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Belvidere's Sister Cities Strives for Cultural Enrichment

By David Larson

Belvidere's Sister Cities is an internationally-recognized organization that exchanges guests and communication between Belvidere and Vaux-Le-Pénil, a French city of about 12,000 people and Schwieberdingen, Germany, a city of about 12,000 people. The organization promotes Belvidere's local identity internationally by providing student exchanges and hosting touring groups between the three cities. In September of this year, Belvidere's chapter will host both European cities.

The local chapter formally began when the Belvidere City Council made a proclamation to become a sister city in 1988, followed by Belvidere Mayor Rory Peterson and several alderpersons visiting Schwieberdingen to countersign the agreement in Germany.

In Vaux-Le-Pénil and Schwieberdingen, the organization is funded entirely by the municipalities. The City of Belvidere had traditionally funded a portion of the annual program, but has recently discontinued its financial contribution. The earliest-known sister cities, also known as town twinning, was in Europe between Paderborn, Germany, and Le Mans, France, in 836 during the Middle Ages. Today, Paderborn maintains a sister-city relationship with Le Mans, as well as six other cities, including Belleville, Illinois.

Throughout history, many cities have participated in various cultural exchanges and similar activities that resemble a sister-city or twin-city relationship, but the first officially-documented case of such a relationship was a signed agreement between the leaders of the cities of Toledo, Ohio and Toledo, Spain in 1931. Toledo, Ohio remains a sister city of Toledo in Spain, plus ten others.

The contemporary concept of a sister city developed during the Second World War. On November 14, 1940, Coventry, England experienced a devastating bombing by the Germans known as the Coventry Blitz. In 1942, to establish solidarity, the Mayor of Coventry sent a telegram to the city of Stalingrad (now Volgograd), which had suffered a similar, devastating experience. The comradeship between the two cities continued, when 830 women in Coventry had their names embroidered on a tablecloth along with the words "Little help is better than big sympathy." The tablecloth was sent along with money the city had collected from 6-pence-per-person donations to the people of Stalingrad.

In 1956, Republican President Dwight Eisenhower created a citizen diplomacy initiative from which our concept of a sister city originates. The concept evolved, and in 1967, Sister Cities International was established. The idea found roots in Belvidere in the mid-80s through the efforts of Bill Wolf, Ted Cowan, and Wally Weststead.



Église Saint-Pierre-et-Saint-Paul in Vaux-Le-Pénil



Presently a Bank the Former Zum Hirsch guesthouse in Schwieberdingen

Illinois Proposal Calls For Expanding Vote-By-Mail

State rep. proposes measure that would allow all-mail elections in some areas

By Peter Hancock Capitol News Illinois

As the 2024 election season draws near, voters in Illinois will once again choose whether they want to cast their ballots in person or by mail.

But one lawmaker is proposing a bill in the Illinois House that could make that decision a lot easier, making voting by mail the default option for people in counties and cities that choose to go that route.

State Rep. Carol Ammons, D-Urbana, said voting by mail has been shown to be a more convenient and efficient way of running elections.

"Vote-by-mail has been proven by way of court order, as well as people's utilization of vote-by-mail – I vote by mail – that it has been safe," she said during an interview. "There have been no problems. I have not missed a single election. And people who use it increase their voter participation."

Voting by mail, often referred to as absentee voting, was originally intended for people who planned to be away from home on Election Day, particularly military personnel, as well as college students and people whose jobs required them to travel. That often required voters to ask their state or local election official for an absentee ballot and, in some cases, explain why they wanted to vote by mail.

In more recent years, Illinois and other states

Illinois Supreme Court to Determine if Cannabis Odor Can Be Cause for Vehicle Search

Consolidated cases before court will test language of 2020 legalization law

By Dilpreet Raju Capitol News Illinois

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

The court heard two consolidated cases of individuals who were in vehicles that were

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Courts from page 1

searched after an officer used the smell of cannabis as probable cause.

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

The other case, *People v. Molina*, involved defendant Vincent Molina, who was a passenger in the vehicle when an Illinois State Police trooper smelled cannabis and searched the car, finding a small box of rolled joints, according to court records. Molina told the trooper he had a medical marijuana card prior to the search, the records state. Molina was charged with unlawful possession of cannabis by a passenger in a motor vehicle for not storing the cannabis in an odor-proof container.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Alexandra Block, director of the ACLU of Illinois' criminal legal systems and policing project and co-author of the brief, told Capitol News Illinois a probable cause must be objective, not "malleable."

"Even the claim of smelling cannabis can be discretionary. Honestly, it can be made up sometimes when officers are being less than honest because there's no way to challenge it. You can't see (a smell) on a body worn camera," Block said.

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

In *People v. Molina*, a trial court determined the odor of cannabis alone could not be cause for search since the odor of cannabis could be found on medical patients who grow their own marijuana plants or workers at cultivation centers

and dispensaries. The ruling was reversed by an appellate court before the case was consolidated with Redmond's and brought to the Illinois Supreme Court.

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

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

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

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


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

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

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OBITUARIES

Roger Butler, 78, Belvidere, January 7
 Kenneth Epperson, 53, Poplar Grove, January 12
 Thomas W. Balhatchet, 78, Formerly Rockford, Dec 9



REAL JOURNALISM FOR A REAL DEMOCRACY

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Voting

from page 1

have made voting by mail an option for anyone by adopting “no-excuse” absentee voting laws, meaning anyone could request a mail ballot without giving a reason.

Illinois also gives voters the option of asking to be placed on a permanent vote-by-mail list so they can automatically receive a mail-in ballot without having to fill out a new request for one each election cycle.

And in 2020, amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the General Assembly passed a law requiring local election officials automatically send vote-by-mail applications to every voter in their jurisdiction, instead of requiring voters to ask for one.

During a special meeting of the House Ethics and Elections Committee Wednesday in her hometown of Urbana, Ammons said voting by mail has become increasingly popular. But she said the multi-step process of voting by mail is still inefficient because it requires voters to fill out and send in a vote-by-mail application to receive a ballot.

“But when we went back to look at the utilization of the ballots, the number that came back, and the cost associated with mailing a ballot, we realized as we talked to other jurisdictions that you would actually save the money if you simply mailed them the ballot,” she said.

Ammons is the sponsor of House Bill 4198, which would allow county clerks and other local election authorities to make voting by mail the default option in their jurisdiction. It would give them the option of mailing ballots to all registered voters in their jurisdiction, without requiring voters to ask for one. But it would still require local election authorities to offer in-person voting as well for those who prefer to cast their ballot in person.

Currently, eight states and Washington, D.C., operate elections almost entirely by mail. William Cavecche, an election administrator in King County, Washington, which includes the city of Seattle, said that state passed a similar law in 2005 and immediately, two-thirds of the counties in the state shifted to vote-by-mail systems.

“Speaking to someone who has run both polling-place elections and vote-by-mail elections, I can tell you from experience that vote by mail elections are significantly easier to administer,” he said.

Among other benefits, Cavecche said, in a vote-by-mail election, there is no need to worry about problems that commonly occur at in-person polling places such as running out of ballots, voting machines breaking down or poll workers failing to show up.

He also said vote-by-mail elections are more secure because all ballots can be counted in a centralized location. He said ballot counting can also be livestreamed on the internet to provide more public transparency.

Wednesday’s meeting was a subject matter hearing, meaning the committee only heard testimony and did not take action on the bill. But Rep. Maurice West, D-Rockford, who chairs the panel, said he intends to

hold additional hearings during the upcoming legislative session, which begins Tuesday, and it’s possible lawmakers could vote on the measure in time to take effect for the 2024 general election in November.

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Recreational Cannabis Sales Again Hit Record, Illinois AG Calls for Federal Rescheduling

\$1.6 billion of product sold in 2023 as out-of-state sales decline

By Capitol News Illinois

As Illinois’ recreational cannabis industry once again reported record sales for 2023, the state’s attorney general is calling on the federal government to reclassify the substance.

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency classifies cannabis as a Schedule 1 drug, meaning the federal government believes it has “no currently accepted medical use and a high potential for abuse.”

But Attorney General Kwame Raoul and his counterparts in 11 other states are calling on a

reclassification to Schedule 3, meaning it has “a moderate to low potential for physical and psychological dependence.”

Raoul and the other attorneys general said the reclassification would allow states to continue to “set the standard” for legal products, would allow businesses to take ordinary tax deductions, and would increase the ability to research the substance to fully determine its effects.

“Illinois is one of several states that have established robust regulatory frameworks for legal cannabis sales,” Raoul said in a news release. “State-regulated cannabis industries protect consumers from the dangers of unregulated products and the illicit market. Rescheduling cannabis will remove obstacles for legitimate businesses and allow them to better collaborate with law enforcement and regulators.”

Last year, Illinois recreational cannabis dispensaries sold a record \$1.6 billion of product, accompanied by a record number of sales to Illinois residents.

Sales to out-of-state residents, however, fell by \$71 million from 2022’s total, marking the first drop in that category since cannabis was legalized on a recreational basis in January 2020.

The growth in 2023 marked a 5 percent increase from the year prior, meaning the pace of the industry’s growth is slowing. From its first year of legalization to its second, sales grew by 106 percent, while in 2022, growth was marked at 12 percent from the year prior.

There are 177 recreational cannabis dispensaries operating in Illinois, including 68 that were “social equity” applicants, 64 of which opened last year. That’s a term the law gives to individuals who are impacted by cannabis-related offenses, those who have lived in a disproportionately impacted area

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Sister Cities *from page 1*

Sister City relationships begin for a variety of reasons. Chicago is a sister city with 26 cities, including Warsaw, which grew from the large Polish community living in Chicago. Generally, sister city partnerships share similar demographics and town size. Partnerships may arise from business connections, travel, similar industries, or shared history. According to the Sister Cities International website, these exchanges occur in various ways including: “musical performances, art exhibits, construction of peace parks or tea gardens, international cultural festivals, and teacher exchanges.” Links have often been established to foster friendship and understanding among former foes as an act of peace and reconciliation after war. A total of 1,800 cities, states, and counties have partnered in 138 countries worldwide through Sister Cities International. Locally, Rockford has seven sister cities.

Belvidere’s Sister City chapter was recently awarded with the honor of being named 2023 Outstanding Sister City of Illinois.

Belvidere’s original sister city is Schwieberdingen, Germany, which is 10 miles outside of Stuttgart. The first traces of habitation in Schwieberdingen are from about 5000 BC, during the Neolithic period. The Roman Empire conquered the modern-day municipal area and its Celtic inhabitants in 85 BC. The Romans then built a road through the area to ford the Glems River, which runs through Schwieberdingen. This road, at first just for the Roman military, shaped Schwieberdingen’s destiny as one of the few connections between the Rhine and the Danube Rivers. Schwieberdingen Village, under that name, was first known to exist as early as 1304.

Vaux-le-Pénil and Schwieberdingen had already established a relationship before Belvidere joined. So, it was natural for Belvidere to also create a relationship with Vaux-le-Pénil. In 1999, Vaux-le-Pénil, France became our second sister city when a local member broached the idea by visiting Vaux-le-Pénil. Situated about 25 miles southeast of Paris on the Seine River and connected by commuter rail, Vaux-le-Pénil is in the region of Ile de France, often referred as the breadbasket of France. Belvidere has welcomed many visitors from Vaux-le-Pénil over the last 25 years. Adult and youth exchanges have taken place in both directions.

Belvidere will be hosting a Tri-City Rendezvous with 20 citizens from each city coming to Belvidere on September 20th this year. During the visit, an event will be hosted at City Hall followed by a visit to our historical museum. Belvidere hopes to reveal a mural during the visit, which will depict each of the sister cities. In hosting the 40-person group, Belvidere families will open their homes to the visitors for the four-day celebration.

The first official visit from Schwieberdingen was in September of 1989. In those days, Belvidere had an annual Octoberfest, and a band from Schwieberdingen entertained in a rich German fashion on one occasion. In another year’s visit, the Schwieberdingen band played at the Boone

County Fair. Schwieberdingen’s youth band has played in the summer concert series at the Baltic Mill Stage in Belvidere Park. The English class of Schwieberdingen’s school visited during a class trip to the United States.

In addition to cultural exchanges and tourist events, perhaps the most significant function of the sister cities’ mission is the youth ambassador program, which is a student exchange program. Every year Belvidere sends four deserving students, two each to Schwieberdingen and Vaux-Le-Pénil. Upon their return, two students from each European city visit Belvidere. The students sent to Schwieberdingen are often German language students from Boone County’s three high schools. The application process begins in January. Belvidere Sister Cities contributes to the cost of the trip.

Boone County high schools no longer have French language classes, but have a robust Spanish program.

In the future, Sister Cities Belvidere hopes to get a more reliable source of funding and adding an additional city from Mexico.

Rescheduling *from page 1*

within the last decade, or dispensaries that employ at least 10 full-time employees and at least half of them meet the previous standards.

State revenue from cannabis taxes, licensing costs and other fees goes into the Cannabis Regulation Fund, which is used to fund a host of programs including cannabis expungement, the general revenue fund, and the R3 campaign aiming to uplift disinvested communities.

For the 2024 fiscal year, nearly \$122 million has been paid out from that fund for related initiatives, including \$42 million in transfers to the state’s general revenue fund, according to the Illinois Department of Revenue.

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Seasoned Illinois Hog Farmer Tackles Challenges With Grace

*By Phyllis Coulter
FarmWeek*

As a new year begins, Vicki Huelskoetter isn’t exactly sure what her farm will look like next year. She has adapted to many challenges in the pork industry including market disruptions, labor shortages and pandemic consequences.

While this year brings continued uncertainty for this longtime pork producer and popular farmers market vendor, Huelskoetter knows that with the help of her faith, friends, family and loyal customers, she will readjust her path again.

“I’ve been very blessed that people came to my aid when I needed it,” said Huelskoetter, who grew up near Beason, where she lives and farms.

The family even started in the pig business because of adversity.

“In 1968 a tornado came through the area and took down every building on the farm. After the cleanup Larry and his dad decided to concentrate on pigs. They built the feed shed and put in a grain leg, machine shed and grower building. In 1971, just before we were married in 1972, they constructed a farrowing house and nursery. It held 36 sows and had pens for weaning. That was the beginning of becoming a hog farm that eventually produced 5,000 hogs a year,” said Vicki, who studied ag production at Illinois State University.

For years, Larry and Vicki Huelskoetter cooked and donated pork to fundraisers and special events. By 2009, a church friend was so impressed with their pork, he urged them to sell it at farmers markets. Vicki was reluctant at first, not sure if she wanted to commit to working every Saturday. But the couple agreed, so she’s been getting up in the wee hours of Saturday mornings for more than a decade to serve samples of cooked pork favorites, share recipes, sell frozen pork and talk to consumers about being a pig farmer.

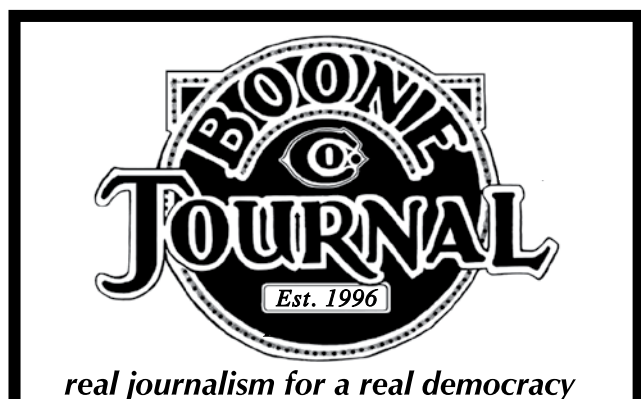
Heartbreak struck in 2020 when her husband, Larry, died.

At the same time, COVID-19 ravaged her regular marketing plan, disrupted processing and put pressure on labor options.

During the pandemic, she beefed up her online order acceptance and delivered her popular pork right to the doorsteps of customers who were fearful of leaving their homes during the pandemic. She also adapted to the modified Bloomington Farmers Market as it evolved.

“We are grateful for everyone who has helped us with the physical operations, financial decision-making process and all those who supported us and kept us in their prayers as we went forward in Larry’s absence,” she said.

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Hogs

from page 4

She persevered in promoting Huelskoetter Pork with her locally grown, family-owned business based in Beason in central Illinois.

Jennifer Tirey, IPPA executive director, works with pig farmers every day, but she is still impressed with such perseverance.

“Over the last few years our industry has seen a variety of challenges with market interruptions due to COVID, the continued fluctuation of feed prices and output costs, labor shortages and now Prop 12 coming into full effect on Jan. 1, leaving more uncertainty for the future,” Tirey said. “Regardless of these setbacks and challenges, our farmers continue to raise these animals 365 days a year and provide a nutritious protein source to consumers. If that isn’t the very best example of perseverance, then I don’t know what is.”

The pandemic changed how the Huelskoettters did business. “When commodity hog prices plummeted due to COVID and then my husband passed from this life, we looked at getting out of the hog business,” Vicki said. However, for 25 years, the family purchased gilts from Choice Genetics and later bought feeder pigs for their remodeled buildings. The good relationship paid off.

“Choice Genetics offered us the opportunity to grow gilts for them. We accepted their offer and grew gilts for them until Choice Genetics was purchased by another company abroad and that company ceased growing hogs in the United States,” she said.

“We thank God that He provided us a future through so many wonderful people when we were at a place in our lives not knowing how to go forward. In addition to my children and their families, members of both Larry’s family and my family, friends, neighbors and employees have been the reason we have been able to keep operating this farm,” she said.

After Larry died, Vicki and children, Kenzi and Kevin, had tough decisions to make together about the farm.

They still do.

Kenzi Primus is the branch director of the YMCA Kerasotes in Springfield and Kevin Huelskoetter is a Channel Seed salesman and agricultural IT professional in Jerseyville. Previously, the decisions have always been to keep the farm and raise pigs.

The question recently popped up again, of whether it is it time to sell the farm. And this time the family decided it is time to list the farm for sale, but also keep on serving their customers.

They cleaned the buildings to show the property over the winter months. They have enough pork in their freezers, and processed hogs at Chenoa Locker to supply customers over the winter months and into the spring.

“We plan to have hogs in our buildings unless the property sells by spring. Upon selling it, I will be working with the new owners and still be providing pork for our customers,” she said.

The timing of when the property sells depends on economic conditions, which aren’t the best right now.

“High interest on loans and low commodity hog prices are not very enticing for entering the hog business currently, but once the supply of hogs decreases to the point that the demand cannot be met, hogs sold as a commodity will again be profitable. Places to grow hogs will once again be in demand,” she said.

While Vicki Huelskoetter is back to working off the farm at a Chevrolet Buick dealership in Clinton, she still manages to supply her farmers market customers with their favorite pork

products.

After work at the car dealership, in the evenings, she prepares for the Saturday farmers market in Bloomington.

There, she serves up samples of her pork to customers, answers questions, and shares recipes. “If I need to come and help you I will,” she tells customers.

She can sleep in a little longer this time of year as the Bloomington Indoor Farmers’ Markets runs 9 a.m. to noon on the third Saturday of each month, Jan. 20 to April 20, at the Grossinger Motors Arena.

Some years, she also sells her products at the Illinois Products Farmers’ Market in Springfield at the Illinois State Fairgrounds.

The family continues to look to the future by expanding their food offerings throughout all the adversity.

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

Boone County is Recruiting Election Judges

Press Release

Boone County Board Chairman, Rodney Riley, encourages individuals from both major political parties to apply to serve as Election Judges in the March 19, 2024 General Primary Election and the November 5, 2024 Presidential Election. “Election Judges play an important role in helping to guarantee that the rights of voters are protected on Election Day” Chairman Riley said.

Next week the Boone County Clerk’s Office will begin the process of training an estimated 100 Election Judges. The County hopes to recruit and train as many as 50 additional Election Judges to help ensure that the elections are fully staffed and run smoothly. Local college students as well as juniors and seniors in high school are encouraged to apply.

Election Judges are paid \$145.00 for serving on Election Day. In addition, the judge will receive an extra \$25.00 for attending the required classroom training session- but only if the judge serves on Election Day.

Interested individuals can download an application to be an Election Judge by visiting www.boonecountyil.gov and clicking on the Clerk and Recorder page, or visiting the County Clerk and Records Office at 1212 Logan Avenue in Belvidere. Please call (815) 544-3103 with any questions about being an Election Judge.

Lawmakers Clear Path For Assault Weapon Registration Rules

Some members record symbolic objection, saying rules are too vague and complicated

By Peter Hancock Capitol News Illinois

New permanent rules will soon go into effect spelling out how people who own assault weapons and related items that are now heavily regulated in Illinois can register them with the Illinois State Police.

The legislature’s Joint Committee on Administrative Rules voted along party lines Tuesday to let the rules go into effect, ending months of negotiations and debate between supporters of the law and gun rights advocates.

“Obviously, this is an issue where there is a difference of opinion on a partisan basis, and I think you saw that play out today,” Sen. Bill Cunningham, D-Chicago, a co-chair of the committee, told reporters after the meeting.

The rules are the result of an assault weapons ban that state lawmakers passed last year in the wake of a deadly mass shooting at an Independence Day parade in Highland Park in 2022.

That law, known as the Protect Illinois Communities Act, bans the sale, purchase, manufacture, or possession of a long list of firearms that are defined as “assault weapons,” as well as several types of attachments, large-capacity magazines and certain kinds of high-power ammunition.

Under that law, people who already owned such items before the ban took effect are allowed to keep them. But to do so legally, they were supposed to register those items with the Illinois State Police before Jan. 1.

Last fall, ISP published temporary “emergency” rules that went into effect Oct. 1, enabling people to begin filing online registrations ahead of the Jan. 1 deadline. But many gun owners, gun rights advocates, and state lawmakers pushed back against the rules, complaining that they were too vague in some areas, too complicated in others, and generally impossible to comply with.

In response, ISP held additional public hearings in October and November as it worked to craft permanent rules.

One of the concerns raised during the discussions focused on how ISP planned to collect and store information about the items people registered, and what the agency would do with that information if the law is eventually overturned as unconstitutional.

So far, the law has survived legal challenges in both state and federal courts, but the National Association for Gun Rights, which is the major plaintiff in one of the federal lawsuits, has said it plans to file an appeal with the U.S. Supreme Court within the next several weeks.

Rep. Ryan Spain, R-Peoria, who also co-chairs the committee, said Tuesday he was frustrated by the short timeframe used to adopt the new rules and by the way some issues were handled. He then offered a motion to prohibit ISP from adopting the rules, arguing that the rules do not meet a requirement in state statute that they be “simple and clear” so that people and groups affected by them can understand them.

That motion failed because it needed eight votes on the 12-member committee but only received six.

Spain then made a motion to “object” to the rules on the same grounds that they were not “simple and clear.” An objection has little practical effect on the rule, except that it requires the agency to respond to the objection in writing within 90 days before the rule can take effect.

That motion, which only requires a simple majority of members taking part, passed on a 6-5 vote.

That vote allows ISP to move forward by adopting the permanent rules and enforcing them into the future. But it remains unclear how many assault weapon owners will comply with the law by registering those firearms.

According to data maintained by ISP, just under 30,000 individuals had filed registration forms

Continued on Page 7

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, examine the court file, CODILIS & ASSOCIATES, P.C. Plaintiff's Attorneys, 15W030 NORTH FRONTAGE ROAD, SUITE 100, BURR RIDGE, IL, 60527 (630) 794-9876

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.

CODILIS & ASSOCIATES, P.C.

15W030 NORTH FRONTAGE ROAD, SUITE 100

BURR RIDGE IL, 60527

630-794-5300

E-Mail: pleadings@il.cslegal.com

Attorney File No. 14-23-02756

Attorney ARDC No. 00468002

Case Number: 2023 FC 45

TJSC#: 43-4273

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.

Case # 2023 FC 45

13236581

Published in *The Boone County Journal* Jan 18, 25; Feb 1, 2024 PNN

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

U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION AS
TRUSTEE FOR LB-CABANA SERIES IV, Plaintiff,
vs. 20 CH 40

JOSEPH P. TRACEY; PHONDA A. TRACEY; LVNV
FUNDING, LLC; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NORECORD
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, February 1, 2024, at the hour of 12:15 p.m., inside the front entrance of the Boone County Courthouse, 601 North Main Street, Belvidere, Illinois 61008, sell to the highest bidder for cash, the following described mortgaged real estate:

P.I.N. 07-23-100-008.

Commonly known as 2793 Stone Quarry Rd, Belvidere, IL 61008.

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 Ms. Mary E. Spitz at Plaintiff's Attorney, Sottile & Barile, LLC, 7530 LUCERNE DRIVE, MIDDLEBURG HEIGHTS, OHIO 44130. 440-572-1511. ILF2112031

INTERCOUNTY JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION

intercountyjudicialsales.com

13235313

Published in *The Boone County Journal* Jan 4, 11, 18, 2024.PNN

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

WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A. Plaintiff,
-v.- 19 CH 113

LAURA J. ANDERSON A/K/A LAURA J. BARRY A/K/A LAURA JEAN ANDERSON A/K/A LAURA JEAN BARRY A/K/A LAURA WIEDL, UNKNOWN HEIRS AND/OR LEGATEES OF ROBERT G. ANDERSON, DECEASED, TARA DOYLE, KYLE R. ANDERSON, KOLIN R. MAYBORNE A/K/A KOLIN R. ANDERSON, TIM MILLER, AS SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR ROBERT G. ANDERSON, DECEASED, ONEMAIN FINANCIAL OF ILLINOIS, INC. F/K/A AMERICAN GENERAL FINANCIAL SERVICES OF ILLINOIS, INC., UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS, UNKNOWN OCCUPANTS Defendant

NOTICE OF SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on February 22, 2022, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 1:00 PM on January 26, 2024, 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 412 WEST MADISON STREET, BELVIDERE, IL 61008

Property Index No. 05-26-406-006

The real estate is improved with a single family residence.

The judgment amount was \$134,010.13.

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, in certified funds/or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. 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.

Where a sale of real estate is made to satisfy a lien prior to that of the United States, the United States shall have one year from the date of sale within which to redeem, except that with respect to a lien arising under the internal revenue laws the period shall be 120 days or the period allowable for redemption under State law, whichever is longer, and in any case in which, under the provisions of section 505 of the Housing Act of 1950, as amended (12 U.S.C. 1701k), and subsection (d) of section 3720 of title 38 of the United States Code, the right to redeem does not arise, there shall be no right of redemption.

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, contact The sales clerk, LOGS Legal Group LLP Plaintiff's Attorneys, 2121 WAUKEGAN RD., SUITE 301, Bannockburn, IL, 60015 (847) 291-1717 For information call between the hours of 1pm - 3pm.. Please refer to file number 19-091405.

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.

LOGS Legal Group LLP

2121 WAUKEGAN RD., SUITE 301

Bannockburn IL, 60015

847-291-1717

E-Mail: ILNotices@logs.com

Attorney File No. 19-091405

Case Number: 19 CH 113

TJSC#: 43-4591

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.

Case # 19 CH 113

6088-938434

Published In *The Boone County Journal* 12/28, 1/4, 1/11

Rules *from page 5*

ahead of the Jan. 1 deadline. Those registrations covered roughly 69,000 firearms that fall under the ban as well as nearly 43,000 accessories.

It is not known what percentage that represents of the total number of assault weapons and banned accessories in circulation in Illinois, but many people have suggested that a large number of gun owners will refuse to comply with the registration requirement.

Cunningham, however, said he was not concerned about speculation of widespread noncompliance with the law.

"I would just repeat what I said earlier, which is the law is in place, and I would encourage people to follow the law," he said.

Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service covering state government. It is distributed to hundreds of newspapers, radio and TV stations 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.

Illinois Supreme Court Weighs Admissibility Of 'Reenactment' in Murder Case

Case plagued by procedural issues could be retried

By Andrew Adams Capitol News Illinois

In October 2019, Jessica Logan's 19-month old son died.

Less than two weeks later, police and an investigator from the state's Department of Child and Family Services met Logan at her Decatur home and gave her a "toddler size mannequin" before telling her to reenact finding the lifeless body of her son in his bed.

The video of that reenactment – which Logan's lawyers maintain she was coerced into performing – was then used as a key piece of evidence in Logan's 2021 conviction on first-degree murder charges. Logan was later sentenced to 33 years in prison.

Now, Logan is asking the Illinois Supreme Court to step in and grant her a new trial. She claims the use of that reenactment video violated her constitutional

rights under the Fourth and Fifth Amendments.

Without that evidence, Logan's attorney argued to the high court on Tuesday, the case might have been decided differently.

"The state was telling the jury, 'You... can convict on inadmissible evidence alone,'" Illinois Assistant Appellate Defender Gilbert Lenz said in court. "It's hard to imagine a more prejudicial evidentiary error."

In addition to arguing on constitutional grounds, Lenz told the court that the video's inclusion in Logan's trial was unfair because Logan was never read her Miranda rights – a warning that anything she said could be used in court and that she had the right to a lawyer.

If the court agrees the reenactment video was inadmissible at trial, Lenz claims other key pieces of evidence would also be tainted as "fruit of the poisonous tree."

This would include the testimony from Dr. Scott Denton, a forensic pathologist who told the jury that Logan's son's "only possible cause of death was smothering," according to court filings.

But Denton made that claim after viewing the reenactment video, something Lenz argued should have disqualified it as evidence in the case. This would limit Denton's testimony only to what he knew before viewing the video.

"At a fair trial, at a new trial, [Denton] would tell the jury 'At the autopsy I did not know how this child died. It was asphyxiation but I don't know whether it was a homicide, I don't know whether it was an accident,'" Lenz argued. "The implications for the state's ability to prove its case when the doctor testifies to that in a murder case are obvious."

On the other side, the state focused on what constitutes coercion, arguing that the reenactment did not qualify as investigators improperly taking Logan into custody.

Much of this came down to what was meant – and understood – when a DCFS investigator told Logan "we need to do a reenactment."

Assistant Attorney General Josh Schneider, who argued the case on behalf of the state, said the word "need" did not stop Logan from refusing to participate.

While the justices betrayed little as to how they would rule in the case, they did question Schneider about the nature of the reenactment, probing to find the limits on what constitutes an involuntary action.

"Knowing that she had another child in the home and whatever DCFS decided would impact whether she got to keep that child, wouldn't and couldn't she have reasonably understood that to mean that 'I have to participate in this?'" asked Justice Joy Cunningham.

Justice P. Scott Neville also prodded this, asking about the nature of being alone with a state investigator and two police officers at the scene of the alleged crime.

"You don't think that might be considered coercive by someone who's never been involved in the criminal justice system?" Neville asked.

While Schneider pushed back on those questions, he also argued that in order for a situation to count as "custody" for the sake of a Miranda warning, someone must have their movement restricted and be in a coercive atmosphere.

"No one ever told her she wasn't free to leave, no one ever physically restrained her, no one ever displayed a weapon or a use of force, no one ever invoked their authority to tell her that she had to stay," Schneider told the court. "She never indicated she wanted to leave. And at the end, she in fact did leave without any obstruction from law enforcement."

In addition to arguing that the evidence was admissible, Schneider said that the lower courts did not make a mistake that would warrant a retrial.

"Here there was ample evidence – really,

Court

from page 7

overwhelming evidence – that the defendant was guilty of the homicide in this case,” Schneider said.

He cited a financial motive – a \$25,000 life insurance policy and Logan’s financial issues – and circumstantial evidence of Logan Googling “how do you suffocate” prior to her son’s death.

The justices will now consider the case, although there is no set timeline on when they might issue a final opinion.

While the high court could take the case in several directions, Logan’s legal team requested a new trial. The state has asked that the conviction – and the existing evidence – be allowed to stand.

In addition to the legal issues surrounding the reenactment video, Logan’s case garnered national attention for the state’s use of a controversial forensic method called 911 call analysis – where so-called experts analyze the guilt of a 911 caller based on what they said and how they said it.

In late 2022, ProPublica published an investigation into the use of that method in this case, calling it “junk science” and noting that the detective in Logan’s case used the fact that Logan – through tears – said “I need my baby” instead of directly asking for help as evidence of her guilt.

The non-profit news organization reports that in the time since its initial investigation, North Carolina’s Office of Indigent Defense Services as well as groups like Fair and Just Prosecutors and the Innocence Project have all raised concerns about the practice.

Editor’s Note: Capitol News Illinois is a partner with ProPublica and shares reporting resources. ProPublica did not contribute to this story.

Amid Record Overdoses and Drug Counselor Shortage, Workforce Expansion Program Aims to Fill Gap

Joint program offers funds, tuition assistance and stipends for future alcohol and drug counselors

By Dilpreet Raju *Capitol News Illinois*

Amid five straight years of record overdose deaths in Illinois, a new state program aims to alleviate a shortage of professionals who work to prevent substance use disorders.

Illinois’ behavioral health counselor workforce “is aging while new entrants are declining,” according to a 2019 report to the General Assembly; 56 percent of certified substance use disorder workers in the state were over the age of 50 at the time. According to the Behavioral Health Workforce Center’s latest data from 2023, 81 of Illinois’ 102 counties have fewer than 13 licensed professional counselors per 60,000 residents, straining those counselors tasked with servicing a large portion of the state.

To alleviate the workforce shortage, the state’s Department of Human Services has partnered with the Illinois Certification Board to offer stipends to lessen the financial burden for those working toward certification in substance use prevention and treatment.

The 2019 task force report also found the state’s “already below-national-average” number of behavioral health professionals dropped 23 percent between 2016 to 2018, coinciding with a two-year

period in which social services funding was slashed as lawmakers and the governor failed to approve a state budget.

While the state’s human service funding has increased in recent years, an analysis from the Chicago-based Center for Tax and Budget Accountability, a nonprofit think tank, found that the current fiscal year marks the first since FY 2000 in which the increase outpaced inflation.

Workforce expansion

The Illinois Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor Workforce Expansion program launched in May and is currently set to run through June 2024. It offers aid in the form of scholarships, tuition payments, internship stipends, application fees and \$1,000 upon hire with a state-licensed provider, following graduation from an ICB accredited training program.

Adriana Trino-Pujals, executive director of the Elgin-based Latino Treatment Center, said the challenge to find, hire and retain workers in behavioral health has remained difficult, mainly due to economic constraints that can push students to consider other career paths. According to Bureau of Labor Statistics data analyzing 2022 payrolls, the median salary for a behavioral health counselor in Illinois is about \$48,000.

Some students who start classes to obtain a certification can’t afford to finish, Trino-Pujals said.

“And then you’re going to take that same person and I’m going to tell them that we’re going to pay them 30-grand a year. Well, at that point, I’d rather go work at Walmart,” she said.

The new workforce expansion program is a partnership between the ICB – an independent organization that credentials several human services positions in the state – and the IDHS Office of Substance Use Prevention and Recovery.

Chris Boyster, executive director of the ICB, said the workforce expansion program aims “to ensure that there’s absolutely no barriers for completion.”

“Let’s say you want to become a CADC, but that class is taught on Monday nights and Monday nights you don’t have anybody to watch your child. It will cover day care,” Boyster said.

The CADC Workforce Expansion program will also provide internship stipends up to \$7,500, providing some reimbursement for work that might otherwise have been unpaid. It can also be used to pay for application and initial certification fees, along with transportation and course costs. Fees associated with enrolling and studying to become a CADC run at least \$500, according to the ICB Schedule of Fees.

To qualify for the program’s \$1,000 hiring stipend, a student must be in the process of getting credentialed as a CADC and agree to a two-year employment period with a state-licensed facility.

Information on how to apply to participate in the program can be found at ilcadcworkforce.org.

The workforce expansion program received a \$3 million appropriation in the current-year budget. IDHS spokesperson Daisy Contreras said in an email the program’s continuation in future fiscal years is “pending the availability of funds and program performance indicators.”

Contreras said that while it’s too early in the program’s implementation to track significant trends, IDHS saw an “initial increase of approximately 30% in new applications” for the first half fiscal year 2024, which began in July. That followed a dip in the number of CADC applicants coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic, she said.

Rising toll

During 2021 – the latest year for which comparable data is available – more than 3,000 people died of an opioid-involved overdose in Illinois, while 1,995 in the state were killed by firearms, according to the Illinois Department of Public Health Opioid Data Dashboard and the Centers for Disease Control

and Prevention. That same year, 1,611 people in Illinois died of alcohol-induced deaths – more than the number of people killed in traffic accidents, according to KFF, formerly known as The Kaiser Family Foundation.

CADCs offer support and try to assess the needs of individuals who seek treatment.

Jen Anadel, who works as overdose prevention manager at Chicago Recovery Alliance, said that in addition to working hundreds of hours in unpaid internships to qualify for her CADC, she had to work multiple jobs to make ends meet. She became certified in 2018 and said her coursework focused heavily on abstinence and relapse prevention.

“Abstinence is the goal,” Anadel said. “There was not really any sort of harm reduction education, or what do we do with a client who is continuing to use. How do we help that person identify their own goal, which may not even be abstinence?”

Anadel said she left her job in traditional substance use treatment because she saw an opportunity to help more people, and in a more direct way.

Trino-Pujals, who also serves as the ICB’s treasurer, said the program is a step toward keeping more students engaged in the field of substance use treatment and harm reduction.

“We have a horrible shortage,” she said. The lack of CADCs “has hindered us to be able to continue to progress in our field.”

‘Too little, too late’

Trino-Pujals said she was inspired to become an alcohol and drug counselor partly because both of her parents worked in substance use treatment, and she saw her father recover from alcoholism.

“Once I took the test, it not only propelled me professionally, but it also helped me to understand a lot more of the fields, theories and different processes regarding (substance use treatment),” she said.

The ICB expanded its reach in November by naming eight universities, public and private, as accredited training programs, including Loyola University, Southern Illinois University Carbondale and the Chicago School of Professional Psychology. The move will make CADC courses more readily available to college-age students interested in recovery and treatment work.

The program is one of three IDHS initiatives aimed at addressing the shortage of behavioral health workers in the state, with the others being a loan repayment program and another workforce incentive program focusing on certifying people who have lived experience as peer support specialists.

Still, many advocates say the recent state efforts are not nearly enough. Anadel, for example, said she fears the hiring stipend is still too low to incentivize people to pursue a certification.

“Two years for \$1,000? I’m going to keep it real here, come on,” Anadel said.

John Werning, the executive director of Chicago Recovery Alliance – a harm reduction organization founded over three decades ago – said he is skeptical of state investment in an overdose program that isn’t directly aimed at slowing the state’s death toll.

“People who use drugs far outnumber the amount of people who are seeking or treatment or who qualify for a substance use disorder diagnosis,” he said. “We’ve never seen a reduction in the demand for drug use in this country and we’ve only seen overdose rates climb.”

Werning said there remains a need for investment in more social service programs such as overdose prevention sites because a diversity of options expands what people can utilize, hopefully saving more lives.

“It might also be too little, too late,” he said, “we need broad, really tremendous investments in social services across the board, not just treatment modalities.”