



64 Years Ago and 64 Years To Go

By David Larson

The picture this week is an aerial view of the Des Plaines Oasis. It could just as well be the Belvidere Oasis in 1958, shortly before the Federal government restricted further construction of over-the-highway restaurants in the United States. Belvidere was one of the first of the 5 over-the-Tollway Oasis restaurants to open in Illinois. Despite being a historic structure, today, the Des Plaines Oasis is gone without a trace. What shall become of the Belvidere Oasis by the year 2086? What follows is some reminiscence of where it has been and a fantasy about where it could go.

Originally the Belvidere Oasis was connected to the Belvidere community, marketing its Fred Harvey and later Howard Johnson dining experience with Sunday prime rib dinners and smorgasbords of roast beef, fried chicken, and baked ham. It was a place where local events were held. It was just a short drive out Pearl Street Road just past the Pearl Street Tavern and George Myers' farm to an exclusively local parking lot. Locals could quickly escape the Belvidere environment to another world of cars and trucks traveling to wherever imagined as they passed under the restaurant bridge like the movements of a planetary time piece.

Recently at Barrington Road in Hoffman Estates, just down the road from Belvidere, an enclosed walking bridge has been built over the I-90 Tollway. It is not a restaurant, but serves as a bus stop on either end, depending on direction to be traveled, connecting passengers to the RTA (CTA and Pace) and the world (O'Hare). It does look like an Oasis, but without the girth.

The Belvidere Oasis, an historical landmark, is all of that plus a restaurant and gas station, too.

Continued on Page 2

What's In Pritzker's Proposed Budget?

A look inside the final spending plan of the governor's first term

By Jerry Nowicki Capitol News Illinois

Each year in February, Illinois' governor must propose to lawmakers a spending plan for the upcoming fiscal year. The General Assembly will then spend the next several months negotiating which proposals to include and which to scrap before sending the budget back to the governor for consideration.

On Wednesday, Gov. JB Pritzker delivered his fourth proposed budget, this one for fiscal year 2023 which will begin July 1, and outlined spending plans for an anticipated \$1.7 billion surplus for the fiscal year that will end June 30.

In the upcoming budget, the governor asks lawmakers to spend \$45.4 billion from its general revenue funds, which are the main discretionary spending accounts for state lawmakers. Revenues are projected at \$45.8 billion, with about \$41.8 billion from state sources and the rest from the federal government.

The budget spends about \$1.6 billion less than the one for the current fiscal year, based upon updated estimates from the governor's office.

Below is a look at some of the major expenditures and new initiatives proposed by the governor.

Pension contributions

Illinois' largest general revenue fund expenses continue to be K-12 education and pensions. The latter will make up 20.7 percent of the proposed general revenue spending in the upcoming budget, or about \$9.6 billion.

The governor has proposed adding another

Continued on Page 2

Chicago Auto Show If you go....

By Charles Herbst

The Nation's Largest Auto Show is back in its usual slot on the calendar, this Saturday, February 12 through Monday, February 20 at Chicago's McCormick Place. There will be hundreds of cars on display in over 1 million square feet of exhibit space. A few companies have cut back or are no longer participating, but you'll find hundreds of cars to choose from, all under one roof. If you are thinking about buying a car, this is the best place to screen the various makes and models.

Like many others, we wish Tesla, Rivian and BMW North America would participate in the show. Sadly, they are not.

Admission. General admission is \$15. Seniors and children \$10. You can buy online or at the door.

There are sometimes discount offers floating around, particularly from car dealers.

Dealing with Covid protocols. While many in the State Line Region take a "live and let live" attitude locally, be advised that these rules are taken seriously (and enforced) in Chicago.

This year outside food and beverages are not permitted inside the Chicago Auto Show.

Masks are required for all attendees age 2 and over, except when eating and drinking. Masks must cover the nose and mouth.

Remember, if you ride Metra or CTA to get to the show, masks must be worn at all times there, too.

Proof of COVID-19 vaccine will not be required for admission to the show, but see the rules for food service below.

Food service. Designated food service areas will be set up at the Auto Show. Proof of COVID-19 vaccine will be required, as well as a photo ID for everyone over 16 for entry into those areas.

Continued on Page 2

It is how the world knows Belvidere. Currently in “no man’s land,” it does not yet have the benefit of hourly bus service to connect the RTA with RMTD. And perhaps it never will. Or perhaps South State Street will extend to a parking ramp to service the daily bus commuters to better paying jobs in the suburbs or a flight out of O’Hare. A far South State Street boulevard with retail development along the way, that relieved the traffic congestion at Pearl Street and Chrysler Drive.

During the gas shortage crises in 1974, the 24/7 Oasis gas station had to limit hours and 8 gallons was the most that could be sold per car. The lines of cars for fill-ups became so long that they backed up traffic on the entrance ramps causing a traffic hazard on the Tollway, unless the restrictions were in place. What will be the fate of the Belvidere Oasis, one of the top sales tax revenue generators in Boone County? Long distance travelers needing to charge electric cars will be different. How will the Oasis change? Could it be a hub for an office park with a turn-around option for anyone coming from the East at Irene Road.

In 1977, the Belvidere Daily Republican published a story with photos of visitors relaxing at the windows of the Oasis, watching the traffic pass. It discussed the volume of daily stops at the Belvidere Oasis. It reported that 16,000 cars and trucks daily passed through the tollbooths nearby. What is that number today? How many come from area zip codes commuting to jobs in Chicago and the suburbs already? Is a bus connection viable today if a train isn’t or wouldn’t be until 2086? Would it soften the blow should Stellantis closes by providing cheap access to better paying jobs?



Morales Engelkes, Andrea, Belvidere
Riley, Janice, 83, Belvidere, February 5

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\$500 million to the pension payment beyond what is required by law in fiscal years 2022 and 2023.

That’s notable, because previous governors have been widely criticized for shortchanging the pension system – something Pritzker proposed, then quickly abandoned, in his first year in office. Critics often point out that the state law governing pension payments already shortchanges the system from what accountants suggest should be paid into it.

The governor proposed spending \$300 million of the surplus from the current fiscal year to pay down pensions, with \$200 million added to the statutory payment in the upcoming budget.

The governor’s office estimated the \$500 million increase beyond statutory amounts would reduce unfunded liabilities – which sit at about \$130 billion – by about \$1.8 billion. A pension buyout program previously approved by the General Assembly has reduced that liability by about \$1.4 billion, according to the governor’s office.

K-12 Education

Approximately 21 percent of the budget is dedicated to Pre-K-12 education, an increase of \$498 million from one year ago.

That includes \$350 million for the evidence-based funding formula for K-12 schools, which prioritizes new money toward the schools furthest from their “adequacy” target, which takes into account class sizes, a local district’s property values and other factors.

The budget asks for another \$54.4 million to provide early childhood education services to another 7,100 children, and another \$96 million in transportation and special education grants for schools.

Another \$12 million would be added to the Regional Offices of Education budget to address truancy and chronic absenteeism, and agriculture education funding would increase by \$2 million.

Temporary tax relief

The governor cited rising inflation as the basis for creating about \$1 billion in temporary tax relief for motor fuel, groceries and property taxes.

The motor fuel tax relief would not lower gas prices, but it would prevent an annual increase to the motor fuel tax that is written into law from taking effect this year. It prevents a hike of 2.2 cents per gallon of gas, according to the governor’s office – a taxpayer savings it pegged at \$135 million.

Motor fuel tax money does not go to the general revenue fund, but rather to road construction projects. The tax holiday does not appear to affect a proposed \$46.5 billion capital infrastructure budget, which is mostly an extension of the 2019 Rebuild Illinois plan.

The governor also proposed rolling back a 1 percent state grocery tax for the fiscal year, a taxpayer savings pegged at \$360 million. The state would reimburse local governments for the effect of the tax holiday.

Illinoisans currently eligible for a 5 percent property tax credit under current law – that is, joint filers earning below \$500,000 and single filers earning below \$250,000 – would be eligible for another 5 percent property tax credit under the proposal, up to \$300. The taxpayer savings is estimated at \$475 million.

Rainy day fund

Illinois’ “rainy day fund” at its height contained only about \$300 million since its 2001 creation, but that was spent down to almost nothing during a budget impasse under Republican former Gov. Bruce Rauner and Democratic leaders in the General Assembly.

Pritzker’s budget proposes adding \$600 million to the fund with a supplemental budget from the current fiscal year, while dedicating \$279 million to the fund in FY2023 to bring the balance up to \$879 million.

The governor also proposed dedicating \$898 million to pay down overdue health insurance bills.

Higher education

The governor proposed spending \$2.2 billion on higher education, a \$208 million increase from

the current year. That includes a \$122 million increase to Monetary Award Program grants to help students demonstrating a financial need attend college.

Universities and community colleges would see their budgets increased 5 percent, or \$68 million, while adult education programs would see \$2.5 million in new funding and funding would increase for minority teacher scholarships by \$2.3 million

Through College Illinois, a state-run prepaid tuition plan that is no longer open for enrollment, the state has about \$230 million in obligations that the fund cannot currently meet. Pritzker proposed spending \$230 million in general revenue funds to pay down that remaining balance, and his team estimated the long-run savings at about \$75 million

Safety net

The beleaguered Department of Children and Family Services would see a funding increase of \$250 million, or 16 percent, to about \$1.3 billion from general revenue funds. That includes rate reforms for private sector providers in an effort to address staffing shortages, totaling \$87.1 million.

The budget also provides \$15.5 million to hire an additional 360 employees to address growing caseloads, improve caseload ratios and continue operations in licensing, monitoring and clinical services.

Funding for nursing homes would increase by \$500 million, with lawmakers expected to take up rate reforms and a new provider assessment designed to maximize federal dollars, encourage improvement of care and staffing ratios.

Unemployment trust fund

As of Feb. 1, Illinois owed the federal government more than \$4.5 billion for advances received to keep its unemployment insurance trust fund afloat during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. By Sept. 30, Illinois will owe almost \$32 million in interest on that borrowing.

If the state doesn’t take action to pay down the deficit, it could lead to massive unemployment insurance rate hikes on businesses and cuts to benefits for those claiming unemployment.

The budget does not include any money to pay down the borrowing, but the governor’s office said it remains in negotiations with lawmakers and representatives of labor and businesses on a solution. There’s serious consideration of using much of about \$3.5 billion in remaining federal American Rescue Plan Act funding to pay down the deficit, according to the governor’s office.

Public safety

Pritzker noted his budget includes an \$18.6 million increase to allow for three classes of Illinois State Police cadets. Another \$5.4 million will go to opening a new forensic laboratory in Decatur in August.

The budget also includes \$4.5 million to fund body cameras for ISP in accordance with a criminal justice reform bill passed one year ago, as well as providing the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board with \$10 million for distributing grants to local law enforcement for body cameras.

The Department of Human Services budget includes \$240 million as part of a two-year, \$250 million commitment to the Reimagine Public

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Safety Act, which aims at investing violence prevention resources in some of the state's most dangerous areas. Just \$5 million of that comes from the general revenue fund, with \$235 million funded through the American Rescue Plan Act.

Revenues

The budget does not call for raising taxes to create any new revenues.

The state does expect a 4 percent increase in income tax receipts at \$22.4 billion. Corporate income taxes are expected to decline 5.4 percent to \$4.4 billion, with sales tax decreasing 1.3 percent to \$9.9 billion and other sources netting \$3.1 billion.

The lottery is expected to bring in \$754 million, legalized gambling \$157 million, and adult-use marijuana \$142 million. Federal sources account for just over \$4 billion.

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Auto Show

from page 1

Many Chicago restaurants are following the same rules for dine-in service. Carry-out is generally exempt, but you are expected to wear your mask when ordering.

Avoid traffic, tolls and high parking fees at McCormick Place. Parking at McCormick Place is \$25.

One option is to take Metra from Woodstock, Crystal Lake or Elgin. Special Auto Show buses will operate between the Ogilvie Transportation Center/Union Station and McCormick Place. These buses will have either "To Auto Show McCormick Place" or "Metra Stations/Via Downtown" in their destination signs depending on the direction of travel. This bus charges the regular CTA fare, which is \$2.25 each way, exact change required. Generally, outside of the auto show times, there is no direct bus from either Ogilvie or Union Stations to McCormick Place.

During the weekday, we suggest you use the Park and Ride at I-90 and Randall Road. Parking is free. Round trip to the Chicago Auto Show will cost you about \$5 with your Ventra card. If you don't have a Ventra card, you can pay an exact cash fare of \$2.25 on the express bus and buy a Ventra card at the Blue Line for the rest of your trip. The express bus (which has reclining leather seats and free wifi) will take you to an easy transfer to the Blue Line at Rosemont. At Clark and Lake, take the escalators up to the Green Line. Ride the Green Line to the 22nd Street/McCormick Place Station. McCormick place is a short walk.

In the evening or on the weekend, we suggest you drive to the CTA Park and Ride at Cumberland Avenue and the Kennedy Expressway. Parking is \$6 for 12 hours. Take the Blue Line to Clark and Lake, where you'll transfer to the Green Line as described above. Round trip fare to McCormick Place from Cumberland is also \$5. Ventra cards can be purchased or fare added at Rosemont,

Cumberland or any CTA Rapid Transit station.

There are plenty of CTA personnel at all of the rapid transit stations, who will happily give you directions if you need them. Or you can always call 312 836-7000, or visit transitchicago.com for help.

Comptroller Says Proposed Budget could Lead State to Another Credit Upgrade

Mendoza praises efforts to pay down debt, bill backlog

By Grace Kinnicutt Capitol News Illinois

Comptroller Susana Mendoza said she expects the state's credit rating to improve and the remaining bill backlog reduced under Gov. JB Pritzker's \$45.4 billion proposed budget.

Another credit rating upgrade would be noteworthy, as the state had gone 23 years without receiving such a vote of confidence from a ratings agency at the time it was upgraded by Moody's Investors Service in June 2021.

The state's unpaid bill backlog, which climbed to \$16.7 billion during the budget impasse between former Republican Gov. Bruce Rauner and Democratic leaders of the General Assembly, now sits at about \$2.9 billion.

That equates to the state paying its bills on a cycle of about 15 days, whereas the oldest voucher at the height of the impasse was 500 days old. That's a fact Pritzker noted in his speech in which he specifically credited Mendoza by name.

"Painstaking work has been done in coordination with the General Assembly and Comptroller Susana Mendoza over the last three years to diligently and meticulously reverse the irresponsible decisions of the past and ensure that responsible budgeting would become the rule, not the exception," Pritzker said.

Mendoza credited the governor for his attention to the backlog, including allocating \$898 million to pay down overdue health insurance bills.

"Since (Pritzker) took office, he's been a wonderful partner in helping rewrite the state's fiscal ship and having the ability to really hone in on paying down our debt as quickly as possible," Mendoza said. "The bill backlog will become just the normal cost of running a business."

Mendoza said paying down the backlog avoids late payment interest that totaled hundreds of millions of dollars annually at the height of the impasse.

Mendoza succeeded Leslie Munger, a Republican appointed by Rauner, by winning a special election in 2016.

The Democrat and former Chicago city clerk was a frequent critic of Rauner, publicizing her lack of autonomy over state finances due to consent decrees and court orders which mandated her to pay certain bills with the state's dwindling finances during the height of the impasse.

She won reelection in 2018 and has continued to prioritize the timely payment of bills.

"I don't think anyone would have thought this was possible five years ago," Mendoza said of the proposed

budget in a phone call with Capitol News Illinois Wednesday. "We've made incredible strides, incredible progress."

She also praised the governor and state legislative leaders for paying down \$3.2 billion in pandemic-related borrowing early. In 2020, Illinois borrowed the money from the Federal Reserve's Municipal Liquidity Facility due to revenue shortfalls associated with the pandemic.

By the end of January, Illinois was able to pay back the \$3.2 billion two years early, saving taxpayers about \$82 million.

Sen. Cristina Castro, D-Elgin, released a statement stating that reducing the bill backlog will improve the state's fiscal standing.

"Making sure we save money on unnecessary interest costs by paying our bills on time means saving Illinois taxpayers money," Castro said.

If the budget is passed and signed into law, Mendoza said, "there is no doubt in my mind" that Illinois' credit score will once again improve.

The June upgrade from Moody's put Illinois two notches above "junk" bond status, which is still one of the worst credit ratings in the U.S. But Mendoza said anytime credit is improved, it helps taxpayers save money when the state has to borrow funds.

"Anytime our credit improves, that means that the cost of borrowing or access to cash will be cheaper for taxpayers," Mendoza said. "That's a wonderful place to be."

Capitol News Illinois bureau chief Jerry Nowicki contributed to this story.


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OP-ED

Valentine's Day

By Scott Reeder

I picked up the phone the other day and made a dinner reservation for a Valentine's Day date.

The manager wrote down, "Party of two for 7:30 p.m."

I couldn't help but smile. It will be my 20th Valentine's Day date in a row with the same person.

Folks sometimes ask what brought us together. It wasn't Cupid's arrow; it was dog's urine.

You see, I met my wife, Joan, on a blind date right before Thanksgiving 2001. We decided to go out again so I found myself agonizing over what we should do on a second date. I knew she liked animals because she was a veterinarian. So, I invited her to go for a walk with me in Springfield's Washington Park with my Labrador retriever, Griz.

He was a nice dog. But we were two single males who had lived together for eight years. He wasn't too keen on sharing me with anyone else. So, he viewed Joan with a great deal of suspicion.

"He never takes his eyes off of you – ever," Joan said as we walked through the park with Griz leading the way. As we walked we talked about family, God, careers and other deep stuff.

After the walk, we went to my house to watch a movie. No sooner did we sit down on the sofa than Griz plopped down – right between us. We petted him as we watched Russell Crowe in Gladiator.

Occasionally, our fingers would touch as we both stroked the Labrador's fur. A little tingle ran up my hand each time our fingers brushed against each other. But Griz wasn't so impressed. He watched me intently but pointedly ignored this woman – an intruder in his lair.

After the show was over, Joan decided she was going to win his heart. She stepped into the kitchen, squatted down and called Griz's name. He responded to her calls with a glare.

He walked toward her with stiff-legged trepidation. No sooner did he reach Joan than he hoisted his leg and urinated on her blouse.

I stood there horrified as the steady stream of urine raced down her side and formed a puddle on the floor. I kept thinking, "She's never going to go out with me again."

Joan gave me a big grin and said, "Don't worry about it. It's the third time it has happened to me this week."

At that moment, I knew this would be the woman I would marry – she had grace under pressure. A month later, we were engaged to be married.

Spouses don't come with instructions and I'll admit that even after 20 years, I'm at times bewildered as to how to respond to some situations.

But I do know this: She is the love of my life and puts up with me despite my many shortcomings.

She completes me.

When we wed, friends felt the need to offer advice.

Perhaps they came plying their unsolicited guidance because I entered the world of matrimony

later than most. I was 38.

Regardless, their advice, while well intentioned, was not always full of merit.

For example, a twice-divorced college buddy told me: "Never hold anything back. Always tell her exactly what you are thinking. And when she does something you don't like, make sure she knows it."

On the other hand, a relative gave me this sage bit of wisdom: "Marriage is something you should go into with your eyes wide open and through with them half shut."

When I ran this adage by my father, who ultimately was married to my mother for 58 years, he would just smile.

His folks were married 74 years, and my mother's parents' marriage lasted until the eve of their 50th anniversary, when a bad heart felled my grandfather.

They set good examples.

It is not enough to "feel" in love. Feelings are fleeting. Love is an action – not a mood. Love is choosing to put the needs and desires of someone else ahead of your own. I saw this sort of sacrificial love when my father would pick up my mother's frail cancer-stricken body and gently place her in bed. Or at harvesttime when my mother would cook meals and take them into the field so Dad could always have something good to eat when he was working such long hours.

I only hope Joan and I can provide an even better example for our three daughters.

If they ever ask the secret to a happy marriage I'll say this: love, forgive and never give up.

Happy Valentine's Day, Dear.

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

Governor, AG Address Expressway Shootings, Organized Retail Crime

Hundreds of cameras being installed on Chicago area highways

By Jerry Nowicki Capitol News Illinois

Two of the state's top officials each held news conferences Monday morning to outline current and proposed responses to increasing crime, including expressway shootings and organized retail thefts.

Gov. JB Pritzker appeared with Illinois State Police Director Brendan Kelly in Chicago to outline actions taken and arrests made in expressway shootings, while Attorney General Kwame Raoul appeared with the president of the Illinois Retail Merchants Association to outline a proposed legislative package taking aim at organized retail crime.

Pritzker and Kelly said more than 20 arrests have been made in recent months related to expressway shootings and crime. The arrests included three first-degree murder charges, one involuntary manslaughter, three attempted murders, and other crimes such as aggravated discharge of a firearm, reckless discharge of a firearm, aggravated vehicular hijacking and aggravated fleeing and

eluding.

While they were in the news conference, however, a shooting occurred on the Dan Ryan expressway, according to the Chicago Sun-Times.

Kelly said expressway shootings have increased because of the prevalence of cameras – from doorbell cameras to store security systems – almost everywhere else, other than expressways. Putting cameras there can help deter the shootings, he said.

"It's almost like a modern, 21st century form of dueling," Kelly said. "They say horrible things to each other on social media, they threaten one another and they say let's take that out to the E-way. So let's take this out to the expressway. And almost like Main Street in the Old West, they're using these expressways for this type of violence."

Pritzker and Kelly pointed to the installation of 99 cameras with license plate readers on the Dan Ryan expressway in Chicago, where many of the shootings have occurred, with "hundreds more" cameras coming.

In recent weeks, the ISP has worked with the Chicago Police Department, Homeland Security and local law enforcement agencies, Pritzker said, leading to the 20 arrests.

Kelly said the agency increased patrol presence on Chicago expressways by over 150 percent at "peak criminal activity times." Since October, that has led to nearly 5,000 traffic stops, 132 DUI arrests, 69 firearm recoveries and 133 criminal arrests in the Chicago area.

The Monday news conference touting the Pritzker administration's approach came as he and Democrats in the General Assembly have faced consistent attacks from Republican lawmakers and political opponents amid the recent rise in violent crime.

Republicans have painted a criminal justice reform bill passed one year ago in January as a contributing factor to rising crime rates. That bill, known as the SAFE-T Act, overhauls police certification, reforms use-of-force standards, improves police accountability and abolishes cash bail beginning in 2023 in favor of a system that prioritizes risk of re-offending over an offender's

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ability to afford release.

The GOP has introduced a package of bills looking to create mandatory minimums for certain violent crime offenses and to create a special, \$125 million grant fund to beef up officer hiring and retention efforts.

State Sen. Chapin Rose, a Mahomet Republican, is the sponsor of the Senate GOP's crime package. In response to the governor's budget address, he outlined his view of the GOP and Democratic differences when it comes to crime.

"This is, I believe, a major difference between Gov. Pritzker and the Democrats and the Republicans," he said. "They refuse to lock up truly violent people talking about so called low-level nonviolent offenders ... all Gov. Pritzker wants to do is throw money at something that may or may not work years down the road. Republicans want to take violent criminals off the streets today."

In recent budgets, Pritzker said his administration has increased funding for ISP officers to retrieve illegally owned guns and to hire new ISP cadets, including 300 in the upcoming fiscal year.

He also touted violence interruption spending, which he's more than doubled in his tenure, an increase made possible due to hundreds of millions of dollars in federal COVID-19 response funding.

"Stopping the cycle of violence also means tackling poverty and root causes of crime, access to housing, health care, education and jobs," Pritzker said Monday.

He also noted recent state spending on crime labs which was included in the 2019 Rebuild Illinois capital infrastructure plan.

"Catching and prosecuting perpetrators can reduce and deter crime right now. And that's what our excellent Illinois State Police troopers, new cameras and new crime labs are doing," he said. "Between the stepped up patrols and the new technology we've brought to bear, anyone, anyone even thinking of committing violent crimes on our expressways ought to be on notice that they're more likely today than ever before to get caught."

Retail crime bills

Warning of "criminal rings" and "illicit trade," Raoul, appearing with IRMA President Rob Karr, differentiated what he referred to as "organized retail crime" and the types of retail theft committed by "ragtag, low-level offenders."

The legislative package addressing organized retail crime has not yet been drafted. But Raoul and Karr said it will aim to define organized retail crime in law, allowing prosecutors greater leeway to charge those participating in it, while also holding online marketplaces accountable and aiming to provide more state funding to address organized retail crime.

"Organized retail crime is not like your customary retail theft, and our laws should not treat them as such," Raoul said. "These crimes are perpetrated by sophisticated criminal enterprises coordinating the thefts of many items of high value. Those items are often resold, and the funds are often used to fund drug trafficking and human

trafficking."

Raoul touted an organized retail crime task force overseen by his office, a public-private collaboration that includes retailers, online marketplaces, law enforcement agencies and state's attorneys. Its first major bust was announced in early December, when over \$1 million of stolen goods were recovered after an unrelated weapons arrest in Chicago.

But law enforcement alone can't stop organized retail crime, Raoul said. The effort must also include retailers, online retailer platforms and lawmakers.

According to a news release, in the new proposal, prosecutors would be given wider discretion to bring charges regardless of where the crime takes place, meaning if the conspiracy, theft, and selling all occurred in different jurisdictions, each jurisdiction would have the ability to prosecute the entire crime.

The AG would also have the ability to prosecute via a statewide grand jury.

Online third-party sellers would be required to verify the identity of high-volume sellers using bank account numbers, taxpayer IDs or other information, and to suspend sellers for non-compliance.

The plan would also require the courts to give retail crime theft victims seven days' notice of a court hearing.

Karr said organized retail theft is not a victimless crime.

"While the (Magnificent Mile in downtown Chicago) and high-end stores have captured headlines, neighborhoods and retail corners throughout the state have been victims," he said. "But it isn't just faceless stores that are victims, either."

Clerks who fear coming to work, consumers who worry about visiting stores, commuters and tourists who worry about downtown shopping, the hospitality industry which relies upon visitors, and anyone seeking economic development are all victims, he said, as are Illinois taxpayers, who rely on retail as the second largest generator of tax revenue.

"In my nearly three decades involved with retail, this is the first time that safety

and crime has been one of the top two concerns as stores decide whether to locate or keep stores open," he said.

The proposal also calls for an unspecified amount of funding, according to a news release, to create new positions in the AG's office and various state's attorney offices to investigate and prosecute retail theft and illicit trade.

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



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Pheasants Forever Annual Banquet
 Friday, March 4th, 2022

Doors open @ 5:30 pm
 Raffles & Silent Auction @ 5:30 pm
 Dinner served @ 7:00 pm
 Live Auction @ 8:00 pm
 Membership Dinner \$70
 Dinner Only \$45

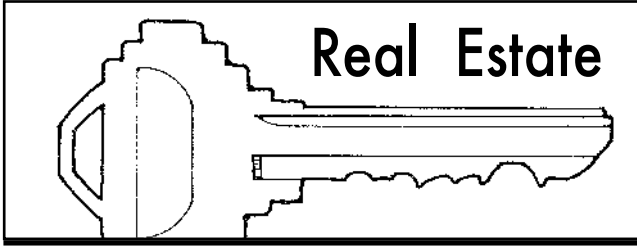
Raffle & Table Packages Available
 Please call: (779) 771-3907 for tickets or more information.

Boone County License & Title
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 Or
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 Or
 Vin# + Plate # + Expiration Date

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

DEUTSCHE BANK NATIONAL TRUST COMPANY, AS TRUSTEE FOR ARGENT SECURITIES INC, ASSET-BACKED PASS THROUGH CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2005-W4 Plaintiff,
-v.-
2020 CH 48
ROBERTO GOMEZ JR, MARIA R. BOBADILLA-GOMEZ, CANDLEWICK LAKE ASSOCIATION, INC, AMERICAN GENERAL FINANCIAL SERVICES OF ILLINOIS, INC N/K/A ONEMAIN FINANCIAL OF ILLINOIS, INC, Defendant
NOTICE OF SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on December 14, 2021, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 1:00 PM on March 15, 2022, 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 129 DREW COURT NE, POPLAR GROVE, IL 61065
Property Index No. 03-22-253-007

The real estate is improved with a single family residence. The judgment amount was \$147,323.22.
Sole terms: 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, including the Judicial Sale fee for the Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund, which is calculated on residential real estate at the rate of \$1 for each \$1,000 or fraction thereof of the amount paid by the purchaser not to exceed \$300, in certified funds/or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. No fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.

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

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

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

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

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

For information, Alexander Potestivo, POTESTIVO & ASSOCIATES, P.C. Plaintiff's Attorneys, 223 WEST JACKSON BLVD, STE 610, Chicago, IL, 60606 (312) 263-0003. Please refer to file number 111480.

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.

POTESTIVO & ASSOCIATES, P.C.
223 WEST JACKSON BLVD, STE 610
Chicago IL, 60606
312-263-0003
E-Mail: ilpleadings@potestivolaw.com
Attorney File No. 111480
Case Number: 2020 CH 48
TJSC#: 42-9

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 # 2020 CH 48
13186750
Published in *The Boone County Journal* Feb 10, 17, 24, 2022.

residential real estate arose prior to the sale. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.

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

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

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

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For information, Alexander Potestivo, POTESTIVO & ASSOCIATES, P.C. Plaintiff's Attorneys, 223 WEST JACKSON BLVD, STE 610, Chicago, IL, 60606 (312) 263-0003. Please refer to file number 111480.

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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.

POTESTIVO & ASSOCIATES, P.C.
223 WEST JACKSON BLVD, STE 610
Chicago IL, 60606
312-263-0003
E-Mail: ilpleadings@potestivolaw.com
Attorney File No. 111480
Case Number: 2020 CH 48
TJSC#: 42-9

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 # 2020 CH 48
13186750
Published in *The Boone County Journal* Feb 10, 17, 24, 2022.

TAX DEED NO.: 2022TX5
FILED: 1/24/2022

TAKE NOTICE

County of Boone
Date Premises Sold: October 31, 2019
Certificate No.: 2018-00133
Sold for General Taxes of (Year): 2018
Sold for Special Assessment of (Municipality) and Special Assessment Number: N/A
Warrant No.: N/A Installment No.: N/A

THIS PROPERTY HAS BEEN SOLD FOR DELINQUENT TAXES
Property Located at: 926 Julien Street, Belvidere, IL 61008
Legal Description or Property Index No.: 05-25-408-013

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 July 20, 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 July 20, 2022.

This matter is set for hearing in the Circuit Court of Boone County in 601 N. Main St., Belvidere, IL 61008, Room 3, on August 9, 2022 at 9:00 AM.

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 July 20, 2022 by applying to the County Clerk of Boone, Illinois at the Office of the County Clerk in Belvidere, Illinois.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT THE COUNTY CLERK
1212 Logan Ave., Suite 103
Belvidere, IL 61008
(815) 544-3103

Firm Assets, LLC
Purchaser or Assignee, January 26, 2022
Travis B Hardy Sr., Travis B. Hardy Sr.

Occupant
Devin A. Gough, Elizabeth Vendermerwe, Trevor James Brewer, Joni Oglesby, Elizabeth Bruzan, Thomas Gough, Shawn Michael Roth

State of Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services Child Support Enforcement, State of Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services Child Support Enforcement, State of Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services Child Support Enforcement, Attorney General for the State of Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services Child Support Enforcement, Julie A. Bliss, County Clerk of Boone County, Illinois, Claimants, Judgment Creditors, and Decree Creditors, if any of the above described as "Unknown Owners"
"Unknown owners or parties interested in said land or lots"
6088-920670
Published in *The Boone County Journal* Feb 3, 10, 17

TAX DEED NO.: 2022TX6
FILED: 1/24/2022

TAKE NOTICE

County of Boone
Date Premises Sold: October 31, 2019
Certificate No.: 2018-00021
Sold for General Taxes of (Year): 2018
Sold for Special Assessment of (Municipality) and Special Assessment Number: N/A
Warrant No.: N/A Installment No.: N/A

THIS PROPERTY HAS BEEN SOLD FOR DELINQUENT TAXES
Property Located at: 136 Columbia Street Northwest, Poplar Grove, IL 61065

Legal Description or Property Index No.: 03-22-351-015
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 July 20, 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 July 20, 2022.

This matter is set for hearing in the Circuit Court of Boone County in 601 N. Main St., Belvidere, IL 61008, Room 3, on August 9, 2022 at

9:00 AM.
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 July 20, 2022 by applying to the County Clerk of Boone, Illinois at the Office of the County Clerk in Belvidere, Illinois.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT THE COUNTY CLERK
1212 Logan Ave.,
Suite 103
Belvidere, IL 61008
(815) 544-3103

Equity One Investment Fund LLC
Purchaser or Assignee
January 26, 2022
Matthew S See, Priscilla M See, Matthew S. See, Priscilla M. See, Priscilla M. See, Matthew S. See

Occupant
Charles R. See, Lucas Yattone, Barb Lizer, Jake Yattone
Julie A. Bliss, County Clerk of Boone County, Illinois
Claimants, Judgment Creditors, and Decree Creditors, if any of the above described as "Unknown Owners"
"Unknown owners or parties interested in said land or lots"
6088-920671
Published in *The Boone County Journal* Feb 3, 10, 17

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS
ESTATE OF JOHN E. LAMMERSFELD, Deceased
NO. 21 P 75

CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given of the death of: JOHN LAMMERSFELD of Capron, IL
Letters of Office were issued on December 14, 2021

Representative Linda Lammersfeld
155 Rainbow Drive, Capron, IL 61012
Whose attorney is: Law Office of Paula Rieghns, Ltd.
P.O. Box 205
631 E. Grant Highway
Marengo, IL 60152

Claims against the Estate may be filed within six months from the date of first publication. Any claim not filed within six months from the date of first publication or claims not filed within three months from the date of mailing or delivery of Notice of Creditor, whichever is later, shall be barred.

Claims may be filed in the office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Boone County, 601 N. Main Street, Belvidere, Illinois 61008, or with the representative or both.

Copies of claims filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to his or her attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

December 15, 2021 Kelly Boettger Pro Tempore
Clerk of the Court
Published in *The Boone County Journal* Feb 3, 10, 17

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

In the Matter of the Estate of JOHN T. WOLF, Deceased.
CASE NO. 2022 PR 5
CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given of the death of JOHN T. WOLF. Letters of Office were issued on February 3, 2022, to AMY J. WILCOX, 9562 Lawrenceville Road, Garden Prairie, IL 61038, who is the Independent Executor of the Estate. The attorney for the Estate is MICHAEL J. SCHAPPERT, HolmstromKennedyPC, 800 North Church Street, Rockford, Illinois 61103.

Claims against the Estate may be filed on or before August 10, 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 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 his attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

Dated: February 7, 2022.
AMY J. WILCOX, Independent Executor of the Estate of JOHN T. WOLF, Deceased

HolmstromKennedyPC, Her Attorneys
Attorney Michael J. Schappert
HolmstromKennedyPC - ARDC #3128183
Attorney for Independent Executor
800 N. Church Street
Rockford, IL 61103
(815) 962-7071
mjs@hkrockford.com
Published in *The Boone County Journal* Feb 10, 17, 24, 2022.

Claims with notice to heirs (Will)
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF
BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS,
COUNTY DEPARTMENT,
PROBATE DIVISION.

ESTATE OF Marian Adamczyk, DECEASED. NO. 2021P82.
Notice is given of the death of the above named decedent. Letters of Office were issued to Gabriela Rozborksa, 1375 E. Woodfield Road, Suite 550, Schaumburg, IL 60173, as Independent Executor, whose attorney of record is WITAS, EDWARD J. (6298782), 1375 E WOODFIELD RD SUITE 510, SCHAUMBURG, IL 60173.

Notice to Heirs and Legatees
Notice is given to Joanna Adamczyk; Sylvester Adamczyk; Evona Vasquez; Christopher Adamczyk; Piotr Adamczyk; Katarzyna Borysewicz; and Gabriela Rozborksa, as Trustee of the Marian Adamczyk Living Trust dated December 14, 2016, Most Recently Amended September 14, 2021; who are heirs or legatees in the above proceeding to probate a will and whose names or addresses are also stated in the petition to admit the will to probate, that an order was entered by the court on 01/18/2022, admitting the will to probate.

Within 42 days after the effective date of the original order of admission you may file a petition with the court to require proof of the will by testimony of the witnesses to the will in open court or other evidence, as provided in section 5/6-21 of the Probate Act of 1975 (Ill. Compiled Stat. 1992, Ch. 755, par. 5/6-21).

You also have the right under section 5/8-1 of the Probate Act (Ill. Compiled Stat. 1992, Ch. 755, par. 5/8-1) to contest the validity of the will by filing a petition with the court within 6 months after admission of the will to probate. The estate will be administered without court supervision, unless under section 5/28-4 of the Probate Act (Ill. Compiled Stat. 1992, Ch. 755, par. 5/28-4) any interested person terminates independent administration at any time by mailing or delivering a petition to terminate to the clerk.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the office of the Boone County Circuit Clerk's Office 601 N. Main Street, Belvidere, Illinois

LEGAL NOTICES

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

DEUTSCHE BANK NATIONAL TRUST COMPANY, AS TRUSTEE FOR ARGENT SECURITIES INC, ASSET-BACKED PASS THROUGH CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2005-W4 Plaintiff,
-v.-
2020 CH 48
ROBERTO GOMEZ JR, MARIA R. BOBADILLA-GOMEZ, CANDLEWICK LAKE ASSOCIATION, INC, AMERICAN GENERAL FINANCIAL SERVICES OF ILLINOIS, INC N/K/A ONEMAIN FINANCIAL OF ILLINOIS, INC, Defendant
NOTICE OF SALE

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on December 14, 2021, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 1:00 PM on March 15, 2022, 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:
LOT19 IN CANDLEWICK LANE UNIT NO. 11, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED AS DOCUMENT NO. 73-2314 IN THE RECORDER'S OFFICE OF BOONE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

Commonly known as 129 DREW COURT NE, POPLAR GROVE, IL 61065
Property Index No. 03-22-253-007

The real estate is improved with a single family residence. The judgment amount was \$147,323.22.

Sole terms: 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, including the Judicial Sale fee for the Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund, which is calculated on residential real estate at the rate of \$1 for each \$1,000 or fraction thereof of the amount paid by the purchaser not to exceed \$300, in certified funds/or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. No fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the

61008, or with the representative, or both, on or before July 21, 2022, or, if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by section 5/18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed.

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

Published in *The Boone County Journal* Feb 10, 17, 24, 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, March 8, 2022 at 6:00 pm in the City Council Chamber, Belvidere City Hall, 401 Whitney Boulevard, Belvidere, Illinois 61008 upon the following:

Application of Ryan Crombie on behalf of the property owner, LHC Properties, LLC, 992 Belvidere Road, Belvidere, IL 61008 for a special use to permit indoor commercial entertainment. Specifically, video games, video gaming and serving of alcohol at 996 Belvidere Road, Belvidere, IL 61008 (Belvidere Zoning Ordinance Sections 150.105(C)(4)(B)(2) Indoor Commercial Entertainment and 150.904 Special Use Review and Approval Procedures) in the PB, Planned Business District on 1.3 acres. The subject property is legally described as:

Lot Sixty-seven (67) as designated upon the Plat of Logan Square, being a Subdivision of part of the West Half (1/2) of Section 31, Township 44 North, Range 4 East of the Third Principal Meridian, according to the Plat thereof recorded August 18, 2003 as Document No. 2003R13998 in the Recorder's Office of Boone County, Illinois; situated in the County of Boone and the State of Illinois. (PIN: 06-31-151-003)

All persons interested in the petitions may attend and be heard at the stated time and place.

Paul Engelman, Chairman,
Belvidere Planning and Zoning Commission
Published in *The Boone County Journal* Feb 10

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, March 8, 2022 at 6:00 pm in the City Council Chamber, Belvidere City Hall, 401 Whitney Boulevard, Belvidere, Illinois 61008 upon the following:

Application of MNC Group, LLC, 5022 Newburg Road, Belvidere, IL 61008 on behalf of the property owner, Mike Culic, 6755 Samantha Lane, Rockford, IL 61107 for special uses to permit indoor sales or service, off-site parking lot and vehicle repair and maintenance at 6853 Indy Drive, Belvidere, IL 61008 (Belvidere Zoning Ordinance Sections 150.105(C)(7)(B)(2) Indoor Sales or Service, 150.105(C)(7)(B)(2) Off-site Parking Lot, (150.105(C)(7)(B)(2) Vehicle Repair and Maintenance and 150.904 Special Use Review and Approval Procedures) in the PI, Planned Industrial District on 8.4 acres. The subject property is legally described as:

Lot Seventeen (17) as designated upon the Plat of Belford Industrial park, being a subdivision of part of the East Half (1/2) of Section 32 and the West Half (1/2) of Section 33, Township 44 North Range 3 East of the Third Principal Meridian, the Plat of which subdivision is recorded in Book 12 of Plats on page 30 and 31 as Document Number 74-738 in the Recorder's Office of Boone County, Illinois; situated in the County of Boone and the State of Illinois. PIN: 05-33-100-023

All persons interested in the petitions may attend and be heard at the stated time and place.

Paul Engelman, Chairman,
Belvidere Planning and Zoning Commission
Published in *The Boone County Journal* Feb 10

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 window tinting business in said County and State under the name of VAZQUEZ WINDOW TINT at the following post office address: 1105 Logan Avenue, Belvidere, IL 61008 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: Jaime Vazquez, 2133 Wynnwood Drive, Belvidere, IL 61008; phone # (815) 997-4662.

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

Julie A. Bliss, County Clerk
Published in Boone County Journal 02/10, 02/17, 02/24

**ASSUMED NAME CERTIFICATE OF INTENTION
STATE OF ILLINOIS COUNTY OF BOONE**

This is to certify that the undersigned intend to conduct and transact a Federal firearms licenses business in said County and State under the name of R and C ARMS at the following post office address: 1443 South State Street, Belvidere, IL 61008 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: James Joseph

Rocuskie, Jr., 105 Galahad Court SE, Poplar Grove, IL 61065; phone # (779) 771-3298.

Subscribed and sworn (or affirmed) to before me, this 13th day of January, A.D. 2022

Julie A. Bliss, County Clerk
Published in Boone County Journal 1/20/22, 1/27/22, 2/3/22

**ASSUMED NAME CERTIFICATE OF INTENTION
STATE OF ILLINOIS COUNTY OF BOONE**

This is to certify that the undersigned intend to conduct and transact a Wood working business in said County and State under the name of OGAN WOODWORKS at the following post office address: 16610 Capron Rd., Capron, IL 61012 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: BRADLEY OGAN, 16610 Capron Rd., Capron, IL 61012; phone # (815) 303-7243.

Subscribed and sworn (or affirmed) to before me, this 28th day of January, A.D. 2022

Julie A. Bliss, County Clerk
Published in Boone County Journal 02/ 03,10,17

**ASSUMED NAME CERTIFICATE OF INTENTION
STATE OF ILLINOIS COUNTY OF BOONE**

This is to certify that the undersigned intend to conduct and transact a quilting services business in said County and State under the name of JUDYBEEZ QUILTING at the following post office address: 9859 Little Lucy Lane, Belvidere, IL 61008 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: Judith Bender, 9859 Little Lucy Lane, Belvidere, IL 61008; phone # (815) 690-6938.

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

Julie A. Bliss, County Clerk
Published in Boone County Journal 02/10, 02/17, 02/24

**ASSUMED NAME CERTIFICATE OF INTENTION
STATE OF ILLINOIS COUNTY OF BOONE**

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Subscribed and sworn (or affirmed) to before me, this 4th day of February, A.D. 2022

Julie A. Bliss, County Clerk
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**Black And Latino
Caucuses Support
Proposed Budget**

'Good place to begin the process' of budgeting, Senate Black Caucus chair says

By Beth Hundsdorfer Capitol News Illinois

Members of the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus and Illinois Legislative Latino Caucus voiced their overall support for Gov. GB Pritzker's budget in separate news conferences Wednesday, but said they will continue to push to address the lack of access to health care, affordable housing, economic development, and high quality education for Black and brown communities in Illinois.

Illinois Senate Black Caucus Chair Robert Peters, D-Chicago, and Latino Legislative Caucus Chair Sen. Karina Villa, D-West Chicago, said Pritzker's budget is a fair starting point.

"This budget is at a good place, and considering the circumstances, it reflects a more optimistic outlook than where we were a year ago," Peters said. "The budget proposal certainly takes into

account the improved circumstances of our state's economic and fiscal situations, and it's a good place to begin the process of drafting our first budget that puts us on the road to economic recovery during this pandemic."

Villa and Peters, in separate appearances, praised the investment of \$240 million in new money for the Reimagine Public Safety Act for increased funding for community-based violence intervention programs, behavioral health programs and trauma recovery.

"We have a unique opportunity to heal trauma, repair harm and create safety for communities who have been faced with too much pain for way too long," Peters said.

Peters also pushed for the full implementation of the SAFE-T Act, a criminal justice reform passed in January last year.

The proposed budget includes funding for the Illinois Supreme Court's requested \$26 million to establish comprehensive pretrial services in the 63 counties that lack such services. It includes another \$10 million in new appropriations from the Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board to pay for the obligations associated with the SAFE-T Act.

"We are improving public safety, supporting better law enforcement and working to end systemic injustice at the same time," he said.

Peters said he supported housing assistance that includes \$10 million for eviction mitigation, and \$40 million for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

Low unemployment rates and rising revenues show signs of a growing economy, but Villa said families are experiencing the lingering effects of the pandemic.

She praised a one-year proposed vacation on the 1 percent grocery tax, as well as a proposal to cancel an anticipated 2.2 cent increase to the state's motor fuel tax for the current fiscal year.

Members of the Black Caucus said the budget should result in real and transformative change to close the economic gaps for minorities.

"One of the things I like is we will be addressing healthcare disparities, ensuring economic viability by retaining and creating jobs, investing in small businesses, which is the backbone of our local economies, supporting education," said Rep. Nick Smith, D-Chicago.

The COVID-19 pandemic also underscored inequities in housing and health care in the Latino community, Villa said.

"The reality is that we still have a very long way to go when it comes to recovering. The pandemic further uncovered a dire need to access health care in our community," Villa said.

Leaders of the two caucuses said they will continue to work to improve opportunities for their constituents as they negotiate the budget.


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Joining Forces

Grants Help Belvidere and County Law Enforcement Enhance Resources for Recovery

By Mars Rinaldi

Previously, we introduced the Boone County Behavioral Health Task Force, and examined the resources offered to the community through their grant-funded programs. In this article, we will share how the grants have enabled our local law enforcement to go beyond “serve and protect.

Every day, officers with the Boone County Sheriff’s Department and the Belvidere Police Department go to work knowing that they are very likely to encounter people who are struggling with substance abuse issues. In the past, officers would have to treat these encounters like any other criminal interaction- haul them off to jail and see what the judge says. Thanks to several federally funded grants, however, law enforcement officers have new tools at their disposal to aid in the fight against substance abuse and domestic violence.

The Boone County Behavioral Health Task Force operates as part of the Health Department, but it is the cooperation of many community partners that makes their programs successful. Without a doubt, three of the most important partners are the Police and Sheriff’s Departments, as well as Community Officer Michelle Schwartz. Looking through the lens of law enforcement, we are given another perspective on the absolute importance of the Task Force programs and the benefits to the community.

According to Boone County Sheriff Dave Ernest, “the biggest impact this has is the ability to follow up and give victims a person to follow up with them.” Enter Officer Michelle Schwartz, a 19-year veteran of the Belvidere Police Department. As the Outreach Officer, her job is to connect people with avenues for help in whatever situation they are facing that brought them in contact with law enforcement. Her job takes her to the homes of those who have had police whether the primary contact or the family- and to offer them a connection to a number of sources for help; even if they are not ready. She says, “My opening line is always ‘You’re not in trouble.’”

Police Chief Shane Woody has nothing but high praise for Officer Schwartz and the programs offered through the Task Force. He says that this operation compliments their community policing, bridging the gap between law enforcement and the community. “We are able to help people navigate sources more easily. When you’ve just come off a police encounter, the resources can seem overwhelming. Officer Schwartz helps ‘plain speak’ the system.”

Inside the departments, having a go-between has been hugely beneficial. Sheriff Ernest says, “we believe in a regional approach, with everybody on the same page and communicating.” For officers of both departments, having someone who is specifically devoted to following up on these cases has already shown success among some of the “high-utilizers” in the system. People battling addiction have begun to willingly reach out to Officer Schwartz, and are getting the help they need.

The help, however, doesn’t only come with Officer Schwartz. The benefits of the federal funding are two-fold; aiding the Task Force in creating community programs, but also establishing programs within the county corrections system.

When someone is sitting in the back of a patrol car on their way to jail, the idea that help is waiting for them likely doesn’t cross their mind. Boone County Sheriff Dave Ernest would like that to change.

“We’ve learned over time that locking people up and throwing away the key doesn’t work.” Because of the funds from the COAR and SORT grants secured by the Task Force, the Boone County Jail is now able to connect incarcerated individuals to in-house medical care and recovery services. These services are provided through Remedies and the Rosencrance Clinic; well-known agencies in

Boone and Winnebago Counties that offer help for victims and treatment for substance abuse.

Both Chief Woody and Sheriff Ernest are heavily invested in providing help to people in jail. Sheriff Ernest says, “If you are in our jail, I assure you, we give you all of the opportunities to get better.”

To really grasp the importance of these resources, it should be understood the State of Illinois offers no help to law enforcement when it comes to handling cases dealing with mental health, substance abuse, and domestic violence issues. Chief Woody says that the sState of Illinois doesn’t have the financial resources to combat the rise in these types of cases, so it is left up to individual communities to find solutions. The brunt of that responsibility falls on law enforcement and the taxpayers. In the last two years, officers have seen an uptick in the rate of calls, and a lot of it can be attributed to tight Covid-related restrictions. Boone County Sheriff Dave Ernest says “when you’re cooped up, stressed out, you don’t know what the future brings, people are losing their jobs, they can’t go to work, kids can’t go to school- it’s a recipe for disaster, and I think that’s where it really brought it more forward what we were on the right path. At the end of the day, we really do want to help the good people.”

The common thread that runs through the Task Force, the Sheriff’s Department, and the Police Department is working together. Boone County is extremely fortunate to have the services provided through the Task Force and the grants, and now is the time to take advantage of those services. If you or someone you know is struggling with substance abuse, addiction, mental health crisis, or domestic violence, please do not wait. There is help and it’s only a phone call away. For more information about the Task Force and becoming a community partner, please contact Jessica Perillo at 815-708-4123. To reach Task Force Program Navigator Allie Carlstrom, call 815-708-950. If you are experiencing an emergency, please call 911.

‘Coexist with COVID:’ Pritzker, Ezike Plan to Lift Mask Mandate by Feb. 28

School mandates would remain in place for ‘coming weeks,’ pending court decision

By Jerry Nowicki *Capitol News Illinois*

If hospitalizations for COVID-19 continue to decline for the rest of the month, Gov. JB Pritzker plans to lift his executive order that mandates face coverings indoors by Feb. 28. The plan does not apply to schools.

It’s unclear what level of rise in hospitalizations could lead the state to change its course, but Pritzker and health officials said at an afternoon news conference Wednesday that such a scenario was not out of the question.

“It’s the end of the statewide mask mandate,” Pritzker said of the planned Feb. 28 lifting of the order. “But as we’ve all said, if things get very bad, I think we’ve seen this before with the onslaught of delta and then omicron (variants of the coronavirus), boy, masks really helped us to keep infection rates, transmission rates down. So, there may come a time in the future when that happens.”

Regardless of what happens with hospitalizations, masks will continue to be mandated at schools, on school busses and other public transportation, at nursing homes and congregate living facilities, and at day cares beyond March 1.

“The equation for schools just looks different right now than it does for the general population,” Pritzker said at the news conference in Chicago. “Schools need a little more time for community infection rates to drop, for our youngest learners to become vaccine eligible and for more parents to get their kids vaccinated.”

Masks, testing and vaccines have worked to keep schools open, Pritzker said, and that was the primary goal of the administration.

But whether he has the authority to issue such mandates in schools will be a question decided by state courts. The 4th District Court of Appeals is currently considering whether a lower court’s temporary restraining order on the governor’s school mandates pertaining to about 170 school districts will remain in effect.

Pritzker called Judge Raylene Grischow’s opinion an “extremely bad decision,” as well as “poorly written” and “poorly decided.”

Without giving a timeline, Pritzker said “in the coming weeks” school mask mandates could be lifted if the state continues to see progress in terms of hospitalization and disease spread.

The reason the state was able to get to a place where Pritzker could consider lifting the mandate, he said, is because hospitalizations for COVID-19, which pushed heights of 7,400 cases in mid-January, have fallen by nearly two-thirds, to 2,496 cases as of Tuesday night. That marked a decrease of more than 140 from the day prior.

Twenty percent of statewide intensive care unit beds were available as of Tuesday night, up from a low of about 8 percent four weeks ago, Pritzker said.

It’s a faster decline in hospitalizations than at any point in the pandemic, Pritzker said.

Illinois Department of Public Health Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike said 89 percent of those hospitalizations are in unvaccinated individuals. Approximately 75 percent of the state’s population has received at least one dose of the vaccine, according the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, putting Illinois at the top of Midwestern states.

Ezike said lifting the mandate does not signify an end to COVID-19, but the latest in the state’s effort to “coexist with COVID.”

“Your actions that you’ve already taken have helped to reduce the amount of virus circulating and it absolutely has saved lives,” she said. “But be clear that COVID is not gone and it won’t be gone on Feb. 28. So, we are going to continue to find ways to live with the virus.”

The path forward likely includes masks, vaccines, testing and creating safer settings through better ventilation, she said.

Local jurisdictions and businesses may continue to enforce stricter masking guidelines than outlined by the state.

Pritzker did not state specific metric thresholds would need to be met before school mask mandates could be lifted, but noted he hoped it would be “weeks rather than months” when a decision could be made. He deferred to Dr. Emily Landon, an infectious disease specialist at the University of Chicago, when asked about specific metrics.

Landon said “metrics are really tough” when it comes to COVID-19 tracking. The CDC recommends an analysis of COVID-19 cases and positivity rates, but new at-home tests could change that calculus. For schools, which can serve as a breeding ground for the virus as community hubs, case rates, hospitalizations and other metrics should be watched, she said.

Flexibility is needed, she said earlier in the news conference.

Ultimately, Pritzker said, his decisions will come down to the advice of doctors, epidemiologists and the CDC.

“People really do feel that the trajectory here is one that we’re going to be able to hold onto,” he said.

The announcement didn’t sit well with Republicans in the General Assembly who have criticized Pritzker’s “top-down” approach to the pandemic. House Republican Leader Jim Durkin, R-Western Springs, criticized the governor in a statement.

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