

Legislature kills bill that would have expanded resentencing for youth offenders

Illinois expanded release options for certain youth offenders in 2023

By Ben Szalinski
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

The Illinois House shot down legislation April 10 that would have allowed some people incarcerated for crimes they committed when they were under 21 to become eligible for release.

In a rare rebuke of a Democrat-sponsored bill, a bipartisan coalition of lawmakers voted against House Bill 3332, causing the bill to fail on a 49-51 vote. Bills require 60 votes to pass the House, and numerous Democrats voted against the bill or skipped the vote. The bill was declared “lost,” meaning it cannot be recalled later.

The bill would have allowed people sentenced for crimes they committed when they were under 21 to be eligible for a parole hear-

ing after serving 10 years in prison. Those sentenced for murder would be eligible for parole after serving 20 years, while those sentenced for murdering a victim who was under 18 years would be eligible for parole after serving 30 years.

“This bill would create a pathway for people sentenced as children and young adults to show that they have been rehabilitated and potentially return home and give back to their communities,” bill sponsor Rep. Theresa Mah, D-Chicago, told the House.

Mah declined to comment on the bill’s failure.

Gov. JB Pritzker signed a law in 2023 that makes anyone sentenced to life in prison while they were under 21 eligible for release after serving 40

years behind bars—but only for people sentenced after June 1, 2019. Mah’s bill aimed to make that law retroactive and provide an opportunity for parole for all people incarcerated for crimes they committed before they were 21.

Illinois previously became one of the first states to abolish parole for crimes committed after 1978. Anyone sentenced for crimes committed between 1979 and early 2019 is not eligible for parole, but state law provides other mechanisms that allow people to have their sentence reduced, such as for good behavior in prison.

Mah’s bill immediately drew heavy criticism from Republicans who objected to creating a path to freedom for people convicted of violent crimes. Rep. Patrick

Windhorst, R-Metropolis, argued that people serving decades-long sentences for convictions before they turned 21 are likely in prison for murder or major sex crimes.

“With respect to victims, we need to give them finality in the criminal justice system,” Windhorst said. “They should not be having to come back to court to relieve the loss they suffered either being a victim of crime or the family of a victim of a murder. There needs to be finality, and we should not be reducing sentences for murderers and those guilty of criminal sexual account.”

Rep. John Cabello, R-Machesney Park, who works for the Winnebago County Sheriff’s Office, recalled serious crimes he investigated in his law en-

forcement career.

“Murder is brutal. It is final for one person; it’s a lifetime for their family,” Cabello said. “We can’t allow this yet.”

Mah attempted to ease concerns of her Republican colleagues, stating that the bill would merely create an opportunity for someone to receive a parole hearing and would not guarantee anyone will be given a hearing or released from prison.

“It’s not an automatic resentencing or a release,” Mah said. “All these cases come up for review by a judge. The victim’s families are also included in that process.”

Progressive Democrats voiced support for the bill even as many others in their party voted against it or

skipped the vote.

“These are people who have spent decades working to be better in the most unimaginable and heinous situations you could dream of, locked behind bars still committed to reforming themselves,” said Rep. Will Guzzardi, D-Chicago.

Mah argued that studies show youth offenders have lower rates of recidivism, and the legislation would give people in prison a reason to rehabilitate themselves.

“This is essentially a way to create fairness in our system that provides incentive for rehabilitation,” Mah said.

Similar legislation has also failed to gain traction in Springfield. A bipartisan bill in the Senate in 2023 stalled after passing committee.

Lake County DOT announces \$117 million construction program

The Lake County Division of Transportation (LCDOT) announced today the 2025 construction program that includes \$117 million for infrastructure projects to increase driver and pedestrian safety, improve mobility and reduce carbon emissions across Lake County’s transportation system.

Nearly 30 transportation projects will be under construction in 2025, featuring intersection improvements, bike and pedestrian accommodations, resurfacings and bridge and culvert maintenance.

“Over the next six years, the Lake County Board is dedicating more than \$850 million to modernizing and maintaining our roads, bridges and paths,” said Lake County Board Chair Sandy Hart. “This investment ensures we can meet essential transportation needs for all who travel in Lake County.”

This year’s program features a combination of projects that preserve and modernize Lake County’s transportation system. These include:

• **Arlington Heights Road Reconstruction**

Pavement replacement from IL 83 to Lake Cook Road, leading to a smoother ride. The improved storm sewer system will accommodate higher rainfall totals. Non-motorized gaps are being filled.

• **Darrell Road Roundabouts** Realigning Dowell Road to join Darrell Road with a roundabout, eliminating the existing skewed intersection. The Fisher Road intersection with Darrell Road will also be improved by adding a roundabout to replace the existing one-way stop-controlled intersection. Construction will include a bike path between Fisher Road and Case Road/ Neville Road, and a portion of the path will be a part of the Grand Illinois Trail.

• **Deep Lake Road Resurfacing.** Resurfacing Deep Lake Road from IL132 (Grand Avenue) to IL173. Adding wider paved road shoulders. The existing ditch lines will be regraded to make them less steep and improve drainage. Adding a northbound to east-bound right-turn lane at Grass Lake Road to improve traffic flow at the intersection.

• **Hunt Club Road at Wash-**

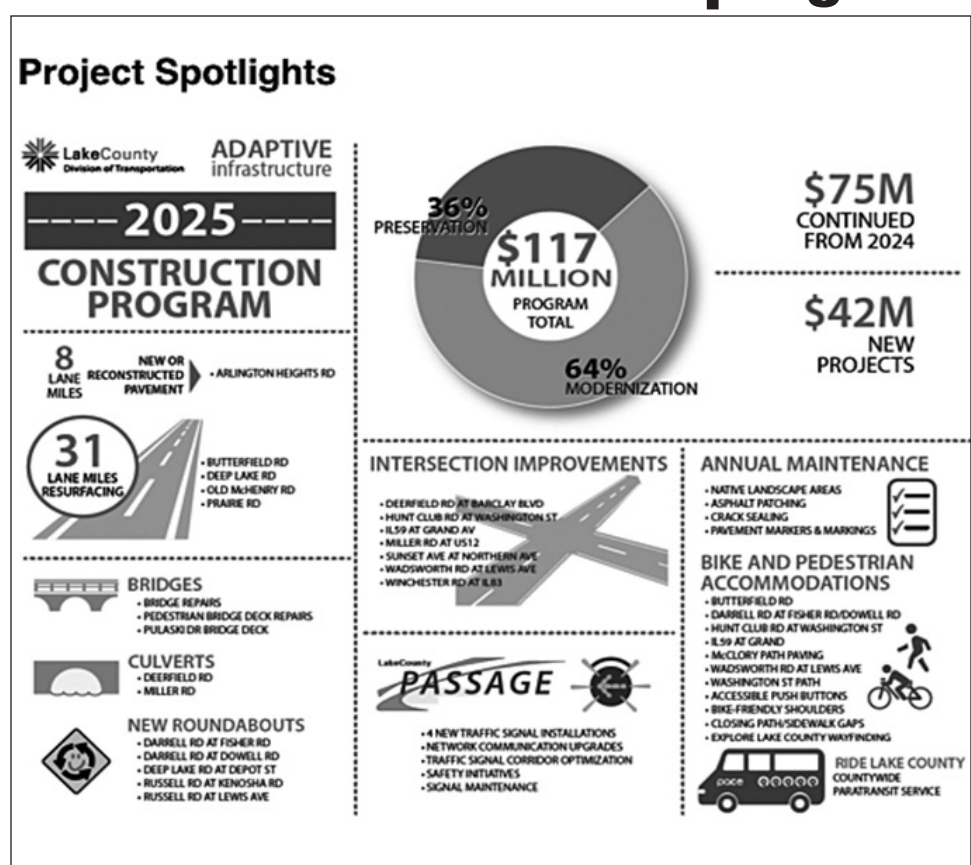
ington Street Intersection Adding dual left-turn lanes and a right-turn lane on all legs of the intersection, filling in existing gaps in the path along Washington Street, and installing a new path along Hunt Club Road with an extension of the bike path north to Dada Drive.

• **IL 59 at Grand Avenue Intersection**

The intersection of IL 59 at Grand Avenue is being reconstructed and will have a new, modernized traffic signal. Also realigning Washington Street to meet IL 59 south of Grand Avenue with a new traffic signal. Adding new left-turn lanes, along with sidewalks and multi-use paths that connect to Grant Community High School.

• **Wadsworth Road at Lewis Avenue Intersection** Adding turn lanes and pedestrian signals with push buttons. Numerous other pedestrian accommodations will be made, including a new shared-use path from this intersection to the regional Robert McClory Path.

For more information visit the website at lakecountyl.gov.



Lake County Division of Transportation will be investing in projects that will increase driver and pedestrian safety, improve mobility and reduce carbon emissions. For more information on the projects visit lakecountyl.gov.

Homeschool bill stalls in Illinois House, but Costa Howard says it's still alive

The bill's future is uncertain as it draws fierce opposition from homeschool families, a threat against its sponsor prompting a police investigation and shaky support from Democrats

By Molly Parker and Beth Hundsdoerfer
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

A bill that would tighten homeschooling regulations in Illinois missed a key deadline on April 11. But its sponsor, Rep. Terra Costa Howard, said it's still alive—and she's working on changes recommended by fellow lawmakers to get it passed.

“We recognize that there’s some more changes that need to be made and so we want to be respectful of the process,” Costa Howard, D-Glen Ellyn, told Capitol News Illinois. “I want to pass a bill that we can be proud of. And even though I’m proud of the bill now, I want to be able to take into consideration some of the other suggestions that have been made.”

The proposal, amended twice in recent weeks, would

require parents to file a declaration of intent with their regional office of education. If a truancy investigation arises, officials could ask for schoolwork or lesson plans.

Costa Howard introduced the bill after a Capitol News Illinois and ProPublica investigation last summer revealed Illinois’ lack of oversight in cases where children weren’t receiving an education. Illinois has some of the loosest homeschooling laws in the country, and multiple truancy officers told reporters that when they investigated a truancy case and parents claimed they were homeschooling, the investigation came to a grinding halt, even if concerns remained.

In the worst cases, children disappeared from school and endured abuse or neglect at home for years before authorities became aware.

The bill has become one of the most divisive issues at the Capitol this session, drawing thousands of opponents led by two Christian homeschooling organizations: Illinois Christian Home Educators and the Home School Legal Defense Association.

On April 10, Will Estrada, in an upbeat message on the Home School Legal Defense Association’s Facebook page, shared news that the bill’s sponsors “did not have the votes currently on the floor to move the bill.” The organization’s chief legal counsel called it “hard to overstate how significant this news is.” Estrada congratulated homeschooling families for their efforts, adding, “The good news is your phone calls, your efforts, your talking to your friends, your continuing to get the word out to the leg-

islators in Springfield, your voices are being heard.”

However, Estrada cautioned that the stall “doesn’t mean the battle is over.”

On April 12, Estrada joined Illinois Christian Home Educators Executive Director Kirk Smith in a Facebook video message from a homeschooling conference in Peoria. They urged their followers to tone down their efforts during the legislative break that coincides with Passover and Easter.

“We have kind of a change of strategy,” Estrada said.

“We want to limit the activity politically this week,” Smith added. “We encourage those who may have friends who are representatives to reach out to them lovingly during this time. But let’s give the legislature a little time to catch their breath.”

Though both organizations have stressed their

members to communicate their opposition politely with lawmakers, Costa Howard says these organizations have stoked fear, amplifying fringe voices.

Since introducing the bill, Costa Howard said she’s been inundated with hostile calls and emails, even including a letter she perceived as a death threat. The anonymous letter, addressed to Costa Howard at her legislative office in Lombard, referenced HB2827—the Homeschool Act—contained five lines:

“It’s all over the country. We all know. It starts here and must end here. If we have to break the 6th Commandment, so be it. God said ‘Do Not Kill,’ but also said ‘Smite thine enemy.’ We’re watching”—Anonymous

Costa Howard turned the letter over to police, who she says are investigating it in

her home district, which includes most of Lombard.

The bill has also drawn opposition from minority communities. Pastor Chris Butler testified against the bill last week when the amended version came before the House Education Policy Committee.

“I am here today as somebody who grew up in Chicago public schools,” Butler said. “I am here today sitting next to somebody who taught in Chicago’s public schools. And we too have grown up, and we too have something to say about the education that we received, and it is why people in our generation have stepped up and said, we must do something different.”

He argued that any regulation would impede minority families from home

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Prisoner Review Board reform bill clears Senate

Updated from last year's bill, it aims to increase transparency of prisoner releases

BY JADE AUBREY AND UIS PUBLIC AFFAIRS REPORTING

A bill that would reform the Prisoner Review Board passed the Illinois Senate on April 10, aiming to protect victims and increase transparency about prisoner releases following years of controversy surrounding the board's decisions.

Championed by Senate President Don Harmon, D-Oak Park, Senate Bill 19 would give victims the ability to file victim impact statements ahead of hearings, provide them with additional notice when their offender is granted early release, and allow them to seek an order of protection against an offender who is incarcerated.

The bill passed on a 33-22 vote, with some Democrat senators opposing the legislation.

It would also create the Office of the Director of Victim and Witness Services, which would ensure the board complies with victims' rights, and mandates victims are provided with contact information for the State Victim Assistance Hotline

The reforms come after Crosetti Brand allegedly murdered an 11-year-old Chicago boy in 2024. That February, the board voted to release Brand, finding there was not enough evidence he had violated his conditions of release. His ex-girlfriend, Laterrria Smith, was denied

an emergency order of protection by a Cook County judge while Brand was imprisoned at Stateville in Crest Hill.

A day after he was released, Brand attacked Smith and murdered her 11-year-old son, Jayden Perkins, who attempted to protect his mother. The murder caused two PRB members, including the board chair, to resign.

Brand's history of domestic violence against women prompted both advocates and lawmakers to call for stricter review of prisoners' backgrounds before their release.

During last year's legislative session, Rep. Kelly Cassidy, D-Chicago, championed a PRB reform bill that that

had bipartisan support, but was never called for a vote in the House on the final day of session.

That bill would have made changes that included requiring the board to notify victims within 24 hours if an offender, whom they had an order of protection against, was released early.

In a news conference held the day after the session ended, Gov. JB Pritzker expressed his concerns with parts of the bill regarding the live stream of certain PRB meetings and the lack of funding for other requirements.

Harmon described this year's reform bill as a "similar to, but improved upon" version of Cassidy's bill that

"expands the rights of victims to be heard and to be notified."

The bill would change qualifications for board members, requiring seven out of the 15 board members to have at least five years of experience as a law enforcement officer, parole officer, prosecutor, criminal defense attorney or judge.

It would also change the term limits of any new board members elected from six to eight years, something Harmon said would allow board members to be less concerned about their reappointment and more focused on making "good decisions."

Sen. Steve McClure, R-Springfield, voiced his dis-

agreement on the Senate floor Thursday. He asked Harmon how he thought it was a "great idea" to lengthen terms for members, who he said are vetted by the governor.

"The Senate can't pass a law by itself. The bill before us, I believe, will be well-received and passed by the House and signed by the governor," Harmon said in response. "It is the best bill we are able to pass into law at the present time."

Republicans have spent years criticizing Pritzker's appointments to the board following several controversial nominations in recent years.

The bill now awaits action in the House.

Lake County evaluates options amid federal funding uncertainty

In mid-March, Lake County was informed that more than \$3 million in federally earmarked funds were eliminated from the Fiscal Year 2025 federal budget. These funds were intended to support critical infrastructure and affordable housing in the County.

In 2024, Lake County submitted multiple infrastructure and housing initiatives through the U.S. House of Representatives' Community Project Funding (CPF) program. CPF enables Members of Congress to request direct federal funding for projects that serve local community needs. U.S. Representatives Brad Schneider and Jan Schakowsky selected several Lake County proposals for submission to the House Appropriations Committee, focusing on sewer and water system upgrades and affordable housing.

These proposals received approval at the Appropriations Committee level, how-

ever, when Congress passed a Continuing Resolution in March to avert a government shutdown and extend federal funding through September 30, 2025, the legislation included the elimination of all Community Project Funding requests nationwide. As a result, Lake County lost over \$3 million in funding that would have supported sewer and water system improvements in Antioch, Hawthorn Woods (Glennshire) and Forest Lake, as well as the creation of an affordable housing hub to serve some of the County's most vulnerable residents.

Despite this setback, Lake County remains committed to advancing these vital projects. The County is currently evaluating all available options to move forward and secure alternative funding to address these community needs.

"It is important, now more than ever, for the County to have strong local, state and federal partnerships," said John Wasik, Chair of the

County's Legislative Committee and Lake County Board Member for District 6. "We will continue to fight for every federal, state and local dollar to fund our county services and programs. Everything we do helps our communities be healthy, safe and thrive."

In addition to the CPF cuts, the Lake County Health Department was informed in late March that the federal administration was terminating federal grants nationwide that had been already awarded to support ongoing work to protect public health.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) notified the Illinois Department of Human Services and Illinois Department of Public Health of a statewide reduction totaling \$153 million. These funds help support mental health care, substance use treatment and infectious

disease control—services partially delivered through grants to the Lake County Health Department. Currently, the funding elimination has been temporarily halted due to ongoing litigation and a court-issued restraining order, allowing the Health Department to continue its operations without interruption for the time being.

"These are life-saving programs that support women, children and seniors, help prevent and treat addiction, prevent the spread of infectious diseases and strengthen our communities," said Lake County Health Board President Tim Sashko. "The Health Department will continue working closely with the County to ensure that essential services remain accessible to our residents. We must keep advocating for the resources our communities need and deserve."

Lake County administration continues to work with the County's federal lobbyist

in understanding the current federal funding landscape and is evaluating potential options in the case of additional federal cuts to ensure the County's vital services are continued to be available to our residents and businesses.

"We are deeply grateful to our congressional delegation for their strong advoca-

cy on behalf of Lake County and our residents," said Lake County Board Chair Sandy Hart. "Despite these federal funding setbacks and the uncertainty at the federal level, we will continue working with our partners to ensure uninterrupted services and protect the quality of life in our communities."

MCDOT hosting open house April 29 to discuss next phase of upcoming construction on Randall Road project

The McHenry County Division of Transportation (MCDOT) is preparing to begin construction of the next phase of the Randall Road Corridor improvement project. The public is invited to attend an open house regarding improvements that are planned for the stretch of Randall Road from Polaris Drive/Acorn Lane to Ackman Road.

If the public is interested in learning more about what

is planned to be accomplished during this portion of the project, please join the MCDOT on Tuesday, April 29th, 2025, from 5:00 P.M. till 7:00 P.M. at the Lake in the Hills Village Hall. The Lake in the Hills Village Hall is located at 600 Harvest Gate Road, Lake in the Hills, IL 60156.

Attendees will have the opportunity to view project exhibits, speak with members of the project team and get

details about potential construction impacts, detours and anticipated road closures. The MCDOT wants to provide this informal event as a valuable opportunity for residents, commuters and local business owners to stay informed and ask questions about the project.

As the project progresses, information will be available for public review on randall-road.info.

Manufacturing grant applications open until April 30

Applications are accepted until April 30 for a grant through the 2025 Made in Illinois Grant Program for McHenry County manufacturers.

This initiative through the Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity is designed to strengthen small and mid-sized manufacturers across Illinois by providing up to \$50,000 in matching funds to support innovation and strategic technological advancements.

Eligible manufacturers must employ between five

and 250 employees, they have to have operated in Illinois for at least three years, and must have recorded sales revenue in the last 12 months.

Don't delay, the deadline

to apply is April 30. To learn more and apply, visit www.imec.org/madeinillinois. Questions can be directed to the IMEC Grants office at grants@imec.org.

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~ including McHenry County News

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Conservation District receives GFOA Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) has again honored McHenry County Conservation District with its National Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting (COA) for fiscal year 2024. This is the fifteenth consecutive year the District has earned this achievement. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.

“The Conservation District once again congratulates Director of Administration & Finance Andy Dylak and his Accounting team for receiving this certificate for the fifteenth consecutive year. The Conservation District is committed to transparency, efficiency, and being responsible stewards of both financial and natural resources,” stated Executive Director Elizabeth S. Kessler.

The GFOA established the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting Program in 1945 to encourage and assist state and local governments to go beyond the minimum requirements of generally accepted accounting principles to prepare annual comprehensive financial reports that evidence the spirit of transparency and full disclosure and then to recognize individual governments that succeed in achieving that goal.

Financial Reports are judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the program, which includes demonstrating a constructive “spirit of full disclosure” to clearly communicate its financial story and motivate potential users and user groups to read the report.

GFOA is a major professional association servicing the needs of more than 19,000 appointed and elected local, state, and provincial-level government officials and other finance practitioners.

McHenry County Conservation District currently owns and protects over 25,800 acres of open space which provides wildlife habitat preservation, educational opportunities and recreational amenities for the citizens of McHenry County to enjoy.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Hi-Liter/MCN

A Safe Place’s Chief of Housing Services, Christine Luchek (center) & the Development Team are pictured with Lake County Clerk Anthony Vega (right). The Clerk’s office and A Safe Place have partnered for a Community Donation Drive taking place through April 30.

Lake County Clerk’s Office partners with ‘A Safe Place’ for Community Donation Drive

The Lake County Clerk’s Office is proud to partner with ‘A Safe Place’ for a Community Donation Drive running now through April 30. Donation boxes are available at multiple municipal locations, making it easy for Lake County residents to contribute at their convenience.

A Safe Place is the only organization in Lake County dedicated solely to supporting victims of domestic violence and human trafficking. All services are offered free of charge to survivors.

A Safe Place is also pet-friendly. Their emergency shelter includes a dedicated space for pets, allowing survivors to bring their beloved companions with them on their

journey to safety. Pet friendly donations such as food, beds and toys are welcome.

High-priority donation items needed:

- All-purpose cleaner
- Paper towels
- Dish soap
- Diapers (sizes 6&7)

A full list of requested donation items can be found at: <https://asafeplaceforhelp.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/In-Kind-Donations-1.pdf>

Donation box locations:

- Village of Mundelein: 300 Plaza Circle, Mundelein
- City of Highland Park: 1707 Saint

Johns Avenue, Highland Park

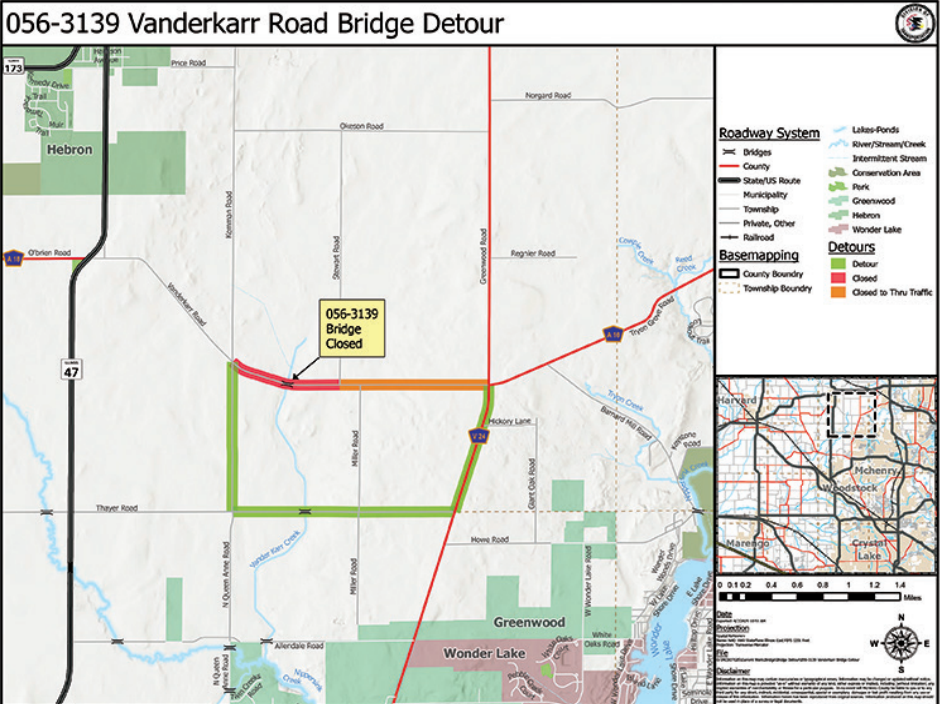
- Lake County Clerk’s Office: 18 N County St, Waukegan
- Lake Forest Police Department: 255 Deerpark, Lake Forest
- Village of Wauconda: 101 N Main St, Wauconda
- Winthrop Harbor Police Department: 830 Sheridan Rd, Winthrop Harbor
- Village of Grayslake: 10 Seymour Ave, Grayslake
- Vernon Township: 3050 N Main Street, Buffalo Grove
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- Village of Wadsworth: 14155 W Wadsworth Road, Wadsworth

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Vanderkarr Road Bridge project underway

The McHenry County Division of Transportation announces the start of the second phase of the Vanderkarr Road Bridge Project. The second phase of the project was scheduled to start April 21 and is expected to be completed by the end of May 2025, weather permitting.

Vanderkarr Road was closed starting April 21, 2025, from Kemman Road to Greenwood Road. Local access to homes will be maintained at all times. Signage was placed to notify road users of the upcoming road closure.

The detour redirects traffic from the intersection of Vanderkarr Road and Kemman Road to Vanderkarr Road and Greenwood Road. The detour will use Kemman Road, Thayer Road and Greenwood Road to bridge the gap in Vanderkarr Road. Signs will be posted along the designated route to help guide vehicle drivers while the detour is in place.

The project will replace the existing bridge beams on Vanderkarr Road over Nippersink Creek.

Follow the Division of Transportation on Facebook, Instagram and Nextdoor to stay abreast of construction projects on county highways.

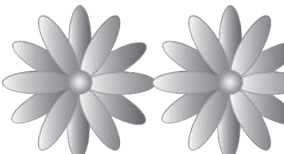


SUBMITTED PHOTO Hi-Liter/MCN

Pet of the week

Hubble, a Maine Coon mix, is about 3 months old, neutered, up-to-date on shots, tested negative for FIV, feline leukemia and heartworm and micro-chipped.

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.



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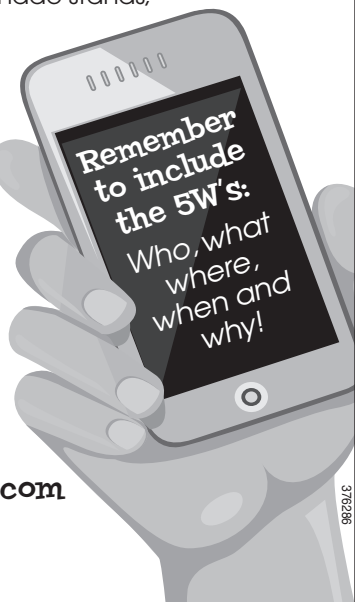
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HI-LITER • APRIL 23-29, 2025 • 6

Court & crime news

Lake County Sheriff's Office and Regional Law Enforcement collaborate to arrest four burglars

The Lake County Sheriff's Office assisted the North Regional Major Crimes Task Force (NORTAF) in arresting four individuals involved in a residential burglary on the afternoon of April 16.



Haral S. Canter-Rocha



David Gomez Galindo



Brian E. Navarrete-Caballero



Daniel Ospina Lozano

As traffic backed up, NORTAF investigators were able to stop the Range Rover. All three occupants fled on foot but were ultimately apprehended by NORTAF investigators and sheriff's deputies.

All four suspects were transported to the Lake County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Division, where the investigation continued. After reviewing the case, the Lake County State's Attorney's Office approved one count of Residential Burglary (Class 1 Felony) all four offenders.

The additional two suspects arrested were:

Haral S. Canter-Rocha, 26, of the 4100 block of Cullom Avenue, Chicago, and Brian E. Navarrete-Caballero, 31, of the 5300 block of North Damon Avenue, Chicago.

Based on NORTAF's investigation, these four individuals are believed to be part of a larger burglary crew targeting homes within the Asian community.

Lake County Sheriff John D. Idleburg praised the collaborative effort, saying: "This is a great example of what we can accomplish when law enforcement agencies work together. NORTAF has done an incredible job conducting long-term investigations into burglary crews that have been plaguing the suburbs. I'm grateful for the collaboration between NORTAF and our Criminal Investigations Division. As a reminder, if you see something suspicious or believe something is off, it's always best to report it and let law enforcement investigate."

The investigation remains active and additional charges are possible.

All four offenders appeared in First Appearance Court on April 17 and all were ordered held for Detention Court.

Motorcycle collides with garbage truck

On April 14, at approximately 10:25 a.m., Lake County Sheriff's Deputies responded to Grass Lake Road and West Park Avenue, unincorporated Antioch, for a motorcycle versus garbage truck crash with injuries. Sheriff's deputies arrived and found the motorcycle driver unresponsive.

Preliminary investigation shows the garbage truck,

a 2019 Mack, driven by a 46-year-old man of Ingle-side, was eastbound on Grass Lake Road, just east of the Grass Lake Bridge. Behind the garbage truck, also traveling eastbound, was a 2017 Harley-Davidson, driven by a 35-year-old man of unincorporated Spring Grove.

The driver of garbage truck began to slow to make a left turn into a parking lot. The driver of the motorcycle attempted to pass the garbage truck on the left and struck the rear of the garbage truck, as it was completing its turn. The driver of the motorcycle, who was not wearing a helmet, sustained life-threatening critical injuries. He was transported to Advocate Condell Medical Center in Libertyville.

The driver of the garbage truck was uninjured and is cooperating with the investigation.

The speed of the motorcycle appears to be a factor in the crash.

The crash remains under investigation by the Lake County Sheriff's Office Technical Crash Investigations Team.

Three 17-year-olds arrested for possession of firearms and drugs

Lake County Sheriff's Deputies arrested three 17-year-olds (one from Chicago, one from Lindenhurst, and one from unincorporated Antioch) after they were found to be in possession of firearms and drugs.

On April 13, at approximately 8:15 p.m., a Lake County Sheriff's Deputy conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle near 27th Street and Galilee Avenue in Zion for a traffic infraction. The vehicle was occupied by a 17-year-old male driver and two 17-year-old male passengers. All three appeared unusually nervous and were evasive in their responses. Based on this behavior, the deputy requested a K9 unit to assist.

After the K9 arrived, the occupants were asked to exit the vehicle. One of the assisting deputies began to pat down the front seat passenger and felt a firearm in the passenger's waistband. That passenger immediately attempted to flee on foot, but the deputy tackled him and took him into custody. A loaded pistol

with an extended magazine, containing 23 hollow-point rounds, was recovered from the teen.

During the struggle, the driver fled on foot. He stopped when the deputy announced he would deploy a Taser.

As this was occurring, the back seat passenger fled on foot as well. After a short foot chase, sheriff's deputies were able to apprehend him.

A search of the vehicle revealed a loaded 7.62 caliber AK-style rifle with a 30-round magazine. Deputies also located approximately 75 grams of psilocybin mushrooms, cannabis, and drug packaging materials.

All three were transported to the Hulse Juvenile Detention Facility near Vernon Hills. Sheriff's deputies petitioned all three to juvenile court on the charges of aggravated unlawful use of a weapon and resisting arrest. Additional charges are pending on the drugs found.

Sheriff's detectives arrest man for child pornography

Lake County Sheriff's Detectives arrested a Zion man for possessing numerous videos of child pornography, some involving children as young as infants.



Michael J. Guerra

Lake County Sheriff's Detectives received a tip from an online cloud storage website indicating a device in Lake County uploaded child pornography to their platform. Sheriff's detective began an investigation and based on that investigation, determined the likely source was coming from a residence in the 3200 block of Enoch Avenue, Zion.

Sheriff's detectives obtained a search warrant for the residence and conducted that search warrant with the Illinois Attorney General's Office and Lake County State's Attorney's Office Cybercrime Unit on April 11, 2025. During their search, detectives seized electronics that contained child pornography, belonging to Michael J. Guerra, 55, of the above address.

After reviewing the initial

facts and circumstances, the Lake County State's Attorney's Office approved two counts of Possession of Child Pornography (Class 2 Felony) against Guerra.

Guerra's numerous electronic devices continue to be forensically analyzed, and additional charges are likely.

"This is yet another successful investigation and arrest of a child predator by our detectives," said Sheriff John D. Idleburg. "We will stop at nothing to protect the most vulnerable in our community. I'm grateful for the incredible collaboration between our office, the Attorney General's Office, and the State's Attorney's Office to investigate these crimes and hold these individuals accountable."

Guerra remained held in the Lake County Jail pending his initial court hearing.

Two men sentenced for possessing over \$400,000 worth of cocaine

The McHenry County State's Attorney's Office announces that Cristian Chavez-Salgado, 27, of Chicago, Illinois, was sentenced to twelve years in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The sentence was handed down on April 9, 2025, by the Honorable Judge Christopher Harmon after Chavez-Salgado entered a negotiated plea of guilty to unlawful possession of a controlled substance, a class 1 felony.



Enrique Navar-Favela



Christian Chavez-Salgado

Enrique Navar-Favela, 27, of Stone Park, Illinois, was sentenced to eight years in the Illinois Department of Corrections on April 11, 2025, by the Honorable Judge Harmon, after pleading guilty to unlawful possession of a controlled substance, a class 1 felony.

On July 2, 2024, members of the McHenry County Sheriff's Department's Narcotics Task Force learned of a drug transaction scheduled to occur in McHenry, Illinois. Chavez-Salgado and

Navar-Favela arrived at the McHenry Super 8 that afternoon. Chavez-Salgado was the driver of their vehicle. The men exited the vehicle and walked toward the motel. Chavez-Salgado was carrying a duffel bag containing 17 kilograms of cocaine, with an estimated street value of over \$400,000. Both men were intercepted in the parking lot by law enforcement.

McHenry County State's Attorney Randi Freese wishes to congratulate the McHenry County Sheriff's Department's Narcotics Task Force on this successful operation and for their continued tireless efforts to keep dangerous drugs off our streets and ensure that those who wish to profit off the illicit drug trade are held accountable. This case was successfully prosecuted by Criminal Division Deputy Chief Brian Miller.

Man sentenced for theft by deception

The McHenry County State's Attorney's Office announces that on April 14, David McCready, 44, of Sturtevant, Wisconsin, was sentenced to six years in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The sentence was handed down by the Honorable Judge Tiffany Davis after McCready entered a plea of guilty to one count of the offense of Theft by Deception.



David McCready

The charge stemmed from an incident that occurred on October 20, 2020. On that date, just outside of their home in the city of McHenry, the victim in this matter sold a car to McCready, who paid using a cashier's check. When the victim attempted to deposit the check received for the car at their bank, it was determined to be fake. Further investigation determined that McCready had also provided a fake name to the seller. Using footage from home surveillance video provided by the victim, officers of the McHenry Police Department began working to identify the man who provided the fake cashier's check. Through collaborative efforts with other police departments, detectives were ultimately able to identify McCready as the man in the video who provided the fake check.

McHenry County State's Attorney Randi Freese appreciates the diligent and joint efforts of all agencies involved in this case, especially the investigating members of the McHenry Police Department.

This case was successfully prosecuted by Assistant State's Attorney Matt Broder-sen.

Barradas found guilty of criminal sexual assault of a child after jury trial

The McHenry County State's Attorney's Office announces that Alejandro Barradas, 36, of Woodstock, Illinois, was found guilty on three counts of Criminal Sexual Assault after a four-day jury trial before the Honorable Judge Tiffany Davis.

See JURY TRIAL, Page 7

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•Bill stalls

(Continued from page 2)

schooling to escape failing public schools and encouraged opponents to continue filing witness slips opposing the bill and speaking out against it.

Editorial boards at the Chicago Tribune and The Wall Street Journal have also opposed the bill. The Tribune said the bill “overreaches,” while the Journal raised privacy concerns about the information homeschool families could be required to provide on the forms.

The anonymous letter to Costa Howard was postmarked from a mail distribution site in Kearny, New Jersey, on March 24—three days after the editorial appeared in the Wall Street Journal. The return address was listed simply as The Rancher, East Coast.

Under Illinois law, threatening a public official is a Class 3 felony. The Lombard Police Department declined to comment, but did provide, under a Freedom of Information Act request, a copy of the report that contained the typewritten, unsigned letter.

Costa Howard also alerted the Illinois State Police regarding the letter. An ISP spokesman said the agency assesses potential threats

and determines needed actions based on the findings of the assessment, which may include further consultation and, if necessary, makes recommendations to enhance security.

Despite the vitriolic communication, Costa Howard said she is pressing forward because of those who’ve also reached out to say they were victims of inadequate homeschooling and want more protections in the law. The bill missed a procedural deadline on April 11 for non-budget bills to clear their chamber of origin. But lawmakers can request an extension, which Costa Howard has done.

“The one thing I’ve learned about Springfield is don’t ever count something out,” she said.

Rep. Amy Elik, R-Alton, disagreed.

“This bill was doomed from the beginning,” Elik said from the House floor Friday after Costa Howard made a brief speech about the bill.

Costa Howard says changes to the bill have already been made to address concerns, and that she’s working on more. The amendment that passed a House com-

mittee on Wednesday, April 9, provided more specific details for the declaration form, ensured that an online version would be available, and clarified that a truancy investigation would be required to compel families to turn over homeschooling portfolios.

Another change addresses concerns from private schools, which had opposed having to provide a list of students to the Illinois State Board of Education. Under the change, private schools would only need to verify a student’s attendance record if asked in a truancy investigation.

Costa Howard said she remains open to negotiations on the bill’s finer details but believes passing new safeguards is critical to protect children from parents who claim they are homeschooling, but don’t follow through.

“I do not back down from bullies,” Costa Howard said. “And there are victims that have reached out to me constantly thanking me because it has also allowed them to raise their voices and feel that they could speak out about the experiences they’ve had as well.”

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.

March 3
Cesar Casas Garcia, 24, Palatine, was cited for driving while license suspended;

March 4
Marquel D. Miller, 29, North Chicago, was cited for criminal damage to property;
Nichole Barkus, 36, Lake Villa, was cited for a warrant arrest: disorderly conduct;

March 6
Rene Rodriguez, 38, Beach Park, was cited for unlawful delivery of a controlled substance, and unlawful possession of firearm ammo by a felon;

March 7
Alexandr Schockman, 32, Geneva, was cited for a warrant arrest:parole violation;
Robert Kozlov, 36, Lake Villa, was cited for a warrant arrest: reckless driving;
Lauren Fiumetto, 26, Lake Villa, was cited for a warrant arrest: obstructing identification;
Brian P. Geraghty, 52, Libertyville, was cited for do-

mestic battery;
Kimberly L. Hellen, 58, Antioch, was cited for DUI – alcohol;

March 8
Isreal D. Medina, 34, Beach Park, was cited for a warrant arrest: unlawful possession of a controlled substance;
Shaunte R. King, 37, Kenosha, WI, was cited for DUI – alcohol;

March 9
Francisco Gomez- Parado.

•Jury trial

(Continued from page 6)

Sentencing has been set for June 11, 2025.

Evidence presented at trial proved that between March 1, 2023, and June 23, 2023, Barradas committed multiple acts of sexual penetration against a female minor child, a family member to Barradas, at a time when the child was under 18 years of age.

McHenry County State’s



Alejandro Barradas

43, Beach Park, was cited for battery;

Christian D. Bucknor, 19, Beach Park, was cited for reckless driving, fleeing to elude, driving while license suspended, registration suspended and no insurance;

Carlos Bueno-Bueno, 49, Waukegan, was cited for a warrant arrest: DUI;

Raymundo Gonzalez, 58, North Chicago, was cited for a warrant arrest: theft;

Marcos Hernandez, 23, Waukegan, was cited for DUI – alcohol.

Attorney Randi Freese would like to thank Victim Witness Coordinator Polo Fabian and McHenry County State’s Attorney’s Office Investigators Keith Von Allmen and Robert Bice for their assistance on the case. Freese also commends the diligent work effort by both Detective Sharp and Detective Prentice of the Woodstock Police Department for their thorough investigation.

The case was successfully prosecuted at trial by Deputy Chief Margaret O’Brien and Assistant State’s Attorney Maria Marek.

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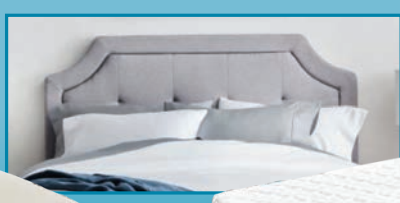
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