May 19, 2026, commencing at 9:00AM, Sangamon County Building, Sangamon South Auditorium, 1 Copley Plaza (Old SJR Building) 1st Floor, Springfield, IL 62701, to sell to the highest bidder or bidders the following described real estate, or so much thereof as may be sufficient to satisfy said decree, to wit:

Commonly known as: 908 N. 4th St., Springfield, IL 62702
P.I.N.: 14-27.0-155-024
First Lien Position; Single Family Residence; Judgment Amount \$58,264.48 IN ACCORDANCE WITH 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) AND (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(G)(5), AND 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT THE PURCHASER OF THE PROPERTY OTHER THAN A MORTGAGEE, SHALL PAY THE ASSESSMENTS AND LEGAL FEES REQUIRED

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BY SUBSECTIONS (g)(1) AND (g)(4) OF SECTION 9 AND THE ASSESSMENTS AND COURT COSTS REQUIRED BY SUBSECTION (g-1) OF SECTION 18.5 OF THE ILLINOIS CONDOMINIUM PROPERTY ACT.

Terms of Sale: CASH – 10% down at the time of sale and the balance due within 24 hours of the sale. All payments for the amount bid shall be in certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Sangamon County. The person to contact for information regarding this property is: Sales Department at Diaz Anselmo & Associates, LLC, 1771 West Diehl Road, Suite 120, Naperville, IL 60563, (630) 453-6960. For bidding instructions, visit www.dallegal.com 24 hours prior to sale.

This communication is an attempt to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. Diaz Anselmo & Associates, LLC 1771 West Diehl Road, Suite 120 Naperville, IL 60563 (630) 453-6960 midwestpleadings@dallegal.com 8051-963731

NOTICE OF SALE STATE OF ILLINOIS IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COUNTY OF SANGAMON SPRINGFIELD, SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS FEDERAL NATIONAL MORTGAGE ASSOCIATION, Plaintiff, vs. CHRISTY STUBBS, MORTON COMMUNITY BANK SUCCESSOR BY MERGER TO MARINE BANK, SPRINGFIELD AND HICKORY POINT

BANK AND TRUST, Defendants.
CASE NO. 25-FC-199
PROPERTY ADDRESS: 1515 S 7TH ST. SPRINGFIELD, IL 62703
PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of the above Court entered in the above entitled cause on December 17, 2025, the following described real estate, to-wit: Permanent Index Number: 22-03.0-105-010

Commonly known as: 1515 S 7th St., Springfield, IL 62703 will be offered for sale and sold at public venue on May 19, 2026, at 9:00 AM, in the Sangamon County Complex, County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Springfield, Illinois. The Judgment amount is \$76,233.21. The real estate is improved with a single family residence.

Sale terms: 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Sheriff of Sangamon County. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, including the Judicial sale fee for Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund, which is calculated on residential real estate 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/or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. No fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the mortgaged real estate arose prior to the sale. 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 the Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The Sale is further subject to confirmation by the Court. 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 property will NOT be open for inspection. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the Court file to verify all information.

For information contact Plaintiff's Attorney: Heavner, Beyers & Mihlar, LLC, 601 East William Street, Decatur, IL 62523, (217) 422-1719

The purchaser of a condominium unit at a judicial foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, who takes possession of a condominium unit pursuant to a court order or a purchaser who acquires title

from a mortgagee shall have the duty to pay the proportionate share, if any, of the common expenses for the unit which would have become due in the absence of any assessment acceleration during the 6 months immediately preceding institution of an action to enforce the collection of assessments, and which remain unpaid by the owner during whose possession the assessments accrued. If the outstanding assessments are paid at any time during any action to enforce the collection of assessments, the purchaser shall have no obligation to pay any assessments which accrued before he or she acquired title. If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by the Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5 (g-1). If the sale is not confirmed for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the purchase price paid. The Purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney. 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. Note: Pursuant to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act you are advised that the Law Firm of Heavner, Beyers & Mihlar, LLC, is deemed to be a debt collector attempting to collect a debt, and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

FEDERAL NATIONAL MORTGAGE ASSOCIATION, Plaintiff, Kristin J. Conwell (#6294931), Its Attorney Of Heavner, Beyers & Mihlar, LLC Kristin J. Conwell (#6294931) HEAVNER, BEYERS & MIHLAR, LLC Attorneys at Law 601 East William Street Decatur, IL 62523 Email: Non-CookPleadings@hsbattys.com Telephone: (217) 422-1719 Facsimile: (217) 422-1754 8051-961040



Legals Deadline, Thursdays at 4pm

Call Daron at 217-679-7801 or email

legals@illinoisimes.com

PUBLIC NOTICES

Death Claim IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS PROBATE DIVISION IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF BARBARA J. ARCHER, DECEASED Case #2026-PR-145 DEATH & CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given of the death of BARBARA J. ARCHER. Letters of Office have been issued to DAVID W. ARCHER, 27605 SW 170th Ave., Sherwood, OR 97140, as Independent Executor, whose attorney is Sheehan & Sheehan, Lawyers, P.C., 1215 South 4th Street, Springfield, IL 62703. Claims against the estate may be filed in the office of the Circuit Clerk, Probate Division, Room 405, Sangamon County Complex, 200 South 9th Street, Springfield, IL 62701, or with the Independent Executor, or both, on or before October 30, 2026, and any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Circuit Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the Independent Executor and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed.

Dated this 16th day of April, 2026.

Patrick J. Sheehan SHEEHAN & SHEEHAN, LAWYERS, P.C. 1215 South 4th Street Springfield, IL 62703 (217) 544-0701

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS ESTATE OF LILLIE F. PRINDLE, Deceased. 2026 PR 000131 CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given to creditors of the estate of the death of LILLIE F. PRINDLE. Letters of Office were issued to Tina Williams, as Independent Administrator, whose address is 41 Parkway Drive, Sherman, IL 62684. The estate will be administered without court supervision, unless under 755 ILCS 5/28-4, any interested person terminates independent administration at any time by mailing or delivering a petition to terminate to the Clerk. Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, Sangamon County Complex, 200 South 9th Street, Springfield, IL 62701, or with the representative, or both, on or before October 23, 2026, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by 755 ILCS 5/18-3, three months from the date the representative mailed or delivered such notice, whichever is later. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

E-filing is now mandatory for documents in civil cases with limited exemptions. To efile, you must first create an account with an e-filing service provider. Visit <http://efile.illinoiscourts.gov/service-providers.htm> to learn more and to select a service provider. If you need additional help or have trouble e-filing, visit <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/FAQ/gethelp.asp> or talk with your local circuit clerk's office.

Dated: April 26, 2026.

Attorneys for Independent Administrator: Sorling Northrup Brian D. Jones, Attorney (6286510) Jeremy D. McAfee, Attorney (6349611) 1 North Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 200 P.O. Box 5131 Springfield, IL 62705 Telephone: 217-544-1144

Fax: 217-522-3173
E-Mail: bdjones@sorlinglaw.com
jemacafee@sorlinglaw.com

Claims against the Estate of Hattie O. Boston, Probate case: 25-PR-283 opened July 3, 2025 by Attorney Samuel J. Cahnman in the court of Judge Adam Giganti, may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, Sangamon County Courthouse, Springfield, Illinois, 62701, or with the Representative, or both, within 6 months from the date of the first Publication of this Notice. Any Claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a Claim filed with the Clerk of the Circuit Court must be mailed or delivered to the Primary Representative: Norma J. Jordan, Co-Executor of the Estate of Hattie O. Boston, at 6105 Spindell Dr. Springfield, IL 62711; and to the Estate's Attorney, Samuel J. Cahnman, Esq. with Samuel Cahnman Law Offices located at 915 S. 2nd, Springfield, IL 62703; within 10 days after it has been filed.

Mrs. Boston's obituary posted online on June 02, 2025. Published in The State Journal-Register.

<https://www.sj-r.com/obituaries/pills1194036>
Note: Norma J. Jordan, Co-Executor with Cathy A. Boston, Co-Executor personally notified all creditors of Hattie O. Boston's death as we had knowledge of, starting in June 2025.

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS PROBATE DIVISION IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF MARY LOU McCLELLAND, DECEASED Case #2026-PR-137 DEATH & CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given of the death of MARY LOU McCLELLAND. Letters of Office have been issued to FORREST McCLELLAND, 21026 Indian Point Ave., Petersburg, IL 62675, and JOELLYN VONDEBUR, 2300 Parkview Drive, Springfield, IL 62704, as Independent Co-Executors, whose attorney is Sheehan & Sheehan, Lawyers, P.C., 1215 South 4th Street, Springfield, IL 62703.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the office of the Circuit Clerk, Probate Division, Room 405, Sangamon County Complex, 200 South 9th Street, Springfield, IL 62701, or with the Independent Co-Executors, or both, on or before October 28, 2026, and any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Circuit Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the Independent Co-Executors and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed.

Dated this 14th day of April, 2026.
Patrick J. Sheehan SHEEHAN & SHEEHAN, LAWYERS, P.C. 1215 South 4th Street Springfield, IL 62703 (217) 544-0701

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS IN RE THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF ROBERT J. McCRAY Deceased.

No. 2026-PR-129 NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION - CLAIMS Notice is given of the death of ROBERT J. McCRAY. Letters of office were issued on April 9, 2026, to DAWN OSBORNE, 76 Gavin St., Lincoln, IL 62656

Claims against the estate may be filed in the office of the Clerk of this Court at the Sangamon County Courthouse, 200 S. 9th Street, Springfield, IL 62701, on or before the 29th day of October, 2026, being at least six months from the first publication of this notice. Any claim not filed within that six-month period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the at-

STAND WITH THE FACTS

npr Illinois
91.9 UHS

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torney within 10 days after it has been filed. Dated this 14th day of April, 2026.
DAWN OSBORNE,
Independent Executor
By: ROBERT V. BONJEAN III
Bonjean Law Office
309 West State Street
Jacksonville, IL 62650
217/243-4814
bobbybonjean@bonjeanlawoffice.com

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
Estate of:
JOYCE LYNN BERTONI,
Deceased.
NO. 2026-PR-136
CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given of the death of Joyce Lynn Bertoni of Sangamon County, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued on April 14, 2026, to Brian E. Bertoni, 5308 Cromwell Place, Springfield, Illinois 62711, as Executor, whose attorneys are Barber, Segatto, Hoffee, Wilke & Cate, LLP, P.O. Box 79, Springfield, Illinois 62705.
Claims against the estate may be filed in the office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Sangamon County Complex, 200 South Ninth Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701 or with the representative or both, on or before October 21, 2026, and any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed. Dated this 14th day of April, 2026.
Bernard G. Segatto, III - 06190753
Barber, Segatto, Hoffee, Wilke & Cate, LLP
P.O. Box 79
Springfield, IL 62705
(217) 544-4868
bsegatto@barberlaw.com

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT
FOR THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SPRINGFIELD, SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF:
SARILDA B. MORRISON
Deceased.
Case No. 2026-PR-127
DEATH AND CLAIM NOTICE
NOTICE IS GIVEN of the death of SARILDA B. MORRISON of Springfield, Sangamon County, Illinois, on February 28, 2026. Letters of Testamentary were issued on the 3rd day of April, A.D., 2026, to KATHLEEN A. DENNISON, 1402 Franklin-Alexander Road, Alexander, Illinois 62601, as Independent Executor, whose attorney of record is SCOTT & SCOTT, P.C., 611 East Monroe Street, Suite 200, Springfield, IL 62701.
Claims against the Estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Sangamon County Circuit Court, Sangamon County Complex, 200 South 9th Street, Springfield, Illinois, 62701, or with the representative, or both, within six (6) months from the date of the first publication of this Notice and any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the Attorney at the above addresses within ten (10) days after the claim has been filed.
DATED this 10th day of April, A.D., 2026.
ESTATE OF SARILDA B. MORRISON,
Deceased,
BY: /s/Pamela E. Hart
Pamela E. Hart, one of his Attorneys.
PREPARED BY:
Pamela E. Hart (6299974)
SCOTT & SCOTT, P.C.
Attorneys at Law
611 East Monroe Street, Suite 200
Springfield, IL 62701
Telephone: (217)753-8200
peh@scottscottlaw.com

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
In the Matter of the Estate of MECHELLE MEYER,
Deceased.
2024PR386
NOTICE TO CLAIMANTS AND UNKNOWN HEIRS / LEGATEES. Notice is given of the death of MECHELLE MEYER, from 1135 North Ninth Street, Springfield, in Sangamon County, Illinois. Letters of Independent Administration were issued on December 4, 2024 to Jamie Howie, from 313 South Bogardus Street, Elkhart, Illinois 62634 and Justin Meyer, from 506 E. Wesley St., Springfield, IL 62702 as Co-Independent Administrators whose attorneys are the Noll Law Office, 930 E. Monroe St., Springfield, IL 62701. Claimants' claims against the estate may be filed in the office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Sangamon County Courthouse, 200 South Ninth Street, Springfield, Illinois 60701, or with the representative or both, on or before November 1, 2026 or three months after date of mailing or delivery, whichever is later, and any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representatives and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed. A copy of an order granting executorship and probating of will can be obtained from the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Sangamon County Courthouse. The estate will be administered without court supervision, unless an interested person asks the court to become involved. Notice is given to unknown heirs / legatees, who are heirs or legatees in the above proceeding to probate a will and whose name or address is not stated in the petition to admit the will to probate, that 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 to the will in open court or other evidence, as provided in section 6-21 of the Probate Act of 1975 (755 ILCS 5/6-21). You also have the right under section 8-1 of the Probate Act of 1975 (755 ILCS 5/81) to contest the validity of the will by filing a petition with the court within 6 months after admission of the will to probate. E-filing is now mandatory for documents in civil cases with limited exemptions. To e-file, you must first create an account with an e-filing service provider. Visit <http://efile.illinoiscourts.gov/service-providers.htm> to learn more and to select a service provider. If you need additional help or have trouble e-filing, visit <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/FAQ/gethelp.asp>, or talk with your local circuit clerk's office.
DATED this 10th day of April 2026
Sarah Noll
Noll Law Office, LLC
930 E. Monroe St.
Springfield, IL 62701
Phone: (217) 544-8441
noll@noll-law.com

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF
MICHAEL GARVIN SR., Deceased
DEATH AND CLAIM NOTICE
NO. 2026PR000067
Notice is given to claimants of the Estate of MICHAEL GARVIN SR., Deceased.
Letters of Office were issued on April 9th, 2026, to Michael Garvin Jr., 2976 State Highway, 104, Franklin, IL 62638 as Independent Administrator, whose attorney is Alex B. Rabin, Sgro, Hanrahan, Durr, Rabin & Reinbold, LLP, 1119 S. Sixth Street, Springfield, IL 62703. Claims against the Estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, Sangamon County Complex, 200 S. Ninth Street, Springfield, IL 62701, or with the Representative, or both, on or before the 19th day of October, 2026 or

three months from the date the Representative mailed or delivered a Notice to Creditor, whichever is later. Any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the Representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed. Dated this 10th day of April 2026.
Alex B. Rabin
Sgro, Hanrahan, Durr, Rabin & Reinbold, LLP
1119 S. Sixth Street
Springfield, IL 62703
217-789-1200

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF:
CURT H. NAVE,
Deceased.
NO. 2026 PR 130
CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given of the death of CURT H. NAVE of Springfield, Sangamon County, Illinois. Letters of Administration were issued on April 9, 2026, to BENJAMIN W. "BEN" TUXHORN, whose address is 3609 Hoylake Drive, Springfield, Illinois 62712, as Administrator, and whose attorney is JAMES R. ENLOW of GATES, WISE & SCHLOSSER, P.C., 1231 South Eighth Street, Springfield, IL, 62703.
Claims against the Estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, Sangamon County Courthouse, Springfield, IL 62701, or with the representative, or both, within six (6) months from the date of the first publication of this Notice and any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the Attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.
DATED this 9th day of April, 2026.
James R. Enlow(#6199891)
GATES, WISE & SCHLOSSER P.C.
Attorneys at Law
1231 South Eighth Street
Springfield, Illinois 62703
Telephone: (217) 522.9010
Facsimile: (217) 522.9020
Email: jim@gwspc.com

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
Estate of
BETTY RUTH HART,
Deceased.
NO. 2026-PR-115
CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given of the death of Betty Ruth Hart of Springfield, Sangamon County, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued on March 26, 2026, to Michael Haii,2432 S. Holmes Ave., Springfield, Illinois 62704, as Independent Administrator, whose attorney is Schuyler E. Frashier, Barber, Segatto, Hoffee, Wilke & Cate, LLP, P.O. Box 79, Springfield, Illinois 62705.
Claims against the estate may be filed in the office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Sangamon County Complex, 200 South Ninth Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701, or with the representative or both, on or before September 26, 2026, and any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed.
DATED this 8th day of April, 2026.
Schuyler E. Frashier - 06342113
Barber, Segatto, Hoffee, Wilke & Cate, LLP
P.O. Box 79
Springfield, IL 62705-0079 217/544-4868
sfrashier@barberlaw.com
367473

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE SEVENTH

JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
ESTATE OF
ROSA A. STANLEY,
Deceased.
Case No. 2026 PR 000126
CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given to creditors of the estate of the death of ROSA A. STANLEY. Letters of Office were issued to Timothy A. Stanley, as Independent Executor, whose address is 7899 S. Timber Cliff Lane, Trafalgar, IN 46181. The estate will be administered without court supervision, unless under 755 ILCS 5/28-4, any interested person terminates independent administration at any time by mailing or delivering a petition to terminate to the Clerk.
Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, Sangamon County Complex, 200 South 9th Street, Springfield, IL 62701, or with the representative, or both, on or before October 16, 2026, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by 755 ILCS 5/18-3, three months from the date the representative mailed or delivered such notice, whichever is later. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.
E-filing is now mandatory for documents in civil cases with limited exemptions. To efile, you must first create an account with an e-filing service provider. Visit <http://efile.illinoiscourts.gov/service-providers.htm> to learn more and to select a service provider. If you need additional help or have trouble e-filing, visit <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/FAQ/gethelp.asp> or talk with your local circuit clerk's office.
DATED April 8, 2026
Attorneys for Independent Executor:
Sorling Northrup
Ross D. Stone (6349880)
1 North Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 200
P.O. Box 5131
Springfield, IL 62705
Telephone: 217-544-1144
Fax: 217-522-3173
E-Mail: rdstone@sorlinglaw.com

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT
FOR THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
In Re the Estate of:
PAULA L. BUSSMANN, A/K/A PAULA L. BALAKAS,
Deceased.
Case No.: 2026PR000006
CLAIM NOTICE
NOTICE IS GIVEN of the death of Paula L. Bussmann, A/K/A Paula L. Balakas, of Rocky Mount, Missouri. Letters of Office were issued on February 2, 2026, to Kristin Bussmann, as Independent Executor, whose address is c/o her attorney of record, Barry O. Hines, 1224 Centre West Drive, Suite 200A, Springfield, Illinois 62704.
The Estate will be administered without Court supervision, unless under Section 28-4 of the Probate Act (755 ILCS 5/28-4) any interested person terminates independent administration, at any time, by mailing or delivering a petition to terminate to the Clerk.
Claims against the Estate may be filed in the office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, Sangamon County Courthouse, 200 South 9th Street, Springfield, Illinois, 62701, or with the representative, or both, on or before October 16, 2026, and any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.
DATED this 7th day of April, 2026.
Kristin Bussmann
Independent Executor

Barry O. Hines - 01220918
Attorney at Law
1224 Centre West Drive, Suite 200A
Springfield, IL 62704
Telephone: (217) 698-8444
Email: Barry@HinesLaw.net

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
Estate of:
SHERRY JO POWERS,
Deceased.
NO. 2026-PR-124
CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given of the death of Sherry Jo Powers of Glenarm, Sangamon County, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued on April 2, 2026, to Derek Powers, 1410 E. Knox, Springfield, Illinois 62703, as Independent Administrator, whose attorney is Bernard G. Segatto, III, Barber, Segatto, Hoffee, Wilke & Cate, LLP, P.O. Box 79, Springfield, Illinois 62705.
Claims against the estate may be filed in the office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Sangamon County Complex, 200 South Ninth Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701, or with the representative or both, on or before October 12, 2026, and any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed. Dated this 3rd day of April, 2026.
Bernard G. Segatto, III - 06190753
Barber, Segatto, Hoffee, Wilke & Cate, LLP
P.O. Box 79
Springfield, IL 62705-0079
(217) 544-4868
bsegatto@barberlaw.com

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
PROBATE DIVISION
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF
CARL A. SCHMITT, DECEASED
Case #2026-PR-78
DEATH & CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given of the death of CARL A. SCHMITT. Letters of Office have been issued to MARY LYNN HOFFER, 23019 Joyce Lane, Naperville, IL 60564, as Independent Administrator, whose attorney is Sheehan & Sheehan, Lawyers, P.C., 1215 South 4th Street, Springfield, IL 62703.
Claims against the estate may be filed in the office of the Circuit Clerk, Probate Division, Room 405, Sangamon County Complex, 200 South 9th Street, Springfield, IL 62701, or with the Independent Administrator, or both, on or before October 15, 2026, and any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Circuit Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the Independent Administrator and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed. Dated this 1st day of April, 2026.
Patrick J. Sheehan
SHEEHAN & SHEEHAN, LAWYERS, P.C.
1215 South 4th Street
Springfield, IL 62703
(217)544-0701

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
ESTATE OF:
DONNA COLLINS,
Deceased.
Case No. 2026-PR-118
CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is hereby given of the death of DONNA COLLINS. Letters Testamentary were issued on March 31, 2026, appointing GREGORY A. BRIDGWATER, 1675 Grace Ridge Road, New Berlin, IL 62670, as Executor, whose attorney is Matthew A. Cook of Giffin, Winning, Cohen & Bodewes, P.C., 900

Community Drive, Springfield, Illinois 62703, Phone: (217) 525-1571.
Claims against the Estate may be filed in the office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, 200 South Ninth Street, Springfield, Illinois or with the representative, or both, within 6 months from the date of the first publication of this Notice. Any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Circuit Court Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed with the Circuit Court Clerk.
E-filing is now mandatory with limited exemptions. To e-file, you must first create an account with an e-filing service provider. Visit <http://efile.illinoiscourts.gov/service-providers.htm> to learn more and to select a service provider. If you need additional help or have trouble e-filing, visit <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/faq/gethelp.asp> or talk with your local Circuit Clerk's office. If you cannot e-file, you may be able to get an exemption that allows you to file in-person or by mail. Ask your Circuit Clerk for more information or visit www.illinoislegalaud.org.
DATED: March 31, 2026
Attorneys for Estate:
Creighton R. Castle, ARDC No. 6215856
crcastle@gwclaw.com
Matthew A. Cook, ARDC No. 6347528
mcook@gwclaw.com
GIFFIN, WINNING, COHEN & BODEWES, P.C.
efile@GiffinWinning.com
900 Community Drive
Springfield, IL 62703
(217) 525-1571
Clerk of the Circuit Court
Sangamon County, Illinois
8051-963624

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF
JOHN D. SGRO, Deceased
NO. 2026PR000119
DEATH AND CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given to claimants of the Estate of John D. Sgro, Deceased.
Letters of Office were issued on March 31, 2026, to Michael T. Sgro, 2458 Arrowhead Drive, Springfield, IL 62702, as Independent Administrator, whose attorney is Gregory P. Sgro, Sgro, Hanrahan, Durr, Rabin & Reinbold, LLP, 1119 S. Sixth Street, Springfield, IL 62703. Claims against the Estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, Sangamon County Complex, 200 S. Ninth Street, Springfield, IL 62701, or with the Representative, or both, on or before the 13th day of October, 2026, or three months from the date the Representative mailed or delivered a Notice to Creditor, whichever is later. Any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the Representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed.
DATED this 31st day of March, 2026.
Gregory P. Sgro
Sgro, Hanrahan, Durr, Rabin & Reinbold, LLP
1119 S. Sixth Street
Springfield, IL 62703
(217) 789-1200

Court of the Seventh Judicial Circuit
Sangamon County, Illinois
Estate of Elizabeth Marie Maher, Deceased
No. 2026-PR-000120
Claim Notice
Notice is given of the death of Elizabeth Marie Maher. Notice is given to all creditors of Elizabeth Marie Maher that Letters Testamentary of the Estate of Elizabeth Marie Maher Deceased were issued on March 30, 2026, to Mary Coker, 190 Craven Rd. Springfield IL and Judith Maher, 7025 Pet Haven Lane Boise ID 83716 as Co-Executors. Claims against the Estate may be filed in the Office of Circuit Clerk,

Probate Division, Sangamon County, 200 South Ninth, Springfield IL 62701 or with the Co-executors or both within 6 months from the date of the first publication of this notice, and any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the Co-Executors within 10 days after it has been filed.
Dated this 30th day of March, 2026
Daniel Maher, Attorney, 412 East Lawrence, Springfield IL 62702, 217-522-4575
dan.maher@sbcglobal.net

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
NEWREZ LLC,
Plaintiff,
Vs.
DENNIS L. GERMANN, et. al.,
Defendants.
Re: Estate of JERI L. GERMANN,)
Deceased.
2026-FC-36
NOTICE

TO: UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES OF JERI L. GERMANN (a/k/a JERI L. LoPINTO): Notice is given of the death of Jeri L. Germann (a/k/a Jeri L. LoPinto). The Court has appointed Dan E. Way as Special Representative for Jeri L. Germann, deceased, in the above-entitled cause seeking a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale on property located at 3140 S. Allis St., Springfield, IL 62703. The address of the Special Representative is Way Law Offices, LLC, 1100 S. Fifth Street, Springfield, IL 62703. You may direct any questions you have to him, or you may retain counsel of your own choosing, or represent yourself, or do nothing. E-filing is now mandatory for documents in civil cases with limited exemptions. To e-file, you must first create an account with an e-filing service provider. Visit e-file.illinoiscourts.gov/service-providers.htm to learn more and to select a service provider. If you need additional help or have trouble e-filing, visit www.illinoiscourts.gov/FAQ/gethelp.asp.
/s/ Dan E. Way
Special Representative for
Jeri L. Germann, deceased
Dan E. Way #6204735
WAY LAW OFFICES, LLC
1100 S. Fifth Street
Springfield, IL 62703
Ph.: 217-525-7003
dan@danwaylaw.com

Name Change
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
In the matter of the Petition of Cameron Michael Romero
For change of name to Cameron Lee Schleyhahn
Case No. 2026-MR-000121
PUBLIC NOTICE
Public Notice is hereby given that on June 2, 2026 I will petition in said Court praying for the change of name from Cameron Michael Romero to Cameron Lee Schleyhahn pursuant to the statute in such case made and provided.
Dated: April 16, 2026

Foreclosure
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE 7TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY - SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS
Heartland Bank and Trust Company
PLAINTIFF
Vs.
Ivana May Green a/k/a Ivana M. Green; Fast Home Cash Offers LLC; Unknown Owners and Nonrecord Claimants
DEFENDANTS

No. 2026FC00027
NOTICE BY PUBLICATION
NOTICE IS GIVEN TO YOU:
Unknown Owners and Nonrecord Claimants
That this case has been commenced in this Court against you and other defendants, praying for the foreclosure of a certain Mortgage conveying the premises described as follows, to-wit:
COMMONLY KNOWN AS:
20961 Center Staff Rd
Illipolis, IL 62539
and which said Mortgage was made by: Ivana May Green a/k/a Ivana M. Green the Mortgagor(s), to Heartland Bank and Trust Company, as Mortgagee, and recorded in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds of Sangamon County, Illinois, as Document No. 2020R01962; and for other relief; that summons was duly issued out of said Court against you as provided by law and that the said suit is now pending.
NOW, THEREFORE, UNLESS YOU file your answer or otherwise file your appearance in this case in the Office of the Clerk of this Court,
Joseph B. Roesch
Clerk of the Circuit Court
Sangamon County Courthouse
200 South Ninth Street, Room 405
Springfield, IL 62701
on or before May 26, 2026, A DEFAULT MAY BE ENTERED AGAINST YOU AT ANY TIME AFTER THAT DAY AND A JUDGMENT MAY BE ENTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRAYER OF SAID COMPLAINT.
CODILIS & ASSOCIATES, P.C.
Attorneys for Plaintiff
15W030 North Frontage Road, Suite 100
Burr Ridge, IL 60527
(630) 794-5300
DuPage # 15170
Winnebago # 531
Our File No. 14-26-00874
NOTE: This law firm is a debt collector.
I3285513

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
ROCKET MORTGAGE, LLC F/K/A QUICKEN LOANS, LLC,
Plaintiff,
vs.
RAYMOND C. MORRIS; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS;
Defendant(s).
CASE NO. 2025FC000183
Property Address: 908 N. 4th St. Springfield, IL 62702
NOTICE OF SHERIFF SALE
Public notice is hereby given that in pursuance of a judgment of said Court entered in the above-entitled cause on February 11, 2026, I, Sheriff Paula Crouch of Sangamon County, Illinois, will hold a sale on May 19, 2026, commencing at 9:00AM, Sangamon County Building, Sangamon South Auditorium, 1 Copley Plaza (Old SJR Building) 1st Floor, Springfield, IL 62701, to sell to the highest bidder or bidders the following described real estate, or so much thereof as may be sufficient to satisfy said decree, to-wit:
THE SOUTH 24 FEET OF LOT 9 AND THE NORTH 8 FEET OF LOT 8 IN BLOCK 1 OF B.S. EDWARD'S SECOND NORTH ADDITION TO THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, SITUATED IN SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS.
Commonly known as: 908 N. 4th St., Springfield, IL 62702
P.I.N.: 14-27.0-155-024
First Lien Position; Single Family Residence; Judgment Amount \$58,264.48
IN ACCORDANCE WITH 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) AND (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(G)(5), AND 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT THE PURCHASER OF THE PROPERTY OTHER THAN A MORTGAGEE, SHALL PAY THE ASSESSMENTS AND LEGAL FEES REQUIRED BY SUBSECTIONS (g)(1) AND (g)(4) OF

SECTION 9 AND THE ASSESSMENTS AND COURT COSTS REQUIRED BY SUBSECTION (g-1) OF SECTION 18.5 OF THE ILLINOIS CONDOMINIUM PROPERTY ACT.
Terms of Sale: CASH – 10% down at the time of sale and the balance due within 24 hours of the sale. All payments for the amount bid shall be in certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Sangamon County. The person to contact for information regarding this property is:
Sales Department at Diaz Anselmo & Associates, LLC, 1771 West Diehl Road, Suite 120, Naperville, IL 60563, (630) 453-6960. For bidding instructions, visit www.dallegal.com 24 hours prior to sale.
This communication is an attempt to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.
Diaz Anselmo & Associates, LLC
1771 West Diehl Road, Suite 120
Naperville, IL 60563
(630) 453-6960
midwestpleadings@dallegal.com
8051-963731

NOTICE OF SALE
STATE OF ILLINOIS IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
COUNTY OF SANGAMON SPRINGFIELD, SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
FEDERAL NATIONAL MORTGAGE ASSOCIATION, Plaintiff,
vs.
CHRISTY STUBBS, MORTON COMMUNITY BANK SUCCESSOR BY MERGER TO MARINE BANK, SPRINGFIELD AND HICKORY POINT BANK AND TRUST, Defendants.
CASE NO. 25-FC-199
PROPERTY ADDRESS: 1515 S 7TH ST. SPRINGFIELD, IL 62703
PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of the above Court entered in the above entitled cause on December 17, 2025, the following described real estate, to-wit:
Lot 4 in Block 4 in Elijah Iles' Subdivision of Lands Number 3 in the City of Springfield, as platted by the plat recorded in the Recorder's Office of Sangamon County, Illinois, in Book 71 of Deeds at Page 546.
Also, part of Lot 3 in Block 4 of said Elijah Iles' Subdivision of Lands Number 3 to the City of Springfield; commencing at the Southwest corner of said Lot 3, thence running East along the South line of said Lot 3 a distance of 33.75 feet to a point in said line marked by a drill hole in concrete driveway and designated Point "C" on plat hereinafter described thence North parallel with the West line of said Lot 3 a distance of 3.51 feet to a spike in concrete driveway designated Point "B" on said plat, thence West 33.75 feet to a point in the West line of said Lot 3 marked by a drill hole in concrete pavement and which is 4.25 feet North of the Southwest corner of said Lot 3, thence South along the West line of said Lot 3, 4.25 feet to the place of beginning; the plat of survey referred to above being one made by Morgan P. O'Brien during the Month during the Month of April 1950 and filed for record in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds of Sangamon County, Illinois on April 11, 1950, Document Number 236534.
Except any interest in the coal oil, gas and other minerals underlying the land which have been heretofore conveyed or reserved in prior conveyances, and all rights and easements in favor of the estate of said coal, oil, gas and other minerals, if any.
Permanent Index Number: 22-03.0-105-010
Commonly known as: 1515 S 7th St., Springfield, IL 62703
will be offered for sale and sold at public venue on May 19, 2026, at 9:00 AM, in the Sangamon County Complex, County Board Room, 2nd Floor, Springfield, Illinois.

The Judgment amount is \$76,233.21.
The real estate is improved with a single family residence.
Sale terms: 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Sheriff of Sangamon County. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, including the Judicial sale fee for Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund, which is calculated on residential real estate 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/or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. No fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the mortgaged real estate arose prior to the sale. 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 the Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The Sale is further subject to confirmation by the Court.
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 property will NOT be open for inspection. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the Court file to verify all information. For information contact Plaintiff's Attorney: Heavner, Beyers & Mihlar, LLC, 601 East William Street, Decatur, IL 62523, (217) 422-1719
The purchaser of a condominium unit at a judicial foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, who takes possession of a condominium unit pursuant to a court order or a purchaser who acquires title from a mortgagee shall have the duty to pay the proportionate share, if any, of the common expenses for the unit which would have become due in the absence of any assessment acceleration during the 6 months immediately preceding institution of an action to enforce the collection of assessments, and which remain unpaid by the owner during whose possession the assessments accrued. If the outstanding assessments are paid at any time during any action to enforce the collection of assessments, the purchaser shall have no obligation to pay any assessments which accrued before he or she acquired title. If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by the Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5 (g-1).
If the sale is not confirmed for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the purchase price paid. The Purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney.
IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOME-OWNER), 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. Note: Pursuant to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act you are advised that the Law Firm of Heavner, Beyers & Mihlar, LLC, is deemed to be a debt collector attempting to collect a debt, and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.
FEDERAL NATIONAL MORTGAGE ASSOCIATION, Plaintiff,
Kristin J. Conwell (#6294931), Its Attorney Of Heavner, Beyers & Mihlar, LLC
Kristin J. Conwell (#6294931)
HEAVNER, BEYERS & MIHLAR, LLC
Attorneys at Law
601 East William Street

Decatur, IL 62523
Email: Non-CookPleadings@hsbattys.com
Telephone: (217) 422-1719
Facsimile: (217) 422-1754
8051-961040

Notice by Publication
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
CURRAN-GARDNER TOWNSHIPS PUBLIC WATER DISTRICT
Is seeking proposals from qualified Human Resources consultants or consulting firms to provide professional consulting services. For specific details go to currangardner.com/public notices
DEADLINE: April 30, 2026 at 5:00 pm CDT
For specific questions, please contact Cherril Graff, Business Manager at 217/546-3981 or cgraff@currangardner.com

CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT SPRINGFIELD, SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF Julian Patino
No. 2026-GR-55
To: Giovanni Patino & Claire Anderson at addresses unknown: Please be notified that Tabatha Szkutnik has filed a Petition for Guardianship of Julian Patino, minor child. You are required to answer said Petition By June 8, 2026 or be defaulted by the Court thereafter.

The Springfield Planning and Zoning Commission will meet on Wednesday, May 20, 2026, at 5:30p.m. in the City Council Chamber of the Municipal Center West to hear the following petition.
A petition for a variance of Sections: 155.340 (i) & (j), and (j), General Provisions for Off-Premises Advertising Signs, and 155.341, Height and Size Regulations for Off-Premises Signs, of the City of Springfield Zoning Ordinance. A billboard is currently situated on subject real estate. The billboard contains two parallel back-to-back faces that each measure 10' 6" high x 36' wide. The West face of the billboard is illuminated by traditional lamps located along the bottom of the sign face. The East face of the billboard is an electronic digital display authorized in Zoning Docket Number 2023-043.
The existing West face of the billboard was authorized by Zoning Docket Number 2023-043, which permitted relocation of sign on South Sixth Street to the existing location, and an electronic digital display on the East sign face of the off-site advertising sign on the Subject Real Estate. The current use would continue if the relief sought herein is denied. Petitioner desires to replace the existing West facing portion of the existing offpremises advertising sign (i.e. billboard) located on the real estate with an electronic digital display face. The electronic digital display face that Petitioner intends to install on the West face of the billboard will be the same size as the current traditional billboard face being replaced (10' 6" high x 36' wide, totaling 378 square feet of signage for each face). The West facing sign face will be replaced with an electronic digital display, as the East sign face already utilizes an electronic digital display. The electronic digital display face will display different messages on a set 8 to 10 second cycle. Messages displayed will be static images that do not include moving, scrolling, blinking, flashing, or animated graphics. The electronic digital display faces will utilize technology that limits the brightness of the display at night. To accommodate the electronic digital display replacement on West sign face of the billboard located on the Subject Real Estate, Petitioner respectfully requests Variances of: Pursuant to Sections 155.212 (General Provisions-Variations) and 155.213 (Applications for Variances) of the Zoning Ordinance, a variance of Section 155.340(i)

and (j) (Off-Premises Signs) to permit the issuance of a sign permit approving the replacement of the existing traditional West face of the off-premises advertising sign with an electronic digital display of the same size of the existing sign face (10' 6" high x 36' wide, totaling 378 square feet of signage for each sign face) by utilizing the existing base, poles, and other equipment presently used in conjunction with the existing sign, without significant modification, to comply with the requirements of Section 155.340(i)'s aesthetic requirements and other subsection provisions; and a variance of Section 155.340(j) (Off-Premises Signs) so as to permit the replacement of the existing traditional West face of the off-premises advertising sign with an electronic digital display of the same size as the existing sign face (10' 6" high x 36' wide, totaling 378 square feet of signage for each sign face) without the surrender of otherwise existing permits on a four for one basis as required by Section 155.340(j); and a variance of Section 155.341 (Height and Size Regulations for Off-Premises Advertising Signs) to permit an electronic digital display on the West sign face of the existing off-premises advertising sign on the Subject Real Estate of a height not to exceed 40 feet above the ground in lieu of the Zoning Ordinance's 35' height limit and a maximum of 378 square feet of signage in lieu of the Zoning Ordinance's 175 square feet limit, for each of the two sign faces; and such other and further relief necessary for the purposes stated within the petition.
Improvements (or Structures) located on said property is a billboard which contains two parallel back-to-back faces that each measure 10' 6" high x 36' wide. The West face of the billboard is illuminated by traditional lamps located along the bottom of the sign face. The East face of the billboard is an electronic digital display authorized in Zoning Docket Number 2023-043. The Subject Real Estate also contains a Freddy's restaurant. Subject Real Estate is currently classified in the B-1, Highway Business Service District. Section 155.033.
Legally described as: Exhibit A. That portion of the following described real property contained within PIN 14-25.0-451-053, generally known as the West 188.15 feet of the following described real estate:
Part of the Southwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of Section 25, township 16 North, Range 5 West of the Third Principal Meridian, described more particularly as follows: Commencing at a disk marking the South One Quarter corner of the aforementioned Section 25, thence North 89 degrees 41 minutes 38 seconds East along the Section Line a Distance of 476.07 feet, thence North 00 degrees 55 minutes 33 seconds West a distance of 277.75 feet to an iron pin marking the true point of beginning, thence South 89 degrees 39 minutes 30 seconds West a distance of 415.33 feet to an iron pipe on the East right-of-way line of Dirksen Parkway, thence North 01 degrees 27 minutes 38 seconds East along said right-of-way line a distance of 5.50 feet to an iron pipe, thence North 89 degrees 56 minutes 03 seconds East a distance of 415.12 feet to an iron pipe, thence South 00 degrees 55 minutes 33 seconds East a distance of 3.50 feet to the true point of beginning. PIN No.: 14-25.0-451-053. Common Address: 3205 Clear Lake Avenue, Springfield, IL 62702. The property is commonly known as 3205 Clear Lake Avenue, Springfield, Illinois. The petitioner is The LAMAR Companies, as Lessee, By Its Attorneys Brown, Hay & Stephens, LLP, Daniel L. Hamilton of Counsel Docket No. 2026-019
John Harris
Zoning Administrator

The Springfield Planning and Zoning Commission will meet on Wednesday, May 20, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the City Council

Chamber of the Municipal Center West to hear the following petition.

A petition pursuant to Section 155.212, General Provisions-Variations, and Section 155.214, Applications for amendments and variances, for Variations of Sections: 155.010(a) & (a)(1), Use Regulations: General Provisions, and 155.001, Definitions, "Lot" and "Accessory Building or Accessory Use", of the Springfield Zoning Ordinance. Subject property is currently vacant and there are no structures on the property. Petitioner, as stated in item # 5 of the petition, desires to construct upon said real estate a garage/storage building on the subject lot in the R-1 zoning district while not so having a residence or living on said lot. The purpose of the structure is for storing property owner's vehicles / personal items, family members' personal items, and storage of items related to maintenance of adjoining/adjacent rental property to the east of the subject property. Additionally, it is intended that the structure will be used as a personal fitness area for owner and his sons. The structure as proposed would include a water connection for installation of a water heater, toilet and sink. The owner of subject property lives at 1837 Witchazel Drive. Family members of the owner of subject property live at 1833 Witchazel Drive. To be in compliance the the Zoning Ordinance petitioner respectfully requests Variances of: 155.010 (a) and (a) (1) to allow construction of the storage building/garage on subject property which property owner will not so reside, and while not having a residential dwelling on subject lot for uses as stated in #5 of the petition; and 155.001, definitions, "lot" and "accessory building or accessory use", to allow construction of said storage building / garage on subject property without a residence on said lot, to be recognized as accessory storage / use for 1837 Witchazel Drive, allowing uses as stated in #5 of the petition, and to allow the structure to contain a water service for purposes of a water heater, toilet and sink. Improvements (or structures) located on said property are none. Subject Real Estate is currently classified in the R-1, Single Family Residence District, Section 155.015. Legally described as: SUB L 12 SUB NE&PT N1/2NW 2-15-5 NE COR L 3. Commonly known as 2512 East Laurel Street, Springfield, Illinois, 62703. PIN:22-02-0-256-001 The subject property is commonly known as 2512 East Laurel Street, Springfield, Illinois. The petitioner is William H. Whitener Jr. Docket No. 2026-018 Ben Ferris Assistant Zoning Administrator

ADVERTISEMENT OF SALE

Wishing to avail themselves of the provisions under the Self-Service Storage Facility Act, the below storage facility gives notice of the sale under said act; Monday the 27th day of April, 2026 at 10:00 AM, on that day will conduct a sale to the highest bidder, with bidding to take place on lockerfox.com, and payment to seller via credit/debit card, the contents of spaces 10 Federal Storage, 2225 J David Jones Pkwy, Springfield, IL, 62703 (217) 600-2778 Greg Davis 498. Thomas Harris Jr 736. Marci Schneider 568. Louis Day 625/588. Breona Gaiter 232. Rachel Welch 609. Lynda Michelle Grant 509. Shane Wilkins P48/P49/P50/P51. Jasmine Campbell 709. Donte Hester 115. Chad Bergquist 283. Gregory Gordon P43. Corina Coffin 189. Hell Jackson 131. Jeremy Word 445/446. June Word 5. Janice Rutledge 532; 10 Federal Storage, 3500 South 6th Street, Springfield, IL, 62703 (217) 387-3951 Lakeisha Price A59. Candace Armstrong B192/B193/B194. Rhonda Wright A25/A26/A27. Erick Anderson A105; 10 Federal Storage, 900 E Straight St, Springfield, IL, 62703 (217) 286-1550 Gymelah Coleman 150. Ulises Leon F387. John DeGroot 147. Dexter Sisson 161. Carolyn Cummings 6. Austin Gutierrez 235. Annetta Robinson

2. Van Converse 157. Van Converse 159; 10 Federal Storage, 500 W Browning Rd, Springfield, IL, 62703 (217) 339-3865 Jacob Ray 19A. Allie Holmes 216D/217D

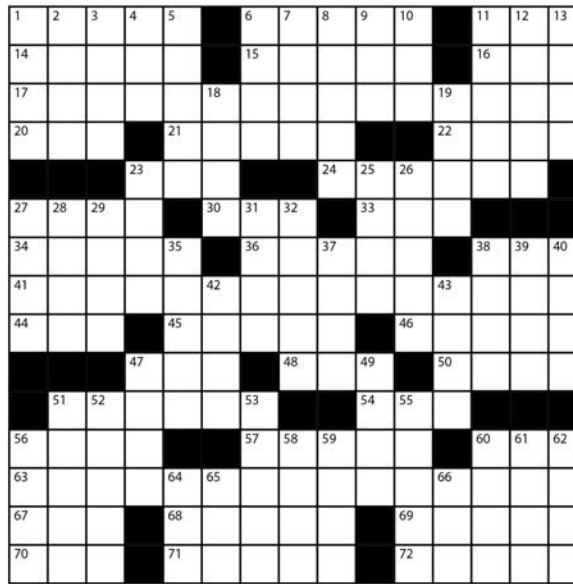
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS NEWREZ LLC D/B/A SHELLPOINT MORTGAGE SERVICING, Plaintiff, v. ESTATE OF BARBARA JO BROWN, Deceased; CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS; GREGORY HULLUM; ADRIAN HULLUM; CLYDE BROWN, JR.; ROBERT BROWN; CHARLENE ALEXANDER; KAREN EUBANKS; CARLA COOK; MARCUS BATES; KAPRICE BATES; UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES OF BARBARA JO BROWN, Deceased; UNKNOWN OWNERS, and NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS, Defendants. Case No. 2025-FC-83 NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT OF SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE To: The Unknown Heirs and Legatees of BARBARA JO BROWN, Deceased TAKE NOTICE that, on January 14, 2026, the Honorable Adam Giganti appointed William P. Sheehan as Special Representative of BARBARA JO BROWN, Deceased, pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/13-209. An amended mortgage foreclosure complaint was filed in Sangamon County Circuit Court on January 27, 2026 as Case #2025-FC-83. IF YOU FEEL YOU HAVE A VALID DEFENSE TO THE FORECLOSURE, YOU MUST ASSERT SUCH DEFENSE AND CONTACT THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE IMMEDIATELY. Please govern yourself accordingly. William P. Sheehan (#6327880) Special Representative SHEEHAN & SHEEHAN, LAWYERS, P.C. 1215 South 4th Street Springfield, IL 62703 (217) 544-0701 | wps@sheehanlaw.net

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS In the Matter of the Estate of KEVIN HAAS, Deceased. IN PROBATE NO. 2026-PR-143 DEATH AND CLAIM NOTICE Notice is given to claimants of the Estate of Kevin Haas, Deceased. Letters of Office were issued on April 16, 2026, to Shelley Haas, as Independent Administrator, whose attorney is Brandon R. Clark, Brown, Hay & Stephens, LLP, 205 South Fifth Street, Suite 1000, Springfield, IL 62701. Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, Sangamon County Courthouse, 200 S. Ninth Street, Springfield, IL 62701, or with the representative, or both, on or before the 6th day of November, 2026, or three months from the date the representative mailed or delivered a Notice to Creditor, whichever is later. Any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed. Dated this 16th day of April, 2026. BROWN, HAY & STEPHENS, LLP Brandon R. Clark, Registration No. 6329553 205 S. Fifth Street, Suite 1000 P.O. Box 2459 Springfield, IL 62705-2459(217) 544-8491; bclark@bhslaw.com

Important lights Edited by J. Reynolds - No. 942

Across

- 1. Grinch disguise
- 6. Set on fire
- 11. Cleopatra biter
- 14. Nano and shuffle
- 15. Trunk item
- 16. Lipton product
- 17. Sailor's meteorological concern, in a saying
- 20. S.A.T. takers
- 21. Code name
- 22. "If all ___ fails ..."
- 23. Identify
- 24. Represent with symbols
- 27. Like some losers
- 30. "Act your ___!"
- 33. Frisk, with "down"
- 34. Attempts
- 36. Montezuma, for one
- 38. "The Matrix" hero
- 41. Something followed in a classic movie
- 44. Language suffix
- 45. In the lead
- 46. Because
- 47. King Kong, e.g.
- 48. Collector's goal
- 50. Sounds of relief
- 51. Language organ
- 54. Yahoo! competitor
- 56. Make, as money
- 57. Understands
- 60. Chart topper
- 63. Super Bowl I champs
- 67. Once more: Abbr.

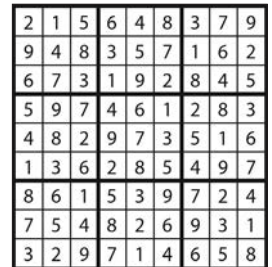


- 68. Grant's successor
- 69. Fable writer
- 70. Part of an E-mail address
- 71. Cow catcher
- 72. Meg and Nolan
- 11. Inclined
- 12. Taste, e.g.
- 13. Use a beeper
- 18. Eastern discipline
- 19. In order
- 23. Leave in a hurry, with "out"
- 25. Oil cartel
- 26. Carpet fasteners
- 27. Eye problem
- 28. Mine finds
- 29. Anger, with "up"
- 31. Kotter of "Welcome Back, Kotter"
- 32. Pound and Stone
- 35. All lathered up
- 37. Ocean motion
- 38. Soul singer Hendryx
- 39. A pop
- 40. Lyric verses
- 42. "Say ___"
- 43. Iranian coin
- 47. "Rule, Britannia" composer
- 49. "Look what I did!"
- 51. Florida's Key
- 52. "You ___ kidding!"
- 53. Dentists' pictures
- 55. Academy Award
- 56. "Good grief!"
- 58. Blinkers
- 59. Lhasa ___ (dog)
- 60. The Bee Gees' "___ Liar"
- 61. Clothes presser
- 62. Medicinal amts.
- 64. Flyers' org.
- 65. Call to Bo-peep
- 66. Lock opener

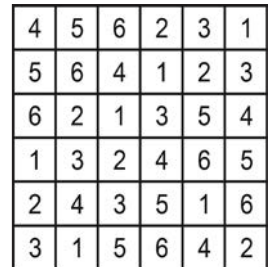
Puzzle answers from this week will appear here next week



Crossword answers from #941



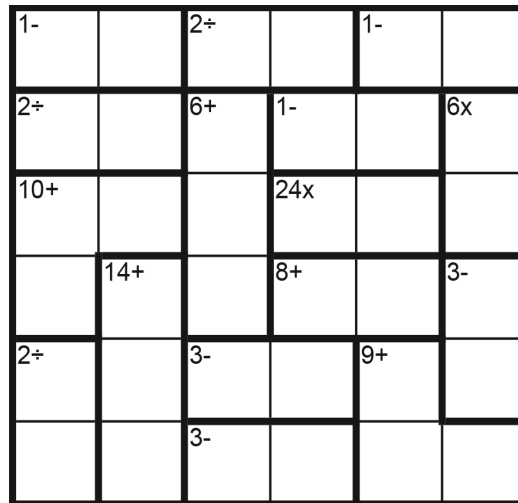
Sudoku answers from #941



JoshJosh answers from #941

JoshJosh by J. Reynolds - No. 942

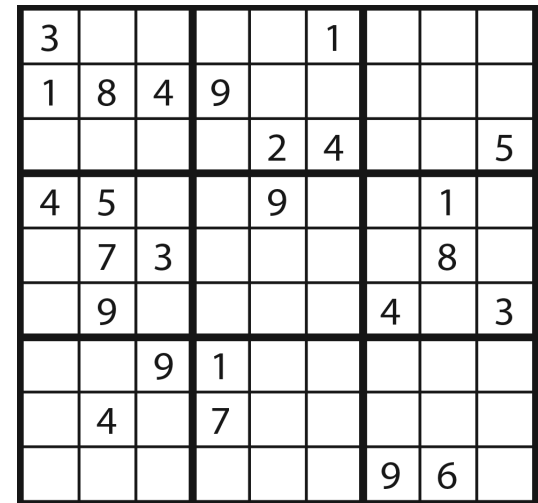
Fill the grid with digits so as not to repeat a digit in any row or column, and so that the digits within each heavily outlined box will produce the target number shown, by using addition, subtraction, multiplication or division, as indicated in the box. A 6x6 grid will use 1-6.



Difficulty hard

Sudoku No. 942

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusive.



Difficulty medium

217 ★★

Tacos & Tequila

★★★ WEEK



217 Taco & Tequila Week Official Passport April 27-May 3, 2026

Legacy Pointe Eatery

1130 Legacy Pointe Drive
(On the north side of Scheels)
217-670-1217
legacypointeeatery.com
Kitchen hours: Closed Mon., Tues.-Sat. 11am-9pm, Sun. 10am-3pm.

The Macho Pork Nacho - \$18

A large shareable portion of fresh corn tortilla chips, three cheese blend, shredded, house-smoked pork, Legacy cheese sauce, house taco sauce, edamame corn salsa, green onion, and sour cream.

Smoked Carnitas Tacos - \$12

A pair of corn tortillas stuffed with shredded, house-smoked pork carnitas, queso fresco, house taco sauce, fresh pico de Gallo, radish coins and fresh lime.

Margarita Azul - \$12

El Bandido Blanco Tequila, cointreau, blueberry simple, fresh lemon and lime juice with a sugar rim.

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217-793-1840
Kitchen hours: Mon.-Sat. 8am-8pm and Sun. 10am-3pm.

Smokehouse Pork Nacho Platter - \$15

A platter of gourmet nachos featuring blue corn chips topped with shredded house made pulled pork, pickled red onions, melted cheese, and guacamole. Enjoy your nachos with a frozen strawberry margarita for \$7.

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109 S. Fifth St.
217-280-5178
soyoaxacadowntown.com
Sun & Mon. 11 am -9 pm,
Tue - Wed: 11 am-9:30 pm,
Thu: 9 am-10 pm Fri: 10 am -10 pm and
Sat: 11 am-10 pm

Baja Fish Tacos-\$13.99

Crispy, golden filets of tender white cod, fried to perfection, creating a delicate crunch that gives way to a flaky, melt-in-your-mouth goodness tucked into a warm tortilla. A generous handful of crisp, shredded cabbage adds a refreshing snap, balancing the richness of the fish with its cool, vibrant crunch. Topped with a fragrant cilantro, juicy Pico de Gallo, adds a mouthwatering finish to every bite. Enjoy with an award-winning margaritas for \$8.99

Main Gate Bar & Grill

2143 N. 11th St.
(across from Illinois State Fair Main Gate) · 217-528-8940
Kitchen is open 10:30am to 1am.
maingatebar.com

North of the border Taco Quesadilla-\$9.75

A grilled flour tortilla is layered with seasoned meat, melted cheese, sautéed onions and pepper. Folded and toasted until golden and perfectly crisp, it's sliced and served hot with salsa and sour cream on the side. Grab a classic Patron margarita for \$5. Kitchen and dine-in open daily 10:30 am to 2 am and delivery until 4 am. Order for pickup or delivery at maingatebar.com.

Silver Sevens Gaming Pub & Parlor

3217 Lake Plaza Drive
217-585-0460
Kitchen hours: Sun. 1-9pm, Mon.-Thu. 11am-9pm, Fri. and Sat. 11am-10pm

Mexican-style pulled chicken tacos-\$9

Two tacos filled with seasoned pulled chicken, lettuce, tomatoes, and shredded cheese. available on soft or deep-fried shells, or turn up the heat with the firebird version for a spicier kick. Served with sour cream, jalapeños available. Come have lunch and try your luck on video gaming powered by J&J Gaming.

Los Altos Cocina y Cantina

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217-717-1932
losaltoscocinamex.com
Hours: Sun 11am-8pm, Mon-Thurs 11am-9pm, Fri-Sat 11am-10pm

Philly Steak Tacos-\$17

Steak strips, grilled onions and peppers with drizzled cilantro-garlic sauce. Served with crispy fries and honey chipotle

Quesa-Birria-\$20

12' cheese quesadilla topped with birria brisket, pickled red onions, radish, cilantro, queso fresco and cilantro-garlic sauce. Served with birria consommé

Altos Carajillo-\$12

Fresh espresso + licor 43 + Anejo Altos Tequila

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curatespringfield.com
Lunch: Thur. - Sat. 11 am - 2pm,
Dinner: Tues. - Thurs. 4pm-9:30pm,
Fri. & Sat. 4pm - 10pm

Two tacos per order or mix and match one of each-\$14

Short Rib

White corn tortilla · braised short rib · cabbage · feta · pickled shallots · cilantro · avocado

Blackened Shrimp

White corn tortilla · blackened shrimp · mango jalapeño pico · cabbage · chipotle aioli

Tequila cocktails-\$13

Avion de Papel

Blanco tequila · Aperol · Amaro · lemon

Elote Margarita

Reposado tequila · Nixta · lime · chili agave · cilantro

Tequila and Mezcal Flights-\$18

Flight of 64 Blanco · Reposado · Añejo

Flight of Mezcal Espadin · Tobalá · Ensamble

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