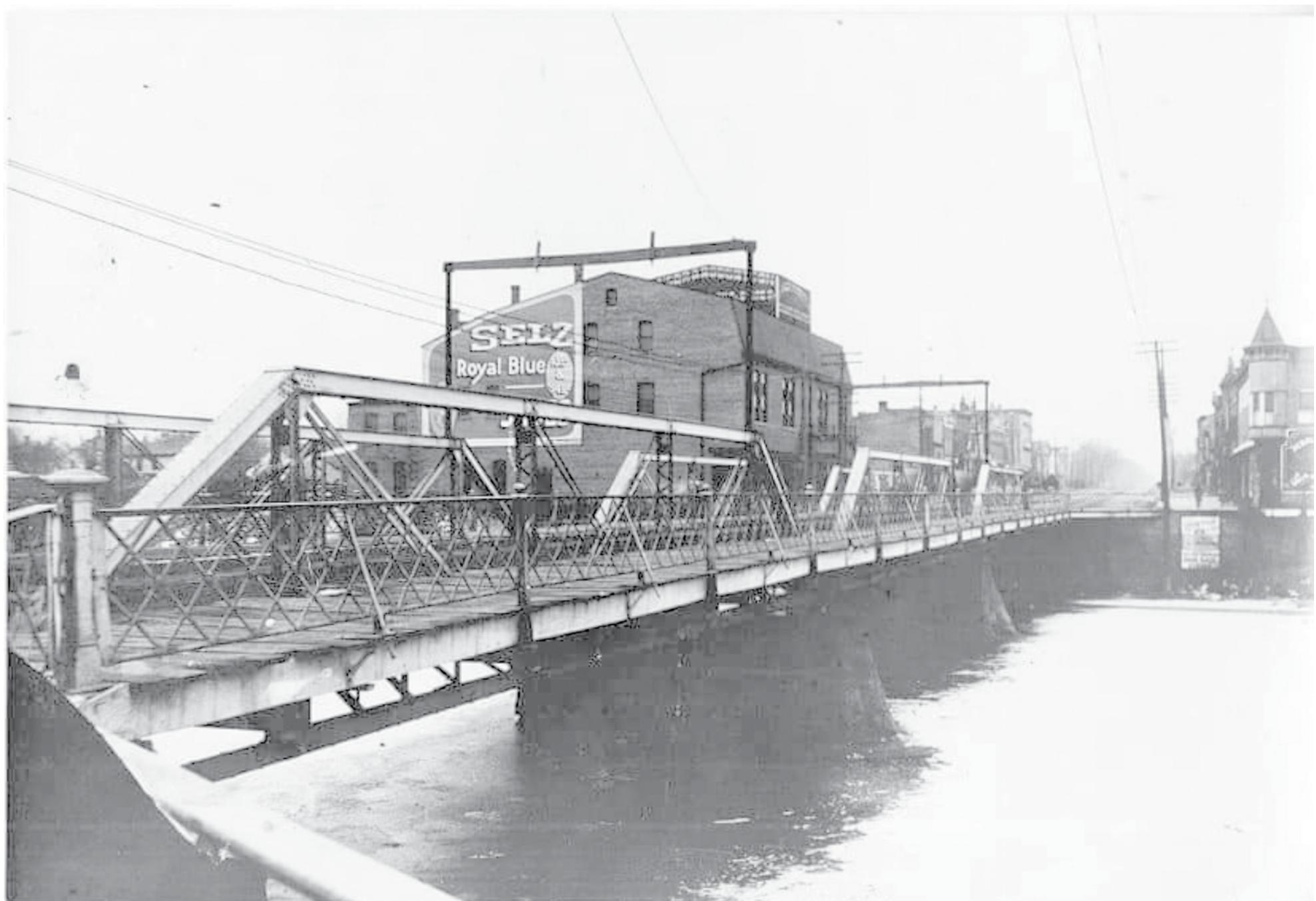


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## Pre-Shappert Downtown Belvidere

by David Larson

This week, with the passing of Frank Shappert of Shappert Engineering, a local company who built bridges in the Midwest and in the South, we are reminded of the 1929 State Street Bridge, which Shappert's father, Fred, engineered. That bridge was replicated in appearance, as a permanent visual feature of the cityscape, when the bridge was rebuilt about 20 years ago.

The date of this picture, taken of a predecessor to the 1929 Shappert-engineered bridge, is unknown. It is difficult to tell if this is the 1867 bridge or the 1889 bridge. Likewise, we are not sure if this is a picture of the Union Hall or the later, Derthick Opera House.

In 1867, the fourth bridge, the first iron bridge, was built over the Kishwaukee River in Belvidere at State Street. An Elgin contractor built the bridge at a cost of \$15,000. Prior to 1867, the State Street Bridge was made of wood, and often washed out during the high waters of springtime. John Plane, a hardware store owner at the corner of State Street and Logan Avenue, dedicated the 1867 bridge by being the first citizen to cross when it opened to traffic. Plane was 100 years old in 1867, and the wagon he drove over the bridge was pulled by a horse that was 25 years old. Decedents of John Plane still live in Belvidere.

The fifth bridge, also built of iron, was built in the winter of 1889-90, and lasted until 1928, when the son-in-law of the local newspaper

*Continued on Page 2*

## Tom Cullerton Sentenced to 1 Year in Prison for Embezzlement

*Former state senator received salary, benefits from ghost union job*

By Peter Hancock *Capitol News Illinois*

A federal judge in Chicago handed down a one-year prison sentence Tuesday for a former state senator who once chaired the Senate Labor Committee.

Tom Cullerton, a Villa Park Democrat, pleaded guilty earlier this year to one count of embezzlement for receiving salary and benefits from Teamsters Joint Council 25 as a purported union organizer even though he admitted to doing little or no work for the union.

Cullerton, 52, was first elected to the General Assembly in 2012 to represent the 23rd District, which at that time spanned a portion of northern DuPage County. He had previously worked as a truck driver and was a member of a local Teamsters union.

In March 2013, shortly after being sworn into office, he was given a job at Teamsters Joint Council 25 and he remained on the payroll until February 2016.

In addition to receiving a salary, monthly car and telephone allowances and bonuses, prosecutors said, Teamsters Joint Council 25 also funded Cullerton's health and pension benefits through Teamsters Local Union 734, all totaling \$248,828.

Cullerton was indicted in August 2019 on 40

*Continued on Page 7*



*Superintendent Dr. Cassandra Schug*

## New District 100 Superintendent to Begin Leadership Role by Listening

*By Mars Rinaldi*

New District 100 Superintendent To Begin Leadership Role By Listening

After months of searching and conducting interviews, the Board of Education announced

*Continued on Page 8*

**Bridge****from page 1**

publisher Frank Moran, Fred Shappert, then a young man, built the Neo-classical styled State Street Bridge.

In the background of the photo is a very good image of one of Belvidere's early opera houses. As can be seen, it is located on the same site that the Apollo Theatre is today. The original opera house built in Belvidere burnt to the ground in 1897.

It is difficult to untangle when the original opera house was built and who built it, but we do know that William Derthick became the owner or partner at some point. Derthick owned a store and sold wallpaper and paint. He also provided skilled labor for several high-end remodeling jobs as far away as Harvard, Illinois.

The original opera house was known as Union Hall and consisted of retail business on the first floor. Derthick's paint shop was one of them at the time of the 1897 fire. The store owners also lived in the rear of the stores. The second floor was the opera house, and it was a large high-ceilinged space with a stage. It served as a community building for

Belvidere as well as an entertainment venue.

After the fire, William Derthick rebuilt on the ashes of the Union Hall and continued to prosper, renting out retail spaces on the first floor and producing entertainment and providing a gathering place for social events in the large, second story hall.

The degree of ownership Derthick had in Union Hall at the time of the fire is not clear, but he was associated with the Union Hall for quite some time after the Civil War. We know this because Derthick hosted the annual reunion of Civil War veterans in the Union Hall, and later the Derthick Opera House, which he rebuilt after the fire.

Derthick, a battle wounded veteran of the Civil War Battle of Vicksburg, was a central figure in organizing Civil War reunions until his death, 50 years after the war ended. The Battle of Vicksburg on the Mississippi River, won by the Union Army, led by General Grant, was considered the turning point in the war in the West, just as Gettysburg was in the East.

The Derthick Opera House burned to the ground in 1917.

In 1927, Frank Rhinehart built the Bradley Architects-designed Apollo Theater on the same site that Union Hall and the Derthick Opera House had once stood.

**OP-ED****Conservatives vs.  
The Far Right***By Scott Reeder*

Mary Miller frightens me.

Yes, I'm talking about the member of Congress from Southern Illinois who is running against Rodney Davis for the Republican nomination in the 15th Congressional District.

She is not pitching policies. She is selling anger.

But I could also say it is the same about a whole host of candidates on the far left or far right who mix anger, pandering and rigid orthodoxies.

You may remember Miller as the person who quoted Adolf Hitler on her third day in office and said his efforts to indoctrinate the young were worthy of emulation.

It doesn't surprise me that there are people like Miller in politics. After all, I've been covering politics for more than 35 years. I've encountered plenty of cranks and conspiracy theorists during that time.

But the difference is that until recently, no one took those folks seriously. And then they began winning elections.

Today, extremists are redefining both political parties. And the country is not the better for it.

There are too many folks interested in stirring up anger but too few willing to get stuff done. The era of constructive compromise seems to be a memory of a bygone time.

My political leanings are not a secret. I believe in limited government, low taxes and protecting individual liberties. That said, I split my ticket between Republicans and Democrats in just about every election. There are good people in both parties.

I even vote for folks I often don't agree with. For example, the late Sen. Paul Simon was far more liberal than me. But he consistently earned my vote because he

exhibited integrity in how he conducted himself. He was also a thoughtful individual who considered all sides of an issue.

The older I get, the more I'm convinced the key to progress is electing good people who think independently and act with integrity.

Miller is not one of those people. She is running in the Republican primary against Rodney Davis, a conservative Republican from Taylorville. By all accounts Davis knows how to bring home the bacon to his district. If he is reelected, he's in line to be a committee chair. And most folks, no matter their political persuasion consider him to be a serious member of Congress.

But Miller, quite literally, has the Trump card. The 45th president has endorsed her and will be holding a rally for her June 25 in Quincy – three days before election day.

Miller is a member of the hard-right House Freedom Caucus along with others including Marjorie Taylor Greene, a Georgian known for comparing COVID mask mandates to steps the Nazis took to control the Jewish population during the Holocaust. Greene is said to have lobbied Trump to endorse Miller.

Lord, help us. Miller, Greene and Lauren Boebert, the congresswoman from Colorado who falsely accused a Muslim member of Congress of being a terrorist, are card-carrying members of the Kook Klan.

The 15th District was drawn by Democrats to consolidate Republican votes. Quincy is the biggest city in the horseshoe shaped district that covers one-third of the state's counties including much of Sangamon.

Robin Johnson, a lecturer at Monmouth College and a Democratic consultant on rural voting behaviors, lives in the 15th and perceives an angry electorate.

"I see Mary Miller and Darren Bailey signs all over the place. I sense there is a real appetite for insurgent candidates. Could Trump's visit make a difference? Yes. In a close race, it certainly could. And we know in the areas where he had rallies he boosted his own vote totals. Whether that translates over to candidates he is campaigning for, we really don't know yet."

Davis is traditional, much like his old boss, John

**Continued on Page 3**

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## Is Belvidere Interested in Improving Education in Belvidere?

<b>OBITUARIES</b>	
Brodhacker, Kathleen, 62, Belvidere, June 14	
Emanuel, Carol, 83, Belvidere, June 13	
Hove, Donald, 75, Belvidere, June 17	
Luckey, Doris, 91, Caledonia, June 16	
Meindl, Gregory, 58, Marengo, June 15	
Mewitz, Ronald, 64, Poplar Grove, June 10	
Moore, Jack, 94, Belvidere, June 17	
Rogers, Lorette, 84, Belvidere, May 18	
Shappert, Frank, 92, Belvidere, June 14	

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Each week, the Journal seeks to present a variety of voices.

**Letters.** Every attempt will be made to print all letters received with the exception of those that are libelous or obscene. Letters should be signed and include an ID or phone number, so that we can contact the author prior to publication to verify authenticity.

**Guest columns.** Community leaders are encouraged to submit guest columns consistent with our editorial guidelines for possible inclusion in the Journal.

**Opinions.** The opinions expressed in the Journal are those of their authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of The Boone County Journal management or ownership.

**OP-ED***from page 2*

Shimkus. By no leap of the imagination is Davis anything but a conservative. Whether its taxes, guns, abortion or any of the other GOP litmus tests he comes out solidly on the right. But he has avoided the confrontational far-right politics.

In other words, he's gentlemanly with those he disagrees with. And he seeks consensus to get things done.

Miller goes for the flash. She is more about capturing headlines and soundbites than seeking legislative achievements. It is a race between hard work and Hollywood. Or maybe it's a choice between steak and sizzle.

A lot of political pundits have written Miller's candidacy off. I'm not one of them. There is a real chance she can win. She is trying to tap into a pervasive disillusionment permeating rural America.

I know of which I speak. I live in the 15th District, grew up on a hog farm and reside in a village of 650. I know rural America.

Republican consultant Patrick Pfingsten said Miller is a member of the Trump personality cult. "Miller is part of a group of people who are content on raising cane, but never getting anything done."

He added, "And at some point that playbook is gonna run out of plays. The dude's 76 years old and one Big Mac away from having a grabber. So, he's not gonna be around forever. And I have a really hard time believing that the party is forever in the eyes of Trump."

The question rural voters – and all of us face – is do we give into the temptation of anger or the desire to get things done?

*Scott Reeder, a staff writer for Illinois Times, can be reached at: sreeder@illinoistimes.com.*

**OP-ED****The Court That Appoints Itself***By Jim Nowlan*

Six of the seven members of the Illinois Supreme Court reached their lofty bench by appointment, even though the Illinois Constitution is quite clear that members of the court shall be elected. In effect, the court has been appointing itself.

The following practice has developed in Illinois: Illinois Supreme Court judges are elected to the state high court on a partisan basis for 10-year terms. When a vacancy occurs as a result of retirement or whatever, the state Supreme Court appoints a replacement until the next election. This appointment of their own members is unique in the U.S.

As the practice has developed, a supreme court judge makes his or her retirement effective just after the final date for filing candidacy petitions has passed. This means the supreme court makes an interim appointment that is effective for more than two years.

The judges defer to the wishes of the retiree as to his/her own successor. This is similar to "aldermanic privilege" in Chicago, where the 50 aldermen nearly always vote to support the wishes of an alderman on matters within her/her ward. You scratch my back; I'll scratch yours.

O Holy St Jude!

Apostle and Martyr, great in virtue and rich in miracles, faithful intercessor for all who invoke you, special patron in time of need; to you I have recourse from the depth of my heart, and humbly beg you, to whom God has given such great power, to come to my assistance; help me now in my urgent need and grant my earnest petition. I will never forget thy graces and favors you obtain for me and I will do my utmost to spread devotion to you. Amen.

St. Jude, pray for us and all who honor thee and invoke thy aid.

(Say 3 Our Father's, 3 Hail Mary's, and 3 Glory Be's after this.)

In effect, Illinois supreme court judges appoint their successors. But, retort the judges, the appointee ultimately has to run for election to serve a full 10-year term. Yes, but the fortunate appointee runs later with all the trappings of incumbency. You have seen the billboards: "Keep Illinois Supreme Court Justice Mary Quite Contrary on our state's highest court. Retain Justice Quite Contrary June 28."

This dampens interest among lawyers and lower court judges in contesting the "incumbent," and few do.

So, basically, the Illinois Supreme Court appoints itself.

This came to mind when I read that Supreme Court Judge Rita Garman recently announced her retirement (doing so after the candidate filing deadline). Immediately thereafter, the court (meaning Garman, because of "aldermanic privilege") appointed Appellate Court Judge Lisa Holder White to take Garman's place on the high court bench. Indeed, in earlier years, Garman had also appointed Holder White, first to the circuit bench, and then to the appellate bench.

All of this appointing has become a high-toned form of job patronage, and there is lots of it. To illustrate, each Illinois supreme court judge is authorized, by the court, to make one or more personal appointments to the appellate bench, without cover of a filling a retirement or whatever. For example, ex-supreme court judge Tom Kilbride had appointed Robert Carter to the appellate bench for 15 years straight, without him ever having been elected, until 2020, when the court appointed Kilbride protégé Carter to the supreme court.

This is not new. In the 1960s, for example, a Republican judge from Canton named Albert Scott served as chief judge of the 3rd District Appellate Court (an honorific, rotating position), without ever having been elected to the appellate court. Indeed, Scott was rejected by the voters in his bid to be elected to the appellate court in 1974, yet was subsequently appointed again as a member of that court.

The supreme irony of this appointing process is that it may give us better judges overall than would pure election. What do you and I know about judicial candidates? For example, Judge Lisa Holder White is, I am told, a fine judge. She is also an African-

American from modest financial background. So, she may never have had a chance via the election process to become a circuit, appellate, and first black female Illinois Supreme Court judge.

Yet the process of appointing your successor is fraught with problems. Does it result in perpetuation of a particular legal philosophy? For example, the trial lawyers have always had strong influence within the state high court. These lawyers oppose, of course, any caps on awards to their clients, which would in turn cap their fees. These savvy lawyers have always been big contributors to supreme court judges.

And, does the process cause lawyers and lower court judges who want to be higher court judges to suck up to those who might appoint them, and generally exclude those who don't?

I am a PhD, not a JD, and I have not followed the courts closely, so I have more questions than answers.

Selection of judges has been a quandary for American democracy throughout our history, because of the separation of powers, and our belief in the election process. Should the executive or the legislative branches, or the voters, select judges?

No system is perfect, and "politics," that is, who gets what, plays a part in any selection process. Personally, I like the Missouri Plan, where nonpartisan panels of lawyers and nonlawyers come up with nominees of acceptable candidates, and the governor selects judges from among the names given him. A number of states have adopted this plan, or something like it.

I have trouble with the Illinois system. In effect, the high court appoints itself.

*Nowlan is a retired professor and former Illinois legislator and state agency director. He has worked for three unindicted Illinois governors.*

**Death Certificates of 5 Men Killed in East St. Louis Riots Found in State Archives**

*Lost records complicate possible identification*

*By Beth Hundsdorfer Capitol News Illinois*

It was a tale told by older generations to the younger generations, of men shot and killed and their bodies tossed into a creek during one of the fiercest race riots in the country.

That tale was carried across the Mississippi River by those trying to escape the violence and through the generations of African American families who lived in East St. Louis in 1917.

Reginald Petty, the founder of the East St. Louis Historical Society, said he heard it. His elders told the children that 20 or 30 men were shot and thrown in Cahokia Creek.

"Everyone I talked to had a story, but this is the first time I have heard proof," Petty said.

Capitol News Illinois discovered the death certificates in the Illinois State Archives earlier this year. The St. Clair County coroner's records from the time period contained death certificates of five Black

*Continued on Page 4*

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**Certificates***from page 3*

men, each identified only as "John Doe," who were found in Cahokia Creek during and in the days after the massive riot.

Four were shot. One suffered a fractured skull.

"My grandparents would tell me about 30 or 40 men killed and thrown in the creek during the riots," Petty said. "This is proof that this happened. That's amazing."

The five unidentified men were buried on July 3, 1917, in St. Clair Cemetery—the day after they were discovered in Cahokia Creek.

Decades later, they were disinterred and moved about seven miles to Sunset Gardens of Memory Cemetery in Millstadt to make way for the construction of Interstate 64. The records for the St. Clair Cemetery didn't make the move with them.

Checks with the St. Clair County clerk and the Illinois comptroller's office, who regulates cemeteries, failed to turn up any records for the formerly county-run St. Clair Cemetery.

Without those records, if they ever existed, there is no way to know the location of the John Does in their new gravesite in Sunset Gardens, further deepening the mystery of who these five men were who died at the hands of a riotous mob.

Petty said he considers them stitches in the fabric of East St. Louis history.

"They have become part of the East St. Louis community. All of our fathers, grandfathers, uncles. That's how I will think of them," Petty said.

The death certificates detail the violence that began May 28, 1917, after a city council meeting during which angry white workers formally complained about black migrants who came from the south to East St. Louis to work in the meat packing plants and factories that were gearing up for World War I. Mobs began attacking Black residents, pulling them off streetcars.

Illinois Gov. Frank Lowden activated the National Guard, but troops were dispersed weeks later.

Tensions boiled over on July 1. A car occupied by white men drove through the Black area of the city and passengers fired into a group on the street, according to news reports of the time. Later, another car containing police officers drove through the same area and residents, assuming it was the first car, opened fire, killing two police officers.

This led to days of violence, including the burning of homes occupied by Black people, as well as assaults and murders.

The death certificates state the men died "by being thrown into Cahokia Creek during mob violence by parties unknown to us after being shot."

In response to the violence, families built rafts to cross the Mississippi River or walked for miles to reach St. Louis.

Josephine Baker, a renowned actress, singer and dancer from St. Louis, once described the scene in a speech as she saw it as an 11-year-old.

"I can still see myself standing on the west bank of the Mississippi looking over into East St. Louis and watching the glow of the burning Negro homes lighting the sky. We children stood huddled together in bewilderment, frightened to death with the screams of Negro families running across this bridge with nothing but what they had on their backs as their worldly belongings," Baker said in a 1952 speech.

And as those residents fled, they told their stories of violence, Petty said, and drew the attention of St. Louis newspaper reporters who wrote stories that circulated around the country.

Lowden reactivated the National Guard, which eventually quelled the violence on July 3, 1917—the same day the five John Does were buried in St. Clair Cemetery in East St. Louis.

More than 300 homes in East St. Louis were burned. Death estimates were officially placed

around 33, but later estimates by scholars put the deaths at around 200. Petty thinks it may even be more.

In addition to the death certificates for the five unidentified men found in Cahokia Creek, there were at least 10 other death certificates found in the state archives. Three of those died from a fire in a building at 8th and Broadway.

*Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service covering state government that is distributed to more than 400 newspapers statewide. It is funded primarily by the Illinois Press Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation.*

## Kinzinger & Houlahan Introduce Ukraine Fighter Pilots Act

(Press Release) – Today, U.S. Air Force Veterans Congressman Adam Kinzinger (R-IL) and Congresswoman Chrissy Houlahan (D-PA) introduced legislation to train Ukrainian fighter pilots and crews on US military air assets. This bill would allow the United States to begin training Ukrainian pilots and air crew members on F-15's, F-16's, and other air platforms while the Administration continues to consider sending such equipment.

The Representatives remain hopeful that there won't be a need for further escalation, but they both agree that it's critical for the Ukrainian military to be trained and familiar with these air platforms should Russia continue their malign campaign against Ukraine's sovereignty. Regardless of whether the United States and its allies deploy such equipment, this program will strengthen the Ukrainian military and ensure their long-term stability and security.

Having both served in the United States Air Force, Representatives Kinzinger and Houlahan recognize the importance of establishing aerial combat supremacy. Given that public reporting suggests neither the Ukrainians nor the Russians have established air superiority thus far, the United States can help Ukraine change the situation in the air domain, giving Ukrainian forces a decisive advantage in the war.

"We have watched for months as the Ukrainian people and global community fight back against the unprovoked, unjust attacks from Russia. Ukrainian President Zelenskyy rose to the occasion, calling on his fellow Ukrainians to join the fight and showing the world what true leadership and democratic unity looks like. The United States stands in solidarity with the Ukrainian people as they continue to defend their sovereignty. I hope we will continue helping them put an end to Russia's ruthless war," said Rep. Kinzinger. "The Ukrainian military needs our immediate assistance, especially with air assets. So today, I'm introducing legislation with my fellow Air Force veteran colleague Rep. Houlahan to authorize funding to provide training and military assistance to Ukrainian military pilots. It's critical that we support Ukraine as they continue fighting for democracy and ensure they are prepared for any potential Russian escalation."

"The resilient people of Ukraine are defending themselves against Putin's war better than most of the world ever thought possible, which is exactly why we must maintain our support at this critical moment," said Rep. Houlahan. "Because this conflict

continues to rage on, we need to rethink our long-term strategic planning to help our Ukrainian allies—this includes training pilots on additional aircraft that might become available to them. It's simple: should our military decide to transfer aircraft, we need their pilots to be ready to utilize them immediately. Our bipartisan effort will ensure that training happens. The United States continues to be a stalwart supporter of Ukraine's fight for sovereignty, shown by the additional \$1 billion in security assistance authorized this week. As an Air Force veteran, I'm especially grateful to work with Rep. Kinzinger on this critical step forward in the fight for democracy around the world."

## Community Garden Tour Day

(Press Release) - The cost of food is on the rise. Access to fresh produce may become an issue for those who can't afford it. Community gardens help to feed the hungry by putting fresh produce into the hands of those in need.

Belvidere is fortunate to have four community gardens that work to provide fresh produce for the community. Two of the gardens provide food for local food pantries as well as educational/volunteer opportunities for youth in 4-H programs and life skills with the Belvidere NASR groups.

On Saturday, July 16 from 10 a.m. to noon, the community is welcome to attend this year's Community Garden Tour Day. Stop by one or stop by all four and learn how the gardens got started, how they function in the community and how you can get involved. Volunteers will be at each site to help answer any questions you may have.

The four garden locations are as follows:

- Boone County Health Department (1204 Logan Ave. Belvidere – Behind the Administration Building)
- Buchanan Street Garden (218 Buchanan Street – corner of Main St. and Buchanan Street)
- St. John's United Church of Christ (401 N. Main Street)
- Ida Public Library (320 N. State Street)

If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in the garden tours, please contact Judy Hodge, Extension Program Coordinator at 815-544-3710 or [hodg@illinois.edu](mailto:hodg@illinois.edu). Early requests are encouraged to allow sufficient time for meeting your access needs.

WRITER: Judy Hodge, Program Coordinator, University of Illinois Extension – Boone County

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# Pritzker Expands State Child Care Subsidy, Increases Reimbursement Rates

*Administration estimates expansion will impact 20,000 children*

By Peter Hancock Capitol News Illinois

Thousands more families in Illinois will soon be eligible for subsidized child care and child care providers will see a pay raise under a series of initiatives that Gov. JB Pritzker announced Thursday.

Starting July 1, the state will invest more than \$175 million in additional funding for child care and early childhood education.

Speaking at an early learning center in Chicago, Pritzker said the initiatives are meant to ease the burden for working families to find affordable child care while also making it easier for those providers to stay in business.

"Once upon a time, Illinois state government was known for hollowing out its vital public services. No longer," Pritzker said. "When our youngest families succeed, our whole state reaps the benefits. That's the Illinois that our residents deserve and together, we're making it happen."

Starting July 1, he said, providers enrolled in the state's Child Care Assistance Program, or CCAP, which subsidizes child care for low-income families, will see an 8 percent increase in their reimbursement rates.

In addition, he said, the income eligibility limit to qualify for those subsidies will go up to 225 percent of the federal poverty level, or \$51,818 a year for a family of three. After that, when families go through redetermination to see if they are still eligible, the income limit will go up to 275 percent of the poverty level, or \$63,333 for a family of three.

The governor's office said in a news release that those increases will make the subsidies available to an additional 20,000 children.

Pritzker also announced the state will implement a 3 percent cost-of-living adjustment to reimbursement rates for early intervention services.

And families that qualify for CCAP with a parent or guardian working in child care will have their copays capped at \$1.

Child care providers will also have additional time to qualify for Child Care Restoration Grants, which have been funded with federal COVID-19 relief funds. That program had been set to expire this month, but it is now being extended through December, delivering an estimated \$60 million to approximately 2,400 child care providers.

And Pritzker announced his administration is extending the Strengthen and Grow Child Care Grant program through June 2023. That program, funded through the American Rescue Plan Act, provides funding for eligible child care centers, child care homes and group child care homes.

Additional policy changes announced Monday include eliminating child care copays for families experiencing homelessness; expanding eligibility to parents and guardians who are attending online school from home; continuing to provide three months of child care assistance for unemployed parents seeking to reenter the workforce through December 2022; launching an early childhood enrollment campaign, including investments in community outreach; and extending the hold on family fee collection for early intervention services through the end of this calendar year.

"The significant investments that were announced today prioritize equitable and stable funding for early childhood across Illinois," said Bethany Patten, associate director of the Department of Human Services' Division of Early Childhood. "They focus on expanding access to early childhood care and education for low-income families who need it and investing in child care workers and providers so that they can continue to serve families in their communities."

# State Audit Finds Billions in Unemployment Fraud

*Agency blames lack of controls on Trump administration*

By Beth Hundsorfer Capitol News Illinois

A state audit released Thursday found nearly \$2 billion in federal money intended to help unemployed Illinoisans during the pandemic was lost to fraudulent claims in Illinois.

The Illinois Department of Employment Security blamed "insufficient and flawed federal guidance" and a lack of controls on a hastily constructed program put together by the Trump administration.

The federally-funded Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program provided up to 39 weeks of benefits for unemployed individuals who ran out of regular unemployment benefits and for self-employed individuals, gig workers and others not eligible for regular unemployment.

The report released Thursday by Auditor General Frank Mautino covered much of the life of the program, July 2020 through June 2021.

In the early days of the pandemic, amid business shutdowns and high unemployment, states struggled under a crush of claims from those laid off during those shutdowns. Amid this volume of claims, IDES was forced to try to weed out the fraudulent claims while under pressure to get money into the hands of the recently unemployed.

The Pritzker administration has said the PUA program was designed hastily and does not give employers an opportunity to challenge fraudulent claims because the type of workers applying for benefits do not technically have employers. The PUA program also eliminated existing controls, including income and employment verification, according to a statement by IDES.

Much of the fraud, up to \$163 billion estimated nationwide, involved identity theft.

Scammers filed unemployment claims using false identities and then had the payment method switched from the debit cards that people receive when they qualify for benefits to direct deposit into an account accessible by them.

The audit found that, of the \$3.6 billion in PUA paid out from July 2020 through June 2021, nearly \$1.9 billion was found to be fraudulent, mostly due to identity theft.

"Overpayments associated with identity theft and traditional fraud within the PUA program was unprecedented and resulted in fraudsters using highly sophisticated techniques to take advantage of the current economic condition created by the COVID-19 pandemic," the audit stated.

The audit found IDES:

- Failed to implement general information technology controls over the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance.
- Failed to maintain accurate and complete pandemic unemployment assistance claimant data.

• Failed to perform timely cash reconciliations.

IDES responded that the system used to manage the PUA program is independent of the system used to manage regular unemployment benefits. From the beginning of the pandemic in March

2020 through the end of 2021, IDES stopped \$40 billion in fraudulent payments from both state and federal programs, according to the agency's statement.

Republicans are calling for hearings related to IDES' handling of the programs and, specifically, whether the agency failed to follow federal recommendations for fraud prevention tools made available before the pandemic.

"The Pritzker administration and IDES have refused to disclose the extent to which fraud affected our unemployment system and this audit makes abundantly clear why," said Rep. Tim Butler, R-Springfield, said in a statement. "The loss of nearly \$2 billion, more than half the funds for the PUA program, displays an unprecedented level of negligence by the administration and IDES management. Blaming the previous president's administration is an unacceptable excuse and we need immediate hearings to get to the bottom of this failure."

*Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service covering state government that is distributed to more than 400 newspapers statewide. It is funded primarily by the Illinois Press Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation.*



## Pritzker Signs Bills Targeting Wage Theft, Expanding HIV Care Options

*Measures among more than 400 signed into law thus far this year*

By Jerry Nowicki Capitol News Illinois

Gov. JB Pritzker has signed 401 bills sent to him this calendar year, leaving just 10 of those passed by lawmakers this year awaiting his action as of Monday.

His most recent crop of signed bills from Friday, June 10, included a measure taking aim at wage theft in the construction industry and a pair of bills aimed at increasing access to treatment for HIV.

The wage theft measure, House Bill 5412, was a major initiative of a regional carpenters' union that allows a worker with a wage theft or fringe benefit grievance against a subcontractor to sue the primary contractor to rectify the situation.

The Mid-America Carpenters Regional Council was the main backer of HB 5412. Minority contractors lobbied against the proposal, which they said would drive up costs and limit work opportunities for smaller contractors.

The minority groups, including the Hispanic American Construction Industry Association, the

*Continued on Page 7*

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# LEGAL NOTICES

Early Voting for the June 28, 2022 General Primary Election will begin on Thursday, May 19, 2022 and end June 27, 2022. Early Voting for Boone County residents will be conducted at the Boone County Clerk's Office, 1212 Logan Ave, Suite 103, Belvidere, IL 61008. The office is open Monday through Friday, 8:30AM to 5:00PM, except holidays. The office will also be open on Saturday, June 25, 2022 from 9:00AM to 12:00PM.

For more information about Early Voting please contact the Boone County Clerk's Office at 815-544-3103. There may be construction on Logan Avenue in front of the Boone County Administration Building during the Early Voting hours, so please watch for signs to enter the parking lot.

Julie A. Bliss

Boone County Clerk & Recorder

Published in The Boone County Journal 5-12 through June 23

To: Christopher M Meyer, Tiffany Holland, Salvador Villalobos, Abel Medina, Armando Carranza, Jackie Meyer, Julie A. Bliss, County Clerk of Boone County, Illinois, Unknown Occupants of 1817 7th Ave., Belvidere, IL 61008, and Unknown Owners and Parties Interested, Generally of 1817 7th Ave., Belvidere, IL 61008

TAX DEED NO.: 2022TX9 FILED: 5/12/2022

#### TAKE NOTICE

County of Boone  
Date Premises Sold: 10/31/2019  
Certificate No.: 2018-00175  
Sold for General Taxes of: 2018  
Sold for Special Assessment of (Municipality): N/A  
And Special Assessment Number: N/A  
Warrant No. N/A INST. NUMBER: N/A

#### THIS PROPERTY HAS BEEN SOLD FOR DELINQUENT TAXES

Property located at: 1817 7th Ave., Belvidere, IL 61008

Legal Description or Property Index No.: 05-35-452-017

This notice is to advise you that the above property has been sold for delinquent taxes and that the period of redemption from the sale will expire on 10/26/2022.

The amount to redeem is subject to increase at 6 month intervals from the date of sale and may be further increased if the purchaser at the tax sale or his or her assignee pays any subsequently accruing taxes or special assessments to redeem the property from subsequent forfeitures or tax sales. Check with the county clerk as to the exact amount you owe before redeeming.

This notice is also to advise you that a petition has been filed for a tax deed which will transfer title and the right to possession of this property if redemption is not made on or before 10/26/2022.

This matter is set for hearing in the Circuit Court of Boone County, 601 N. Main Street, Courtroom 3, Belvidere, Illinois, 61008 at 11:00 A.M. on 11/22/2022.

You may be present at this hearing but your right to redeem will already have expired at that time.

#### YOU ARE URGED TO REDEEM IMMEDIATELY TO PREVENT LOSS OF PROPERTY.

Redemption can be made at any time on or before 10/26/2022 by applying to the County Clerk of Boone County, Illinois, at the Office of the County Clerk in Belvidere, Illinois.

For further information contact the County Clerk.

ADDRESS:  
1212 Logan Ave, Suite 103  
Belvidere, IL 61008  
TELEPHONE: (815) 544-3103  
Auction Z, Inc.  
Purchaser or Assignee  
Dated: May 16, 2022  
6088-923877

Published in *The Boone County Journal* June 9, 16, 23

To: Pamela Pittman, James Pittman, Julie Bliss, County Clerk of Boone County, Illinois, Curtis Newport, County Treasurer of Boone County, Tricia Smith, States Attorney of Boone County, State of Illinois, Attorney General, State of Illinois, Secretary of State Vehicle Services, Unknown Occupants of 2630 Springcreek Rd., Belvidere, IL 61008, and Unknown Owners and Parties Interested, Generally of 2630 Springcreek Rd., Belvidere, IL 61008

TAX DEED NO.: 2022TX10

FILED: 5/12/2022

#### TAKE NOTICE

County of Boone  
Date Premises Sold: 10/31/2019  
Certificate No. 2018-90005  
Sold for General Taxes of: 2018  
Sold for Special Assessment of (Municipality): N/A  
And Special Assessment Number: N/A  
Warrant No. N/A  
INST. NUMBER: N/A

#### THIS PROPERTY HAS BEEN SOLD FOR DELINQUENT TAXES

Property located at: 2630 Springcreek Rd., Belvidere, IL 61008  
Mobile Home Vehicle Identification No. (or other unique description): 50-09-400-029

This notice is to advise you that the above mobile home has been sold for delinquent taxes and that the period of redemption from the sale will expire on 10/26/2022.

The amount to redeem is subject to increase at 6 month intervals from the date of sale and may be further increased if the purchaser at the tax sale or his or her assignee pays any subsequently accruing taxes or special assessments to redeem the mobile home from subsequent forfeitures or tax sales. Check with the county clerk as to the exact amount you owe before redeeming.

This notice is also to advise you that a petition has been filed for a tax certificate of title which will transfer the certificate of title and the right to possession of this property if redemption is not made on or before 10/26/2022.

This matter is set for hearing in the Circuit Court of Boone County, 601 N. Main Street, Courtroom 3, Belvidere, Illinois, 61008 at 11:00 A.M. on 11/22/2022.

You may be present at this hearing but your right to redeem will already have expired at that time.

#### YOU ARE URGED TO REDEEM IMMEDIATELY TO PREVENT LOSS OF PROPERTY.

Redemption can be made at any time on or before 10/26/2022 by applying to the County Clerk of Boone County, Illinois, at the Office of the County Clerk in Belvidere, Illinois.

For further information contact the County Clerk.

ADDRESS:  
1212 Logan Ave, Suite 103  
Belvidere, IL 61008  
TELEPHONE: (815) 544-3103  
Auction Z, Inc.  
Purchaser or Assignee  
Dated: 5/16/2022

Published in *The Boone County Journal* June 9, 16, 23

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

IN RE THE ESTATE OF: MARY VITEK, Deceased.

Case No. 2022 PR 28

#### PUBLICATION NOTICE

NOTICE is given of the death of MARY VITEK. Letters of Office were issued on the 2nd of June, 2022 to BARBARA GONZALEZ,

706 Cynthia Lane, Glendale Heights, IL 60139, who is the legal representative of the Estate. The attorney for the Estate is REBECCA A. LAHO, of Mulyk Laho Law, LLC, 45 S. Park Blvd., Suite 230, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137.

Claims against the Estate may be filed on or before December 16, 2022, 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 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 their attorney within ten days after it has been filed.

Dated June 14, 2022

By: /s/Rebecca A. Laho  
Rebecca A. Laho – ARDC #6275326  
MULYK LAHO LAW, LLC  
45 S. Park Blvd., Suite 230  
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137  
Telephone: 630-852-1100  
Fax: 630-852-1128  
ralaho@mulyklaholaw.com

Published in *The Boone County Journal* June 16, 23, 30

for delinquent taxes and that the period of redemption from the sale will expire on 10/26/2022.

The amount to redeem is subject to increase at 6 month intervals from the date of sale and may be further increased if the purchaser at the tax sale or his or her assignee pays any subsequently accruing taxes or special assessments to redeem the mobile home from subsequent forfeitures or tax sales. Check with the county clerk as to the exact amount you owe before redeeming.

This notice is also to advise you that a petition has been filed for a tax certificate of title which will transfer the certificate of title and the right to possession of this property if redemption is not made on or before 10/26/2022.

This matter is set for hearing in the Circuit Court of Boone County, 601 N. Main Street, Courtroom 3, Belvidere, Illinois, 61008 at 11:00 A.M. on 11/22/2022.

You may be present at this hearing but your right to redeem will already have expired at that time.

#### YOU ARE URGED TO REDEEM IMMEDIATELY TO PREVENT LOSS OF PROPERTY.

Redemption can be made at any time on or before 10/26/2022 by applying to the County Clerk of Boone County, Illinois, at the Office of the County Clerk in Belvidere, Illinois.

For further information contact the County Clerk.  
ADDRESS:  
1212 Logan Ave, Suite 103  
Belvidere, IL 61008  
TELEPHONE: (815) 544-3103  
AUCTION Z, INC.  
Purchaser or Assignee  
Dated: 5/16/2022  
Published in *The Boone County Journal* June 9, 16, 23

#### STATE OF ILLINOIS

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE 17th JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
BOONE COUNTY

IN THE ESTATE OF: JACQUELINE S. FRIEGL, Deceased.

Case No. 2022 PR 27

#### CLAIM NOTICE

NOTICE is given of the death of Jacqueline S. Friedl. Letters of Office were issued on June 16, 2022, to Charles R. McGonigal, 20840 Free Church Road, Caledonia, Illinois 61011, who is the legal representative of the estate. The attorney for the estate is Amy L. Silvestri of Silvestri Law Office, 2208 Charles Street, Rockford, Illinois 61104.

Claims against the estate may be filed on or before December 30, 2022, 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 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 legal representative and to his attorney within ten days after it has been filed.

Dated: June 21, 2022

Charles R. McGonigal, Administrator  
Amy L. Silvestri ARDC#06210065  
Silvestri Law Office, Attorney for the Representative  
2208 Charles Street  
Rockford, Illinois 61104  
(815) 227-0700  
amy@silvestri-law.com

Published in *The Boone County Journal* June 23, 30, July 7

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

MANCHESTER RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT #5

Is hereby given that at 8:00 P.M. on June 30, 2022 a public hearing will be held at 19760 Harnish Road, for the purposes of considering the proposed budget, levy and appropriation ordinances of the Manchester Rural Fire Protection District #5. The proposed budget and ordinances will be on file and conveniently available to public inspection at said hearing. The financial audit of Fire District #5 will also be approved.

Joel Nussbaum, Secretary of Manchester Rural

Fire Protection District #5

This was published in *The Boone County Journal*, June 23, 2022

#### NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

BELVIDERE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
Notice is hereby given that the City of Belvidere Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, July 12, 2022 at 6:00 pm in the City Council Chamber, Belvidere City Hall, 401 Whitney Boulevard, Belvidere, Illinois 61008 upon the following:

Application of property owner, Ida Public Library, 320 N. State Street, Belvidere, IL 61008 for a map amendment (rezoning) at 117 West Hurlbut Avenue, Belvidere, IL 61008 from SR-6, Single-family Residential-6 District to I, Institutional District pursuant to the Belvidere Zoning Ordinance Section 150.903 Amendment to Official Zoning Map.

The subject property is legally described as:

Commencing on the Northerly line of Hurlbut Avenue (formerly called East Street), at the most Easterly corner of Lot Number Eleven (11) in Block Number two (2) of Frederick W. Crosby's Second Addition to Belvidere, and running from thence Northwesterly and parallel with State Street, Two (2) chains and Five (5) links; thence Southwesterly and parallel with Hurlbut Avenue, One (1) chain; thence Southeasterly and parallel with State Street, Two (2) chains and Five (5) links to the Northerly line of Hurlbut Avenue; thence Northeasterly on said line One (1) chain to the place of beginning; being the whole of Lot Eleven (11) and Twenty(20) links from the Northeasterly side of Lot Ten (10) adjoining said Lot Eleven (11) in said Block Two (2) of said Frederick W. Crosby's Second Addition to the town (now City) of Belvidere; situated in the County of Boone and State of Illinois. PIN: 05-26-426-010.

Paul Engelman, Chairman,

Belvidere Planning and Zoning Commission

Published In *The Boone County Journal* June 23, 2022

# ASSUMED NAMES

#### ASSUMED NAME CERTIFICATE OF INTENTION STATE OF ILLINOIS COUNTY of BOONE

This is to certify that the undersigned intend to conduct and transact a washing service business in said County and State under the name of CLEAN STREAM PRESSURE WASHING LLC at the following post office address: 526 Bounty Drive NE, Poplar Grove, IL 61065 that the true and real full names of all persons owning, conducting or transacting such business, with respective residence address of each, are as follows: Nathan Schouten, 526 Bounty Drive NE, Poplar Grove, IL 61008; phone # (815) 323-9527.

Subscribed and sworn (or affirmed) to before me, this 7th day of June, A.D. 2022

Julie A. Bliss, County Clerk

Published in *The Boone County Journal* June 6/9, 6/1, 6/23/22

**Cullerton***from page 1*

counts of embezzlement. But he maintained his innocence and continued to serve in the Senate, although he was stripped of his chairmanship of the Labor Committee.

In March of this year, however, he entered a plea agreement with federal prosecutors in which he admitted to one count of embezzlement. He then resigned his Senate seat and was replaced by former state Rep. Diane Pappas, who is not running for a full term in that office.

In addition to his prison sentence, U.S. District Judge Robert W. Gettleman also ordered Cullerton to repay the union \$223,828, an amount that reflected the fact that he had previously made a \$25,000 restitution payment. As part of the plea agreement, prosecutors agreed not to seek forfeiture of his Villa Park residence.

Prosecutors initially asked for an 18-month sentence, which they said would reflect the seriousness of the crime.

In a court filing earlier this month, they noted that after Cullerton lost his job at Teamsters Joint Council 25, he took another “do-nothing” job as a salesman for a video gaming company in 2017 where he received a salary of \$1,000 a week, an amount that was later doubled to \$2,000 a week, even though he brought in little if any business for the company. He was not charged in relation to those payments.

He continued to receive those payments, prosecutors argued, until the investigation into his Teamsters employment became public.

Cullerton’s defense attorney, however, argued for a more lenient sentence of three years’ probation, with an order to perform community service and pay restitution, arguing that Cullerton was currently employed doing shift work at a warehouse and that money continues to be a source of stress for his family.

“Tom is a good and decent man who made a terrible mistake,” attorney Daniel Collins wrote in a court filing. “He should not have accepted the Teamsters salary and benefits without doing enough to earn them. Tom will live the rest of his life with deep regret and shame, but he is determined to make it right and continue in some way to help his community.”

**Pritzker***from page 5*

Black Contractors Owners and Executives, and the Federation of Women Contractors, argued that the measure was a union attempt to drive up the cost of non-union labor.

HB 5412 specifically exempts union projects, homes built on private property where the property owner is the general contractor, and projects contracted through state, local and federal governments.

A follow-up measure, House Bill 4600, was also signed Friday. It exempts any renovations or repairs to existing residential structures, any project that costs less than \$20,000 to complete, and construction on any single unit within a multi-family dwelling. It also created the Bond Reform in the Construction Industry Task Force to report to the General Assembly by March 1, 2023.

The laws took effect upon the governor’s signature.

**HIV Treatment:** House Bill 4430 allows pharmacists to order and conduct testing and dispense pre- and post-exposure HIV medications to individuals who are at high risk for infection. The law takes effect Jan. 1, 2023.

The pharmacists would need to have a standing order issued by a licensed physician or county health department that would allow them to offer care for the individual seeking help, but it would not require a prior patient referral.

The law also requires pharmacists to receive training and specifies that insurance providers must cover the treatments provided by a pharmacist at the same rate as treatment from a physician.

The governor signed that bill the same day he signed House Bill 5549, which requires that for every \$3 million in the state’s special African American HIV/AIDS Response Fund, the fund must maintain at least one Black-led Center of Excellence HIV Biomedical Resource Hub. Its fund balance was \$4.5 million as of Monday, according to the Illinois

Comptroller’s database.

**Family bereavement:** On Thursday, June 9, Pritzker signed Senate Bill 3120 expanding the state’s child bereavement leave act to allow for unpaid leave related to pregnancy loss, failed adoptions, unsuccessful reproductive procedures and other pregnancy-related events.

It expands existing law that allows 10 days of unpaid leave for workers suffering losses, and the new law expands the list of individuals for which a worker can take the leave.

The measure didn’t specify an effective date, meaning it will go into effect on Jan. 1, 2023.

**Health care visits:** Senate Bill 1405 requires that a health care facility must ensure “an opportunity for at least one visitor to visit a resident or patient,” even amid a gubernatorial disaster declaration. A clergyperson would not count against the limit. It became effective when signed on May 27.

**Health safety guidelines:** set by the facility, U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention would still apply. The person seeking entry may be required to pass a health screening and denied entry if they fail it.

**Rep. Chris Bos,** R-Lake Zurich, the bill’s chief House sponsor said in April it was in response to constituent anger over Pritzker’s COVID-19 executive orders. Bos said facilities would still have to comply with local health department guidance as well.

**Fentanyl testing:** House Bill 4556 expands access for pharmacists and other health care professionals to distribute fentanyl testing strips to help reduce opioid overdoses. The testing strips can detect fentanyl in counterfeit pills and drugs.

The bill is designed to expand on the Overdose Prevention and Harm Reduction Act, passed in 2019. That law authorizes government agencies and nongovernmental organizations to create needle access programs aimed at reducing HIV and other bloodborne diseases.

The measure took effect immediately when signed June 2.

**Higher education:** House Bill 5464 requires state public universities and community colleges to develop and implement equity plans to increase the access, retention, completion, and student loan repayment rates for minority students, rural students, adult students, women, and people with disabilities.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education and Illinois Community College Board will guide implementation of the new equity plans. HB 5464 took effect when signed on Tuesday, June 7.

House Bill 4201, which goes into effect Jan. 1, 2023, requires state universities and community colleges to employ “benefits navigators” to connect students to any federal, state or local assistance programs.

**Vegan lunches:** House Bill 4089 requires school districts to provide a plant-based lunch option that complies with federal nutritional requirements to any student who submits a prior request to the district asking for such an option. The law takes effect in August 2023 and was signed May 13.

*Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service covering state government that is distributed to more than 400 newspapers statewide. It is funded primarily by the Illinois Press Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation.*

## COMMUNITY NEWS & EVENTS

### Heritage Day's 5K Run:

The Belvidere Chamber of Commerce is excited to host this beautiful race along the Kishwaukee River Path. The race will start and finish in Doty Park downtown Belvidere. Dogs and strollers are welcome. Please be courteous to runners and stay to the side of the path.

The purpose of this Run/Walk is to provide healthy family fun to the festival weekend. Proceeds from this race will help keep the festival going for years to come.

There will also be a free kids race at 9:00 AM. It will stay within the park and will be approximately 400-500 meters on the circle path in Doty Park. For registration and all other information go to <https://runsignup.com/Race/IL/Belvidere/Heritage5K>.

### Boone County Master Gardeners are Ready to Answer Your Call:

Boone County Master Gardeners offers a free service answering garden questions at their Horticulture Help Desk. The Help Desk is open 1-4 p.m., Monday thru Thursday throughout the growing season (April – Sept.) Master Gardeners are volunteers who have trained by University of Illinois Extension educators to provide research-based answers to your home horticulture questions. Topics include insects, trees, shrubs, plants, vegetables, fruits, gardens, lawns, and more. The Master Gardeners can be reached by calling 815-544-3710, emailing in your question to [uiemg-boone@illinois.edu](mailto:uiemg-boone@illinois.edu), or by stopping at the office at 205 Cadillac Court, Suite 3 in Belvidere during help desk hours.

### Belvidere Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Golf Outing:

Monday, July 11, 2022. Registration and warm breakfast at 8:00 A.M. Shotgun start at 9:00 A.M. Lunch available from 11:30 – 1:00 P.M. call (815) 544-4357 for registration and for further information.

### Calling All Kiddos! (And Adult Chaperons!):

This year the Vintage Wings & Wheels Museum is participating in the Belvidere Heritage Days Parade, which will be held, on June 26 at 3PM. We will be towing a flatbed trailer that will have a Tessier biplane on it! We are looking for as many kiddos that would like to participate, by either sitting on the float with the airplane or walking alongside the float handing out flyers to the parade spectators along the route.

The only things that will be required are adults getting their children to and from the float, a signed waiver by a legal parent/guardian allowing for participation, and also some sort of aviation gear (like in the picture) to be wearing to fit the theme of “vintage”!

Please call 815-547-3115 or email [info@wingsandwheelsmuseum.org](mailto:info@wingsandwheelsmuseum.org) to sign your kid(s) up!

### Celebrate Independence Day with the RSO:

The Rockford Symphony Orchestra (RSO) in conjunction with Rock Valley College’s Starlight Theatre will present the Star-Spangled Spectacular July 3 at 8 PM., conducted by the Rockford Symphony Youth Orchestra’s Music Director Linc Smelser and will include a variety of patriotic favorites along with the always popular tribute to our community’s Veterans. Also included will be music from the movies Star Trek, Superman and Apollo 13.

A highlight of this year’s concert will be Aaron Copland’s Lincoln Portrait featuring State Representative Maurice West who will be narrating this moving work filled with American folk tunes interwoven with narrated passages from Abraham Lincoln’s greatest speeches.

Food trucks will be available on-site beginning at 6 PM. Tickets are \$30 and youth 12 and under \$10. Lawn seats are also available for \$5 each. Purchase tickets online at [rockfordsymphony.com](http://rockfordsymphony.com) or call the RSO box office at 815-965-0049. The annual Star Spangled Spectacular in the beautiful Starlight Theatre is the perfect way to celebrate Independence Day!

### Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden now hosting Sean Kenney’s Nature Connects made with LEGO® bricks:

Sean Kenney’s Nature Connects Made with LEGO® Bricks, an award-winning and family friendly exhibition that uses beautiful works of art made from simple toy blocks to explore animal endangerment, the balance of ecosystems, and mankind’s relationship with nature, is now on display for public viewing at Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden in Rockford.

The public is invited to explore the beauty and wonder of Sean Kenney’s Nature Connects Made with LEGO® Bricks, open daily to the public from 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM for a limited engagement now through September 11, 2022. Daily admission rates are \$8 for adults, \$5 for children and seniors, and children ages 3 and under are free. Plan your visit today!

More information about Sean Kenney’s Nature Connects Made with LEGO® Bricks can be found on Klehm’s website: [www.klehm.org/nature-connects](http://www.klehm.org/nature-connects)

## Mars a New Member of the Journal Team

Hello, Boone County! My name is Marion Rinaldi- but, please, call me Mars.

I am thrilled to be onboard with the *Boone County Journal* as the newest Advertising Sales Representative. I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself, and give you a chance to get to know me and why I have a passion for media and advertising in Boone County.

Hailing from Georgia, I made my way to Illinois with my husband, Dominick, who was working for an airline at O'Hare. We started in Mount Prospect, but eventually moved to Crystal Lake, then to Poplar Grove when we decided to buy a house.

We have two daughters, Elizabeth and Makenna, aged 12 and 2 respectively. I have a Bachelor's degree in English with a concentration in creative writing. I am also a graduate of the Connecticut School of Broadcasting, where I earned my certificate in Television and Radio Broadcasting. I have worked in news radio for Cumulus Media in the Atlanta and Nashville markets as a news producer, voice producer, and fill-in news anchor. Breaking into a new market in radio broadcasting is tough, so when we moved to Illinois, I knew I'd need to broaden my search for work opportunities. While eating lunch at the Steam Plant, I was browsing through an issue of the *Boone County Journal* and saw that they were looking for a part-time writer. That seemed like a great idea, given my previous experience, so I set up a time to meet with David Larson. Long story short, I've been at the *Journal* now for a few months and my role has expanded to ad sales. I view this as an exciting opportunity to not only become more involved in the community, but as a way to use my background in media and small business strategy to help businesses in Boone County enrich their customer base through well-composed and specifically targeted advertising.

Although my family have only been residents of Boone County for two years, this area began to feel like home shortly after we arrived. I come from a small town called Monticello, located in Jasper County, Georgia. With a population of just over 14,000, Jasper County doesn't appear to be what one might call an "exploding community." However, I'm willing to bet that you know a lot more about Jasper County and Monticello than you think. If you're a country music fan, you have certainly heard of Jason Aldean and Trisha Yearwood- both hometown folks from Jasper County, Georgia. Have you ever seen the movie *My Cousin Vinny*? That movie, as well as nine other movies and music videos, was filmed right in the heart of Monticello on the historic downtown square. Jasper County also has the distinction of being "the Deer Hunting Capitol of the South," and celebrates that by holding the annual Deer Festival every fall. Jasper County is a beautiful, rural place with a comfortable, hometown atmosphere that takes great pride in its historical district and those who have called Jasper County home.

As you can see, Boone County shares a lot in common with Jasper County, and these similarities were clearly evident to me as we began settling in. I adore the historical buildings and homes along State Street, and the absolutely beautiful parks and public areas that have been established and so well maintained. The communities are close-knit, and the local support for the schools and students reminds me of some of my favorite things about my own hometown.

As I was coming through high school in Monticello, I did a lot of volunteering within the community, and in my senior year I worked for the Monticello/Jasper County Chamber of Commerce. It was during this time that I developed a deep appreciation for small businesses and helping them grow and thrive in our community. The Chamber recognized the importance of local businesses, and



**Marion "Mars" Rinaldi**

made it their priority to promote those home-grown operations. The next biggest supporter of the local businesses was, and still is, the *Monticello News*. Standing as the only newspaper in Jasper County, the *Monticello News* was absolutely the place to advertise, and the publisher made it a point to be a champion for local business advertisement. This was a valuable partnership that was established between the business owners and the newspaper, and one that was carefully fostered over the years. Much later, in 2015, I opened a photography studio on the square in Monticello, and one of the first things I did was set up weekly advertising in the *Monticello News*. I knew the value of advertising locally, and the *Monticello News* got directly to the heart of my target audience- my neighbors.

With all of these experiences in mind, my approach to selling advertising for the *Boone County Journal* is not one of "how big of an ad space can I sell you," but rather, "what kind of advertising can we offer you that fits your needs and your budget?" My goal is to refresh your view on the power of print advertising, and to help you create a smart, multi-dimensional strategy that allows you to use all the tools at your disposal to successfully market your brand. We are a society in the midst of the age of Digital Marketing; and while there are some extremely cheap online solutions for marketing yourself, using only a few, free digital tools might look great for your budget, it is extremely limiting. It would be like having access to a full golf bag, but only using your driver for every shot. Sure, it's the right tool sometimes, but it's impractical for more than half the game. This is why advertising in print media is so important.

I am truly looking forward to getting to know Belvidere and Boone County, and becoming part of this wonderful community. If you're ever by the *Boone County Journal*/ License & Title office, I hope you will say hello!



## Superintendent

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on April 6th that Dr. Cassandra Schug had been hired as the incoming Superintendent of Belvidere District 100 Schools. Dr. Schug will replace outgoing Superintendent Dr. Daniel Woestman, whose last day will be June 30th.

Dr. Schug brings the experience of 25 years as an educator to District 100, with 11 of those years having served as the Superintendent for the Watertown Unified School District in Watertown, Wisconsin.

Having been introduced to the community via social media and a recent Meet & Greet on June 16th, Dr. Schug is preparing to face a number of hot-button topics that have been of concern in District 100 for some time.

In her statement at the time of her announced hiring, Dr. Schug said "I know that the students, staff, and families of District #100 are looking for a leader who will celebrate the dedicated staff and supportive community in Belvidere while being a strong decision-maker, and visible, approachable, and transparent communicator."

From her statement, it is clear that Dr. Schug is familiar with the results of a survey conducted by the District in February of this year, in which respondents overwhelmingly stated that they wanted a Superintendent with leadership skills, someone visible and active in the community, and someone with strong communication skills. Dr. Schug was also quick to confirm that she and her family would be residing in Belvidere--something that a large majority of survey respondents felt was important for a Superintendent.

The *Boone County Journal* had an opportunity to interview Dr. Schug recently, to find out how she will be approaching her new position in the school district.

"I would say that my priorities right now are learning about the school district, learning about the stakeholders, and learning about the community. My first task is to listen and to learn. Once I've had the opportunity to do that, then I'm looking forward to partnering with those stakeholder groups and

establishing a strategic plan to help guide us in our work going forward." To put this into practice, Dr. Schug will be hosting "listening sessions" throughout the summer that will give students, parents, and the community at large an opportunity to speak up on the issues they feel are important. Those dates are forthcoming, and she hopes that members of the community will take advantage of these opportunities to have their voices heard.

Dr. Schug went on to say, "When you are coming into a new place, you have to be really cognizant that you're coming into a place that is doing a lot of things really well. There are a lot of things to celebrate about what's going on in District 100, and I want to make sure I find out what those things are and continue to celebrate those fantastic assets that are happening; and then really listen to what it is that we need to do to continue to move us forward."

As part of that strategic plan, Dr. Schug expressed a strong commitment to making sure that District 100 students have a solid plan for their post-secondary life. "Whatever it is that our students are going to be doing after they walk out of our doors, there's a really strong commitment to having a plan for their success after high school."

Dr. Schug highlighted that her commitments to District 100 are to "celebrate, communicate, and continue a commitment of excellence to District 100." To that end, she was highly complimentary of the staff and faculty in the District, mentioning that she has heard over and over that this district has an extremely supportive and welcoming culture. She also highlighted the successes of the Dual Language Program offered by the District, and that she looks forward to continuing that and seeing the tremendous, positive impact it has on the community.

Another issue ranking at the top of her priority list is school safety. The *Journal* asked Dr. Schug about her policies regarding the growing issue of bullying.

"It is important to be as proactive as possible in terms of ensuring you are building a culture of acceptance and belonging, and that you are promoting a culture where you are not going to tolerate bullying and harassment; and when those things happen, you are responding to them immediately. You are following up and making sure the [bullied] student feels supported, the family feels supported, and that they are going to be able to come back and feel like they are a part of their school."

But what about the students who are doing the bullying? Dr. Schug says that those students need to be surrounded with support just as much.

"Your first communications are that we are not going to tolerate this behavior. However, it's really important that we teach you what the correct behavior is. Part of our responsibility is to help students learn to problem solve; to surround them with the support they need to make good decisions, so they aren't making decisions that will hurt themselves or others."

She went on to point out that challenging behaviors are not new--but the challenges facing students and parents are much different than they were before. A new focus on student mental health is coming to the forefront, as students are exhibiting higher levels of depression and anxiety; and those don't go away when a student goes to school. "We see students who are navigating difficult items in their own lives, and part of our responsibility is to provide support whenever we can to get those students to a successful future."

As to her commitment to communication, Dr. Schug said, "It is definitely one of my goals, as I conduct these listening sessions to listen to how they want to be communicated with, and how we can meet those needs. We can never communicate enough. Figuring out how to efficiently, accurately, and effectively communicate with families as proactively as possible is definitely one of my goals as an administrator; and you can't do that if there isn't an opportunity for parents to reach out and communicate with you as quickly as possible as well."

Dr. Schug officially takes office on July 1, 2022.