

# Hi-LITER

~ including McHenry County News

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## Judges of the nineteenth judicial circuit to visit local classrooms

In conjunction with the February celebration of the life and legacy of Abraham Lincoln, the judges of the Lake County Circuit Court will be among the many Illinois judges to deliver a program to grade school students based on the popular children's book by Martha Brenner, Abe Lincoln's Hat. To have a Judge read to the students in your Lake County classroom, email tjaffe@lakecountyil.gov.

A project of the Illinois Judges Association, the reading program is aimed at children in grades K-4 to encourage the appreciation, value, and enjoyment of reading. Judges dressed in black robes will make classroom appearances, read the book, and discuss its intersection with history and the law; the book will then be donated to the school library.

"Too many school children are not reading at grade level," said Hon. Mary Schostok, a justice in the Appellate Court, Second District, and former president of the Illinois Judges Association. "This reading deficiency affects student learning and contributes to the high school dropout rate. Our reading project is one small step which we hope will inspire young students to appreciate the value of books as

they learn a little about history and our system of justice directly from a sitting judge."

Surveys by the Annie E. Casey Foundation have found that a significant percentage of fourth-graders from low-income families are not reading at grade level. Further, children who are proficient readers by the end of third grade have a greater chance to graduate from high school and become economically self-sufficient adults.

Abe Lincoln's Hat is an illustrated account of the adventures of our nation's 16th President. It reveals the secrets he stored in his tall, black hat. The book portrays Lincoln as an absent-minded frontier lawyer who nudged his memory by sticking letters, court notes, contracts, and even his checkbook inside his trademark top hat.

The project is the latest in a series of community programs undertaken by the Illinois Judges Association, including the IJA's Page It Forward reading and tutoring program. Other IJA programs are "Courtroom in the Classroom," a presentation that celebrates the U.S. Constitution; "7 Reasons to Leave the Party," covering the legal and personal consequences of drinking and driving, taking drugs, and engaging in other



During February, Lake County Circuit Court judges will be visiting local classrooms to help celebrate the life and legacy of Abraham Lincoln by reading to children.

unhealthy behaviors; "Worries of the World Wide Web," a program created to address the increasing problem of cyberbullying, electronic harassment, and sexting/pornography and "Your Future, Your Choice," educate the students

about the justice system, how a case goes through the system, what's the difference between the juvenile and the adult system and what are the crimes associated with the internet and social media. Information on various IJA programs

is available on their website: <https://ija.memberclicks.net/in-school-programs>.

The Illinois Judges Association is a membership organization of 1,250 active and retired judges whose purpose is to foster public confidence

in the independence of the judiciary, provide services and education to its members, and information about court operations to the public. Funding for the books was made possible by a grant from the Illinois Judges Foundation.

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# State health department warns respiratory illnesses are on the rise

CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Cases of COVID-19, flu and RSV are “circulating widely,” according to the Illinois Department of Public Health and officials in the department are urging people to exercise caution and get vaccinated if they are able.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that as of Dec. 30, 18 counties are listed at “high” levels of COVID-19 hospitalization, meaning more than 20 hospitalizations per 100,000 people. That’s four more counties than the week prior.

In addition to COVID-19, flu activity is about on par with the 2019-2020 flu season—the last before COVID hit. IDPH confirms two pediatric deaths from flu in December and is investigating a third.

IDPH Director Dr. Sameer Vohra said in a Jan. 5 news release the winter holiday season typically brings increases in seasonal virus spread.

“I encourage all Illinoisians - and especially those most vulnerable to serious illness - to stay informed about respiratory illnesses in their area and use all the tools available to keep themselves and their loved ones safe,” Vohra said.

Precautions include good hand hygiene, ensuring proper ventilation and staying home and away from others if people develop symptoms like coughing, sneezing, sore throat, runny nose, or fever. COVID-19 levels are highest in west-central Illinois, the Kankakee area and Johnson County in southern Illinois.

While no counties in northern Illinois are at a “high” level, all counties along the Wisconsin border as well as Cook County are at “medium” levels of hospitalization, meaning there are at least 10 hospitalizations per 100,000 people.

About 24 percent of Illinoisans are up to date on their COVID-19 vaccinations as of Dec. 23, according to a weekly CDC survey. About 35 percent of Illinoisans reported they “definitely or probably will not get a vaccine.”

## SCOTUS denies one appeal of assault weapons ban while another waits in the wings

The U.S. Supreme Court has denied one request to review the Illinois assault weapon ban, but many believe the court is more likely to take up another challenge to the law later this year.

The high court turned down a request by Republican State Rep. Dan Caulkins, of Decatur, to hear an appeal of the case he lost before the Illinois Supreme Court in August.

In his appeal, Caulkins argued that he was denied a fair hearing at the state supreme court because two of the state justices had received large campaign contributions from Gov. JB Pritzker, who signed the assault weapon ban into law.

Caulkins also claimed the law is unconstitutional because it allows some people to keep their assault weapons

if they acquired those guns before the ban took effect.

The justices at the U.S. Supreme Court gave no reason for declining to hear Caulkins’ appeal. But many people expect the court to take up a separate challenge to the law from the National Association for Gun Rights, which argues more broadly that the ban violates the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

The 7th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against the gun rights group in November. The group is expected to file its appeal with the U.S. Supreme Court within the next several weeks.

## State opens migrant shelter, Pritzker talks supplemental spending plan

The state opened another shelter for migrants in Chicago on Jan. 10, its latest step in dealing with an influx of more than 30,000 asylum seekers sent to Illinois from states on the southern U.S. Border since summer 2022.

The new shelter is slated to host about 220 migrants in a former CVS location in Chicago’s Little Village neighborhood. It’s part of a \$160 million state spending plan for migrant assistance that Gov. JB Pritzker announced in November.

The new site is one of several that houses migrants, mostly from Venezuela, that have arrived in Chicago over the past year. Roughly 250 migrants are currently staying at O’Hare International Airport and another 280 peo-

ple slept in city buses at a so-called “landing zone” facility in the South Loop.

Pritzker answered questions from reporters about the situation, which he blamed on a “cheap political stunt” from Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, who has been busing and flying migrants to Illinois with little to no notice.

Funding the state response to the situation has been a controversial topic in recent months. With a centralized federal response lacking, some have called on the state and city governments to increase their investments in migrant assistance. But lawmakers did not act on a supplemental spending plan in the legislature’s fall veto session—something Pritzker said he has discussed with legislative leadership in Springfield.

“Suffice to say, I’ve brought this up to leaders,” Pritzker said. “They haven’t wanted to bring it up yet. I do think it’s going to be important to deal with the costs here.”

In addition, Pritzker said his administration is exploring ways to deter bus companies and airlines from transporting more migrants to the city from the southern border. “I don’t want to give away our strategy,” Pritzker said. “We’re trying to prevent those companies from leasing their planes to the state of Texas.”

So far, 30,000 migrants have arrived in Illinois from buses originating in Texas and another roughly 4,300 have arrived via airplane, according to City of Chicago data.

## MCDH releasing weekly respiratory illness surveillance reports

In its ongoing commitment to safeguarding the health and wellness of McHenry County residents, the McHenry County Department of Health (MCDH) actively monitors respiratory illnesses. This includes general respiratory conditions, COVID-19, influenza, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

The surveillance of respiratory illnesses is a year-round initiative, with a particular focus from Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) Week 40 to 20 (approximately the first week in October to the end of the third week in May). This comprehensive approach involves the utilization of various data sources, including syndromic surveillance data, aggregate statistics from positive laboratory data for influenza, and the monitoring of influenza reportable conditions and long-term care facility (LTCF) clusters.

Each week’s report summary is presented in an easily understandable graphic. Utilizing the aforementioned surveillance indicators, each week’s report summary consists of five activity levels, with each level being given a value of ‘Low,’ ‘Medium,’ or ‘High.’ The five activity levels being reported include Respiratory Illness Activity, COVID-19 Activity, COVID-19 Hospital Admission Level, Influenza Activity, and RSV Activity.

To review the MCDH’s weekly respiratory illness surveillance reports for the current respiratory season, please visit [bit.ly/MCDH-respiratory-surveillance](http://bit.ly/MCDH-respiratory-surveillance).

## College news

### UW-Whitewater names local students to fall Dean’s List

A total of 3,757 students earned a spot on the Dean’s List at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater for the 2023 fall semester.

The following Antioch students were named to the Dean’s List for the fall semester: Leighton Costello, Bryanna Dati, Sean DeVries, Cody Holtkamp, Sara Jilly, Mckayla Johnson, Jennifer Moffat, Ryanne Nujeidat, Tyler Skutnik, Aidan Trusky, Alyssa Ulmer, Molly Volkmar, Heidi Wagner and Mad-

elyn Welbel. From Richmond, Hailey Fish.

These students have demonstrated their academic abilities by receiving a grade point average of 3.4 or above in a single semester.

### Aykroid named to President’s List

Madeline Aykroid of Antioch has been named to Southern New Hampshire University’s (SNHU) Fall 2023 President’s List.

SNHU is located in Manchester, NH.

See COLLEGE NEWS, Page 4

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# Illinois Supreme Court to determine whether cannabis odor can be cause for vehicle search

Consolidated cases before court will test language of 2020 legalization law

By Dilpreet Raju  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

The Illinois Supreme Court heard arguments Jan. 10 as to whether the smell of cannabis alone is grounds for police officers to search a vehicle, marking a test of the state's 2020 recreational marijuana legalization law.

The court heard two consolidated cases of individuals who were in vehicles that were searched after an officer used the smell of cannabis as probable cause.

In *People v. Redmond*, defendant Ryan Redmond was pulled over by Illinois State Police for an unsecure license plate and driving three miles per hour over the speed limit, court records show. Upon smelling cannabis, the officer searched the vehicle and found about one gram of cannabis in the center console. He later charged Redmond with a misdemeanor for failure to transport cannabis in an odor-proof container, according to court documents.

The other case, *People v. Molina*, involved defendant Vincent Molina, who was a passenger in the vehicle when an Illinois State Police trooper smelled cannabis and searched the car, finding a small box of rolled joints, according to court records.

Molina told the trooper he had a medical marijuana card prior to the search, the records state. Molina was charged with unlawful possession of cannabis by a passenger in a motor

vehicle for not storing the cannabis in an odor-proof container.

Lawyers for Molina and Redmond argued the smell of cannabis alone should not be probable cause to search a vehicle given that the substance is no longer illegal in Illinois.

But Attorney General Kwame Raoul's office argued the law requires drivers to transport cannabis in an odor-proof container. Thus, the presence of cannabis odor is grounds for a search, even if the passenger is possessing an amount under the legal limit or has a medical marijuana card.

"It remains illegal to use cannabis in a vehicle and to transport cannabis in a vehicle in a container that is not odor-proof," a November brief filed by Raoul reads. Thus, "the odor of cannabis—whether in raw or burnt form—continues to provide police with probable cause to search."

Mitchell Ness, assistant attorney general, continued the argument before the Supreme Court on Wednesday.

"Cannabis is no longer contraband in every circumstance, but that doesn't absolve the person from following the laws that are in place," he said.

Chief Justice Mary Jane Theis said the central matter of the cases was roadway safety.

"The concern here is the safety of the public driving down the highway and impaired drivers," Theis said at the oral arguments. "We're

concerned about drunk drivers, and we're concerned about high drivers."

Nationwide and state-level chapters of the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers filed a brief in support of Molina and Redmond, writing that allowing the odor of cannabis as cause for searching a vehicle will lead to biased enforcement against Black and Latino Illinoisans.

"There is a decades-long pattern of police in this state using pretext like cannabis odor to disproportionately stop and search Black and Latino drivers," the brief reads. Illinois' stop and search policy "unfairly subjects (Black and Latino drivers) to at-will intrusions of their privacy and relegates them to second-class citizenry."

The organizations argued the legalization of cannabis means its presence is not indicative of contraband or crime.

Alexandra Block, director of the ACLU of Illinois' criminal legal systems and policing project and co-author of the brief, told Capitol News Illinois a probable cause must be objective, not "malleable." "Even the claim of smelling cannabis can be discretionary. Honestly, it can be made up sometimes when officers are being less than honest because there's no way to challenge it. You can't see (a smell) on a body worn camera," Block said.

Because such accusations are unchallengeable in court, the results "are often coming out worse for drivers of color," she said.

In *People v. Molina*, a trial court determined the odor of

cannabis alone could not be cause for search since the odor of cannabis could be found on medical patients who grow their own marijuana plants or workers at cultivation centers and dispensaries. The ruling was reversed by an appellate court before the case was consolidated with Redmond's and brought to the Illinois Supreme Court.

Other top courts across the country have faced the same question, most recently in Minnesota, where the state's supreme court ruled the odor of cannabis, in the absence of any other evidence, is not enough "that the search would yield evidence of criminally illegal drug-related contraband or conduct."

Last spring, the Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled the smell of marijuana is enough for police to search a vehicle.

Most state supreme courts—like those in Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Vermont—have all determined the scent of cannabis is not enough for police to initiate a stop and search.

The Maryland General Assembly passed a law last year prohibiting warrantless searches caused by the odor of cannabis.

Last year, Sen. Rachel Ventura, D-Joliet, introduced a bill that would amend the Illinois Vehicle Code and establish the odor of cannabis, raw or burnt, alone "shall not constitute probable cause" to search vehicles or persons. While the bill stalled last year, Ventura told Capitol News Illinois in June she'd consider reviving the measure depending on how the court cases play out.

The Supreme Court's decision is expected later this year.

## 40 acres in Hartland Township protected thanks to purchase by Conservation Foundation

McHenry County Conservation Foundation purchased 40 acres of land in Hartland Township, located west of Hartland Road and east of Deep Cut Road. The property is adjacent to McHenry County Conservation District's Brookdale Conservation Area, previously purchased land, and neighboring conservation easements, to create over 1,875 acres of contiguous land that is now permanently protected.

The acquisition was partially funded by a \$197,904 grant from the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation, as well as donor support, and includes funds for restoration efforts over the next two years.

In 2026, the property will be transferred to McHenry County Conservation District for long-term stewardship and management.

"The Foundation is thrilled to strategically support McHenry County Conservation District's goal of protecting key natural areas," said Shawna Flavel, Executive Director of the McHenry County Conservation Foundation. "The Foundation's work to raise funds in support of public lands and partnership with the Conservation District ensures the long-term protection of open space that we depend on to enhance the quality of life for all McHenry County residents."

The property contains relic white-oak dominated woodlands, kettles and kames, basin marshes and 14 acres of wetlands that support numerous amphibian species, as well as habitat for threatened or endangered bird species, such as the

least bittern, common gallinule, and yellow-headed blackbird. The wetlands are also a part of a larger wetland complex that serves as an important recharge area for the county's groundwater resources, and supplies flood storage capacity of both the Nippersink and the Kishwaukee River Watersheds. Additionally, the wetlands are recognized as significant by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as Advanced Identification (ADID) wetlands and are listed on the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI).

## Giannoulas to Illinois drivers: Ditch the DMV

Modernization, new efficiencies eliminate most in-person DMV visits

Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulas told Illinois motorists today to stay away from the DMV. That's because Illinoisans can now obtain more DMV services and complete more transactions online.

In addition, Giannoulas unveiled a series of new measures aimed at reducing wait times if a DMV visit is required. "Don't come to the DMV, skip the trip," Giannoulas said. "The truth is that most people no longer need to even come to a DMV because the services they need are available with just a few clicks. Our efforts to modernize the office and create efficiencies have led to a 'Do-it-Online, Skip-the-Line' approach, which saves Illinoisans time and headaches."

Giannoulas noted that 2.25 million Illinoisans will need their driver's license or state ID renewed in 2024. Of those, more than 1 million, or nearly half, have the ability to renew online. In 2023, there were just over 1 million Illinois drivers who were part of the state's "safe driver" program (those with clean driving records without a moving violation) that had the option of renewing without having to visit a DMV. Of those safe drivers, approximately 400,000 renewed online, 60,000 renewed by mail and 30,000 renewed over the phone, but nearly 560,000, more than 50%, visited a DMV unnecessarily. The Secretary of State's office has made design changes to its website, [www.ilsos.gov](http://www.ilsos.gov), to make all available online services more accessible to all customers. The Skip-the-Line program, which launched

last September, has accommodated more than 800,000 Illinoisans by appointment, resulting in little to no wait times upon arrival at DMVs.

### New features

- Expanding eligibility for online driver's license and state ID

To determine if you qualify to renew online, [www.ilsos.gov](http://www.ilsos.gov) has a new feature that determines a driver or resident's eligibility for online renewal in real-time after entering their driver's license or state ID number, Social Security number and date of birth. If a visit is required, the system will automatically direct customers to the appropriate appointment type. In addition, eligibility for online renewals has been expanded to include customers who are ages 75 to 78, or have made an online address change to their driver's license or state ID

- Launching appointment portal

By utilizing the appointment portal available at [www.ilsos.gov](http://www.ilsos.gov), customers will now be guided to the correct service and appointment type they require or qualify for. Once they determine which service they wish to obtain, customers are routed to the appropriate appointment type or online service.

- Implementing text message notification for appointments

After booking an appointment online, customers will now receive text notifications to remind them of their upcoming appointment. Customers will receive a reminder notification 24 hours before their appointment.

They will be instructed to respond "1" to confirm their appointment or "2" to cancel their appointment. If the appointment is cancelled, the free slot will be made available to other customers.

- Establishing a dedicated phone help line to assist with online service access

Anyone encountering any difficulty accessing online services can now call a dedicated phone line, 800-252-8980, and staff will provide them with assistance making appointments and answer any questions about requirements or eligibility. Specific options are built into the call-handling system for teen and senior drivers.

- Expanding DMV facilities for seniors and behind-the-wheel tests

Since the launch of the Skip-the-Line program in September, the office has opened a total of four "senior only" DMV Centers and four Road Testing Centers. The "senior only" DMV Centers, which are designed specifically for the needs of seniors, provide walk-in service without the need for an appointment.

The centers in Bridgeview, Calumet Park, Evanston and Westchester and have served 21,000 seniors since Sept. 1.

The new Road Testing Centers are located in Addison, Lockport, Naperville, and on Elston Avenue in Chicago. These dedicated testing centers will free up appointments at other DMV facilities to those who wish to conduct business that does not require a road test.

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# Treasurer holding presentations to promote senior tax deferral program

McHenry County Treasurer Donna Kurtz is launching a series of presentations countywide to explain and promote the Senior Real Estate Tax Deferral Program, which offers tax relief for qualified senior citizens.

The first presentation will be held from 2 to 3 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 24, at the main meeting room of Woodstock Public Library, 414 W. Judd St. Kurtz will review the program and answer ques-

tions regarding completing and submitting an application.

The tax deferral program provides tax relief for qualified senior citizens by essentially providing a loan up to \$7,500 to pay a senior's property tax bill. These funds are granted through the State of Illinois. Upon qualification, a lien for the deferred amount will be filed on the qualifying property. Deferred amounts are repaid upon the sale or transfer of

the property, or within one year of the property owner's death.

To be eligible for this program, an applicant must be at least 65 years old by June 1, and have a total household income less than \$65,000. Other program requirements include:

- Living on the property or other qualifying property for the last two years,
- Having equity in the property,
- Having no unpaid property taxes or foreclosures, and
- Having fire and casualty insurance for the property.

Kurtz and staff will be able to help attendees fill out the two forms required to apply for the deferral: Form IL-1017, Application for Deferral of Real Estate/Special Assessment Taxes, and Form IL-1018, Real Estate/Special Assessment Tax Deferral and Recovery Agreement. While Kurtz will have some copies

on hand, she encourages people to print them out themselves – they can be found by visiting the Treasurer's website at [treasurer.mchenrycountyil.gov](http://treasurer.mchenrycountyil.gov), clicking "Senior Deferral," and then clicking on the application link. A notary public will be on hand at the Jan. 24 presentation to notarize completed forms, free of charge.

Attendees are encouraged to register through the calendar on the library's website

at [www.woodstockpubliclibrary.org](http://www.woodstockpubliclibrary.org).

All applications for the senior tax deferral must be received by March 1; there will be no extensions. For questions, please visit the Treasurer's website or contact them at 815-334-4260 or [treasurer@mchenrycountyil.gov](mailto:treasurer@mchenrycountyil.gov).

Kurtz plans to hold future presentations on the program in Crystal Lake, Harvard, McHenry, Huntley and elsewhere.



SUBMITTED PHOTO HI-LITER/MCN

## Unincorporated residents eligible for flood insurance premium discounts

Property owners residing in unincorporated Lake County may be eligible to save an average of \$232 a year on their flood insurance policies. Currently, there are more than 654 flood insurance policies in unincorporated Lake County.

Through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Community Rating System (CRS) program, residents within unincorporated Lake County – who meet certain requirements – are eligible for up to 20% savings on flood insurance premiums. This results in a potential annual total savings of \$151,708 overall for residents across the county. Property owners should contact their flood insurance agent to obtain individual savings information. Since 2008, Lake County has participated in the CRS program and received favorable ratings saving property owners thousands of dollars on their policies. Lake County is required to create an Annual Evaluation Report to maintain the favorable rating.

### Highlights from the report include:

- Lake County issued permits for two projects for elevating the finished floor of an existing structure to be above the regulatory floodplain elevation and for one project for elevating utilities and/or adding foundation openings to bring the structures into compliance with the Lake County Unified Development Ordinance in 2022. This will help protect these structures from future flooding.
- The Lake County Stormwater Management Commission's (SMC) Watershed Management Board cost-share grant program helps fund local stormwater projects. The highest funding priority is flood damage and prevention/mitigation, but other project benefits are also included in funding decisions.
- Lake County works closely with residents and coordinates with other agencies such as the Township Highway Commissioners and Lake County SMC to respond to drainage complaints affecting private properties.
- View details of the annual evaluation report at <https://lakecounty.legistar.com/>

## 'Celebrate Eagles' program at 4 locations on Saturday

Celebrate the eagles of the Fox River Valley on Saturday. Winter is a perfect time to see eagles in the wild as they congregate to feed near the open waters at dams along the Fox River and at other open spots on our lakes, rivers and streams. An "In Search of Eagles" outdoor event will be held at four sites on Saturday morning.

In Search of Eagles will be held from 8 to 10 a.m. at the McHenry Dam, the Algonquin Dam and the Carpentersville Dam on the Fox River in Illinois and at the Williams Bay Boat Launch on Geneva

Lake in Wisconsin. Representatives from Friends of Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge, Geneva Lake Environmental Agency, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Kettle Moraine Land Trust, McHenry County Conservation District, McHenry County Audubon and Friends of Moraine Hills State Park will help search for eagles and identify other birds using the river and the lake. Attendees are asked to dress for the weather and to bring their own binoculars if they have a pair, but binoculars are not needed to enjoy

seeing birds in the wild. Detailed maps to all locations can be found at [tinyurl.com/InSearchofEagles2024](http://tinyurl.com/InSearchofEagles2024).

There will be scopes and binoculars available for use at each location. Visit the site closest to you or visit them all! This is a free all-ages event. No registration is required.

If you have any concerns on Saturday morning about the weather, please call the Friends of Hackmatack phone line at (262) 448-3558 where there will be a message regarding the status of the event.

## Volo Bog celebrates winter indoors and out on Sunday

*Event originally planned for last week rescheduled due to weather*

Plan to attend Volo Bog State Natural Area's Annual WinterFest this Sunday. It is the perfect blend of indoor and outdoor 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:** 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 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Nature Photo Contest.

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

- **Refreshments:** 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 our

45-minute tours to learn about bogs and their winter secrets. Eight start times between 11 am – 3 pm.

- **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.volobog@illinois.gov](mailto:dnr.volobog@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 Appreciated

Friends of Volo Bog, a 501(c)(3) membership organization, happily accept 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](mailto:dnr.volobog@illinois.gov) or 815-344-1294.

## College news (Continued from page 2)

### Paddock named to Dean's List

Amanda Paddock of Antioch, was named to the dean's list at Olivet Nazarene University, Bourbonnais, IL, during the recently completed fall 2023 semester. To qualify for inclusion on the dean's list, a student must have been enrolled as a full-time undergraduate student and must have attained a semester grade point average of 3.50 or higher on a 4.00 grading scale.

### Neumann named to South Dakota University

### Fall 2023 Dean's List

South Dakota State University, Brookings, SD, announced Joseph Neumann of Antioch, has been named to the dean's list for the fall 2023 semester. Neumann is a student in SDSU's Jerome J. Lohr College of Engineering.

### Miami University names Holian to Dean's List

Grace Holian of Richmond, was named to the Dean's list at Miami University for the 2023 fall semester.

Miami University is located in Oxford, OH.

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## Pet of the week

**Bowen, a cattle dog mix, is about 2 years old, neutered, up-to-date on routine shots (incl. rabies), tested negative for heartworm and on preventative and microchipped.**

While walk-ins are welcome, adoptions are by appointments only to ensure we have the staff available to help adopters. For information and/or to complete an online application, please visit [www.saveapetil.org/adopt](http://www.saveapetil.org/adopt).



# Lake County Sheriff's Office warns of latest scam

The Lake County Sheriff's Office is investigating several deceptive practice/impersonating a peace officer cases, where an offender is calling Lake County residents pretending to be a deputy or sergeant with the Lake County Sheriff's Office.

The offender identifies himself as a deputy or sergeant and

informs the caller they have an active warrant for their arrest, or that they have outstanding civil process paperwork. Sometimes the scammer provides the victim with the victim's name and address, making the victim feel that the caller is a police officer.

The scammer orders the victim to purchase gift cards and

provide the gift card numbers/pins to the scammer in order to satisfy the warrant. The scammer has also asked victims for their social security numbers, banking information, and other sensitive information.

The scammer is utilizing real names of sheriff's office employees. The scammer is

also 'spoofing' their telephone number to make it appear as if the call is coming from the Lake County Sheriff's Office

The Lake County Sheriff's Office reminds the community that government will never call and order you to pay money in the form of gift cards. If you receive an unsolicited call from

anyone requesting money, you should be suspicious. If a person claims to be a government agency, call that government agency first to determine the validity of the call, before discussing anything.

If you have been the victim of a scam, contact your local law-enforcement.



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**2021 CHEVY MALIBU LS**  
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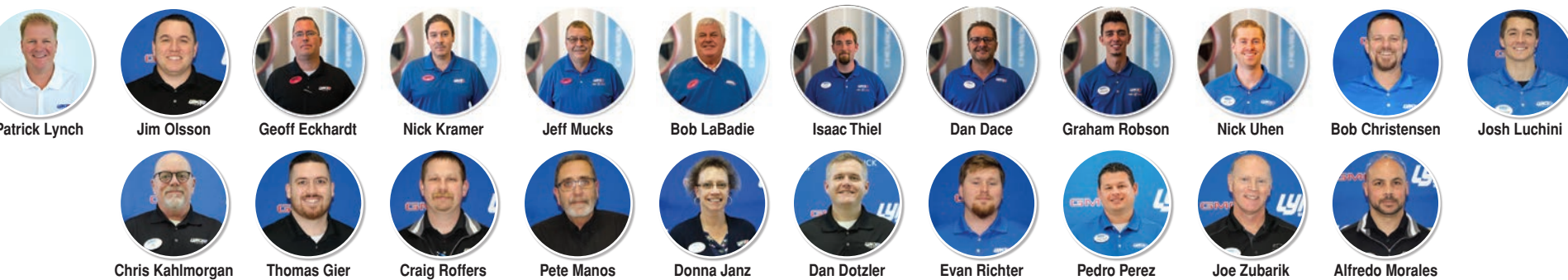
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# Trump faces ballot challenge in Illinois minutes after filing his petitions

## Objectors say he's disqualified under 14th Amendment for role in 2021 Capitol riots

By Peter Hancock  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Illinois is now among the growing list of states in which former President Donald Trump will have to fight to have his name appear on the 2024 election ballots.

A group of five voters filed a joint objection to Trump's candidacy on Jan. 4, arguing that Trump should be disqualified under the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which prohibits anyone who took part in an insurrection against the United States from holding federal office.

The objection alleges that Trump's attempts to overturn the results of the 2020 elections, including his involvement in events leading up to the Jan. 6, 2021, storming of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, amounted to an insurrection.

"Consequently, Donald J. Trump is disqualified from, and ineligible to hold, the office of President of the United States," the objection states. "Accordingly, his nomination papers are invalid under Illinois law because when Trump swore he was 'qualified' for the presiden-

tial office, as required by (state statute), he did so falsely."

Jan. 4 was the first day for presidential candidates to file petitions for the March 19 primary ballot. According to the Illinois State Board of Elections' website, the Trump campaign filed its petitions at 8 a.m., along with fellow Republican candidates Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, and Texas businessman Ryan L. Binkley.

On the Democratic side, President Joe Biden's campaign filed petitions, along with Minnesota Congressman Dean Phillips and author Marianne Williamson.

As of Jan. 4, Trump was the only candidate facing an objection. The deadline for filing objections is Friday, Jan. 12. Similar objections have been filed in multiple other states. So far, however, they have only been upheld in Colorado and Maine. The Trump campaign has filed appeals in both of those cases, including a direct appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court in the Colorado case.

Matthew Piers, a Chicago-based attorney who filed the Illinois objection, said in an interview that the cases highlight the differences in election laws among the various states.

In some states, he said, primary elections are considered operations of political parties, not the states themselves, and therefore are not subject to rules set by the state. But in Illinois, he said, state law specifically requires candidates to state on their nominating petitions that they are qualified for the office they are seeking.

Article II of the U.S. Constitution requires presidents to be "natural born citizens" who are at least 35 years of age and who have been residents of the United States for at least 14 years.

But the 14th amendment, enacted in the aftermath of the Civil War, adds more conditions, barring any former public officials who previously took an oath to support the Constitution from holding certain public offices in the future if they ever engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the United States or gave aid or comfort to its enemies.

The objection cites numer-

ous other government agencies and officials who have concluded that the events of Jan. 6, 2021, were an insurrection, including decisions of the Colorado Supreme Court and the Maine secretary of state to keep Trump's name off the ballot in those states.

The objection also cites several recent court rulings, including some involving people convicted of crimes stemming from the Jan. 6 events at the Capitol.

In an email, Illinois Republican Party Chairman Don Tracy said the state party is neutral in the GOP primary but that the issue of Trump's candidacy

should be decided by voters.

"This attempt to remove President Trump from the ballot without due process is an anti-democracy attempt to limit the voting rights of Illinois citizens and should be dismissed outright," Tracy said.

Legal challenges to a candidate's qualifications for office are not uncommon in Illinois. Dozens of them are currently pending at the Illinois State Board of Elections against candidates for the General Assembly and various judicial positions, mostly based on claims that petition signatures were invalid or insufficient.

In 2016, a challenge was

filed against Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton based on her petition signatures. And in 2012, Democratic President Barack Obama faced three nearly identical challenges to his candidacy based on false allegations about his citizenship.

State Board of Elections spokesman Matt Dietrich said in an email the objection to Trump's candidacy will be investigated by a hearing officer who will make a recommendation to the board's general counsel. The full, eight-member bipartisan board will consider the challenge at a meeting Tuesday, Jan. 30.

## Volo Bog looking for bird volunteer instructors

Bring the joy of learning through birds this spring. Volo Bog State Natural Area is partnering with Openlands to bring a program to children in school classrooms in Lake and McHenry County.

No experience or bird knowledge is required – just a love of birds and a desire to share with youngsters. More volunteers are needed to expand the program to more schools.

Birds in My Neighborhood® is a volunteer driven science-based program for grades 2 through 5 that helps students see nature in their community through the observation of birds. Volun-

teers help run the program by working with teachers to schedule two classroom visits and a field trip to a local natural area. New volunteers must attend trainings to participate in the program.

### Become a volunteer instructor

Commitment is 15-20 hours per season. And responsibilities include: Attend two training sessions, work with teacher to set the schedule for visits and field trip, and lead three visits with students: in-classroom lesson, bird walk in the schoolyard, and a field trip to a local nature area.

**Provide field trip support**  
Commitment is 5-10 hours

per season. Responsibilities include: Attend the field trip tutorial, and attend at least one field trip to support volunteer instructors by chaperoning students and helping them find and identify birds.

Spring 2024 training schedule for Lake & McHenry County volunteers

- Wednesday, March 6, 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. classroom and schoolyard tutorials at Volo Bog SNA
- Wednesday, March 20, 9:00 to 11:30 a.m., field trip tutorial at Rollins Savanna

For more information and to volunteer, contact Stacy Iwanicki at [dnr.volobog@illinois.gov](mailto:dnr.volobog@illinois.gov) or 815-344-1294

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## MCCD upcoming events

### In Search of Eagles

Saturday, Jan. 20, 8-10 a.m., McHenry Dam, Algonquin Dam, Carpentersville Dam, Williams Bay, WI.

Join representatives from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Friends of Hackmatack Wildlife Refuge, Illinois Department of Natural Resources and McHenry County Audubon at locations along the Fox River in Illinois and Geneva Lake in Wis-

consin to search for eagles! Scopes and binoculars will be available for use at each location as well as guided children's activities. All ages welcome.

### Stories with Gerald Savage

Thursday, Jan. 18, 6-7:30 p.m., Prairieview Education Center, Crystal Lake.

Join for an evening with Gerald Savage, Chief White Winnebago, Ho Chunk Ska Ga his formal native name, oldest grandson of Chief Walks with the Wind. Learn about Ho Chunk tribal customs, family names, language and more, as well as stories like the history of Starved Rock, a site central to his family. Ages 10+.

### Discovery Days: Animals

## McHenry County offering lead based paint safe home program

Was your home built before 1978 and resides within McHenry County? Do you have a child aged 0 to 5 living or regularly visiting your home and/or with an elevated blood lead level (over 3.5 µg/dL) and were advised by your child's doctor/ nurse to seek help for lead poisoning? Are you pregnant with an elevated blood lead level (over 3.5 µg/dL)?

Even if you suspect your home contains lead-based paint, McHenry County's Lead Safe Homes application is now open and available to help. Use a QR Code to locate the program's webpage and application link. The QR code can be found at <https://www.johnsburg.org/community/page/mchenry-county-lead-safe-homes-program>.

The mission of the program

### in Winter

Friday, Jan. 19, 10-11 a.m., Lost Valley Visitor Center, Glacial Park, Route 31 and Harts Road, Ringwood.

Join for a morning of fun and educational games, lessons, and hands-on activities focused on the special theme of the day: animals in winter. Part of this program will be held outdoors if weather allows. Ages 2-6 with adult.

### Hike with Mike: Buehler's Day Outside

Saturday, Feb. 17, 10-11:30 a.m. Rush Creek Conservation Area, Harvard.

Curate conservation conversations with McHenry County Board Chairman Mike Buehler while exploring the trails at Rush Creek Conservation Area. All ages.

# You ought to be in pictures!

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# Court & crime news

## Man charged with drug induced homicide

Lake County Sheriff's Detectives concluded a death investigation resulting in the arrest of a Volo man for delivering the fatal dose of drugs that ultimately killed a 33-year-old Volo man.

On August 11, 2023, Lake County Sheriff's Deputies responded to a residence in the 2700 block of West Hartigan Road, Volo, for a report of a man not breathing. Sheriff's deputies arrived and worked with paramedics to attempt life-saving actions. The victim was transported to an area hospital in McHenry, where he was subsequently pronounced deceased.

An autopsy was conducted by the McHenry County Coroner's Office, and the victim's death was deemed to be a result of adverse effects of fentanyl.

During the initial investigation, responding deputies learned the victim recently purchased pills from a man



Jerry L. Gray

at an area gas station. Sheriff's evidence technicians located pills inside the victim's room, which tested positive for fentanyl.

Sheriff's detectives responded to further the investigation. Sheriff's detectives obtained video surveillance from the area gas station and located video from August 11, 2023, of the transaction where Jerry L. Gray, 29, of the 27400 block of Volo Village Road, Volo, sold pills to the victim. Sheriff's detectives uncovered additional evidence linking Gray to the drug transaction.

Due to the victim being transported to McHenry County and dying in McHenry County, Lake County Sheriff's Detectives coordinated with the McHenry County State's Attorney's Office to seek subpoenas, search warrants, and further the investigation.

At the conclusion of the investigation, after reviewing the facts and circumstances of the case, the McHenry County State's Attorney's Office approved the charge of Drug Induced Homicide (Class X Felony) against Gray. Lake County Sheriff's Detectives obtained an arrest warrant for Gray on January 8, 2024.

On January 10, Lake County Sheriff's Detectives arrested Gray at a gas station in the 31700 block of North Route 12, Volo. He is being transferred to the McHenry County Jail and will be ultimately prosecuted in McHenry County.

Sheriff John D. Idleburg said, "We continue to see the horrific impacts of fentanyl and other deadly drugs

in our region, and the Lake County Sheriff's Office will continue aggressively investigating drug traffickers, holding them accountable. I am extremely proud of the hard work of our deputies and detectives investigating this case and holding the drug dealer accountable for his part in causing this man's death."

McHenry County State's Attorney Patrick Kenneally said, "It was a privilege to work with the capable detectives at the Lake County Sheriff's Office in addressing a mutual scourge that doesn't exactly honor county borders."

### Sheriff's Deputy attacked while providing resources to family

A Lake County Sheriff's Deputy is recovering after being attacked by an Unincorporated Lake Zurich Man.

On January 14, at approximately 8:55 a.m., Lake County Sheriff's Deputies were dispatched to a residence in the 23800 block of North High Ridge Drive, Unincorporated Lake Zurich, for a well-being check. A caller reported the home had no working utilities, and they were concerned for the occupants inside, given the frigid temperatures.

Sheriff's deputies checked on the occupants, who were okay, but upset with the presence of the sheriff's deputies and uncooperative. Before departing, one of the deputies at the scene returned to her squad car to retrieve information on services and resources available for those struggling. The deputy returned to the porch to leave the paperwork, when a 30-year-old man exited the home and threw a piece of wood at the deputy. The deputy was able to move to avoid being struck, however, as she moved, she fell backward into the snow. The man immediately jumped onto the deputy and began punching her in the face.

The other sheriff's deputies at the scene ran to assist.

One of the backup deputies attempted to utilize his Electronic Control Device (Taser), however, the device did not stop the man from his attack. The backup deputies were able to tackle the man to the ground and take him into custody. The man then started spitting on the deputies.

Both the deputy who was attacked and the offender were transported to an area hospital. The deputy was treated and has since been released. The offender made statements of self-harm, and hospital staff are transporting him to another hospital for further evaluation.

Sheriff John D. Idleburg said, "Police work can often be extremely unpredictable. In this instance, one of our deputy's was trying to provide resources to a family, and she was violently attacked. I am thankful our deputy will be okay and we will ensure the offender is held criminally accountable for his actions, upon his discharge from the hospital."

Sheriff's deputies will review the circumstances with the Lake County State's Attorney's Office and seek an arrest warrant.

## 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.

### Dec. 8

Cesar A. Diaz Flores, 34, Park City, was cited for DUI - alcohol and no insurance;

### Dec. 9

Roberto Manzanares, 58, Mundelein, was cited for driving while license suspended; Shannon T. Harper, 32, Beach Park, was cited for aggravated assault with a deadly weapon and reckless conduct; Marciel E. Frasco-Reyes, 26, Waukegan, was cited for no driver's license;

### Dec. 10

Jennifer R. Stiemke, 36,

McCullom Lake, was cited for disorderly conduct and resisting arrest;

Juvenile, was cited for aggravated speeding (101 mph in 55 mph zone);

Austin M. Feltner, 28, Antioch, was cited for driving while license suspended and no insurance;

Daniel A. Hernandez, 27, Palatine, was cited for driving while license suspended.

### Dec. 11

Ray A. Willoughby, 57, Ingleside, was cited for a warrant arrest: domestic battery;

### Dec. 12

Veronica R. Stevens, 42, Lake Geneva, WI, was cited for a warrant arrest: parole violation (WI Dept. of Corrections);

Nancy A. Iheis, 58, Beach Park, was cited for DUI - alcohol;

Antonio P. Valencia-Torres, 35, Zion, was cited for no driver's license;

### Dec. 13

Katelyn P. Goldberg, 20, Round Lake, was cited by underage consumption alcohol;

Martin W. Kerley, 59, Arlington Heights, was cited for a warrant arrest: resisting a peace officer (Cook County);

### Dec. 14

Maeghan J. Olson, 35, Grayslake, was cited for domestic battery;

Christina J. Lewis, 36, Grayslake, was cited for a warrant arrest: theft (Kane County);

### Dec. 15

Angel Salazar, 25, Rockford, was cited for battery;

Luis E. Morales-Amador, 46, Waukegan, was cited for DUI - alcohol, and attempted possession of a controlled substance;

Alexion D. Agee, 18, Gurnee, was cited for possession of a stolen motor vehicle, and fleeing/eluding police;

Sebastian J. Adams, 18, Winthrop Harbor, was cited for DUI - alcohol;

Sue Mueller, 57, no permanent address, was cited for warrant arrest: criminal trespass to property;

Shelmar M. Mays, 47, Zion, was cited for DUI - alcohol, and improper transportation of cannabis.

## HELP WANTED

### Help Wanted

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## FOR RENT

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