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Friday • November 22, 2019
Vol. 24, Issue 32 • No. 1228

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The Apollo Theater

by David Larson

The first historical mention of the Apollo Theater on North State Street in Belvidere is a newspaper article reporting that the City Council granted a building permit to a Rockford electrician, Miller, Santee and Co. in October, 1921. The state-of-the-art theater opened less than three months later on January 11, 1922. It was built by Frank Rhinehart, of The Belvidere Amusement Company. The Rhineharts were a prominent family who built and lived in a large Tudor-style mansion on North State Street and Perry Street which still stands. The construction cost was \$100,000.

The theater was designed to accommodate moving pictures, vaudeville and road shows. The entrance of wide French doors were overhung by a broad marquee rimmed with lights and surrounded by an electrical sign. Inside was a foyer, that was divided from the auditorium by ornamental wood panels, glass, and velvet curtains. Broad staircases at both ends of the foyer led to the balcony. Roomy mahogany-finished seats upholstered in padded green leather provided a capacity of 950 seats, 400 of which were balcony seats. The general color scheme blended blue, green, ivory, gray and gold. The ceiling was a watercolor mural, and the side walls had oil murals. A rich, blue-velvet curtain trimmed in gold brought focus to the auditorium.

The stage was 72 by 30 feet. The gridiron (scenery loft) extended 60 feet above the stage. The foot lighting was a double row of white, red, and blue lights which could fade from one color to the next using a dimmer. To manage the stage, Rhinehart sought out Elmer Barker, who had previously been employed at the Garrick Theater in Chicago. Barker had been the advertising man for the Garrick. Before Barker made his move to Belvidere he married Christina Fervay, a Dutch woman who also lived in Chicago. Miss Fervay had been employed as the manager of the corset department at Marshal Field and Company.

Each end of the stage had 14 different dressing rooms with hot and cold running water for the stars. Beneath the stage were 12 more rooms for other members of the acting company.

The stage and sounding board was framed with ornamental plaster that featured a hand-painted theme of a large "A" in a bed of roses.

The orchestra pit could accommodate 15 musicians. A console was built stage left for a large pipe organ. Rhinehart ordered the Hope-Jones Wurlitzer pipe organ, which could project a cathedral-like symphonic sound. It was made of over one-thousand parts powered by an electric motor.

Continued on Page 2

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Apollo *Continued from page 1*

The building had a side building next to the river that was available for rent. It had a deck for tables and chairs that reached out over the river.

Construction continued almost up until opening night. Ticket sales for opening night were by mail order until just days before opening, because the box office was not complete. Rhinehart brought in a musician from the Wurlitzer Company by the name of Mr. Ball to play the organ for the comedy "Take It From Me."

Today the Apollo is still an entertainment venue, owned and managed by the Martinez family of Belvidere.

County Board Radically Restructures its Committee System

by David Larson

At this month's Boone County Board meeting, the motion to delete the county's present 8-committee system passed by a 7-5 vote.

Under the new system, the county will have 3 Committee-of-the-Whole meetings per month. The first three Wednesdays will be Committee-of-the-Whole dates, and the fourth Wednesday will be the monthly County Board meeting date.

The new system will begin January 1, 2020. The new system will have full attendance of the board at each Committee-of-the-Whole meeting rather than only those appointed to or interested in attending a committee meeting under the old system. The rationale for the restructuring was that with this new committee-of-the-whole system, all members will be better informed when voting at the County Board meeting. Board members will be able to use time more economically, while being more informed.

Committee meetings are where most of the work of fact-finding, debate, and conclusions are drawn. With only partial board participation in the old system, virtually a third of the board passed judgment on important county issues, only to be voted upon by the full board without the benefit of the full deliberative process. The 8-committee system had become a burden on board members'

time and limited the information to more fully understand motions.

One dissenting vote came from Cathy Ward, (R) District 2. Ward stated that while she is generally in favor of the Committee-of-the-Whole system, she felt it was rushed and eliminated the City-County Coordinating Committee. The restructuring made no provision for that necessary function. Ward said that the Coordinating Committee was necessary to create better government for the community. She cited how the County pulled away from that spirit of cooperation by creating its own planning department, which has been more expensive, and does not benefit from the coordination that used to exist in City-County planning.

This change is the biggest change in County government since elected County Board members replaced the Boone County Board of Supervisor system. Illinois held a Constitutional Convention in 1970, which resulted in major changes in the Illinois Constitution. The Boone County Board of Supervisors ended when the 1970 Constitution required counties to elect county board members. The supervisor system was composed of Township Supervisors of each of Boone County's 7 townships who, as a result of their office, were also members of the County Board. Because of its larger population, Belvidere Township had additional members on the Board, who were also Belvidere Township trustees.

The creation of today's three districts resulted from a local decision on how best to form a representative government. The Constitution left the details up to the individual counties. It could have been an at large election, but pressure from the rural areas of Boone brought about the three districts, which had the effect of splitting Belvidere Township. Each of the three districts has 4 members.

In 1970 agriculture was composed of legacy farms. Today, one could speculate that a different result might be likely to occur. In light of recent experiments in Lake and McHenry Counties to eliminate township government, one wonders if the 1970 changes were a precursor to government consolidation. The age of the horse had ended and the age of the automobile had replaced it.

In Boone County a conversation has gone on in the background to consolidate Belvidere Police and the Sheriff's office under one Metro department, but lack of action has been taken to date.

Pritzker Vetoes Retroactive Tax Break for Private Jet Parts

Bill passed both chambers with overwhelming majorities

By Peter Hancock Capitol News Illinois

Democratic Gov. J.B. Pritzker on Monday vetoed a bill that would have provided a sales tax exemption on the sale of private jet parts and components retroactive to 2010 and continuing through 2024.

House Bill 3902 cleared the state House on Oct. 30 by a vote of 113-0, with one member voting "present." It passed the Senate Nov. 14 by a vote of 48-1.

Sen. Rachele Crowe, a Glen Carbon Democrat and lead sponsor of the bill in the Senate, argued that the tax exemption had been on the books for years but was allowed to lapse with almost nobody noticing. As a result, she said, aircraft repair companies continued not charging their customers for the tax, and she said it would be "absurd" to ask those companies to go back and collect it from their customers now.

Pritzker, however, said in a statement that those companies owe \$50 million in past-due taxes, interest and penalties. He said the bill would not only forgive that debt but would provide another \$10 million in tax breaks in each of the next five years.

"Giving private aircraft companies tens of millions of dollars in past due tax forgiveness is not the right fiscal decision for our state as we face billions in debt associated with unpaid bills, a multi-billion-dollar structural deficit, and critical needs in schools and public safety services," Pritzker said in his veto message.



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David Grimm April 1938 - Dec. 2000
Richelle Kingsbury Aug. 1955 - June 2013

THE BOONE COUNTY JOURNAL
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Each week, the Journal seeks to present a variety of voices. **Letters.** Every attempt will be made to print all letters received with the exception of those that are libelous or obscene. Letters should be signed and include an ID or phone number, so that we can contact the author prior to publication to verify authenticity. **Guest columns.** Community leaders are encouraged to submit guest columns consistent with our editorial guidelines for possible inclusion in the Journal. **Opinions.** The opinions expressed in the Journal are those of their authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of The Boone County Journal management or ownership.

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Community News & Events

7th Annual Stroll on State- The Rockford Area Convention and Visitors Bureau is excited to announce that the seventh annual Stroll on State, presented by Illinois Bank & Trust, is set to return on Saturday, November 30 in downtown Rockford from 2 P.M. to 9 P.M.

Community Building Complex Finance, Rules & Regulations and Building & Grounds Committee Meeting- Tuesday, December 3, 2019 at 11:45 A.M. at The Steam Plant Restaurant.

Celebrate The Season & Jingle Bell Parade- Friday, December 6, 2019 from 6:00 to 8:00 P.M. Jingle Bell Parade 6:00 sharp at Sycamore and Main.

19th Annual Toy Drive and Chili Challenge- Saturday, December 7, 2019. Doors open at 3:00 P.M. Chili challenge starts at 5:00 P.M. Located at Rockford Lodge #140 – Temple Rebekah Lodge #789. (6219 Forest Hills Road, Rockford IL). Admission is FREE just bring an unwrapped new toy or diapers/wipes. Help bring the joy of Christmas morning to children in our area. Past donations were given to Rockford area organizations such as: Mother’s House Crisis Nursery, Capron Food Pantry and Local Rockford Families. Call (815) 482-9019 for further information.

Christmas in Kirkland 2019- Christmas in Kirkland will be held on December 14, 2019, 3P.M. to 6 P.M. Events in downtown area include visits from Santa, tree decorating, Library craft and story time, face painting, raffles, wagon rides, free refreshments. The Hiawatha High School Band and Chorus will provide music. A craft sale will be held at Hiawatha High School from 2 P.M. to 6 P.M.

Community Building Complex Committee Regular Board Meeting- Thursday, December 19, 2019 at 5:00 P.M. in the Community Building Board Room.

Eight Days after Request, Lincoln Museum Shipped Gettysburg Address to Texas

Cavalier lending of priceless artifact led to former director’s ouster

by Jerry Nowicki Capitol News Illinois

Just eight days after a nonprofit organization founded by conservative commentator Glenn Beck requested it be lent a priceless, handwritten copy of the Gettysburg Address to display at a “pop-up” museum in Dallas, Texas, the staff at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum had the document packed and ready to move.

The man who is said to have overseen and expedited that loan was fired in September by Democratic Gov. J.B. Pritzker, and the state’s Office of the Inspector General released a damning report Friday revealing it recommended that termination.

“The people of Illinois are fortunate that the Gettysburg Address and other artifacts ultimately returned safely to the ALPLM in June 2018, despite the risks that were taken,” the report concluded.

The report details that former ALPLM Executive Director Alan Lowe “mismanaged” the museum by lending one of five existing copies of the Gettysburg Address that was handwritten by President Abraham Lincoln – which is valued at \$20 million – to Mercury One, “an inexperienced, unaccredited, and unknown museum.”

The report said Lowe was contacted by Beck, who was interested in helping the museum pay down approximately \$9 million in outstanding debt remaining from a \$25 million purchase of what is known as the Taper collection in 2007.

The museum eventually received \$50,869.60 in proceeds from the loan.

But the report said the risk far outweighed the small reward. The move was allowed despite a lack of written security and storage details about the destination facility, according to the report, which also said the document was handled by untrained professionals. It’s installment at the Mercury One facility was also apparently livestreamed on Facebook.

According to investigators, Lowe said the loan to Mercury One was also about publicity.

“When asked how the loan benefitted the State of Illinois, Mr. Lowe said that the people of Illinois want the ALPLM to be a nationally and internationally recognized institution, rather than a ‘mom and pop shop, where people come and look at a cabinet of curiosities,’” according to the report.

But several circumstances surrounding the loan — its quick turnaround, Lowe’s unwillingness to listen to staff, problems with the insurance certificate and lack of documentation — led investigators to call for Lowe’s immediate removal.

According to the report, Historic Preservation Agency standards were put in place in 2013 to prohibit any future loans of the Gettysburg Address because of its age, worth and condition. That agency, however, was abolished by

Continued on Page 4

NOTICE OF PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX INCREASE FOR NORTH BOONE CUSD 200

I. A public hearing to approve a proposed property tax levy increase for North Boone CUSD #200, County of Boone, State of Illinois, will be held on December 17, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the North Boone CUSD #200 District Office Building, 6248 North Boone School Road, Poplar Grove, IL 61065

Any person desiring to appear at the public hearing and present testimony to the taxing district may contact Melissa Geyman, Director of Business Services, 6248 North Boone School Road, Poplar Grove, IL 61065, 815-765-3322

II. The corporate and special purpose property taxes extended or abated for 2018 were \$9,206,425.42.

The proposed corporate and special purpose property taxes to be levied for 2019 are \$9,655,761.00. This represents a 4.88% increase over the previous year.

III. The property taxes extended for debt service and public building commission leases for 2018 were \$2,372,911.87.

The estimated property taxes to be levied for debt service and public building commission leases for 2019 are \$2,254,400. This represents a 4.99% decrease over the previous year.

IV. The total property taxes extended or abated for 2018 were \$11,579,337.29. The estimated total property taxes to be levied for 2019 are \$11,910,161.00. This represents a 2.86% increase over the previous year.

Published in The Boone County Journal November 29, 2019



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Lincoln

Continued from page 3

executive order in 2017 by former Republican Gov. Bruce Rauner.

While that executive order made ALPLM its own state agency directly responsible to the governor, it also called for the governor to appoint a board of trustees to oversee the museum. No appointments to that board were made at the time of the loan, however, and the governor's office was apparently not consulted, according to the report.

According to testimony outlined in the report, Lowe used the absence of a board to justify his complete control over the lending process. Pritzker has since appointed all 11 members to the board, which is led by former U.S. Congressman Ray LaHood. It will oversee the appointment of Lowe's successor.

Carla Smith, the museum's registrar, testified, according to the report, that most loans require at least six months advance notice before an item can be released. The Gettysburg Address was released eight days after an informal request was made.

Smith also testified that the museum never received a Standard Facility Report from Mercury One. That document is an industrywide report detailing storage plans, humidity levels, security precautions and other important aspects of the receiving facility which are expected to be completed if any loans are to take place.

The report also noted that Lowe and Michael Little, then the museum's chief operating officer, accepted travel and lodging reimbursements from Mercury One on a trip they made to Texas for the unveiling of the exhibit. Per the report, those reimbursements were accepted without approval from ethics officers.

"Both Mr. Lowe and Mr. Little travelled to Texas at Mercury One's expense in June 2018; neither took the time to oversee the Gettysburg Address and other artifacts being uncrated, installed, or repacked while they were there, but rather were there in 'marketing mode,' engaging and interacting with people Mercury One brought in for the exhibit. These networking opportunities may have provided Mr. Lowe connections for his consulting business, and likely led to employment for Mr. Little at Mercury One," according to the report.

Little, who was later hired by Mercury One, was also found to have "intentionally interfered with an (inspector general's office) revolving door investigation conducted under the Ethics Act," by claiming he had no contact with Mercury One employees in the year prior to his Dec. 5, 2018, departure as a state employee.

"Those statements were false. To the contrary, over less than three months in 2018, Mr. Little exchanged approximately 53 emails with Mercury One staff, including his new supervisor, Mercury One Executive Director Suzanne Grishman, about matters unrelated to his prospective employment at Mercury One," the report stated.

The report also found that Lowe maintains a consulting business related to archives, museums, and public policy centers, and has served on an advisory board for Mercury One since 2018, "at the same time he continued advocating for the ALPLM to make additional loans to Mercury One." The report said Lowe, who was hired in 2016 to lead the ALPLM, denied receiving any compensation from Mercury One.

Two further loans for Lincoln artifacts to the company were denied by ALPLM in 2018 and 2019 due to new protocols that were put in place after the Gettysburg Address loan.

Ideas for Curbing Corruption in Illinois, Over Time; or, How to Become Iowans

By Jim Nowlan

As readers might surmise from reading the news about Illinois, our state is arguably embedded in a political culture (patterns of behavior) of corruption (unearned personal gain at public expense). This doesn't mean that everyone in the Prairie State is corrupt, but that there is a learned disposition among too many of us that if we have a chance to take advantage of government, we might as well do so, as everyone else would do so in the same situation.

I have some ideas that could transform our disposition, but as with any cultural change, it will take time. After all, ingrained habits are hard to break.

Political cultures vary. For example, uncontrollably nice Iowans would scrunch their noses in horror at the bribery and abuse of government power that we brush off as just the way too many Illinois politicians operate.

Corruption has been part of our culture since political candidates on the Illinois frontier treated neighbors to rum and vittles in return for their votes. Later, as recently arrived, hyphenated-Americans in Chicago were shunned from legitimate business by the WASPs who arrived earlier, many turned to politics for careers in which they could do well while doing good.

Things have indeed gotten better on the corruption front in Illinois.

Some personal context: In the 1940s, my Uncle John Sanner was a house painter and GOP chair in tiny Stark County. The Republican governor offered him a "state job," which sounded better than lugging heavy wood extension ladders from house to house. Uncle John started receiving paychecks, but he had no instructions as to where to report for work. Upon inquiry he was told: "Oh, you don't have to report for work." He had a "ghost payroller" job, which he decided to turn down. There is less of that today.

Another uncle of mine was a state rep and weekly newspaper publisher. He received \$5,000 for "public relations" services from the janitorial account of state Auditor of Public Accounts Orville Hodge (1953-56), who was later convicted of embezzling \$6 million from the state. There is less of that today as well.

Maybe worse, however, the following: When I was teaching politics at the University of Illinois in Urbana in the 2000s, I asked my senior-level students across a number of different classes, many of whom were headed for law school, if they would offer an indirect bribe to get an older sibling out of a job-squelching DUI. About two out of three in every class said Yes, "As that's what others would do," and, "The brother is in a really tough bind."

I asked a professor friend in Iowa to ask his students the same. Two out of three rejected the offer.

Whether it was political legend Paul Powell in deep southern Illinois,

where many folks didn't have two nickels to rub together, or political "bigshots" in Chicago's working-class neighborhoods, residents have often looked up to these people for their ability to get things done — jobs, licenses without examination, road contracts, insider deals, whatever. And under-the-table money has often been the grease to get things done.

So, how do we become Iowans, at least when it comes to political culture and ethics?

Changing culture is difficult but can be done, over time. Look at our behavior on drinking-and-driving as well as smoking. We're doing a lot less of both. Laws played a part in this, as with lowered alcohol limits for drivers and higher taxes on smokes. Yet maybe even more important, neither is "cool" anymore. When I was in college, both were indeed cool among my social set, if you can believe it. They were the things to do.

Two important, illuminating books point the way to culture change. In "Nudge," by high-toned law professors Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein, the authors say society can be cajoled, nudged into better behavior by tapping our better instincts.

I like their illustration of the Texas Department of Transportation marketing theme of a few years back: "Don't Mess with Texas." These billboards appealed to Texan pride, which is huge, and dramatically reduced unsightly roadside waste. Maybe: "Illinois corruption corrupts our democracy."

The other book is "Behave," by Stanford neuroscientist Robert Sapolsky, who explores our human brain and why we do what we do, both good and bad. In his dense yet lively read, Sapolsky points out, among much else, that humans are wired to behave so as to achieve higher status among our group.

So, we need to convince folks that the neighborhood political "big shot" is not to be looked up to. Instead, he is a dirtbag, because his actions might from time to time taint our beloved democracy and constitution. Instead, the course to be admired is the ethical one.

Civics recently became a course required for graduation from Illinois high schools. If we use it to paint corruption as behavior about as appealing as pond scum, youngsters might seek ways other than bribery to help a brother get out of trouble.

For many years, Jim Nowlan was a senior fellow and political science professor at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. He has worked for three unindicted governors and published a weekly newspaper in central Illinois.

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State School Board to Make Emergency Rule Changes in Response to Isolation Room Report

ProPublica, Tribune investigation found 20,000 instances of forced isolation since 2017-18 school year

by Jerry Nowicki Capitol News Illinois

The state's board of education announced emergency rule changes Wednesday in response to a news story which detailed an overuse of "isolation rooms" in several Illinois public school districts, including those serving students with special education needs.

That news investigation, published by the Chicago Tribune and ProPublica Tuesday, analyzed thousands of pages of records from Illinois schools which showed "every school day, workers isolate children for reasons that violate the law."

There were more than 20,000 documented incidences of isolation used in the state from the start of the 2017-2018 school year through

December 2018, according to the report, which also relied on more than 120 interviews to detail the harrowing experiences of the children involved.

"The students, most of them with disabilities, scratch the windows or tear at the padded walls. They throw their bodies against locked doors. They wet their pants. Some children spend hours inside these rooms, missing class time. Through it all, adults stay outside the door, writing down what happens," according to the report.

In Illinois, it is legal to isolate students if they pose a safety threat to themselves or others, the report found, but the practice is used far more than in such situations.

"Children were sent to isolation after refusing to do classwork, for swearing, for spilling milk, for throwing Legos. School employees use isolated timeout for convenience, out of frustration or as punishment, sometimes referring to it as 'serving time,'" according to the report.

The report also found that while schools must document isolation instances, that documentation often goes unread, and the Illinois State Board of Education, or ISBE, does not collect any data on the practice.

On Wednesday afternoon, ISBE announced the implementation of emergency rules to "end the use of isolated seclusion in Illinois schools." A news release said the changes would be made at the request of Democratic Gov. J.B. Pritzker.

"That story, and what's happened according to that story, are appalling," Pritzker said of the ProPublica Tribune report at an unrelated news conference Wednesday morning. "...Upon reading it, my entire governor's office and our administration began to move against that."

The ISBE release said the board will ban the use of isolated seclusion in "any educational entity serving public school students in Illinois," and will begin collecting data to "increase accountability and transparency for all instances of timeout and physical restraint."

According to the release, the board will amend rules to allow timeouts with a trained adult in the room and with an unlocked door, "but only for therapeutic reasons or protecting the safety of students and staff."

The new rules will ban physical restraints that "could impair a student's ability to breathe or speak," and will institute strict parameters under which restraint is allowed. The board will also collect data of any instances of physical restraint or timeouts being used during the current and past two school years.

In the future, educational entities will be required to submit data to ISBE within 48 hours of any instance of physical restraint or timeout being employed.

School districts will also now be required to provide detailed information to parents and guardians when timeout or physical restraint is used. Regional Offices of Education will also begin to monitor the timeout spaces during regular monitoring.

Per the release, the governor's office will file a complaint "on behalf of all known cases of isolated seclusion" to expedite the investigative process. After that, ISBE will determine whether the educational entity violated federal or state special education requirements.

The news release said the board would also work with lawmakers to address the issue legislatively.

One member of the General Assembly, Democratic Rep. Jonathan Carroll of Northbrook, posted an emotional story to his website about his personal experiences with "quiet rooms," and said he would do all in his power to end the practice.

"Trust me, I know first-hand how painful being isolated can be. My childhood was very difficult. I was diagnosed with ADHD at a time where people still didn't quite understand the disorder. There were many interventions used including isolation timeouts in a locked closed space," Carroll wrote. "I am 45-years old and

still have nightmares because of this treatment."

Carroll wrote that he can recall "every detail from the smell, lighting and texture of the carpeted walls," during his time spent isolated as a child.

"Isolation was my personal Hell," he wrote. "I begged my parents to take me out of that school and when they did, it changed my life. My struggles didn't go away, but I learned better coping strategies without having to be isolated."

Carroll said he would draft legislation to ban the practice in Illinois. According to the ProPublica and Tribune report, 19 states have already banned isolation, although there are no federal laws prohibiting the practice.

ISBE Seeking Public Input on Student Testing

Officials considering major changes to annual reading, math tests

by Peter Hancock Capitol News Illinois

State education officials are seeking public input on potential significant changes to the annual reading and math tests students take each year.

The Illinois State Board of Education announced Thursday it has launched an online survey to get feedback about how to make those tests "more useful, inclusive, equitable and balanced."

"I began my tenure as state superintendent with a commitment to improving Illinois' state assessments based on feedback from the field," State Superintendent of Education Carmen Ayala said in a news release. "As a former teacher and district administrator, I know the importance of high-quality assessments that help us understand students' mastery of the learning standards and tailor instruction to meet students' needs."

Annual reading and math tests in every classroom became mandatory nationwide in 2002 with passage of the federal No Child Left Behind Act. That was an initiative of the George W. Bush administration that required schools to make "adequate yearly progress" in improving students' basic skills, with the goal of bringing all students up to a level of proficiency within 12 years.

Testing changed dramatically in 2010 when states banded together to develop the Common Core Standards, a uniform set of educational standards that were geared toward making all students ready for college or the workplace by the time they graduated high school. Those standards were eventually adopted by 41 states, including Illinois.

From 2015 until the 2018-2019 school year, Illinois administered tests for students in grades 3 through 8 that were designed around the Common Core Standards. Those tests were developed by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers, and thus became known as the PARCC assessments.

Last year, the state switched to its own version of the PARCC tests, the Illinois Assessment of Readiness. ISBE spokeswoman Jackie Matthews said that exam covers the same content and uses the same questions as the PARCC tests but is about one-third shorter.

High school students currently take a version of the PSAT exam or, for 11th-grade students, the SAT exam.

Matthews said ISBE is considering at least three major changes to the way it administers those tests, and is seeking public input about which changes should be given highest priority.

One of those is to develop a "computer adaptive" test in which each successive question might change depending on how the student performed on previous questions. Under that system, questions might get progressively difficult for students who do well on the first few

Continued on Page 7

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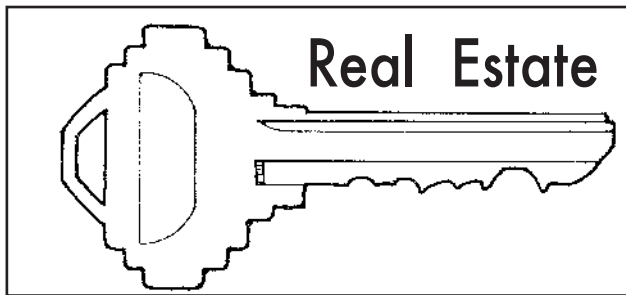


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IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, AS TRUSTEE OF CVF III MORTGAGE LOAN TRUST II, Plaintiff, -v- 2019 CH 69 ERVEY B. ROMERO A/K/A ERVEY ROMERO, ARMANDINA ROMERO Defendant

NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on July 30, 2019, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 1:00 PM on December 20, 2019, at the NLT Title L.L.C., 530 S. State, Suite 201 (Logan Avenue entrance), BELVIDERE, IL, 61008, sell at a public sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate:
Commonly known as 1098 W. 5TH STREET, BELVIDERE, IL 61008
Property Index No. 05-35-182-002
The real estate is improved with a single family residence.
The judgment amount was \$63,592.22.

Sale terms: 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, including the Judicial Sale fee for the Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund, which is calculated on residential real estate at the rate of \$1 for each \$1,000 or fraction thereof of the amount paid by the purchaser not to exceed \$300, in certified funds/or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. No fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.

Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale.

The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information.

If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1).

IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW.

You will need a photo identification issued by a government agency (driver's license, passport, etc.) in order to gain entry into our building and the foreclosure sale room in Cook County and the same identification for sales held at other county venues where The Judicial Sales Corporation conducts foreclosure sales.

For information, JOHNSON, BLUMBERG & ASSOCIATES, LLC Plaintiff's Attorneys, 230 W. Monroe Street, Suite #1125, Chicago, IL, 60606 (312) 541-9710. Please refer to file number 19-7226.

THE JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION One South Wacker Drive, 24th Floor, Chicago, IL 60606-4650 (312) 236-SALE

You can also visit The Judicial Sales Corporation at www.tjsc.com for a 7 day status report of pending sales.

JOHNSON, BLUMBERG & ASSOCIATES, LLC 230 W. Monroe Street, Suite #1125 Chicago IL, 60606 312-541-9710 E-Mail: ilpleadings@johnsonblumberg.com Attorney File No. 19-7226 Attorney Code. 40342 Case Number: 2019 CH 69 TJSC#: 39-4947

NOTE: Pursuant to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, you are advised that Plaintiff's attorney is deemed to be a debt collector attempting to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

Published in The Boone County Journal Nov 22, 29, Dec 6



LEGAL NOTICES Foreclosures

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, AS TRUSTEE OF CVF III MORTGAGE LOAN TRUST II, Plaintiff, -v- 2019 CH 69 ERVEY B. ROMERO A/K/A ERVEY ROMERO, ARMANDINA ROMERO Defendant

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agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 1:00 PM on December 20, 2019, at the NLT Title L.L.C., 530 S. State, Suite 201 (Logan Avenue entrance), BELVIDERE, IL, 61008, sell at a public sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate:

LOT FOUR (4) IN BLOCK TWELVE (12) OF COLUMBIA SUBDIVISION AS THE SAME IS PLATTED AND RECORDED IN THE RECORDER'S OFFICE OF BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

Commonly known as 1098 W. 5TH STREET, BELVIDERE, IL 61008

Property Index No. 05-35-182-002

The real estate is improved with a single family residence.

The judgment amount was \$63,592.22.

Sale terms: 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, including the Judicial Sale fee for the Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund, which is calculated on residential real estate at the rate of \$1 for each \$1,000 or fraction thereof of the amount paid by the purchaser not to exceed \$300, in certified funds/or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. No fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.

Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale.

The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information.

If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1).

IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW.

You will need a photo identification issued by a government agency (driver's license, passport, etc.) in order to gain entry into our building and the foreclosure sale room in Cook County and the same identification for sales held at other county venues where The Judicial Sales Corporation conducts foreclosure sales.

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NOTE: Pursuant to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, you are advised that Plaintiff's attorney is deemed to be a debt collector attempting to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

Published in The Boone County Journal Nov 22, 29, Dec 6

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT BOONE COUNTY - BELVIDERE, ILLINOIS

NEWREZ LLC, F/K/A NEW PENN FINANCIAL, LLC D/B/A SHELLPOINT MORTGAGE SERVICING, PLAINTIFF

vs. 2019CH58

SHERRY ZACK, AS SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ESTATE OF SIEGMUND R. COOPER; CASSIE MCDONALD A/K/A CASSIE COOPER; REINHARD COOPER; ROSA COOPER; SIEGMUND COOPER; UNKNOWN HEIRS AT LAW AND LEGATEES OF SIEGMUND R. COOPER; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS, DEFENDANTS

PUBLICATION NOTICE

The requisite affidavit for publication having been filed, notice is hereby given to you, CASSIE MCDONALD A/K/A CASSIE COOPER; UNKNOWN HEIRS AT LAW AND LEGATEES OF SIEGMUND R. COOPER; and UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NONRECORD CLAIMANTS, Defendant in the above entitled suit, that the said suit has been commenced in the Circuit Court of the 17th Judicial Circuit, Boone County, Illinois by the plaintiff against you and other defendant, praying for the foreclosure of a certain mortgage conveying the premises described as follows to wit:

LOT 178 IN FARMINGTON PHASE 5, BEING A SUBDIVISION OF PART OF THE SOUTHWEST AND SOUTHEAST QUARTERS OF SECTION 31, TOWNSHIP 44 NORTH, RANGE 4, EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED JULY 23, 1999 AS DOCUMENT NO. 1999R07029, IN THE RECORDER'S OFFICE OF BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

COMMON ADDRESS:
2307 Fairfield Trail, Belvidere, IL 61008
P.I.N.: 06-31-380-003

and which said mortgage was signed by STEGMUND R. COOPER, Mortgagor, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., acting solely as nominee for Compass Mortgage, Inc., as Mortgagee, and recorded in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds of Boone County as Document No. 2015R02117; and for such other relief prayed; that summons was duly issued out of the Circuit Court of Boone County against you as provided by law, and that the said suit is now pending.

YOU MAY BE ABLE TO SAVE YOUR HOME- DO NOT IGNORE THIS DOCUMENT. By order of the Chief Judge of the Seventeenth Judicial Circuit, this case is subject to the Residential Mortgage Foreclosure Mediation Program. You must follow the attached instructions to participate.

NOW THEREFORE, UNLESS YOU, the said above defendant, file your answer to the Complaint in said suit or otherwise make your appearance therein, in the Office of the Clerk of this Court in Boone County in Room 303 at 601 N. Main St., Belvidere, IL 61008 on or before December 23, 2019, default may be entered against you at any time after that day and a judgment entered in accordance with the prayer of said complaint.

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

Circuit Clerk Johnson, Blumberg, & Associates, LLC 230 W. Monroe Street, Suite 1125 Chicago, Illinois 60606 Email: ilpleadings@johnsonblumberg.com Ph. 312-541-9710 / Fax 312-541-9711 JB&A # IL 19 7180 13137965

Published in The Boone County Journal Nov 22, 29, Dec 6

STATE OF ILLINOIS IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

CITY OF BELVIDERE, A Municipal Corporation, Petitioner, vs. No. 2019-MR-118 TRUSTEE OF WILLIAM T. SIEMERS 2008 DECLARATION OF TRUST, DEUTSCHE BANK NATIONAL TRUST AS TRUSTEE ON BEHALF OF THE MORGAN STANLEY ABS CAPITAL I INC. TRUST 2006-HE5, MORTGAGE PASS THROUGH CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2006-HE5 DATED OCTOBER 5, 2011, DAVID HUFFMAN and BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS AS TRUSTEE. Respondents.

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION YOU, TRUSTEE OF WILLIAM T. SIEMERS 2008 DECLARATION OF TRUST, DEUTSCHE BANK NATIONAL TRUST AS TRUSTEE ON BEHALF OF THE MORGAN STANLEY ABS CAPITAL I INC. TRUST 2006-HE5, MORTGAGE PASS THROUGH CERTIFICATES, SERIES

2006-HE5 DATED OCTOBER 5, 2011, DAVID HUFFMAN and BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS AS TRUSTEE ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that this case has been commenced and is pending against you and other respondents, asking for an Order of Demolition or that the Property be declared abandoned pursuant to 65ILCS 5/11-31-1 and other relief at real property commonly known as 407 W. Madison Street, Belvidere, Illinois. Legally described as: The Easterly One-Half (1/2) of Lot Eleven (11), and the Westerly One (1) rod of Lot Ten (10), all in Nathaniel Crosby's Addition to Belvidere, Situated in the City of Belvidere according to the map of the Plat of said Addition, as recorded in the Recorder's Office of Boone County, Illinois in Book X of Deeds on page 416; situated in the County of Boone and State of Illinois. PIN: 05-26-403-024

UNLESS YOU FILE YOUR ANSWER or otherwise file your appearance in this case in the office of the Clerk of this Court Boone County, Illinois, on or before December 20, 2019, A JUDGEMENT BY DEFAULT MAY BE TAKEN AGAINST YOU FOR THE RELIEF ASKED IN THIS COMPLAINT.

Linda J. Anderson Clerk of the Court Prepared By: Michael S. Drella, City Attorney #6236991 City of Belvidere 401 Whitney Boulevard Belvidere, Illinois 61008 815/544-2612 Published in The Boone County Journal Nov 15, 22, and 29

LEGAL NOTICES Public Notices

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

PUBLICATION NOTICE In The Interest of: Cristian Campero, Minor No. 19-JA-21

To Ashlee Johnson/ To whom it may concern Respondent ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Take notice that on September 25, 2019, a petition was filed under the JUVENILE COURT ACT by Atty. Tricia Smith, State's Attorney, 601 North Main Street, Belvidere, Illinois 61008, in the Circuit Court of Boone County entitled " In the Interest of Cristian Campero, minor; and that in the County Courthouse in Belvidere, Illinois, at 1:30 P.M. central Daylight time on 12-5-19 & 1-16-20; or as soon thereafter as this cause may be heard, an adjudicatory hearing will be held upon the petition to have the child declared to be a ward of the Court under that Act. THE COURT HAS AUTHORITY IN THIS PROCEEDING TO TAKE FROM YOU THE CUSTODY AND GUARDIANSHIP OF THE MINOR, TO TERMINATE YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS, AND TO APPOINT A GUARDIAN WITH POWER TO CONSENT TO ADOPTION. YOU MAY LOSE ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS TO YOUR CHILD. IF THE PETITION REQUESTS THE TERMINATION OF YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS AND THE APPOINTMENT OF A GUARDIAN WITH THE POWER TO CONSENT TO ADOPTION YOU MAY LOSE ALL PARENTAL RIGHTS TO THE CHILD. Unless you appear you will not be entitled to further written notices or publication notices of the proceedings in this case, including the filing of an amended petition or a motion to terminate parental rights.

Now, unless you appear at the hearing and show cause against the petition, the allegations of the petition may stand admitted as against you and each of you, and an order of judgment entered.

Dated November 18, 2019 Linda J. Anderson, Circuit Clerk By: Heather Austin Deputy Clerk Published in The Boone County Journal 11/29, 12/06,13-c.

STATE OF ILLINOIS COUNTY OF BOONE TREASURER'S ANNUAL STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS FOR THE BOONE COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT #2, BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

The undersigned, Todd Endress, being first and duly sworn on oath states as follows:

Section A: That he is the duly appointed, qualified and acting Treasurer of the Boone County Fire Protection District #2, Boone County, Illinois and by virtue of said office receives for disbursement and disburses the funds of said fire protection district.

Section B: That the following is a statement of all monies received and of all monies paid out by the undersigned on behalf of said fire protection district for the fiscal year beginning May 1, 2018 and ending April 30, 2019.

ALL MONIES AND FROM WHAT SOURCE RECEIVED

CORPORATE FUND	
Property Taxes	\$ 942,220
Replacement Taxes	\$ 25,766
Illinois Municipal League	\$ 6,038
Interest Income	\$ 1,482
Non-Resident Billing	\$ 29,293
Miscellaneous Income	\$ 3,373
Total	\$ 1,008,172

ALL MONIES PAID OUT WHERE TOTAL EXCEEDS \$2,500 IN THE AGREGATE TO INDIVIDUALS OTHER THAN EMPLOYEES

5 Alarm \$2,877.00; Arlow Systems \$7527.42; Beaver Valley Electric \$2741.45; City of Belvidere \$14,145.61; City of Rockford

\$3170.22; Com Ed \$10949.46; Dinges Fire Co. \$14,524.97; Elevated Safety LLC \$11520.00; Erboe & Associates \$4,810.00; Fire Catt, LLC \$4,458.63; Fleet Safety Supply \$10,198.04; Frontier \$3598.02; Illinois Public Risk Fund \$20,534.00; Manley's Belvidere Ford Lincoln \$34,821.72; Marv's Towing & Repair, Inc. \$9432.20; Midwest Fire Equipment & Repair Co. \$2,518.00; Motorola Solutions, Inc. \$3622.50; NiCor \$5,560.78; Ottosen Britz Kelly Cooper & Gilbert \$22,565.00; Public Risk Underwriters of IL \$8126.71; R.J. Daniels Fuel & Tire \$8126.71; Rockford Information Systems \$2690.50; Rush Power Systems, LLC \$4869.20; Sipes Auto \$4130.02; Tri-City Auto Service \$4130.02; WIRFS Industries, Inc. \$6137.11.

ALL MONIES PAID OUT AS COMPENSATION FOR PERSONAL SERVICES

Under \$25,000: Jeremy Adams, Theresa Becker, Seth Bicksler, Brian Block, Brent Bryan, Zachary Bullard, Andrew Burza, Benjamin Clausing, Michael Dixon, Cory Dovenmuehle, Joshua Dummer, Matt Eby, Adam Ellwanger, Malorie Fahey, Cody Fowler, Andrew Geyer, Colton Gritzmacher, Kirk Gritzmacher, Robert Hauser, Michael Heuer, Ryan Johnson, Kyle Kampert, Rodney Kampfranz, Partick Kirane, Robert Koehn, Donald Kownacki, Mike Lowe, James Marrs, Joshua Norek, Frank Perez, Carwin Rayphole, Nicholas Reininger, John Ryan, Jr., Alyssa Schiro, Richard Schwegler, Paul Severson, Jennifer Sheppard, Nicholas Sheppard, Karen Smiley, Luke Spradling, Kevin Stark, Travis Tangye, Troy Vandenbroek, Jeremy Walton, Nathan Walton.

\$25,000 to \$49,999: Adam Brahmstedt, Thomas Dixon, Dennis Dovenmuehle, Kent Hulett, Robert Swisher.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

Corporate Fund

Beginning Balance	\$ 164,704
Beginning Capital Reserve	\$ 784,929
Total Revenues	\$ 1,008,172
Total Expenditures	\$ 731,210
Ending Capital Reserve	\$ 560,858
Ending Balance	\$ 1,292,068

I, Todd Endress, Treasurer of the Boone County Fire Protection District #2, Boone County, Illinois, do hereby certify that the above is a true copy of the Annual Treasurer's Report for the fiscal year ending April 30, 2019.

Todd L. Endress

Todd Endress

SUBSCRIBED to and SWORN before me

On the 4th day of November 2019.

/s/ Teri Becker

Notary Public

Published in *The Boone County Journal* Nov 29, 2019

STATE OF ILLINOIS IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT BOONE COUNTY

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF

Case No.19-MR-124

Candi Sue Anderson

NOTICE OF FILING PETITION FOR NAME CHANGE

Notice is hereby given, that on January 14, 2020, at 10:00 am, I will present a Petition requesting that the Court change her present name of Candi Sue Anderson, to the name of Candice Sue Anderson. The hearing will take place at the Boone County Courthouse, 601 N. Main St., Belvidere, IL 61008 Courtroom #3

Published in the Boone County Journal 11/29, 12/06,13

Testing

Continued from page 5

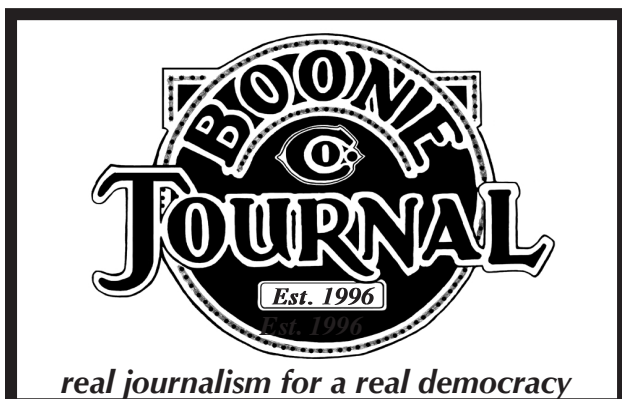
questions, or they might get easier for students who perform poorly at first. That could help teachers better identify exactly where the student is academically.

Another possible change, Matthews said, is to administer "native language" tests for students with limited English proficiency. She said that could be especially important in math exams, which are currently administered in English, making it difficult to tell if the test is measuring a student's math skills or English skills.

Finally, she said, officials are considering developing "interim" tests that could be given at different points throughout the year to track how well students are progressing toward meeting state standards for their grade level. Many districts develop and administer those on their own, Matthews said, but the survey will measure interest in having the state develop standardized interim tests that are written around the state's educational standards.

ISBE will use the survey results when it begins the process of developing new tests in December. That's when agency staff will present a "Request for Sealed Proposals" from test developers that will be guided by the survey results. The state board is expected to take action on those proposals in January.

Meanwhile, the agency said tests given this coming spring will remain the same. Whatever new tests the state adopts will go into effect in 2021.



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Bill Would Cut Off Lawmaker Pay the Day They Leave Office

Murphy cites Arroyo's Nov. 1 resignation as another reason to end 'pay benefit'

by Rebecca Anzel Capitol News Illinois

A measure preventing lawmakers from receiving pay for days they did not hold office has remained in legislative limbo since its introduction in January. Its sponsor said the "simple, commonsense" fix is necessary to address the General Assembly's "culture."

Representatives and senators are paid in 12 equal disbursements on the last working day of each month. Currently, the statute allows legislators to collect a full month's salary as long as they hold office at least part of that period, meaning a lawmaker can receive a full month's pay for working just one day.

Springfield Republican Rep. Mike Murphy's bill proposes to end that "pay benefit," he said, and conform the legislature's salary structure to one akin to the private sector's.

According to his legislation, "A member who has held office any part of the month, but not for the entire month, is entitled to compensation only for those days during that month that he or she held office."

Murphy said the resignation of former Rep. Luis Arroyo, a Democrat from Chicago, highlighted the need for his initiative.

Arroyo was arrested on federal bribery charges in late October but waited until Nov. 1 — the same day a special investigative panel was to consider whether to expel him from the chamber — to officially resign.

Because he held office for one day in November, Arroyo will be paid his legislative salary for the entire month when paychecks are issued Nov. 27, in accordance with state law, a spokesperson with the comptroller's office confirmed.

"This is something very simple to me — if you work a day, you'll get paid a day," Murphy said.

His measure, proposed in January, has not been assigned to a substantive committee and cannot move through the legislative process until it does.

Murphy said he hopes "the attitude is changing" in the General Assembly to allow his initiative to receive consideration by his colleagues across the aisle when they return to the Capitol in the spring, but that he has not "seen anything to make me believe that yet."

He added that while his bill would save "some money," it would not be "a significant amount of money."

"It's more about the culture, the attitude," Murphy said. "How are we going to perform here? Are we going to do it in an up-front, honest and commonsense way, or are we going to have special deals to question everything? To me, it's very simple. This is what we should do."

His bill was one of several other reform initiatives proposed by Republicans — Murphy estimated the number to be around 30 — that were not addressed by the General Assembly during the fall veto session. Lawmakers approved two bills — one creating an ethics reform commission and another requiring greater lobbyist transparency — despite Republican claims the measures were partisan and watered down.

Chicago Democratic Rep. Gregory Harris did not respond to a request for comment by time of publication. He is the House Majority Leader and chair of the Rules Committee, which acts as a gatekeeper for legislation that passes through that chamber.

Murphy's proposal is House Bill 818. It has six co-sponsors, all Republicans.

U.S. Supreme Court Won't Review Illinois 'Felony Murder' Law

But lawmakers may change law allowing convictions for deaths caused by a third party

by Peter Hancock Capitol News Illinois

The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday declined to hear an appeal challenging a controversial state law that allows someone to be convicted of murder, even if the death is caused by someone else, if it occurs during the commission of another forcible felony.

The ruling means the Illinois law still stands, although at least two bills have been introduced in the state General Assembly to narrow how it's applied.

One of those bills was prompted by a recent controversy in Lake County when five teenagers were initially charged with murder after a homeowner shot and killed another boy when he saw the group trying to break into a car on his property. State's Attorney Michael Nerheim later dropped those charges amid pressure from community groups and civil rights activists.

The case before the nation's high court, however, involved an incident April 30, 2012, when three men attempted to burglarize an electronics store. According to Givens' Supreme Court petition, 19 officers responded to a report of the break-in. They surrounded the building and called for the men to surrender, but they attempted to flee the building in a van. Officers began shooting, eventually firing 77 bullets into the vehicle, killing one of the men, David Strong.

The other two men, John Givens and Leland Dudley, who were both 32 at the time, were each shot several times but survived. They were convicted of murder for Strong's death because, even though it was police who shot and killed him, his death occurred during the commission of a forcible felony.

Givens, who is now confined to a wheelchair, was sentenced to 20 years in prison for the murder, according to Illinois Department of Corrections information. Dudley received a 25-year sentence.

The Illinois Appellate Court rejected Givens' appeal in November 2018 and the Illinois Supreme Court upheld that decision in March, prompting the appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

While most states have similar laws, critics of the Illinois statute say it's one of the broadest in the nation because it is based on what is called a "proximate cause" theory — that is, that the death "proximately" resulted from another underlying criminal activity, even if the death was caused by someone else.

Givens' attorneys from the State Appellate Defender's office argued in their petition that the law violates the U.S. Constitution's guarantee of due process because it allows for a first-degree murder conviction without any showing that the defendant intended to cause a person's death. They also argued that Givens was denied due process because the law creates, "a conclusive presumption of guilt for murder once the state proves that he committed an underlying, independent predicate felony."

Finally, they argued the law violates the Eighth Amendment's prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment because it allows for the same sentence that would apply to a person convicted of intentional murder.

The Supreme Court gave no reason for its decision. The case was simply listed as one of dozens of cases the court declined Monday to hear.

Rachel Kindstrand, one of Givens' attorneys from the Appellate Defender's office, said she was "deeply disappointed" in the Supreme Court's decision not to review the case. A spokeswoman for Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Meanwhile in the General Assembly, Sen. Robert Peters, a Chicago Democrat who serves on the Criminal Law Committee, introduced Senate Bill 2292, on Oct. 28, the first day of the just-completed veto session.

That would narrow the current law by requiring that the defendant or another participant in the underlying crime actually causes the death of another person.

In a statement at the time, Peters said his bill was an initiative of the group Restore Justice and is intended as a direct response to the incident in Lake County involving the five teenagers initially charged with another teen's death.

"Incarceration rates are disturbingly high as it is," Peters said in the statement. "These laws do nothing to improve safety in our community and are not an effective way to combat the unforgivable crowding of our jails and prisons. They are quite simply not a reflection of any sort of justice we should strive for as a society."

In an interview Monday, Peters said he believes the law is too broad and allows prosecutors to "stack on" charges against defendants, often people of color who have to rely on a public defender to represent them.

"I think there's something we can do in Illinois to prevent (the law) from being applied so broadly," he said.

Peters' bill is nearly identical to House Bill 1615, introduced Jan. 31 by Rep. Justin Slaughter, a Chicago Democrat who serves on the House Judiciary — Criminal Committee.

So far, neither bill has been referred to a substantive committee.

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