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~ including McHenry County News

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Red envelopes could hide golden tickets in this year's BBQ'd Productions campaign

Cynthia Wolf
CONTRIBUTOR

Each holiday season for the past eight years, the excitement over restaurateur Kris Schoenberger's red envelope campaign has grown as cash and prizes totaling more than \$100,000 in value have been in the offing.

But this year — with the introduction of some very special golden tickets — the buzz is rocketing like Willy Wonka's gilded glass elevator.

"I wanted to do something different," said Schoenberger, owner of BBQ'd Productions in Third Lake, Lake Zurich and Kenosha, Wisconsin, as well as Station 51 in Antioch. "Those receiving a golden ticket will have a seat at our Golden Ticket Dinner in March at the Lehmann Mansion, where all of our grand prizes will be given away."

Red envelopes are available to dine-in customers at Schoenberger's restaurants, as well as to anyone making a purchase at LCB Home in Lake Villa, from now until the end of the year, or when all of the 5,300 envelopes are gone, whichever comes first. Each of the no-peek envelopes contains a prize. It could be a free dessert, half off or 100 percent off a meal, or any of myriad others.

But the hottest items this year will be the 300 envelopes containing golden tickets, Schoenberger said. Golden ticket holders get entry to the dinner on March 21, 2024, and all grand prizes will be given away that night to the golden ticket winners. The grand prizes range in value from \$100 to \$3,000.

"It could be cash. It could be a trip. It could be a Louis Vuitton bag. It could be electronics," Schoenberger said. "It's going to be a very fun evening, with dinner, drinks, dancing, a gourmet meal worth close to \$100 — and lots of prizes. It is going to be the thing that people are going to talk about all through the community for months to come."

Customers receiving red envelopes must not open them until they make a return, dine-in visit to one of the distributing restaurants between Jan. 1, 2024, and Feb. 29, 2024.

Schoenberger said he started his end-of-the-year red envelope campaign nine years ago as a way to give back to customers.

"They're the reason I've been able to achieve my dream of becoming an entrepreneur," said Schoenberger, who also owns Elyte Productions at the Lehmann Mansion, a wedding and events venue in Lake Villa. "This

is a fun, exciting way to say thanks."

There is no limit to the number of red envelopes a customer can receive. Dine in a few times a week, and receive an envelope each time, while supplies last. BBQ'd Productions restaurants are located at 34121 Route 45 in Third Lake, 405 N. Rand Road in Lake Zurich and 4235 Green Bay Road in Kenosha, Wisconsin. Envelopes also are available at Station 51, 883 N. Main St., Antioch.

BBQ'd Productions restaurants feature mouth-watering, award-winning smoked and grilled pork, beef, fish and ham dishes as well as salads, craft cocktails and more. Station 51 Truck Co. Bar and Grill in Antioch features fire station-themed décor. Popular menu items there include foot-long mozzarella sticks and lobster rolls straight from the East Coast, served on signature New England rolls.

For other information, visit wegrillitall.com or call 847-550-1234 for Lake Zurich, 847-543-1234 for Third Lake, 262-764-5005 for Kenosha. BBQ'd Productions regularly updates its menus with the latest fare, and also offers a free mobile app, private events and catering. The Station 51 website is at station51truck-company.com.



Station 51 hostesses Clara O'Brian, left, and Jenna Bennett display some of the red envelopes being distributed to dine-in customers. Each no-peek envelope contains a prize ranging from free dessert to a prize valued at \$3,000. This year, 300 of the 5,300 envelopes contain a golden ticket, indicating a high-value prize redeemable during a special Golden Ticket Dinner at the Lehmann mansion in March 2024.

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What to know about Illinois' assault weapons ban

Which guns are banned, how to file disclosures and what happens next

By Andrew Adams
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Gun owners face a Jan. 1 deadline to register their assault weapons with the state under Illinois' assault weapons law.

But between lawsuits and ongoing policymaking, the exact guns, accessories and ammunition covered under the Protect Illinois Communities Act remain unclear to many gun rights advocates, who point out that the ban includes some of the most popular models in the country.

The assault weapons ban went into effect when Gov. JB Pritzker signed it in January 2023, immediately prohibiting the sale in Illinois of a long list of weapons and attachments. But Illinoisans who own assault weapons — a term that is itself contentious among gun advocates — can keep them, so long as they purchased them before the law went into effect and register them with the Illinois State Police before the end of this year.

At the end of November, with four weeks before the deadline, nearly 4,900 individuals had filed disclosures with ISP. Owners of now-banned firearms, accessories and ammunition face criminal penalties if they fail to file that disclosure paperwork.

Which guns and accessories are affected?

Illinois' assault weapons ban is wide-ranging and affects a variety of firearms and accessories, most notably weapons based on the design of the AR-15.

The law classifies more than 170 different models of firearm as assault weapons. The statute also lists several general types of weapons under its definition of assault weapon, including AK-type and AR-15-type rifles. It also lists AK-type, AR-type, MAC-type, Thompson-type and Uzi-type pistols. The act restricts IZHMASH Saiga 12-type shotguns. Rifles that shoot .50 caliber rounds are also regulated by the act.

But much of the confusion surrounding the law centers on the fact that it also restricts features that would classify an otherwise acceptable gun as an "assault weapon." These include thumbhole, folding, telescoping and detachable stocks, pistol grips on rifles, flash suppressors, grenade launchers, barrel shrouds that allow users to hold the barrel without being burned, and the capacity to accept ammunition belts.

Accessories that would give an otherwise unregulated firearm one or more of these features are regulated as "assault weapon attachments,"

and they also require a disclosure with state police.

Pistols are also restricted if they have a threaded barrel, a second grip, the capacity to accept magazines outside of the grip and shoulder stocks.

Revolving cylinder shotguns are restricted as well as semiautomatic shotguns that have the capacity to accept a detachable magazine or a fixed magazine with more than five rounds.

Importantly, any firearm that has been modified with aftermarket accessories to achieve the same effect as the state's definition of "assault weapon" would still fall under the ban. This means that a collection of parts that could convert a firearm into an assault weapon—for example, an unregulated pistol and conversion kit—would be considered an assault weapon, even if the kit is unassembled.

The law also bans .50 caliber BMG rounds. While common, these are not the only type of .50 caliber ammunition. Owners of this type of ammunition must file a disclosure with state police.

Ammunition feeding devices are also regulated by the act, but in a slightly less strict fashion than weapons. The law bans "large capacity" magazines, which it defines as being 15 or more rounds for pistols and 10 or more rounds for rifles. While banned, own-

ers of large capacity magazines do not need to file a disclosure.

Affected gun owners must file an affidavit or face criminal penalties

Owners of weapons regulated under the act can legally keep assault weapons, now-banned accessories and .50 caliber rifles, if they owned the weapon or accessory prior to Jan. 10, 2023, when the law went into effect, and they register them with ISP. Some people, notably law enforcement officers, are exempt from the disclosure requirement.

People required to file this paperwork, called an "endorsement affidavit," can do so at the state police Firearms Services Bureau website. This is the same online portal used for concealed carry licenses and Firearm Owners Identification cards. These affidavits must be submitted electronically and submitting false information would be considered perjury.

These online disclosures require the maker, model, serial number and caliber of the gun. For accessories, a description and part number are required. A date of purchase is required if that information is available.

If a gun owner moves to Illinois from a state where they legally owned firearms

or accessories banned under Illinois' law, they must file an endorsement affidavit with the state police within 60 days of moving to Illinois.

This applies to owners of assault weapon attachments, even if they do not own an assault weapon. Local law enforcement agencies and the state police are responsible for enforcing the assault weapons ban in the same manner they currently enforce other regulations, such as the rules around FOID cards.

Penalties for violating the law vary. Carrying or possessing an assault weapon is a Class A misdemeanor. This is generally punishable by up to a year in jail or a fine of up to \$2,500. Manufacturing, selling, delivering and purchasing those weapons, however, is a Class 3 felony. These are generally punishable with five to 10 years in prison and fines of up to \$25,000.

A second or subsequent possession charge is considered a Class 2 felony, which is generally punishable by three to seven years in prison and a fine of up to \$25,000.

Manufacturing, possessing, selling or importing assault weapon accessories and kits is also considered a Class 2 felony. Specific cases may vary in their sentencing.

While the law bans the sale and possession of large-capacity magazines, owners do not need to file a disclosure if they had these magazines prior to Jan. 10, 2023.

For a brief period of six days this spring, an injunction temporarily halted enforcement of the assault weapons ban. Anyone who purchased a regulated weapon after Jan. 10, 2023, including during that window, is in violation of the law.

How many banned guns are there in Illinois?

As of Dec. 4, nearly 4,900 people had filed disclosures in accordance with the state's assault weapons ban. They collectively filed about 9,300 weapons disclosures, about 4,800 accessory disclosures and 87 ammunition disclosures.

Estimating how many people own the types of guns outlined by the state's assault weapons ban is nearly impossible, due to limited data collection requirements and inconsistent definitions of terms like "assault weapon" and "AR-15-style rifle."

That said, some estimates do

exist.

A survey conducted by Ipsos, a large market research firm, found that last year, one in five gun owners in the United States owned an AR-15 or similar gun. Estimates for gun ownership more broadly in Illinois vary, with research suggesting between 25 and 30 percent of the households in the state own a gun. Older data suggests closer to 20 percent.

Taken together, those statistics suggest that around hundreds of thousands of Illinoisans will be impacted by the state's assault weapons ban.

Despite this uncertainty, the prevalence of these guns is one of the issues at the heart of the ongoing legal battle over the constitutionality of the law.

Arguments in the federal cases that could invalidate or uphold the law have repeatedly turned to whether the guns are in "common use." Under recent U.S. Supreme Court rulings, guns in common use are generally protected under Second Amendment's right to bear arms.

State officials still settling rules, implementation

As with many state laws, Illinois' assault weapons ban has been the subject of administrative rulemaking, the process whereby the state agency responsible for implementing the law lays out the rules by which it will do so.

The state police have proposed rules that are now under consideration by an oversight committee of lawmakers. The rulemaking on the subject has been closely watched and has spun off into a series of dedicated hearings hosted by ISP to gather public input on how to execute the law.

One of the central issues at the heart of these hearings has been how precisely ISP will interpret some of the vaguer aspects of the law. This includes a final decision on exactly which items must be registered.

The law is also the subject of ongoing litigation. Several federal cases challenging the constitutionality of the law could be decided by the U.S. Supreme Court. Earlier this month, a three-judge panel on the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals issued a 2-1 opinion allowing the law to remain in effect while the cases continue.

*Peace on Earth...
good will to men...
Give Thanks to our
Service Men & Women*

At this season of quiet reflection, we recall our many blessings and realize just how fortunate we truly are to receive the goodwill of people like you! From all of us to all of our military personnel and their families, we send our thanks, thoughts and prayers to you this Holiday Season.

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Antioch Community Chorus presenting free holiday concert Dec. 17

Free holiday concert will be presented by The Antioch Community Chorus at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 17 at Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church in Antioch.

They will be performing the Christmas Portion of The Messiah by George Frideric Handel. The performance will be directed by Stanley Bochat with piano by Chris Kusher, strings by Tim Montalvo String Ensemble and orchestra instrumentalists from the Lakes Community Band. The program is presented by Festival Arts of Antioch.

Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church is located at 24300 W. Grass Lake Road, Antioch, (Grass Lake Rd. and Rte. 59).

State health plan declares racism a public health crisis

Advocacy groups say 'Healthy Illinois 2028' is missing key areas of focus

By Dilpreet Raju
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

A new state health report pinpoints racism as a public health crisis while also noting Illinois needs to improve in the areas of maternal and infant health, mental health and substance use disorders.

The broad goals are laid out in a draft of the State Health Improvement Plan, which will be finalized and presented to the Illinois General Assembly next year. The SHIP is part of Healthy Illinois 2028, a five-year plan outlining the major public health crises the state hopes to address.

After two years of assessment and planning, Healthy Illinois 2028 prioritized five major public health issues:

- Racism as a public health crisis.
- Maternal and infant health.
- Mental health and substance use disorders.
- Chronic disease.
- COVID-19 and emerging diseases.

The report found these issues consistently overlap and are all exacerbated by a lack of access to health care and wraparound services, the infrastructure of public health systems and racial inequities.

"It is essential to emphasize that disparities in health outcomes according to race/ethnicity have nothing to do with biology and everything to do with inequitable distributions of money, power and resources," the report stated.

Several members of the public registered concern at virtual hearings last week about what was missing from the draft plan — including care plans for migrants and concrete actions to slow a rising number of overdose deaths in Illinois.

Public health advocates asked for the inclusion of data-driven responses. Previous SHIPs have included measurable goals including reducing rates of suicide and opioid overdose deaths, both of which have increased over the last decade, according to the Centers for Disease Control's National Center for Health Statistics.

But Jennifer Epstein, deputy director of the Illinois Department of Public Health Office of Policy, Planning and Statistics emphasized to Capitol News Illinois that the report is still in draft form, and that specific metrics will be added to the plan during 2024.

Racism's effect on health care

The draft improvement plan for the first time makes a point of listing racism as an overarching public health crisis in Illinois.

"Racism is both a cross-cutting issue and a standalone priority because it is at the root of many, if not all health issues," Illinois Public Health Institute senior program manager Janece Gough said at the hearings.

IPHI was one of the entities that contributed to the draft under the guidance of the Illinois Department of Public Health and the State Board of Health. The report was also co-authored by staff from the University of Illinois Chicago's Policy, Practice and Prevention Research Center.

Gough said continued stigma and discrimination from health care providers are

among the barriers to equitable health care.

The plan aims to address inequities by forming an appointed advisory committee on racism in health care and building a more diverse health care workforce. This type of racism happens when health care workers hold racial biases against patients, whether intentional or not.

IPHI director Laurie Call said public health infrastructure needs serious strengthening to be ready for emerging threats, as evidenced by the COVID-19 pandemic. Climate change—and its health effects caused by air, water and land pollution—are included in those emerging threats, she said.

"We know that as climate change is expected to worsen, this will have many health consequences," she said.

Call said eight local entities in Illinois—such as the Chicago Department of Public Health, the Peoria City/County Health Department and a Champaign school board—have already issued a formal declaration of racism as a public health crisis. According to the American Public Health Association, 19 other states have declared racism a public health crisis, including Michigan and Wisconsin.

During a recent hearing, Angela McLemore, who worked for years in hospital administration and now serves as executive assistant to state Sen. Mattie Hunter, D-Chicago, said she was supportive of the plan's goals, but she emphasized the state will need to dedicate resources to make them a reality.

"I like what I have seen," McLemore said. "In order to make the goals and objectives happen, you have to spend a lot more time on implementation, planning and we need to attach the money, manpower and materials necessary for each plan."

Funding was a key concern for multiple other public commenters, including Creola Hampton, president of Black Leadership Advocacy Coalition for Healthcare Equity, or BLACHE, pronounced "black." BLACHE currently has 19 organizations in its network from the west side of Chicago down to East St. Louis.

"The unfortunate dilemma is the Illinois Department of Public Health funding is so highly racially inequitable that it perpetuates racism being a public health issue," Hampton said.

Hampton argued that when it comes to combatting HIV and AIDS, by which Black communities have been hit the hardest, there has been little funding sent to "African American-led organizations that have the enhanced cultural competency" and "the

maximum degree of effectiveness."

"The state is going to be leading saying that racism is a public health issue," she said. "Then the state has to be actively involved and making sure that there is equitable funding going to African American-led organizations to do the work that needs to be done to negate the inequity of health."

In response to media questions, IDPH spokesperson Jim Leach said the agency aims to partner with Black-led organizations around the state to reduce the "historic and present-day disparities" found with HIV.

"More than half of the HIV testing and risk reduction services delivered with IDPH grant funds were provided to clients who identified as Black/African American," Leach told Capitol News Illinois in an email.

Healthy Illinois 2028 lists an infrastructure recommendation to "de-silo funding and eliminate inequitable funding."

Requested additions

Though reducing overdose mortality was outlined as a priority goal in the previous SHIP, overdose deaths have continued to climb in Illinois. The IDPH Opioid Data Dashboard recorded 3,261 opioid-involved overdose deaths in 2022—a new record for the state.

The SHIP draft lists broad objectives including reducing the number of emergency department visits and increasing access to health care and wraparound services. It also sets a goal to "Increase funding to support the infrastructure development of the mental health and substance use disorder system."

Absent from the report is any mention of licensed overdose prevention sites, something many addiction researchers and advocates for those with substance use disorders support.

"We really don't have time to lose," Chelsea Laliberte Barnes, co-founder of the Illinois Harm Reduction and Recovery Coalition, told the panel last week.

Overdose prevention sites, which are places where people who use drugs can get clean equipment and drug samples tested, present one major evidence-based strategy to reduce overdose deaths. Illinois has none but the issue was brought forward each of the past two legislative sessions by Rep. La Shawn Ford, D-Chicago. New York is the only state with licensed overdose prevention centers, both of which are in New York City.

In countries with overdose prevention sites, like Canada,

See CRISIS, Page 4



SUBMITTED PHOTO Hi-Liter/MCN

K9 Grip, the newest member of the Cyber Lab, is shown with State's Attorney Eric Rinehart.

K9 Grip, newest member of Cyber Lab

The Lake County State's Attorney's Office is excited to announce the newest member of our Cyber Lab, K9 Program Investigator, Grip.

Grip is a one-and-a-half-year-old yellow lab that was trained as an electronics detection unit and can find cellphones, laptop computers, and any other digital devices containing a SIM card or chip.

Grip has been partnered with her handler, Rob Beach, a Lake County State's Attorney Investigator who specializes in cybercrimes investigations. She will assist Mr. Beach in mutual aid requests during investigations of crimes against children. Specifically, Grip will work closely with law enforcement agencies during the execution of search warrants related to cases involving the use of electronic devices.

"I am completely impressed with her ability to detect electronic devices, she

has the best demeanor, and as my little ones say, 'She helps catch bad guys,'" Beach said.

She was donated through a grant from Defenders for Children, whose mission is to prevent child abuse, trafficking, and child pornography. The purchase of Grip and gift to Defenders For Children is made possible by the generosity of Gripple, Inc., a private company that increases awareness regarding sexual abuse and human trafficking.

"Grip is a great addition to the Office and shows our Cybercrimes' Division strong commitment to using every possible resource to increase child pornography prosecutions. She is already loved by everyone in the office. We will use any tool we can to detect and prosecute those who would engage in heinous crimes against children," Lake County State's Attorney Eric Rinehart commented.

Conservation district hosting candlelight hikes this weekend

Discover the beauty of a crisp, winter evening along scenic trails lit only by candlelight! Skiers and hikers of every experience level and age are welcome to join McHenry County Conservation District at their first Candlelight Ski/Hike of the season on Friday, Dec. 15 and Saturday, Dec. 16 from 5-9 p.m. at Harrison Benwell, 7055 McCullom Lake Road, Wonder Lake. A minimum of 4 inches of snow are required to ski. Not enough snow? Leave the skis at home and

enjoy a candlelight hike! Additional Candlelight Cross Country Ski/Hike Events are scheduled as follows:

- January 12 & 13 at Marengo Ridge, 2411 N. Route 23, Marengo
- February 9 & 10 at Prairieview Education Center, 2112 Behan Road, Crystal Lake.

Registration is not required for this drop-in activity. Bring your own equipment. No pets please.

Cancellations may occur if trails are icy, hazardous or

wind chill drops below -20°. Alerts are posted at [MCCD.org/Closures](https://www.mccd.org/Closures).

Enjoy Night Skiing/Hiking? Solar lit trails at Pleasant Valley Conservation Area in Woodstock and at Hickory Grove Highlands in Cary are open to skiers and hikers every night until 9 p.m. through March 10, 2024. A minimum of 4 inches of snow are required to ski.

To learn more about McHenry County Conservation District and their programs visit [MCCDDistrict.org](https://www.mccd.org).

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SUBMITTED PHOTO HI-Liter/MCN

County official of the Year

McHenry County Circuit Clerk Kathy Keefe received the 2023 County Official of the Year by the Illinois Association of County Officials at the annual conference held in Normal, IL in November. The honor is bestowed by IACO to recognize outstanding officials who best demonstrate the association's mission of "improving the quality of county government while maintaining a high standard of performance." Keefe has served 15 years as Circuit Clerk and more than 20 years prior to her election working in the office.

Mark your calendars for Volo Bog's Winterfest event on Jan. 14

Looking for a cure for Cabin Fever? Plan to attend Volo Bog State Natural Area's Annual WinterFest on Sunday, Jan. 14. It's a blend of activities to remedy those mid-winter doldrums.

With a mixture of indoor and outdoor activities there is sure to be something for everyone to enjoy.

Indoor Activities

Live Music by Harper's Back Porch Revue, an eclectic ensemble of performers, will fill Volo Bog State Natural Area's Visitor Center with the energy of nearly 20 musicians! Friends of Volo Bog and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources are delighted to welcome this dynamic musical group back for an encore performance. The ensemble explores Americana music from the late 19th to the mid-20th centuries: blues and country, old time, folk, gospel, and more. They perform on string instruments of all sorts: guitars, banjos, fiddles, ukuleles, bass, etc., as well as

hand drumming and singing. The ever-evolving group, led by Scott Cashman and Bekr Ali, brings a variety of backgrounds and experiences together for a one-of-a-kind experience with each performance.

Photo Contest Awards

Between music sets photo contest awards will be presented to first, second and third place in ten categories in Volo Bog's 37th Annual Nature Photo Contest.

Winter Crafts upstairs in the Visitor Center provides materials for creating fun take-home treasures.

Refreshments will also be available. Friends of Volo Bog will have hot cocoa, coffee, sodas, and cookies for sale.

Outdoor Activities

Bog Tours: Volo Bog is beautiful any time of year and all the more magical under a blanket of snow. Join the 45-minute tours to learn about bogs and their winter secrets. Eight start times between 11

a.m. and 3 p.m.

Snow Sculpting Contest: Children and adults alike are invited to enter our snow sculpting contest. There are prizes in four categories – Youth, Teen, Family/Group, & Adult. Ask for rules & entry form by emailing dnr.volo-bog@illinois.gov.

Snowshoeing & Skiing: Cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and hiking can be enjoyed on five miles of trails over rolling hills through woodland, wetland, and prairie. BYO skis or snowshoes.

Donations at the event are appreciated. Friends of Volo Bog, a 501(c)(3) membership organization, happily accepts donations to support this and other programs at Volo Bog State Natural Area. Suggested cover - \$10/adult; children free.

Volo Bog State Natural Area is an Illinois Department of Natural Resources site located at 28478 W. Brandenburg Road, Ingleside, IL 60041. Contact the site at dnr.volobog@illinois.gov or 815-344-1294.

Dolly Parton Imagination Library officially launches statewide in Illinois

Goal is to send free books to all children, ages 0-5

By Peter Hancock
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Illinois families with infants and toddlers now have access to free children's books that can be sent directly to their home, regardless of their income.

Gov. JB Pritzker last week announced the official launch of the state's partnership with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, a program founded by the country music legend in 1995 in her home county in east Tennessee. It now sends free books every month to nearly 3 million children in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia and Ireland.

"Today, I couldn't be prouder to announce that the Imagination Library is working with the state of Illinois to begin our journey to provide every child under the age of five an opportunity to receive a free book delivered to them every single month," Pritzker said at an event at the Bloomington Public Library.

Pritzker first announced

in June that the state had formed a partnership with the Dollywood Foundation, Parton's philanthropic organization, after Illinois lawmakers included \$1.6 million in this year's budget to fund the state's share of the program. Other funding comes from the Dollywood Foundation and local, county-based organizations.

Since then, about 44 local programs have been operating in the state, serving roughly 4 percent of eligible children. But Dollywood Foundation executive director Nora Briggs said the goal is to reach all of the estimated 755,000 children under age 5 in Illinois.

"We know that nothing is more basic, more essential, more foundational to a child's success in life than the ability to read," Briggs said. "The research is clear. We cannot wait until kindergarten for children to have access or exposure to books. It must happen early. It must start in the home environment. And reading at home requires books."

People who are interested in enrolling their child in the program can find their local provider on the "check availability" tab located at imaginationlibrary.com. From

there, applicants submit basic information including their address, their child's name and date of birth, and the parents' information.

Once a child's eligibility is approved, they will start receiving one book each month, addressed to them. Each child within an age group receives the same monthly book. Books on the distribution list are chosen by a panel of early childhood literacy experts who review potential titles for inclusion in the distribution list.

In addition to funding the Imagination Library program this year, lawmakers also approved Pritzker's "Smart Start Illinois" initiative that will provide \$250 million this year for early childhood programs, including expanded access to preschool, wage support for child care workers, early intervention programs, and home visiting programs.

"We're making our mark on every aspect of early childhood, and working with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library literacy efforts will begin now at the earliest ages," Pritzker said. "Illinois is well on its way to solidifying our status as the number one state in the nation to raise young children."

• Crisis (Continued from page 3)

Australia and several European countries, no deaths have been reported at any of these centers.

"We've seen how much these types of interventions save money, they reduce costs from emergency services. They provide a direct link for people to access health care services, job training, food," Laliberte Barnes said. "I would just like to really advocate for the addition of overdose prevention sites as a strategy for the plan over the next five years."

She said overdoses are still rising "statewide—rural, urban, suburban, you name it."

The draft report also doesn't contain a plan of care for recent migrant populations that have

arrived in Illinois in the last 15 months largely from the southern U.S. border.

As of Dec. 6, more than 27,000 asylum seekers have arrived in Chicago, with a majority arriving via buses from Texas at the direction of Gov. Greg Abbott, according to the city's new arrivals dashboard.

Without proper medical attention and paperwork, the number of asylum seekers places a particular strain on public schools that need to address their physical and mental health needs.

Betzua Rubio, a nurse at Eli Whitney Elementary in Chicago's Little Village, told the panel she was concerned for migrant children who are with-

out paperwork such as immunization records.

"We are seeing the lack of implementation for medical providers to adequately provide medical orders," including "asthma action plans, allergy action plans," Rubio said at the hearings.

Rubio estimated that more than 100 migrant students have been enrolled at Eli Whitney and described her work as a bilingual school nurse as "non-stop."

"We have been bringing administration vans for those children, but this is all work that we're doing individually," Rubio told Capitol News Illinois. "We're not getting any help."

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Pet of the week

Lady Birdie, is about 6 months old, spayed, up-to-date on routine shots, tested negative for FIV, feline leukemia and heartworm and microchipped.

She is at the PetSmart in Kildeer (corner of Route 12 and Quentin Road). Please note that meetings and adoptions are all done by appointment. For information and/or to complete an online application, please visit www.saveapetil.org/adopt.

The Penny's Purpose hosting Santa visits on Saturday

Come together for a day of giving, joy and community spirit on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at The Penny's Purpose in Antioch.

Warm hearts this season by contributing to the ongoing blanket drive. Donate new, homemade, or gently used blankets. In return, capture the magic of the holidays with a cherished photo alongside Santa Claus. Make this festive day

extra special by giving back to those in need and creating memories that will last a lifetime. Your generosity will bring warmth to others, and the joy of the season will be felt by all.

For more information visit our website at www.thepennyspurpose.org or visit their Facebook page at The Penny's Purpose NFP.

The Penny's Purpose is located at 965 Main Street, Antioch.



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P15656

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Court & crime news

Judge convicts man of attempted murder after unprovoked attack



Errol Shakes

On Dec. 6, a bench trial concluded with a “guilty” verdict on one count of Attempt Murder, a class X felony.

Errol Shakes, 53, was first charged on October 21, 2021, after Libertyville Police Department and Vernon Hills Police Department responded to a report of a stabbing on a public transportation bus. The men had met each other in the past and exchanged words immediately prior to the stabbing.

“This was an unprovoked and brutal attack. This offender will be removed from the community and sent to prison after the success of our trial team. I want to thank ASAs Lenzini and Caskey for their outstanding work to make sure that a clear message is sent that violence will not be tolerated in our community. Our victim specialists will support the victim going forward,” said State’s Attorney Rinehart after the verdict.

The bench trial began on Tuesday, December 5, lasting two days, with State resting on Tuesday afternoon and Defense resting on Wednesday morning. Presiding Judge George Strickland heard from several State witnesses, which included law enforcement and medical personnel.

Police officers testified that they responded to the scene where they found the victim with severe injuries. Officers and medical personnel treated the victim before transporting him to the hospital. Video from the bus showed Shakes stabbed the victim multiple times.

Medical personnel described the severity of the injuries the victim sustained from being stabbed by Shakes multiple times.

The charge of Attempt Murder carries a sentencing range of 6-30 years to be served at 85%. Mr. Shakes has remained in local custody since the arrest, and will be sentenced on January 19, 2024, by Judge Strickland.

Two men arrested on drug, weapon charges

On December 6, McHenry County Sheriff’s Office Narcotics Task Force, SWAT Team, Crystal Lake Police Department, and McHenry Police Department arrested two McHenry men on drug and weapons charges after executing a search warrant on their home in the 5000 block of Home Avenue in McHenry.

Two subjects were taken into custody for various charges outlined below.

Jimmy Diaz; age 59 of McHenry: 2 counts of felon possession or use weapon/firearm/ammunition – Class 2, 1

count of possession of methamphetamine - less than 5 grams – Class 3, 1 count of possession controlled substance – Class 4, 1 count of unlawful possession of drug paraphernalia – Class A, and 1 count of resist or obstruct police officer – Class A.

Rene R. Barrera Junior; age 37 of McHenry: 1 count of possession of methamphetamine - less than 5 grams – Class 3, 1 count of possession controlled substance – Class 4, 1 count of obstructing justice - tamper with evidence/false information – Class 4, 1 count of possession of firearm - no valid FOID card – Class A, 1 count of possession of ammunition - no valid FOID card – Class A, and 1 count of resist or obstruct police officer – Class A.

The charges against these individuals are merely allegations against them. All defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Inmate found dead in cell at McHenry County Adult Correctional Facility

On Dec. 5, around 4:00 p.m., a 74-year-old male inmate was found unresponsive in a single-occupied booking cell at McHenry County Adult Correctional Facility. Corrections officers and Woodstock Fire/Rescue attempted life-saving measures without success, and the inmate was pronounced deceased at the scene.

In compliance with Sheriff’s Office protocol and state law, the McHenry County Major Investigation Assistance Team was requested to conduct the investigation.

The inmate was identified as Timothy Mumford of Johnsbury. An autopsy was scheduled for Dec. 7, with results still pending at the time of this publication.

Sheriff’s office releases statement on jail deaths

The McHenry County Sheriff’s Office faithfully serves the community, promoting the safety and equal protection of all.

In 2023, the Sheriff’s Office had four in-custody deaths. This Office has been fully transparent in providing information in conjunction with McHenry County Sheriff’s Office General Orders, policy and procedures, state laws, and the consideration of affected families.

McHenry County Sheriff’s Office empathizes with members of our community and the families affected by these losses.

In the case of any inmate death, an investigation by an independent agency is always conducted. In recent events, McHenry County Major Investigation Assistance Team (MIAT) has been called upon to act as the independent agency. Details are not released until MIAT, in conjunction with the Coroner’s Office, concludes the investigations. This process is consistent with any type of investigation.

The Sheriff’s Office goes through comprehensive measures to ensure the health, safety, and wellness of all inmates. The Sheriff’s Office is contracted with a health and wellness provider that is on staff 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This staff meets with all inmates upon intake and continuously monitors the health and needs of these individuals. Inmates who need further healthcare are transported to local health facilities where they remain further evaluated and medical needs are addressed. These inmates are considered in-custody. In-custody is not physically limited to the jail but defined as individuals under the supervision and care of the McHenry County Sheriff’s Office.

The Sheriff’s Office receives guidance on best practices through the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) standards and American Correctional Association (ACA) accreditation standards. The Sheriff’s Office’s own policies and procedure ensure that these standards are met or exceeded. If you’d like to review Sheriff’s Office’s procedures, you can find them here: <https://public.powerdms.com/MCSO1/tree>.

The Sheriff’s Office is committed to the health and safety of each inmate and are confident in our Corrections Officers’ ability to maintain a safe environment. As investigations conclude and more information becomes available, we will update the public.

Lake County Sheriff’s arrest bulletin

The Lake County Sheriff’s Dept. reported the following arrests in Lake County. Suspects are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Oct. 30

Lee L. Thomas, 36, Waukegan, was cited for no driver’s license;

Jason D. West, 45, Alton, MO, was cited for a warrant arrest: harassment/stalking (Douglas County, Missouri);

Oct. 31

Shelton Sherrod, 22, Zion, was cited for battery;

Daniel Williams, 24, Fox Lake, was cited for battery;

Leilia F. Patton, 35, Round Lake, was cited for driving while license suspended;

Fernando Amaro-Pinto, 63, Waukegan, was cited for DUI – alcohol, and driving while license suspended;

Rasul Asilbek Uulu, 22, Renton, WA, was cited for operating a commercial vehicle without a CDL, and overweight on registration;

Nov. 1

Elias Arteaga, 55, Round Lake Park, was cited for DUI – alcohol;

Sherrie L. Sutton, 57, Antioch, was cited for reckless driving, failure to report a crash;

Javier Gomez, 57, Wadsworth, was cited for no driver’s license;

Lisa M. Guerra, 29, Park City, was cited for DUI – alcohol, and driving while license suspended;

Nov. 2

Alejandro Gallaga-Alejandro, 50, North Chicago, was cited for driving while license suspended;

Devin M. Maguire, 29, Zion, was cited for driving while license suspended and no insurance;

Nov. 3

Brandy N. Hinjosa, 40, Lake Zurich, was cited for DUI – alcohol;

Jesus Brito-Garcia, 38, Waukegan, was cited for no driver’s license;

Nov. 4

James L. Pendley, III, 26, Spring Grove, was cited for DUI – alcohol;

Miicaila Kline, 20, Round Lake, was cited for violating an order of protection;

Juvenile, was cited for domestic battery;

Marc A. M. De Jesus, 24, Waukegan, was cited for DUI – alcohol, and improper transportation of cannabis;

Nov. 5

Luis M. Acosta-Cardona, 25, Round Lake Beach, was cited for a warrant arrest: DUI, attempted possession of a controlled substance;

Nov. 6

Jesus Magana-Zamora, 25, Park City, was cited for no driver’s license;

Marva L. Wright-Harris, 69, Waukegan, was cited for no driver’s license and suspended registration;

Nov. 7

Juvenile, was cited for possession of child pronography;

Anshaan L. Taylor, 45, Zion, was cited for driving while license revoked;

Jamie L. Grockowski, 46, Antioch, was cited for unlawful possession of drug paraphernalia;

Deondre T. Booker, 29, Zion, was cited for a warrant arrest: battery;

Eliseo Rodrigo Zacarias, 30, Melrose Park, was cited for no driver’s license and no insurance;

Jennifer Rhodes, 48, Wonder Lake, was cited for driving while license suspended and no insurance;

Avery A. Warship, Sr., 35,

Zion, was cited for aggravated DUI, improper transportation of cannabis, and open transportation of alcohol;

Rachel D. Bocik, 46, Trevor, WI, was cited for driving while license suspended, unlawful possession of drug paraphernalia, and obstructing identification, and no insurance;

Veronica R. Stevens, 41, Genoa, WI, was cited for unlawful possession of crack cocaine, obstructing identification and unlawful possession of drug paraphernalia;

Nov. 8

Juan Sanchez-Almaraz, 37, Des Plaines, was cited for a warrant arrest: aggravated DUI;

Reno L. Whirl, 29, Zion, was cited for a warrant arrest: assault (LaPorte County, IN);

Daniel Tellez, 36, Waukegan, was cited for driving while license suspended;

Ian Salgado, 20, Lake Villa, was cited for unlawful possession of cocaine, DUI alcohol, aggravated speeding (72 mph in 40 mph zone) and open transportation of alcohol;

Santos J. Sanchez-Palma, 27, Waukegan, was cited for no driver’s license and aggravated speeding (81 mph in 35 mph zone).

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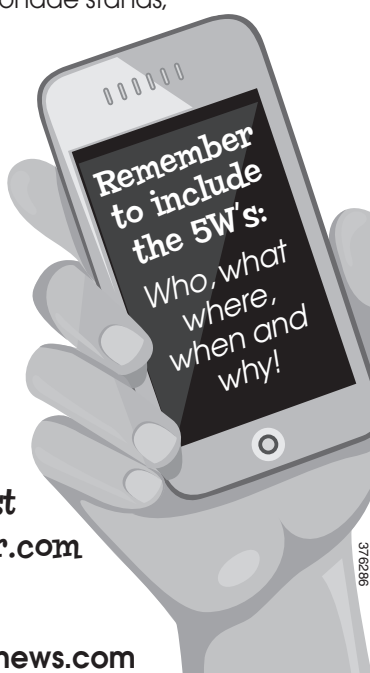
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Sheriff's Special Investigations Group arrests 12 men in human trafficking suppression operation

The Lake County Sheriff's Office Special Investigations Group (SIG), a High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) funded task force, arrested 12 men in a recent human trafficking suppression operation.

SIG conducted an operation specifically targeting customers of prostitutes, known as "Johns." Many individuals selling sex are not doing so willingly, a large number are being forced into involuntary servitude.

This was a web-based operation and utilized classified advertising websites, regularly used as a medium for prostitution. When the "Johns" arrived and offered money to the undercover de-

tectives for sexual acts, they were arrested and transported to the Lake County Jail.

Over the past ten years, this nationwide effort led to the arrests of more than 15,000 total "Johns" and sex traffickers.

Sheriff John D. Idleburg said, "It is a well-known fact that many are forced into this type of 'sex work' through physical force, fraud, and coercion. Many of them are victims of human trafficking. There is no doubt that if we reduce the demand for this type of activity, we reduce the need for the supply, making positive strides toward reducing human trafficking."

The following people were arrested during this

operation and charged with 'Solicitation of a Sexual Act (Class A Misdemeanor):

- Israel G. Cisneros-Sanchez, 31, of the 1300 block of Abington Lane, Round Lake
- Douglas M. Dockery, 36, of the 4100 block of Harvard Street, Arlington Heights
- Ryan A. Juga, 42, of the 7100 block of 36th Avenue, Kenosha, WI
- Michael P. Marciano, 43, of the 33200 block of Valley View Drive, Round Lake
- Aliaksandr Kors, 33, of the 23600 block of Raleigh Drive, Lincolnshire
- Nicholas A. Huemann, 22, of the 100 block of West Northeast Shore Drive, McHenry
- Steven D. Carr, 71, of the

1200 block of North Western Avenue, Lake Forest

- Victor Andrala, 43, of the 1500 block of Eva Avenue, Park City
- Theodore E. Pfaff, 39, of the 4500 block of Hemlock Street, Crystal Lake
- Nicholas B. Steele, 44, of the 18100 block of Loretta Drive, Marengo
- Christian Felix, 19, of the 1000 block of Grand Avenue, Waukegan
- Traian Big, 49, of the 3700 block of Harlem Avenue, Chicago

All defendants were cited, processed, and issued a court date of December 21. All defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty in a court of law.



Victor Andrala



Traian Big



Steven D. Carr



Israel Cisneros-Sanchez



Douglas M. Dockery



Christian Felix



Nicholas A. Huemann



Ryan A. Juga



Aliaksandr Kors



Michael P. Marciano



Theodore E. Pfaff



Nicholas B. Steele

McHenry County Sheriff's arrest bulletin

The following arrests in McHenry County were reported by the McHenry County Sheriff's Department. Suspects are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Oct. 3

Laurinda M. Ahrens, 53, Barrington, was cited for 2 counts of aggravated battery – great bodily harm or permanent disability or disfigurement person 60 yoa or older, 2 counts of aggravated battery – based on location – minor or no injury – no dangerous weapon, 2 counts of possession of controlled substance, resisting or obstructing peace officer, driving on revoked or suspended, and failure to reduce speed;

Johnsburg, was cited for residential burglary, and criminal trespass to real property;

Erik Romero, 33, Wauconda, was cited for driving while license suspended or revoked;

Oct. 4

Lynn L. Milligan, 56, Woodstock, was cited for methamphetamine possession and possession of drug paraphernalia;

Rosendo Pacheco, 18, Beloit, was cited for armed robbery with firearm, aggravated robbery – indicate armed with firearm, burglary, aggravated unlawful use of weapon/delinquent minor, aggravated unlawful use of weapon/vehicle/no foid, and unlawful possession of a handgun under 18;

Wonder Lake, was cited for aggravated battery – bodily harm/disability or disfigurement person with intellectual disability, A-1 domestic battery/bodily harm, and A-2 domestic battery/physical contact;

Oct. 5

Zennith D. Watson, 49, Hebron, was cited for A-2 domestic battery/physical contact, violation of an order of protection, and interference with reporting of domestic violence;

Nicholas K. Perlow, 27, Rockford, was cited for aggravated DUI – during period when driving privileges revoked or suspended as a result of DUI/reckless homicide, and speeding over statutory limit 15-20;

Devonta J. Kimble, 31, Chicago, was cited for driving on suspended license;

Samuel A. Eremo, 41, Wonder Lake, was cited for A-2 domestic battery/physical contact;

Oct. 6

Mark R. Hume, 64, Johnsbury, was cited for DUI – alcohol, operation of motor vehicle when registration suspended for noninsurance, and display plate attachment;

Oct. 7

Jeremias Serrano Lopez, 24, McHenry, was cited for DUI – alcohol, speeding over limit 21-25 mph;

Joseph T. Beekil, 23, McHenry, was cited for DUI – alcohol, and speeding 26-35 mph over limit;

Oct. 8

Bayasgalan Davaadorj, 37, Crystal Lake, was cited for endangering the life or health of a child – causes, permits or places child in circumstances, child left in motor vehicle;

Brent S. Shepperack, 30, was cited for violation of order of protection, and resisting or obstructing peace officer;

Kevin P. Specht, 29, Crystal Lake, was cited for driving while license suspended or revoked and display of registration plates/sticker, registration plate covers;

Angel H. Perez, 23, Chicago, was cited for obstructing peace officer, firefighter or correctional institution employee.

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CARGO TRAILER 5x8

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