



Free!

B4 Summer Festival set for June 7

Tickets on sale now for event at Richardson Adventure Farm

By Cynthia Wolf
CONTRIBUTOR

Those who love their live music, libations and outdoor fun with a healthy helping of championing great causes should make a plan now to attend the third annual B4 Summer Festival June 7 at Richardson Adventure Farm.

Presented by the Chain O' Lakes Chamber of Commerce and Volo Museum, the event will run from 3 to 10:45 p.m. Saturday, June 7, at the farm, 909 English Prairie Road, Spring Grove. The B4 – or Bacon, Bourbon, Beer and Bands – fest, which also happens right as B4 summer officially begins, distributes 100 percent of proceeds to the chamber's scholarship fund and four other rotating local nonprofits.

This year, Kids in Need of McHenry County, Veterans Path to Hope, Furever Home Dog Sanctu-

ary, and Place to Gather community center will benefit.

Area breweries including Crystal Lake Brewing, Holzlager, 9th Hour and Harbor Brewing, as well as Hardly Water will pour favorites. Local food trucks scheduled to attend include Pixie Dawgs, Brothers' BBQ, Toasty Cheese, Rita's Italian Ice & Frozen Custard, Mijo's Authentic Mexican Food and Scott's Popcorn Truck.

Tickets can be purchased at www.B4fest.com, where table reservations and a limited number of bourbon tasting punch cards also are available. Full-price tickets will be available at the gate. Children 5 and younger enter free, organizers said.

"There's really nothing like this festival in the Midwest," said Jim Wojdyla, festival chairman and co-founder as well as Volo Museum



AARON HECHTMAN PHOTOS HI-LITER/MCN

The B4 Summer Festival grounds are shown at Richardson Adventure Farm, Spring Grove. Discounted tickets are now available for the third annual event — taking place June 7 — with 100 percent of proceeds going to five local nonprofits. Left: Modern Day Romeos perform at a previous B4 Summer Fest. The popular band again will headline the nonprofit-boosting fest this June 7, with performances by the Pino Farina Band and Rok Brigade also scheduled.



marketing director. "Most fests are set in an open field. But our location at the Richardson Adventure Far, with most of their activities open, offers an experience where all ages can have a blast for a great cause."

Free, family-friendly activities include a 50-foot-tall observation tower, pedal cars, giant jumping pillows, a giant slide, playgrounds, yard games, farm-style basketball hoops and more. Other activities — including a zip line, extreme air jump, gem mining station and Ni-

cole Sutton's Photo Booth — will be available at an additional charge.

Bands performing June 7 will include the Pino Farina Band, Def Leppard tribute band Rok Brigade and Modern Day Romeos, with DJ Mark Esses kicking off the fun at 3 p.m. and returning to the stage between band performances, Wojdyla said.

Bourbon and wine tasting opportunities will be available from 3 to 9 p.m. Fireworks will go off at 9:30 p.m., between Modern Day Romeos

sets, said Wojdyla, who also is the lead singer of the band.

Chain O' Lakes Chamber Executive Director and fest co-founder, Therese Matthys, said the fest has proven to be an excellent example of community members lifting one another up, and having a great time doing so.

"It's amazing to see so many different parts of the community come together to make this festival

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Lake County Firearm Fatality Dashboard unveiled by county state's attorney Rinehart

In a significant step toward understanding and preventing gun violence, Lake County has unveiled the Firearm Fatality Dashboard. The Dashboard is a tool designed to provide residents, government partners, and organizations with the most recent data on firearm fatalities across the county. This data collection and public education program is part of the broader Gun Violence Prevention Initiative (GVPI)'s work to identify trends, to effectively allocate resources, and to broaden the community conversation about ending gun violence.

Lake County State's Attorney Eric Rinehart stated, "Everyone deserves to be safe in their community. Gun violence is measurable and preventable. As a community and as a democracy, we should have accurate, up-to-date gun violence information available at our fingertips.

This dashboard is a vital tool to give us that information quickly so that we help others and have meaningful community conversations about how to save lives."

Between 2022 and 2024, there was a 73% decrease in firearm homicides, a 55% decrease from 2022-2023 and an additional 18% in 2023-2024. In the most impacted communities in Lake County; Waukegan, Zion, and North Chicago there was a 31% decrease in firearm homicides from 2023 to 2024.

The Firearm Fatality Dashboard uniquely focuses on all deaths involving firearms, including homicides, suicides, unintentional deaths, and undetermined fatalities. This comprehensive approach allows for a more accurate and holistic understanding of gun violence trends in Lake County. The dashboard will allow police, healthcare of-

ficials, elected leaders, and community organizations to determine which programs are working and which communities need increased interventions.

Key features of the dashboard include:

- **Demographic Filters:** Users can examine data based on gender, race, ethnicity, age range, firearm fatality type, and municipality, providing a deeper understanding of how gun violence impacts various communities.

- **Time-based Filters:** Data can be filtered by month and day, offering both macro and micro-level insights into when firearm fatalities are occurring.

- **Real-time, Accurate Data:** The dashboard is updated weekly by the Lake County Coroner's Office to ensure the most current data is available to the public.

The creation of the dashboard was a collaborative effort between the Lake County Gun Violence Prevention Initiative, the Lake County GIS team, and the Lake County Coroner's Office. The data was built using the industry-standard GIS technology from the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI).

Prior to this initiative, data on firearm fatalities in Lake County was not readily accessible to the public, leading to confusion and a lack of understanding about the scope of gun violence. This new dashboard is an innovative approach to ensure transparency and empower residents to understand how firearm violence may impact their community. Residents can now access reliable and timely information to better grasp the impact of

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CMAP and Lake County partner to expand housing with support from Schreiber Philanthropy

To help fuel economic growth, Lake County and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), with support from Schreiber Philanthropy, are teaming up to expand affordable and accessible housing in Illinois' third most populous county.

Schreiber Philanthropy, a charitable organization committed to supporting well-being and economic mobility in Chicagoland, awarded CMAP a grant to identify a menu of housing solutions to address the need for affordable housing in Lake County

Through a 12-month technical assistance process, CMAP, in partnership with Lake County, will convene a Housing Task Force comprising of municipalities across the county. The Task Force will evaluate tools and resources to address housing challenges, culminating in a step-by-step Housing Ready toolkit. The goal of this initiative is to increase the supply of affordable housing through actionable, municipality-specific solutions.

Additionally, a key piece of this effort will be engaging stakeholders to identify obstacles, opportunities and necessary resources. The Coalition will host a housing summit next year to generate momentum and build community support.

"While we continue to advocate for housing support at the state and federal level in an environment of funding uncertainty, tackling the housing crisis at the local level in Lake County requires a multi-pronged approach involving a team effort," said Lake County Board Chair Sandy Hart. "The high costs of construction, land use regulations and other impediments are restricting our local housing supply. Local government, development and real estate professionals, the workforce system, non-profits, financial institutions and other key stakeholders all have a role to play in reducing these barriers to housing production. The Coalition is bringing us together to develop long-term strategies to meet this urgent crisis."

A 2023 Lake County study showed that in order to attract and retain residents and businesses, the County must have a diverse housing stock that provides options for households at different life stages, ages, incomes and sizes. The lack of housing also limits the county's ability to attract and retain workers.

Northeastern Illinois' comprehensive plan, ON TO 2050, also emphasizes the importance of having a variety of housing options to maintain a thriving and inclusive region. It recommends housing development strategies located near transit to support access to jobs, education, healthcare and services.

"We know that affordable and accessible housing — in close proximity to jobs, transportation and other amenities — make for a strong, thriving and resilient region," said CMAP Executive Director Erin Aleman. "We are excited to partner with Lake County on this important work and plan to build on this framework and bring housing solutions to other parts of the region."

To achieve its mission of supporting economic mobility and well-being, Schreiber Philanthropy is committed to building better options for safe and affordable housing opportunities, especially for people who have been historically denied access, to create more vibrant and inclusive communities.

"To sustain its regional economic competitiveness, Lake County needs 7,900 affordable housing units. This presents a real challenge in today's economy, where construction costs are at an all-time high and continue to rise. Increasing the supply of units will require a coordinated, partnership-driven approach with innovative solutions to scale housing," said Schreiber Philanthropy's Housing Portfolio Manager, Ricardo Lopez. "This grant is a key step in Schreiber Philanthropy's commitment to helping Lake County's municipalities achieve that goal."

•Festival (Continued from front page)

happen," she said. "The main objective is to support local businesses and benefit local nonprofit organizations. Every year, more and more community members participate and benefit from B4 Fest."

More information can be

found at b4fest.com, on the B4summerfestival Facebook page, @b4summerfestival on Instagram and by searching B4 Summer Fest 2025 on YouTube. To check out sponsorship opportunities, visit [tinyurl.B34Fest.com](https://tinyurl.com/B34Fest)

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State revenue projections improve while economic uncertainty grows

By Ben Szalinski
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

The General Assembly's independent forecasting commission has improved revenue projections for the upcoming fiscal year despite growing economic volatility.

That's good news for state lawmakers who are in the final weeks of crafting the fiscal year 2026 budget set to take effect July 1. But the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability's upward revision to its revenue forecast remains significantly more conservative than what Gov. JB Pritzker's office projected when he proposed a budget in February.

COGFA's latest update now projects \$54.5 billion in revenue in FY26 – \$266 million more than the commission's March projection, but still \$471 million below the governor's February projection for baseline revenues.

Pritzker has also proposed changes to raise an additional \$492 million in revenue in FY26, although that number is not factored into the baseline revenue comparison.

COGFA is also projecting state revenue will increase by \$317 million in the current fiscal year 2025 compared to its March projection. That means the state would finish the fiscal year at the end of June with \$53.9 billion of revenue—above the \$53.3 billion

lawmakers budgeted for and \$31 million more than the governor's office's February forecast.

The projected revenue growth was driven by strong April income tax receipts. April revenue was up \$593 million compared to April 2024 and was driven by 20 percent growth in income tax receipts, thanks to higher capital gains and interest earnings last year. Corporate income taxes also grew by 6.6 percent for the month, even though the revenue source remains down 8.2 percent for the fiscal year.

But there are warning signs in several areas, according to COGFA. The commission lowered expectations for federal receipts for FY25 by 8.5 percent and 6.3 percent in FY26 because the state has been using a fund outside the typical General Revenue Fund for Medicaid-related expenses. That means reimbursements from the federal government to the state are not reflected in the state's General Revenue Fund total.

The commission also warned that the federal government could, at any time, decrease financial aid to states, creating more uncertainty.

“Those capital gains revenue increases are not sustainable so as we look at fiscal year 26, we should not expect that as we go into fiscal year 27, I think it's going to be an

even worse look,” COGFA Co-Chair Rep. C.D. Davidsmeyer, R-Murrayville, said at a news conference last week.

COGFA Revenue Manager Eric Noggle wrote broader economic uncertainty necessitates a “more cautious approach” projecting next year's revenue numbers.

“The unknown implications of tariffs create many questions related to the duration of the tariffs, their impact on prices, and if these changes could lead to a recession,” Noggle wrote. “These complicating factors and their potential impact on tax revenues make the revenue estimate for FY 2026 very challenging.”

Recent national economic reports have indicated the U.S. added more jobs than expected in April, but the nation's gross domestic product declined by 0.3 percent in the first quarter of 2025, marking the first quarter of economic regression since 2022. Personal consumption grew by 1.8 percent, showing consumers overall aren't yet cutting back, but it was the slowest growth since spring 2022.

“It's very concerning because Illinois tends to lag the nation in economic growth and economic stability,” Davidsmeyer said.

The decline in GDP was driven by an increase in imports, COGFA Chief Economist Ben Varner wrote, be-

cause businesses are likely “front-loading” foreign purchases before tariffs imposed by the Trump administration kick in and make overseas goods more expensive. Imports are subtracted from domestic growth to calculate GDP.

National projections are also blaring more warnings. Wells Fargo modeling projects stagflation from tariffs and an increase in inflation will cause an economic downturn, while Goldman Sachs' early April projection pegs the likelihood of a recession at 45 percent.

“The U.S. economy has entered a precarious phase, with early signs of contraction and rising inflation signaling the potential onset of stagflation,” Varner wrote. “While domestic demand and business investment remain relatively strong, they are being overshadowed by external shocks—particularly the surge in imports ahead of tariff implementation. The policy-driven volatility is already weighing on forecasts and investor confidence.”

The governor's proposed \$55.2 billion FY26 budget is based on a December S&P Global forecast that projected stable economic growth and considered some of Trump's proposed economic policies, including tariffs and tax cut extensions, Pritzker budget office director Alexis Sturm said told a legislative committee in February.

Governor Pritzker announces second-highest film production expenditures in state history

Illinois' competitive film tax credit and training program are continuing to attract award-winning productions to the state

Governor JB Pritzker joined the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) and Illinois film industry leaders last month to announce film production expenditures of \$653 million in 2024 - the second-highest expenditure total in state history - along with estimated wages of \$351 million and 18,200 estimated hires in the industry (excluding extras). The high expenditures demonstrate Illinois' ability to bounce back in the wake of the strikes that halted production in 2023.

“Through the Film and TV Workforce Program, we have invested in the future of the industry - increasing diversity and building out a qualified pipeline of hundreds who are equipped to serve on film crews and making it possible for us to attract major productions,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “Our success is a testament to our hard work and partnership as well as the undeniable charm of Illinois and our people that makes us a prime creative destination.”

This achievement was centrally driven by Governor Pritzker's commitment to growing Illinois' world-renowned film industry by expanding the Film Production Tax Credit, extending the credit through 2032, and launching the Film & TV Workforce Training Program. As filmmakers continue to bring their crews and talent to the state, Illinois' economy benefits from the influx of production companies supporting local catering companies and restaurants, hotels, drivers, a diverse union workforce, and other key industries.

In order to build upon the state's reputation as a national destination for film and TV production, in 2022 the state launched the Film and TV Workforce Training Program, which is designed to increase diversity in Illinois' film industry. Since the program's launch, the Illinois Film Office has partnered with various organizations across the state to train and hire over 200 individuals per year from groups that are historically underrepresented in the industry.

“Illinois is showing you what's possible when you support the arts and creative industries—it's no surprise we're seeing one of our best years yet for film and TV production,” said Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton. “This success didn't happen by chance, but the result of our Film Production Tax Credit which has helped make Illinois a top destination for filmmakers. When government invests in the arts, we're supporting jobs, creativity, and the stories that connect us.”

The State of Illinois is also ensuring it is a strong competitor for new productions by administering the Illinois Film Production Tax Credit, a 30% tax credit on qualified expenditures, including production spending, salaries, and an additional 15% on salaries for people who live in economically disadvantaged areas. Unlike other states, Illinois does not have a cap on film and television tax credits - a program that was extended through 2032 by Governor Pritzker.

“Fueled by progress made as a result of Illinois' competitive Film Production Tax Credit and the Film and TV Workforce Training Program, the state's film industry is thriving,” said DCEO Director Kristin Richards. “As DCEO's Illinois Film Office celebrates 50 years of success, we will continue to strengthen Illinois' reputation as a premier destination for film.”

Illinois' incentive program, which offers tax credits for local labor and production expenditures, has been a key factor in Illinois landing major productions.

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SUBMITTED PHOTO Hi-Liter

Breaking down barriers

In an ongoing commitment to student success, the College of Lake County Foundation hosted a Laptop Giveaway Event in April, where 50 pre-selected students received laptops and backpacks donated by Meridian Group International, Inc. This marked the latest in a series of donations made by the group to the CLC Foundation. Each year these donations aim to support students in their educational journey, empowering them to engage in coursework and pursue their career goals.

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Spring rain helping some Illinois livestock pastures

By Rhiannon Branch
FARMWEEK

With warmer temperatures and April showers, Illinois' livestock are welcoming greener pastures in many areas.

But recent rains have helped some and hurt others, according to University of Illinois Extension Beef Specialist Travis Meteer, who noted southern Illinois is too wet while portions of northern and central Illinois are still highlighted on the U.S. Drought Monitor.

"Those areas that were dry and now received moisture are growing grass and likely pastures are improving," Meteer told FarmWeek. "Areas that are too wet likely have pastures that are drowned in some areas and tracked up if grazing has started."

He said moisture is usually a good thing for pastures, but consistent heavy rains have oversaturated soil in some areas and too much water can cause flooding issues in low-lying pasture areas.

Other inconsistencies early in the season are likely a result of different management.

"Overgrazed, poorly managed pastures from last year are likely struggling to reestablish, while well managed pastures are off to the races now with

moisture and warmer temps," Meteer said.

As of April 21, USDA rated Illinois pasture conditions 3 percent poor, 33 percent fair, 40 percent good and 24 percent excellent. The good to excellent rating was up 18 percentage points from the prior week, but 6 points below the same week last season.

Meteer said the alfalfa hay crop is off to a strong start and growth is ahead of schedule in many central Illinois fields.

"I have heard of some winterkill in northern Illinois, which stayed open and cold whereas central Illinois was snow-covered during the most extreme cold," he said. "There are some early reports of weevil damage in southern Illinois."

And Meteer reminds growers, "While rainfall and weather are a major component of forage production and yield, proper management using rotational grazing and rest periods will allow graziers to maximize grazing days no matter the conditions."

This story was distributed through a cooperative project between Illinois Farm Bureau and the Illinois Press Association. For more food and farming news, visit FarmWeekNow.com.

Conservation District adds 15 acres to Marengo Ridge Conservation Area thanks to foundation

The McHenry County Conservation District announced that they have acquired 15-acres of land bordering Marengo Ridge Conservation Area through a land transfer from the McHenry County Conservation Foundation, the Conservation District's philanthropic partner.

Rich in ecological significance, the McHenry County Conservation Foundation acquired the 15-acre parcel in 2020 thanks to an anonymous private donation. The Conservation District's acquisition of this parcel brings the total acreage of Marengo Ridge Conservation Area to 833 acres.

"As with any natural area the Foundation purchases,

our ultimate goal is to transfer the land to the Conservation District to ensure that it is protected in perpetuity. This recent transaction honors our commitment to assist the Conservation District in its mission to preserve and restore McHenry County's natural areas for present and future generations and we are incredibly grateful to our donors for making critical acquisitions like this possible," said Shawna Flavell, Executive Director of the McHenry County Conservation Foundation.

"Marengo Ridge Conservation Area is treasured for its oak woodlands, and are

See AREA, Page 7

• Dashboard

gun violence in their communities.

The dashboard, which covers data from 2020 to the present, will continue to be updated weekly by the Coroner's Office to maintain accuracy and timeliness. Eventually, non-fatal shootings and other major gun crimes will be added to the dashboard. Data provided by law enforcement agencies show that between 2022 and 2024, Waukegan, Zion, and North Chicago saw a 63% decrease in non-fatal shootings.

In 2024, State's Attorney Rinehart worked with Illinois Senator Mary Edly-Allen and Illinois Representative Daniel Didech to enact Public Act 103-0798. This law creates the Illinois Uniform State-wide Crime Statistics Task Force which begins the work of collecting and publicizing crime statistics from all Illinois police agencies without

(Continued from page 2)

regard to the lengthy U.S. Department of Justice process which takes up to 18 months.

The Lake County State's Attorney's Office acknowledges the invaluable collaboration of Lake County Coroner Banek, Chief Deputy Steve Newton, and their team for their dedication to this project.

About the Lake County Gun Violence Prevention Initiative

The Lake County Gun Violence Prevention Initiative is committed to reducing gun violence across the county through strategic data collection, resource allocation, and community engagement. The initiative works in close partnership with residents, law enforcement agencies, and community organizations to develop innovative and urgent strategies to end gun violence in Lake County.



SUBMITTED PHOTO Hi-Liter/MCN

The Beer Garden at Independence Grove is now open for the season on weekends and holidays. Brews & Views, featuring Lake County craft beer, will take place from 4 to 8 p.m. on Friday, May 30.

Independence Grove Beer Garden open for the season

The Beer Garden at Independence Grove is officially open for the season, welcoming visitors back to its scenic lakeside setting. Located within Independence Grove Forest Preserve in Libertyville, the venue offers a rotating selection of Lake County craft brews on tap and in cans, along with wines, hard ciders, non-alcoholic beverages and packaged snacks.

The family-friendly beer garden features ample outdoor seating and picturesque views, making it a relaxing spot to gather. Fire pits along the lakefront are available on a first-come, first-served basis, with complimentary firewood. S'mores kits are available for purchase.

The Beer Garden is once again sharing its seasonal menu on Untappd, a mobile app that connects craft beer fans. The menu is updated weekly, and users can receive notifications and browse upcoming events.

"The Beer Garden is a perfect spot to unwind and experience the beauty of the forest preserve," said Jessica Vealitzek, president of the Lake County Forest Preserves. "It's a space where visitors can slow down, take in the scenery and make lasting memories together."

Current tentative hours



pending staffing levels and

weather are as follows:

- Through May 25, Friday to Sunday, 1 to 9 p.m.

- May 26, 1 to 9 p.m. for Memorial Day

- Beginning May 27, Tuesday to Thursday; 5 to 9 p.m., and Friday to Sunday and holidays, 1 to 9 p.m.

The Relish Cafe outdoor pick-up window is now open with limited hours. Stop by Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. to grab a snack or beverage. The walk-up window is located on the north side of the Visitors Center, across from the play-

ground.

Starting May 26 on Memorial Day, expanded hours and services begin, including the option to order light meals and snacks for delivery to your table at the beer garden.

Hours may vary based on weather and customer demand.

Brews & Views Tasting Festival

Celebrate Lake County's vibrant brewery scene at Brews & Views from 4 to 8 p.m. on Friday, May 30.

Local breweries will include 9th Hour Brewing

Co., Black Lung Brewing Company, Half Day Brewing, Harbor Brewing Company, Liquid Love Brewing Co., Mickey Finn's Brewing, Phase Three Brewing Company, Roaring Table Brewing, Steep Ravine Brewing and Tighthead Brewing Company.

No pre-registration is required for this relaxed tasting event. Punch cards will be available for purchase at the festival for \$30 each.

Cards include (10) 4-ounce tastings and a souvenir tasting cup. A snack bite from Relish Café is included as an option with the punch card.

Live music will add to the festive atmosphere. Food and non-alcoholic beverages will be available for purchase.

The normal parking fee will be waived for all visitors on May 30.

Tastings are limited to adults 21 and older. All ages are welcome at the beer garden.

Punch cards are limited to the first 600 tasters. Guests without a punch card can still enjoy the regular food and drink offerings as well as live music.

The entrance to Independence Grove is located on Buckley Road (Route 137) just east of Milwaukee Avenue (Route 21) and west of River Road in Libertyville.

• Film production

(Continued from page 3)

The State's tax credit has resulted in a \$6.81 return on investment for every dollar spent on the incentive, resulting in over \$4.5 billion in economic activity between FY17 and FY24. 94% of Illinois' current film industry economic impact is attributed to the impact of the tax credit enacted by Governor Pritzker.

Our collaboration with the Illinois Film Office over the past three years has been nothing short of transformative," said Aurora Toshiko King, Executive Director of Free Spirit Media. "This reciprocal relationship has provided an invaluable bedrock of support, strengthening the fabric of our organization. It has significantly increased our capacity to identify, nurture, and equip the next generation of Chicago's incredibly talented filmmakers and

media professionals.

"We stand at the ready to work with the Governor, his team, and the General Assembly in growing the entertainment industry and contributing to the economic opportunities for our state and workforce," said Tony Baracca, Business Manager for the Illinois Alliance of Theatrical State Employees Local 476.

"Illinois has been the heart of our 'One Chicago' universe for over a decade," said Jerry DiCanio, EVP Production Operations, Universal Television. "The state's support for our television productions has allowed us to create thousands of local jobs and tell impactful stories that resonate with audiences around the world. We're grateful to be part of a thriving community and look forward to continu-

ing our work in this incredible city and state."

Illinois is a world class destination for award-winning productions - in addition to TV's #1 rated night of dramas on NBC with Chicago Med/Fire/PD, Chicago is also featured in the popular sci-fi series "Dark Matter" on Apple TV+ and the award-winning "The Bear" on FX, which recently wrapped filming season four. Additionally, the critically acclaimed "Somebody Somewhere" was filmed in Lockport and recently premiered its third season on HBO Max.

"Monsters" recently filmed its third season for Netflix in Chicago and rural Illinois locations while "Deli Boys" premiered its first season on Hulu this spring. "The Chi" filmed its sixth and seventh seasons in 2024, the latter

of which will be premiering on Paramount+ this summer, and "Power Book: Force" wrapped its third season in 2024.

Independent films also continue to thrive in Illinois - "Ghostlight" premiered on opening night of the Sundance Film Festival in 2024, and "The Up and Comer" and "Love Language" have both made a splash on the independent film scene. Also, holiday production "Once Upon a Christmas Wish," was filmed in the Chicago suburbs.

"It's really hard to find financing for movies in the current environment," said Eddie Linker, producer of "Ghostlight." "The ability to use the Illinois Tax Credit at almost any budget level is often the difference between making a movie or hoping to make a movie."

• **Area** (Continued from page 6)

among the last significant stands of mature oak trees in an area once known as the Big Woods of McHenry County,” said Elizabeth S. Kessler, Executive Director of the McHenry County Con-

servation District. “Globally, oak ecosystems face significant threats, including loss due to development, invasive species, and climate change. Here in McHenry County those pressures are real, with

less than 13% of our original oak ecosystems remaining.”

The woodland on this parcel boasts a variety of oak species including white, red, bur and Hill’s. It is also home to many wildlife species, includ-

ing several that are state and/or federally threatened and endangered. The woodland is the winter habitat for bumblebees, including the rusty-patched bumblebee – a federally endangered species. It also pro-

vides nesting habitat for the state-threatened blackbilled cuckoo, pileated woodpecker, blue-winged warbler and eastern screech owl. Additionally, the woods are home to mammal species including badgers

and bobcats.

The parcel also includes a wet sedge meadow swale – a wetland habitat – further adding to the importance of protecting this diverse and high-quality land.

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Burlington Garage Sales

317 ALICE ST. (In the alley) May 16 9-4. May 17 9-2. Christmas, Halloween & Easter Decor. Lots of unused items. Great selection. Come take a look.

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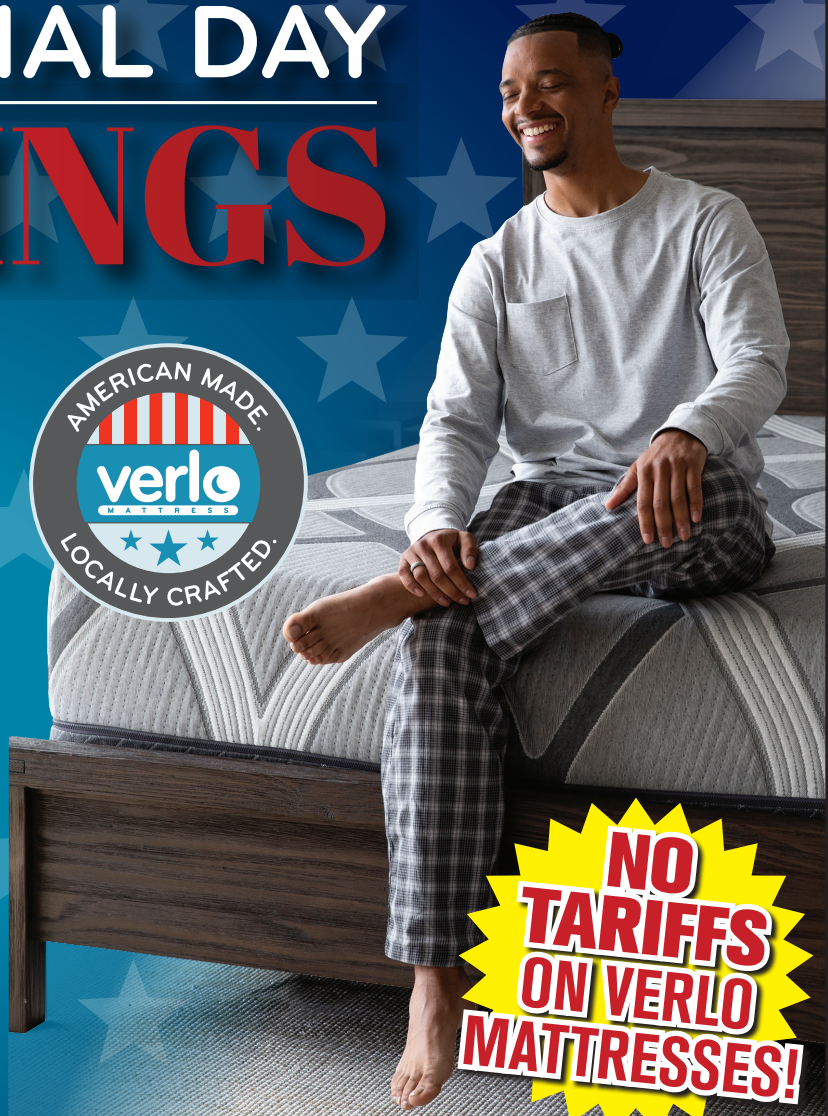
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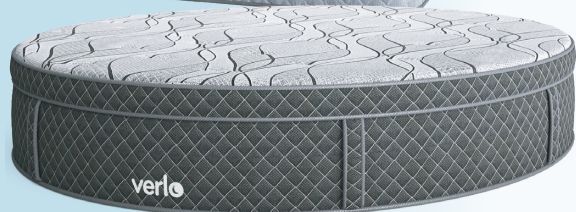
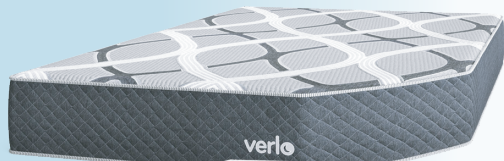
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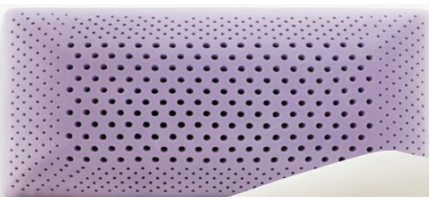
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