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Which Theatres Should Be Saved?

By Charles Herbst

In 2023, with a tornado severely damaging Belvidere's Apollo Theatre; government grants of \$4 million to restore Rockford's Times Theatre; the closing and rescue of the Pickwick Theatre, an art-deco masterpiece in Park Ridge; a City of Chicago plan to save the Congress Theater; and the closing of the Downer on the East Side of Milwaukee, our attention has been drawn to the fate of America's movie theatres.

One of the staples of American Twentieth Century life was the movie palace. Along with department stores, huge churches, and magnificent courthouses, these landmarks defined the centers of great cities as well as small towns.

For many Americans, the time spent at these theatres represents some of the happiest moments of their lives, and these buildings hold great sentimental value. The theatres were largely built in a pre-television era of radio and newspapers. It was the place where audiences saw newsreels of World War II and President Roosevelt. While many of the movies were forgettable, some of America's best-loved and most influential films were shown there, including *Casablanca*, *The Long, Long Trailer*, *It's a Wonderful Life*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Gone With the Wind*, *Mary Poppins*, *The Exorcist*, *Star Wars*, *Jurassic Park*, and *Saving Private Ryan*.

Many of the most ornate theatres were built around the 1920s, making these buildings about 100 years old. Often, these theatres were built by movie studios to showcase their wares. Paramount and 20th Century Fox come to mind. Some theatres were built with a full stage and fly tower to accommodate vaudeville and other live shows.

While many of the theatres sit in various states of disrepair, they remain beloved, if neglected. There are thousands of these throughout the United States, and Northern Illinois is no exception. Often these theatres featured an Art Deco or art moderne design, that was popular when they were constructed. The discovery and opening of King Tutankhamen's grave in 1922 started a craze for all things Egyptian. Not surprisingly, many theatres featured an Egyptian motif. Greek and Italian ornamentation was also popular.

Time marches on

Technology gave us "those magnificent talkies," but it also continued to evolve. In the early 1950s, a new form of entertainment emerged. Everyone was buying their first television set in order to see *The Milton Berle Show*. One no longer had to go to the theatre for video entertainment. Often, movies were shown on television that had been exclusively in the theatres just a few months before. Waiting for the movie to come to television became a common strategy.

Television did not kill the movie theatre, but the moviegoing experience did change. There



The Hub



The Egyptian

was still the opportunity to take in "dinner and a movie" once a week or so, and going to the movies remained a romantic venue for a teenage date. But the audience for each movie started getting smaller. There was no longer a demand for venues like Rockford's Midway Theatre, where 2000 people could watch the same film at the same time.

As a result, the multiplex was born. To stimulate demand, moviegoers were given their choice of a dozen or so films to watch. Most of the multiplexes were rather plain and utilitarian in design. Often, older theatres were carved up into much smaller rooms so multiple features could be shown simultaneously.

As time went on, it became possible to rent or even buy copies of movies at video stores. This meant that movies were available on demand, whenever and wherever the consumer wanted to

watch them. The viewer chose when to watch a film, rather than consulting the theatre's ad in the newspaper or the TV Guide for showtimes.

Today film distribution takes place over the Internet, even at the theatres. The video stores, like the theatres and the local TV stations, have become unnecessary middlemen. Studios now distribute their product through Netflix, Amazon, or a whole host of other online movie vendors. Reel-to-reel motion pictures are a quaint anachronism.

The studio system of the Twentieth Century no longer dominates film making. Absent blockbuster special effects like those found in *Avatar*, it's now much easier and less expensive to make a high-quality film. The film festival circuit is thriving and is part of a golden age of high-quality, often low-budget indie films. Locally, the

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OP-ED

Helmets to Hardhats Helps Veterans Transition

By **Tim Drea**
President, Illinois AFL-CIO

For many veterans, moving into a meaningful career can be challenging, even alienating. Zara Jefferies' union made the transition from helmet to hard hat smooth and rewarding.

Zara joined the military out of high school, after trying college and learning it wasn't a good fit. She jumped into an HVAC training program and ultimately became a staff sergeant in the Air National Guard – U.S. Air Force, where she serves today.

United Association (UA) Local 137 Plumbers and Steamfitters Union in Springfield reached out when they learned Zara was looking for an HVAC career. Knowing her background in HVAC, they proposed she join the union's apprenticeship pro-

gram to train as a plumber through the national Helmets to Hardhats program that helps provide the licensing, certificates and professional training to veterans in a career similar to their military job.

Veterans name finding a job as the greatest challenge in transitioning to civilian life. Many employers see military service as a resume gap and others shy away from hiring active servicemen for fear that they will be deployed. Today, on this Veterans Day, Zara has the flexibility to take time off for drills and deployments. Through her union, Zara knows that her job is protected when she is called for duty.

Zara knows the other union members serving in her squadron. They share a bond, seeing each other at union meetings, on job sites, and even taking trips together on the weekends. They created a deeper connection, personally and professionally. When her military time eventually ends, these connections will help her transition into civilian life full time.

As Zara Jefferies works happily toward her plumbers license and certificate while serving our country, many other veterans and servicemen without the added support of a union are not so lucky.

Veterans struggle to convert those skills they learned in the military into rewarding, meaningful careers back at home. They lack the professional networks needed to find the right career fit. They are unemployed or underemployed, even after showing the work ethic and discipline to serve proudly.

The Helmets to Hardhats program is organized

labor's commitment to make those connections easier for our veterans.

We share a common purpose of a higher duty to service. Veterans often share the core values, specific training and an unrelenting focus on getting the job done right that makes them a success in union construction jobs. GI bill benefits allow veterans to go through on-the-job training – debt-free schooling where the benefits can be used as a monthly housing allowance during apprenticeships.

Across the United States for the past 20 years, Helmets to Hardhats has helped more than 41,000 military service members find high-quality careers and training in the construction industry. Today, the affiliate union and partner contractors operate more than 1,600 U.S. training centers. H2H identifies areas where veterans have a career interest, and then it connects them with appropriate apprenticeships to match those skills and interests in a location that works for them and their families.

Join us this Veterans Day in honoring our military service members and veterans by thanking them for their service, and take it a step further: if you know of a veteran who needs a better career direction, urge them to consider the Helmets to Hardhats program. Our veterans have proven they have what it takes to be successful, and organized labor wants to make sure they follow through on that promise.

Tim Drea is president of Illinois AFL-CIO in Springfield and is a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps.



- David "Bailey" Bailey, 58, Belvidere, October 31
- Barbara Bloomfield, 72, Belvidere, November 3
- Richard "Butch" Blunt, 80, Belvidere, October 22
- Anna Dale, 90, Garden Prairie, November 2
- Paul Donhowe, 78, Belvidere, November 3
- Karin Dorn, 77, Formerly of Belvidere, November 2
- Bette Gazda, 98, Belvidere
- Enrique Godinez Garcia, 69, Belvidere, October 26
- James Hatcher, Belvidere, October 28
- William Matteson, 87, Harvard, October 29
- Pedro Osorio, 32, Harvard, October 29
- Viola Pike, 92, Belvidere, November 4
- Richard Schrack, 81, Belvidere, October 28
- Hans Sorensen, 95, Formerly Marengo, November 2
- Dianne Uramkin, 82, Harvard, October 28

State Gets 9th Recent Credit Upgrade

All 3 major rating agencies have moved Illinois back into 'A' territory after decades of downgrades

By **Jerry Nowicki** Capitol News Illinois

Illinois received another credit upgrade Tuesday, the same day a legislative committee once again scrutinized Gov. JB Pritzker's administration for its handling of unemployment claims during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The upgrade came from Fitch Ratings, the last remaining holdout of the nation's three major credit reporting agencies to advance the state's status to "A" grade. Collectively, Fitch, S&P Global Ratings and Moody's Investors Service have given the state nine credit upgrades since 2021.

Credit upgrades generally make it cheaper for the state to borrow money, playing a major role in investors' assessment of risk in buying state bonds. Fitch moved Illinois to an A-, up from the BBB+ rating it had given the state last year. Illinois' ratings had been on a general downward trajectory across administrations of both parties since the mild recession two decades ago.

Read more: Moody's upgrades Illinois' credit rating

Fitch's review of state finances drew similar conclusions to those that came before it: reserves are growing while long-term liabilities, including pension debt, remain "an elevated but still moderate burden."

"Reserves have improved to historically high levels for the state and provide an important fiscal cushion, but levels remain relatively modest versus other states," Fitch said in its analysis. "Management has eliminated many outstanding budgetary liabilities and established a sustainable pattern of smoother fiscal decision-making."

The state's "rainy day" fund – officially referred to as the Budget Stabilization Fund – had

a balance of nearly \$2 billion as of Tuesday.

Read more: State's 'rainy day' fund hits record-high balance ahead of new fiscal year

Still, the state's unfunded pension liabilities sit at roughly \$140 billion – a number representing what the state would owe if every pensioner sought to collect benefits at once. While an indicator of the pension funds' financial health, it does not reflect their current ability to pay out benefits that are owed.

In recent years, lawmakers have allocated hundreds of millions of dollars beyond statutory requirements to Illinois' pension funds, lessening future liabilities. Fitch called those payments "helpful, but insufficient to address this structural budget gap."


It also warned the rating could once again be lowered if Illinois returns to a point of "irresolute and contentious fiscal decision-making" which had become commonplace over several recent administrations, especially during the two years the state went without a budget between 2015 and 2017.

"We are continuing to right the past fiscal wrongs in our state with disciplined fiscal leadership, and credit rating agencies and businesses alike are taking notice of Illinois' remarkable progress," Pritzker said in a statement.

Read more: Pension debt grows to \$139.7 billion

The upgrade was issued, Fitch noted, because Illinois is planning on issuing bonds next week to continue financing a pension buyout program

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REAL JOURNALISM FOR A REAL DEMOCRACY

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

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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.

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Gun Rights Groups to Seek Supreme Court Ruling on Assault Weapons

High court already set to consider several gun-related cases this term

By Peter Hancock Capitol News Illinois

Gun rights advocacy groups say they intend to ask the U.S. Supreme Court to review the state's assault weapons ban after a federal appeals court on Friday refused to block enforcement of the law.

In a statement Saturday, the Illinois State Rifle Association said it was not surprised by the 7th Circuit panel's 2-1 decision, which said plaintiffs in the consolidated cases had not met their burden to show they were likely to win in a constitutional challenge to the law.

"It has always been and is our intent to take our case to the U.S. Supreme Court where we believe we can get a favorable ruling for law-abiding gun owners in Illinois," the organization said. "We will continue to stand up for the Second amendment and Illinois law-abiding gun owners and against our anti-gun Governor Pritzker and General Assembly."

In addition, the National Foundation for Gun Rights – which provided attorneys involved in the consolidated case – said it will appeal as well.

"Semi-auto bans like Illinois' strike right at the heart of the Second Amendment and are completely inconsistent with multiple Supreme Court precedents," the organization said in a statement. "We will keep fighting and are preparing to appeal this outrageous ruling."

The 7th Circuit's decision on Friday left in place the state's assault weapons ban as well as local bans enacted by Cook County and the cities of Chicago and Naperville.

The state of Illinois and the city of Naperville both enacted their bans in response to a mass shooting last year at an Independence Day parade in Highland Park that left seven people dead and dozens more injured or traumatized.

Authorities say the alleged shooter in that incident used a Smith & Wesson M&P 15 semiautomatic rifle and carried three 30-round magazines. That type of gun and magazine are now banned under the state's assault weapons law.

The majority opinion from the 7th Circuit focused on whether that type of weapon, or others like it, were protected under the Second Amendment.

That opinion, written by Judge Diane Wood and cosigned by Judge Frank Easterbrook, drew a distinction between the types of "bearable" arms commonly used for self-defense and the type of weapons typically reserved only for military uses.

"The State of Illinois, in the legislation that lies at the heart of these cases, has decided to regulate assault weapons and high-capacity magazines — a decision that is valid only if the regulated weapons lie on the military side of that line and thus are not within the class of arms protected by the Second Amendment. Several

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Federal Appeals Court Upholds Illinois' Assault Weapons Ban

2-1 ruling sets up likely appeal to U.S. Supreme Court

By Peter Hancock & Hannah Meisel Capitol News Illinois

In a 2-1 ruling Friday, a federal appeals court declined to block enforcement of the state's assault weapon ban as well as similar local ordinances, saying the rights guaranteed under the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution are not absolute.

The judges sided with two lower court decisions from the Chicago area but overturned the ruling of a federal court in southern Illinois, stating that the plaintiffs "have not shown the likelihood of success on the merits, based on the fact that military weapons lie outside the class of arms to which the individual right applies."

"The Second Amendment to the Constitution recognizes an individual right to 'keep and bear Arms.' Of that there can be no doubt," the majority opinion began, citing a string of recent Supreme Court cases. "But as we know from long experience with other fundamental rights, such as the right to free speech, the right peaceably to assemble, the right to vote, and the right to free exercise of religion, even the most important personal freedoms have their limits."

Still, Friday's decision applied only to the preliminary injunction and did not amount to a definitive ruling on constitutionality, the court noted.

The decision involved three consolidated cases that challenged the state's assault weapon ban as well as local ordinances enacted in Cook County, Chicago and Naperville. Both the state law and the Naperville ordinance were passed in response to a mass shooting last year at an Independence Day parade in Highland Park that left seven people dead and dozens more injured and traumatized.

Illinois lawmakers passed the state law during a special lame duck session in January, and Democratic Gov. JB Pritzker signed it within hours of its passage out of the General Assembly.

Read more: Pritzker signs assault weapon sales, manufacturing ban

The new law sparked immediate challenges in both state and federal courts. The Illinois Supreme Court upheld the law in August against narrow challenges under the state constitution. But the broader legal issues were aired in federal

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Credit Rating

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that's anticipated to shave \$1.4 billion off the state's pension liability over its lifetime.

Also in recent years, Illinois has reduced its "backlog" of unpaid bills to within a 30-day accounts payable cycle. That effort was boosted by an \$898 million allocation to pay off old group health insurance bills last year, which passed as part of a broader plan to pay down debt accrued by the unemployment insurance trust fund during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The unemployment fund was about \$4.5 billion in the red at its lowest point, but lawmakers approved multiple cash infusions to pay off the debt to avoid further massive tax hikes on employers.

IDES Scrutinized

The nature of that unemployment trust fund debt was the subject of scrutiny at an unrelated committee hearing Tuesday.

The Legislative Audit Commission, a bipartisan bicameral group that reviews state audits, questioned Ray Marchiori, the acting director of the Department of Employment Security who previously served as the agency's chief of staff before Pritzker appointed him director in January.

The committee was discussing a state auditor general report from July which showed Illinois overpaid unemployment benefits to the tune of \$5.2 billion during the first 18 months of the COVID-19 pandemic. Much of it went to fraudulent claimants, including hundreds of dead or incarcerated individuals.

During the pandemic, IDES' phone lines and website couldn't handle the sudden spike of individuals trying to file for benefits. State officials scrambled to contract with outside entities to both increase staff and stand up a new federally funded program for people traditionally ineligible for unemployment insurance. That program, called Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, was designed to give benefits to people such as gig workers and freelancers, and was the subject of about \$3.2 billion of the overpayments.

The audit found the rush created weaknesses that fraudsters would go on to exploit when the state temporarily halted its process of crossmatching claims against five other databases to verify eligibility.

The audit noted that Illinois failed to follow federal recommendations in May 2020 to prevent some of the fraud. It wasn't until September 2021 that IDES implemented the use of a multi-state crossmatching tool called the Integrity Data Hub, according to the audit.

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CHARLES HERBST, J.D., LL.M.
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Theaters

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Beloit International Film Festival annually showcases over 100 of these films across a ten-day period. Rather than showing them in a large movie theatre, they are usually shown at smaller venues, many of which are attached to a restaurant with full liquor service.

Movie theatres are obsolete

Despite their sentimental appeal, most of the theatres will not survive. Many, like Marengo's Colonial Theatre—nee Royal—have already had their date with the wrecking ball. Despite heroic efforts, some of the best have already been lost, and others are all-but-certain to fall.

Renovating a 100-year-old theatre today generally takes tens of millions of dollars. Even after a theatre is restored, operating expenses are high, and a historic building is in constant need of maintenance. The economics of operating a theatre today make it a losing proposition.

A few of the theatres have managed to survive. For those lucky ones, it's been a labor of love and has required considerable financial resources.

We contacted several surviving theatres and asked if we could tell their stories and what it takes to save a theatre. We were surprised to be rebuffed by several, including a few well-known, local theatres that have received considerable public largesse. We appreciate the two of them who were kind enough to welcome us.

Both of their stories are worth a screenplay of their own, and well worth a visit.

The Egyptian

DeKalb

A fairy-tale ending

The Egyptian Theatre was designed by architect Elmer F. Behrns and opened in 1928. It includes a fly tower above the stage and an orchestra pit. Originally, the theatre was to connect to a hotel that, given the economic times, was never built. Over 100 Egyptian-style theatres were built across the United States, but today, DeKalb's Egyptian is one of only six that survive. In 1978, the theatre was listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The theatre has a modern capacity of 1430 seats and is the largest auditorium in DeKalb County.

The theatre started out showing silent movies and vaudeville acts and gradually converted to a program of film presentations.

Until renovations in 2020, the theatre lacked air conditioning. By the 1970s, the theatre had fallen into disrepair and was donated to the City of DeKalb. In 1978, a group of concerned citizens formed a nonprofit organization to save the

theatre from demolition. When the National Register designation was made, the theatre qualified for a \$2.3 million state grant to restore the theatre.

In 2006, modern lighting and sound systems were added. Interestingly, the original projection booth is still functional and original, reel-to-reel movies are occasionally shown on the big screen. For the theatre's 90th anniversary, a film was chosen to represent each decade. The nine films were shown using the reel-to-reel projector.

In 2019-20, the building went through another renovation and an expansion to the south. The lobby was expanded, a new refreshment area, and modern restrooms were added. A new conference room was also added. The \$6.5 million project included an air conditioning system that uses the theatre's original ductwork. The project was financed by a \$2 million grant from Illinois, \$1.7 million in individual donations, \$2.5 million in tax increment financing, and a \$400,000 loan which is being paid down with revenue from the theatre's operations. The addition blends seamlessly with the original building.

As theatres go, the Egyptian has been quite successful. The best-performing nonprofit theatres

temporary theatre rather than a relic of the past. The Executive Director, Alex Nerad, came to the theatre as a student at Northern Illinois University to work the sound system. Twenty years later, he's still there. Jeanine Holcomb, Marketing and Communications Director, grew up in DeKalb. She fondly remembers her ballet lessons and recital at the theatre. Ballet lessons on the stage continue to be an integral part of the venue.

The theatre has also hosted Pride and Black Film Festivals. It is known for an annual Asian studies and Anime festival that is usually held in September. A Christmas tradition is to show *It's a Wonderful Life* every December.

The Hub

Rochelle

A repurposed landmark

Like the Egyptian, the Hub Theatre was designed by Elmer F. Behrns. It opened in 1931. In the 1980s, it was converted to a multiplex.

Many people tried to save the Hub as a movie theatre. Local volunteers often worked hard to restore and maintain the building. In the end, their gallant efforts were not enough. But a white

knight came along with a plan to save the historic structure.

Kennay Farms has been a large family farm operating in the Rochelle area for generations. The farm consists of 3500 acres of corn, rye, and wheat. One of Rick Kennay's goals was to take their corn crop and turn it into a higher-value product. Rick's nephew, Adam Kennay, re-

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The ornate interior of the Egyptian Theatre in DeKalb

generally earn about 50 to 60 percent of their operating expenses from revenues. In the case of the Egyptian, about 80 percent of operations are covered by the box office and rentals. The remainder consists of grants, donations, sponsorships, local foundations, and state and corporate grants.

The Egyptian has tried to rely on a diversity of revenue streams. The theatre hosts about 180 events per year, with about 25-30 being national touring acts. About thirty local groups use the theatre annually. The pandemic illustrated what happens when there is no box office revenue for fifteen months.

A young, energetic staff operates the theatre with great dedication to its success. There is a strong emphasis on making the Egyptian a living, con-



The bar at the Hub overlooking the distillery



The distillery at the Hub on the main floor of the theatre



The Egyptian in the early days

Theatres

from page 4

turned to Rochelle with a degree in chemistry and experience as a professional distiller at an ethanol plant. Putting their heads together, the Kennays decided to establish the largest distillery in Illinois and locate it in the Hub Theatre Building. They also have a small brewery there.

In 2016, Kennay acquired the building and the old Lincoln School from the City of Rochelle. Happily, the Kennays donated Lincoln School to a local group who fixed up the old school and uses it for community theatre. The agreement with the city called for the Kennays to settle the debts of the theatre, including paying the many who had labored and spent money on materials for the theatre building.

Kennay used mostly local suppliers to build the distillery, including architect Jennifer Spencer, of Anderson Architects in Rockford.

It has been no small undertaking. It took three years to build the start-up distillery at the theatre. In addition, liquor must age for several years before it is ready to drink, and the business is still in its infancy. A large building was constructed in back of the theatre to age the product.

In addition to its store and bar at the Hub, Kennay Farms Distilling sells its products at local liquor stores including Woodman's, where we met Rick Kennay offering samples of his whiskey. His clients are generally located in a fifty-mile radius that includes the Quad Cities and Naperville. The distillery produces whiskey, rye, bourbon, vodka, and gin. His Kennay Farms



The Colonial Theatre in Marengo

spirits sell in the \$30/750ml range.

Considerable effort was made to preserve the character of the building. Many aspects of the theatre's architecture and ornamentation are still intact. The lobby has a store and gift shop. The distillery is located in the theatre's house and stage area. The frame of the stage remains.

Stairs and an elevator off the lobby take you to the balcony, which has been converted to a cozy, comfortable lounge with a fireplace in the corner. Sitting at the bar, one can view the distillery below through a glass wall. On the street

side of the balcony is a glass-enclosed, private party room, which leads to an outdoor balcony overlooking the original Lincoln Highway. This outdoor balcony is a restoration of the building's original outdoor balcony, which had been removed and replaced with a streamlined, overhanging marquee in the 1950s.

The bar is only licensed to serve Kennay's products, including beer, and does not serve food, although several local restau-

rants will deliver meals to the distillery. It is currently open limited hours, generally Fridays and Saturdays from 4 until 8.

Rick Kennay admits that establishing the distillery has been an expensive risk, and, with the long lead time the business has, it's too soon to know whether it will be a success. He said it would have been cheaper to have built the distillery at the farm, but he wanted to contribute to Downtown Rochelle. Claiming that he "mortgaged everything," Kennay said he would "do it again" if only for the interesting people he has met.

Trick or Treating is Well Established in Belvidere

By David Larson

The Belvidere Chamber of Commerce has turned up the treating in trick or treating at least 2 notches with Downtown Business Trick or Treat. Just like Henry Ford brought mass production efficiency to manufacturing automobiles, the chamber's Trick or Treat fantasia has moved the collection of candy to a more efficient level. Business booths side-by-side passing out candy as far as the eye could see on State Street. For a child what could be better...right?

In 2020, when COVID was keeping everyone indoors. In response, the chamber held a Trunk or Treat at Hamblock Motors in a drive-through style. It was so well attended that it backed up traffic on Appleton Road to Jackson Street. On that success, the Downtown Business Trick or Treat was created in 2021. In the first year downtown, it only went from Pleasant Street to First Street on South State Street. It proved to be a success such that the chamber knew it had a winning idea to bring people into the Central Business District and market local businesses.

When 2022 rolled around, the chamber was geared to go and wanted to measure its success. With a contact from a neighboring chamber, on loan, a program was used to ping cell phones during the event. The data collected informed



The crowd during the Downtown Business Trick or Treat

Chamber Photo

the chamber that 3800 cell phones attended plus additional data points before and after. Over 4,000 people attended and 75 businesses provided candy for the trick or treaters that year.

With the event showing room for growth, an estimated 5,000 to 6,000 attended this year and 100 business participated.

Amy Nord, Executive Director of the Belvidere Area Chamber of Commerce said, "We look forward to hosting the event next year and hope it will continue to grow."

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LEGAL NOTICES

In the Circuit Court of the 17th judicial circuit Boone County, Illinois
In the Matter of: K. ROBERT BLIETZ, Decedent. 2023PR42
NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION-WILLAND CLAIMS

NOTICE is given of the death of K. Robert Blietz, on May 29, 2023. Letters of Office were issued on September 6, 2023, to William Blietz, who is the legal representative of the estate. The attorney for the estate is Attorney Charles G. Popp, P.C., 215 South State Street, Belvidere, Illinois.

Claims against the estate may be filed on or before May 10, 2023, that date being at least six (6) months from the date of first publication, or within three (3) months from the date of mailing or delivery of Notice to creditors, if mailing or delivery is required by 755 ILCS 5/18-3, whichever date is later. Any claim not filed by the requisite date stated above shall be barred.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the office of the Boone County Circuit Clerk--Probate Division at the Boone County Courthouse, 600 N. Main St, Belvidere, IL 61008, or with the estate legal representative, or both.

Copies of claims filed with the Circuit Clerk's Office--Probate Division, must be mailed or delivered to the estate legal representative and to his/her attorney within ten days after it has been filed.

Published in *The Boone County Journal* Oct 26/ Nov 2, 9, 2023

NOTICE OF TRUST

TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED in the legal affairs of Donald O. Thornwall, deceased, who died on or about August 31, 2023;

You are hereby notified that Ellen J. Thornwall is the trustee of the Donald O. Thornwall and Joyce Thornwall Trust dated May 23, 2013, as amended. At this time, no probate administration is contemplated with regard to the estate of Joyce Thornwall or the estate of Donald O. Thornwall.

Any action to contest the validity of the trust must be brought in the District Court of Boone County, Iowa, within the later to occur of four months from the date of second publication of this notice, or thirty days from the date of mailing this notice to all heirs of the decedent, spouse of the decedent, and beneficiaries under the trust whose identities are reasonably ascertainable. Any suit not filed within this period shall be forever barred.

Notice is further given that all persons indebted to the decedent or to the trust are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned trustee. Persons or entities having claims against the trust must mail them to the trustee at the address listed below via certified mail, return receipt requested. Unless creditor claims are mailed by the later to occur of four months from the second publication of this notice or thirty days from the date of mailing this notice, the claim shall be forever barred, unless otherwise allowed or paid.

Dated this 2 day of November, 2023
 Elissa M. Hodges, Attorney for the Trust
 Hodges Law, PLC
 1205 N. Ankeny Blvd., Ste. 201
 Ankeny, IA 50023
 (515) 465-1400
DONALD O. THORNWALL
& JOYCE THORNWALL TRUST
 Ellen J. Thornwall, Successor Trustee
 637 Greene St.
 Slater, IA 50244
 Published in *The Boone County Journal* Nov 2/ 9, 2023

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COUNTY OF BOONE - BELVIDERE, ILLINOIS
Nationstar Mortgage LLC Plaintiff,
vs. 22 FC 31
GERALD L. POWELL, JR.; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NONRECORD CLAIMANTS: Defendants.
NOTICE OF SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure entered in the above entitled cause Intercounty Judicial Sales Corporation will on Thursday, December 7, 2023, at the hour of 12:15 p.m. inside the front entrance of the Boone County Courthouse, 601 N. Main St., Belvidere, IL 61008, sell to the highest bidder for cash, the following described mortgaged real estate:

LOT EIGHTEEN (18) AS DESIGNATED UPON KARR FARM SUBDIVISION PLAT NO. 3, BEING A SUBDIVISION OF PART OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER (1/4) OF SECTION 9, TOWNSHIP 43 NORTH, RANGE 3 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN PLAT INDEX FILE ENVELOPE 17 AS DOCUMENT NO. 76-3907 IN THE RECORDER'S OFFICE OF BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS; SITUATED IN THE COUNTY OF BOONE AND STATE OF ILLINOIS.

Commonly known as 2769 Karr Road, Belvidere, IL 61008. P.I.N. 07-09-202-001.

The improvement on the property consists of a single family residence. If the subject mortgaged real estate is a unit of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Condominium Property Act.

Sale terms: 10% down by certified funds, balance within 24 hours, by certified funds. No refunds.

The property will NOT be open for inspection.

For information call Law Clerk at Plaintiff's Attorney, The Wirbicki Law Group, 33 West Monroe Street, Chicago, Illinois 60603. (312) 360-9455.

INTERCOUNTY JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION
 intercountyjudicialsales.com
 13231748

Published in *The Boone County Journal* Oct 26; Nov 2, 9, 2023

The Journal
 has old newspapers free
 for picking up from time to time.
 Call to see if any are available



IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT BOONE COUNTY, 601 NORTH MAIN STREET, BELVIDERE, ILLINOIS
ESTATE of Kathryn Larys, DECEASED. 23 PR 55

Notice is given to creditors of the death of the above named decedent. Letters of office were issued to Larry Larys, 2203 Ivy Lane, Belvidere, Illinois 61008, as Independent Administrator, whose attorney of record is Craig Hoffman, Mack, Tragos & Hoffman, Ltd, 53 West Jackson Boulevard, Suite 815, Chicago, Illinois 60604.

The estate will be administered without court supervision, unless under section 5/28-4 of the Probate Act Ill. Compiled Stat. 1992, Ch. 755, par. 5/28-4) any interested person terminates independent administration at any time by mailing or delivering a petition to terminate to the clerk.

Claims against the estate may be filed with the clerk or with the representative, or both, on or before April 26, 2024, or, if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by section 5/18-3 of the Probate Act, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the clerk must be mailed or delivered to the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed.

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>.

Craig Hoffman
 Mack, Tragos & Hoffman, Ltd (43549)
 53 West Jackson Boulevard, Suite 815
 Chicago, Illinois 60604
 (312)242-2454
 13231806

Published in *The Boone County Journal* Oct 26; Nov 2, 9, 2023

Boone County Housing Authority Public Comment period for Moving to Work Agency Plan A 45 day comment period of the proposed 2024 Moving to Work Agency Plan has been established beginning October 31st, 2023 and ending December 14, 2023 at 5:00 pm. Throughout the comment period, the documents may be seen at 2036 N State Stret, Belvidere, Il 61008. Written comments may be submitted to Alan Zais, Executive Director, 2036 N State Street Belvidere Il 61008. A public hearing related to the proposed changes to the Moving to Work Agency Plan will be held on December 15, 2023 at 9:00 pm at the Boone County Housing Authority office at 2036 N State Street Belvidere, Il 61008
 Published in *The Boone County Journal* Nov 2/ 9, 2023

STATE OF ILLINOIS IN THE CIRCUIT COURT BOONE COUNTY
DATE FOR REQUEST OF NAME CHANGE (ADULT):
JENNIFER ALEXANDRIA BRUMFIELD WASHINGTON
 Case No. 2023-MR-32

There will be a court date on my Request to change my name from: JENNIFER ALEXANDRIA BRUMFIELD WASHINGTON to the new name of JENNIFER ALEXANDRIA BRUMFIELD. The court date will be held on 11/21/2023 at 9:15 a.m. at the Boone County Courthouse, 601 N. Main St., Belvidere, IL 61008 in Courtroom #4
 Published in *The Boone County Journal* - 11/2, 9, 16 (B)

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE 17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT BOONE COUNTY - BELVIDERE, ILLINOIS
U.S. Bank National Association PLAINTIFF
Vs. No. 2023FC74
Pamela J. Bohlman; Unknown Owners and Nonrecord Claimants DEFENDANTS

NOTICE BY PUBLICATION

NOTICE IS GIVEN TO YOU:
 Pamela J. Bohlman
 Unknown Owners and Nonrecord Claimants
 That this case has been commenced in this Court against you and other defendants, praying for the foreclosure of a certain Mortgage conveying the premises described as follows, to-wit:

COMMONLY KNOWN AS:
 318 Kishwaukee St
 Belvidere, IL 61008
 and which said Mortgage was made by:
 Pamela J. Bohlman

the Mortgagor(s), to First Federal Savings Bank, as Mortgagee, and recorded in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds of Boone County, Illinois, as Document No. 96-6646 modified with 2018R03790; and for other relief; that summons was duly issued out of said Court against you as provided by law and that the said suit is now pending.

NOW, THEREFORE, UNLESS YOU file your answer or otherwise file your appearance in this case in the Office of the Clerk of this Court,

Pamela Coduto
 Clerk of the Circuit Court
 601 North Main Street
 Belvidere, IL 61008
 on or before December 11, 2023, A DEFAULT MAY BE ENTERED AGAINST YOU AT ANY TIME AFTER THAT DAY AND A JUDGMENT MAY BE ENTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRAYER OF SAID COMPLAINT.

CODILIS & ASSOCIATES, P.C.
 Attorneys for Plaintiff
 15W030 North Frontage Road, Suite 100
 Burr Ridge, IL 60527
 (630) 794-5300
 DuPage # 15170
 Winnebago # 531

Our File No. 14-23-05937
 NOTE: This law firm is a debt collector.
 I3232548
 Published in *The Boone County Journal* 11/9. 16, 23

STATE OF ILLINOIS
 IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COUNTY OF BOONE, IN PROBATE
In the Matter of the Estate of: DIXIE L. TIMMERMAN, Decedent. 2023PR51

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION-WILL AND CLAIMS
 NOTICE is given of the death of Dixie L. Timmerman on August 3, 2023. Letters of Office were issued on October 17, 2023, to Michele M. Pearson and Ronald S. Timmerman, Co-Executors, who are the legal representative of the estate. The attorney for the estate is Attorney Charles G. Popp, P.C., 215 South State Street, Belvidere, Illinois.

Claims against the estate may be filed on or before May 10, 2024, that date being at least six (6) months from the date of first publication, or within three (3) months from the date of mailing or delivery of Notice to creditors, if mailing or delivery is required by 755 ILCS 5/18-3, whichever date is later. Any claim not filed by the requisite date stated above shall be barred.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the office of the Boone County Circuit Clerk--Probate Division at the Boone County Courthouse, 400 West State Street, Rockford, Illinois 61101, or with the estate legal representative, or both.

Copies of claims filed with the Circuit Clerk's Office--Probate Division, must be mailed or delivered to the estate legal representative and to his/her attorney within ten days after it has been filed.

Published in *The Boone County Journal* Oct 26; Nov 2, 9, 2023

Position Available:

Trustee for BCFD # 2 beginning immediately through April 2025. This is a volunteer position; Requirements: Reside in Boone County Fire Protection District # 2. If you are interested please email a letter of interest to tbecker@bcfd2.com. Deadline for Letter of Interest is 11/20/2023.

Published in *The Boone County Journal* 11/9, 16

STATE OF ILLINOIS
 IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT BOONE, ILLINOIS PROBATE DIVISION
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF: RENEE SHELTON, Deceased
CASE NO. 2023PR41
CLAIM NOTICE

NOTICE is given of the death of RENEE SHELTON, who died on July 12, 2023. Letters of Office were issued on August 15, 2023, to Regan Gray, Belvidere, IL and Gail Gray, Belvidere, IL, as Co-Administrators. The attorney for the estate is J.F. Heckinger, LLC, 405 West State St., Rockford, IL 61101.

Claims against the Estate may be filed on or before March 21, 2023, that date being at least six (6) months from the date of first publication, or within three (3) months from the date of mailing or delivery of Notice to creditors, if mailing or delivery is required by Section 18-3 of the Illinois Probate Act, 1975 as amended, whichever date is later. Any claim not filed by the requisite date stated above shall be barred.

Claims against the Estate may be filed in the Office of the Boone County Circuit Clerk, Probate Division at the Boone County Courthouse, 601 N. Main St., Belvidere, IL 61008, or with the representatives, or both.

Copies of claims filed with the Circuit Clerk's Office, Probate Division, must be mailed or delivered to the estate's legal representative and to their attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

Regan Gray & Gail Gray
 Co- Administrators
 By:
 J. F. HECKINGER, LLC
 Prepared by:
 J. F. HECKINGER, LLC #1169491
 405 West State Street
 P.O. Box 1492
 Rockford, IL 61105-1492
 815-965-2121
 jfheckinger@yahoo.com
 Published in *The Boone County Journal* 11/9. 16, 23

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

In the Matter of the Estate of: RUSSELL R. HUMPHREYS, Deceased. CASE NO. 2023-PR-54 CLAIM NOTICE

NOTICE is given of the death of RUSSELL R. HUMPHREYS. Letters of Office were issued on the 1st day of November, 2023 to Sherry Ann Humphreys, 144 E. Riverside Road, Rockford, Illinois 61114, who is the legal representative of the Estate. The attorney for the Estate is GEORGE P. HAMPILOS, of Hampilos & Associates, Ltd., 308 West State Street, Suite 210, Rockford, Illinois 61101.

Claims against the Estate may be filed on or before May 9, 2024, that date being at least six (6) months from the date of first publication, or within three (3) months from the date of mailing or delivery of Notice to creditors, if mailing or delivery is required by Section 18-3 of the Illinois Probate Act, 1975 as amended, whichever date is later. Any claim not filed by the requisite date stated above shall be barred.

Claims against the Estate may be filed in the office of the Boone County Circuit Clerk--Probate Division, at the Boone County Courthouse, 601 N. Main Street, Belvidere, Illinois 61008, or with the Estate's legal representative, or both.

Copies of claims filed with the Circuit Clerk's Office--Probate Division, must be mailed or delivered to the Estate's legal representative and to their attorney within ten days after it has been filed.

Dated: November 6, 2023
 By: /s/George P. Hampilos, Esq.
 George P. Hampilos, Esq.
 George P. Hampilos — ARDC #6210622
 HAMPILOS & ASSOCIATES, LTD.
 308 West State Street, Suite 210
 Rockford, Illinois 61101
 Telephone: 815-962-0044
 Fax: 815-962-6250
 georgehamp@aol.com
 Published in *The Boone County Journal* 11/9. 16, 23

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

The Boone County Board will receive bids marked BCG-2023-04 for the purpose of updating fourteen showers and six drying areas adjacent to the showers with a polyurethane shower coating system or equivalent product at 615 North Main Street, Belvidere IL 61008.

Bid documents will be available on or after November 3, 2023. Those interested may visit the Boone County Website at https://www.boonecountylil.gov/businesses/bids_rfp_s.php for further details. Copies of the Bid Documents will be available for viewing in the Boone County Clerks Office located at 1212 Logan Avenue, Suite 103, Belvidere, IL 61008. Bids will be accepted at the Boone County Clerks Office until Friday, December 1, 2023 at 12:00 P.M. Bids will be opened immediately after the deadline in the Boone County Board Room located at 1212 Logan Avenue, Belvidere, Illinois 61008.

Boone County Government reserves the right to accept or reject all bids.

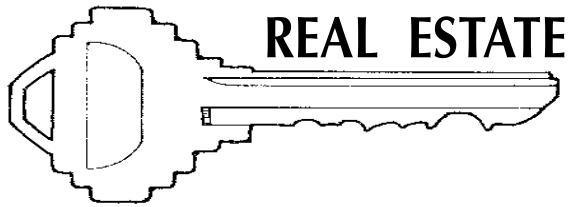
Published in *The Boone County Journal* 11/9/2023

ASSUMED NAMES

STATE OF ILLINOIS COUNTY OF BOONE COUNTY
ASSUMED NAME CERTIFICATE OF INTENTION
 No. DBA4171 - The undersigned person(s) do hereby certify that a consulting business is or is to be conducted or transacted under the name of CONSULTING BY DEMAND that its location is or will be 1800 DOC WOLF DRIVE #1541, BELVIDERE, IL 61008, in Belvidere in the County of Boone County, State of Illinois, and that the true or real name(s) of the person(s) owning, conducting, or transacting the same with the post office address or address of said person(s) is shown below.

Phone Number: 815-347-4747
 Ross Blumenthal, 2021 Chamberlain Street, Belvidere, Illinois 61008
 I, Julie A. Bliss, County Clerk And Recorder of Boone County, in the State aforesaid, do the hereby certify that the within is a true and correct copy of an Assumed Name Certificate on file in my office. Dated: October 18, 2023

Julie A Bliss, County Clerk and Recorder
 Published in *Boone County Journal* 10/26, 11/2, 11/9 - P



IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 17TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
COUNTY OF BOONE - BELVIDERE, ILLINOIS
Nationstar Mortgage LLC Plaintiff,
vs. 22 FC 31
GERALD L. POWELL, JR.; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND
NONRECORD CLAIMANTS; Defendants,
NOTICE OF SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure entered in the above entitled cause Intercounty Judicial Sales Corporation will on Thursday, December 7, 2023, at the hour of 12:15 p.m. inside the front entrance of the Boone County Courthouse, 601 N. Main St., Belvidere, IL 61008, sell to the highest bidder for cash, the following described mortgaged real estate:

Commonly known as 2769 Karr Road, Belvidere, IL 61008.
P.I.N. 07-09-202-001.

The improvement on the property consists of a single family residence. If the subject mortgaged real estate is a unit of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Condominium Property Act.

Sale terms: 10% down by certified funds, balance within 24 hours, by certified funds. No refunds.

The property will NOT be open for inspection.
For information call Law Clerk at Plaintiff's Attorney, The Wirbicki Law Group, 33 West Monroe Street, Chicago, Illinois 60603. (312) 360-9455.

INTERCOUNTY JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION
intercountyjudicialsales.com
13231748

Published in *The Boone County Journal* Oct 26; Nov 2, 9, 2023

Appeal

courts, where judges in different districts reached different conclusions.

One judge in the Southern District of Illinois ruled in April that the law violated the Second Amendment of the constitution. But two judges in the Northern District came to the opposite conclusion. Those three cases were then consolidated in the appeal to the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals.

Read more: Federal appeals court weighs constitutionality of Illinois' assault weapons ban

Judge Diane Wood wrote the majority opinion, joined in concurrence by Judge Frank Easterbrook, while in a 44-page dissent – nearly as long as the opinion itself – Judge Michael Brennan wrote the state and municipal governments that enacted the bans “failed to meet their burden to show that their bans are part of the history and tradition of firearms regulation.”

He also ripped his colleagues' “remarkable” conclusion that personal ownership of assault-style weapons and high-powered magazines is not protected by the Second Amendment. The majority wrote the firearms banned under Illinois' law are “much more like machine guns and military-grade weaponry” than those typically used for self-defense, like handguns.

“The AR-15 is a civilian, not military, weapon,” Brennan wrote. “No army in the world uses a service rifle that is only semiautomatic. Even so, the majority opinion uses a civilian firearm's military counterpart to determine whether it is an ‘Arm.’”

Gun control advocates issued immediate statements praising the decision.

“This is an important victory in the fight against gun violence, and a victory for all states and municipalities that are fighting to keep their residents safe,” Douglas Letter, chief legal officer for the anti-gun violence group Brady, said in a statement. “States and cities should have the right to stop these weapons of war from decimating our communities, and this ruling demonstrates that assault weapon bans are indeed constitutional.”

Gov. JB Pritzker praised the court's opinion, saying in a statement the majority recognized the assault weapons ban as a “commonsense law” and urging Congress to pass an assault weapons ban “so Illinois is not an island surrounded by states with weak protections.”

“Despite constant attacks by the gun lobby that puts ideology over people's lives, here in Illinois we have stood up and said ‘no more’ to weapons of war on our streets,” Pritzker said. “This is a victory for the members of the General Assembly who stood alongside families, students and survivors who worked so hard to make this day a reality.”

Friday's opinion comes in the midst of a series of Illinois State Police hearings on the part of the assault weapons ban law that allows gun owners who already possess banned weapons and high-capacity magazines to be able to keep them so long as they're registered with the state.

Read more: Assault weapon registration period remains open as Illinois State Police seeks further input

Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service covering state government. It is distributed to hundreds of print and broadcast outlets statewide. It is funded primarily by the Illinois Press Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation, along with major contributions from the Illinois Broadcasters Foundation and Southern Illinois Editorial Association.

Gun Rights

from page 3

municipalities have done the same,” the majority wrote.

“The plaintiffs in these cases challenge that conclusion. Using the tools of history and tradition to which the Supreme Court directed us ... we conclude that the state and the affected subdivisions have a strong likelihood of success in the pending litigation,” the opinion continued.

However, the majority left open the possibility that the plaintiffs could, at some later stage of the process, produce evidence to show that the banned weapons should be protected under the Second Amendment.

In a dissenting opinion, Judge Michael Brennan said the law goes far beyond banning firearms defined as “assault weapons,” saying it “eliminates the ownership, possession, and use for self-defense of many of the most commonly owned semiautomatic handguns, shotguns, rifles, and magazines.”

“The Second Amendment ‘right of the people to keep and bear Arms’ is not a second-class right,” he wrote. “Yet the state of Illinois and several Illinois municipalities have categorically banned law-abiding citizens from keeping and bearing a sweeping range of firearms and magazines.”

The U.S. Supreme Court has already agreed to hear at least three other gun-related cases during the 2023-2024 term. Among those is a case it will hear on Tuesday challenging a federal law banning the possession of guns by people who are subject to domestic violence restraining orders.

Late last week, the court also agreed to hear two more gun-related cases, including one that challenges whether a gun equipped with a gun equipped with a “bump stock” – a device that makes a semiautomatic gun fire repeatedly like a fully automatic gun – can be banned as a “machine gun” under federal law.

Another case challenges whether a New York state regulator was protected by the First Amendment when she warned regulated financial institutions not to do business with the National Rifle Association or other “gun promotion organizations.”

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At many points, the commission hearing served as a venue for lawmakers to air long-stated grievances.

Rep. Fred Crespo, D-Hoffman Estates, criticized what he viewed as the agency's “total disregard for the General Assembly” during the pandemic, citing IDES' unwillingness to share call center data.

But much of the questioning for IDES on Tuesday centered on whether it was ready to respond to future crisis events, potentially driven by global political strife.

“Are you prepared right now for the world to go to hell again, or will you be prepared in a couple more months?” Sen. Craig Wilcox, R-McHenry, asked the department. “What is your – when are you ready to say you can handle the next relatively foreseen crisis in the state?”

Marchiori responded that IDES “scaled up” its server capacity and other information technology capabilities to handle pandemic high-water marks of claims. He said IDES is averaging 1,800-2,000 claims per day in “normal times,” but the systems can handle at least 48,000 per day.

IDES has also created an internal fraud task force and is working on other controls, he said, which will be helped by \$30 million in federal grants.

Good financial news

While Wilcox quizzed IDES on its readiness for another economic downturn, a recent report from the legislature's Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability painted a positive picture for state finances one-third of the way through the current fiscal year.

Thus far in fiscal year 2024, which began in July, state base revenues are \$742 million ahead of the same period last year, which ended in the state netting \$50.7 billion in revenue. While it marked good financial news, COGFA has frequently noted that the latter months of the fiscal year – especially April when tax returns come in – can often make or break state finances.

Read more: State ends fiscal year with record \$50.7 billion in base revenue, sparking small surplus

The economy, meanwhile, “appears to be humming along,” according to COGFA's Chief Economist Benjamin Varner, especially in areas such as consumer spending.

While Varner noted some economic forecasters “are expecting a slowing of the economy” – potentially related to high interest rates, the threat of a government shut-down, the resumption of the repayment of student loans, and global political strife – such predictions are not new in recent years.

“However, economic slowdowns have been forecasted consistently over the past two years because of similar impediments, yet the economy continues to expand,” he wrote. “The question continues to be how long can these potential economic hurdles be avoided before a major slowdown occurs.”

Capitol News Illinois' Hannah Meisel contributed.

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Restrictions apply. Not available in all areas. **Internet:** Actual speeds vary and not guaranteed. Many factors affect speed, including equipment performance, interference, congestion, and speeds of visited websites. WiFi speeds affected by additional factors, including distance from Gateway, home configuration, personal device capabilities, and others. For factors affecting speed visit www.xfinity.com/networkmanagement. WiFi hotspots available in select areas. **Mobile:** Xfinity Mobile requires residential post-pay Xfinity Internet. Line limitations may apply. Equip., int., and roaming charges, taxes, and fees, including reg. recovery fees, and other charges extra, and subj. to change. \$25/line/mo. charge applies if Xfinity TV, Internet or Voice post-pay services not maintained. Pricing subject to change. In times of congestion, your data may be temporarily slower than other traffic. Reduced speeds after use of monthly data included with your data option. Data thresholds and savings may vary. For Xfinity Mobile Broadband Disclosures visit www.xfinity.com/mobile/policies/broadband-disclosures. **TV:** Limited Basic TV service required to receive other levels of service. Programming subject to change. Viewing will count against any Xfinity data plan. Streaming content limited to the U.S. Call for restrictions and complete details. © 2023 Comcast. All rights reserved. City of Chicago Business License #1337647