

WGLT ISSUES AND PROGRAMS Third Quarter 2025

July 2025 – September 2025

The following issues were addressed during WGLT Newscasts during MORNING EDITION from 5 to 9 am M-F and during ALL THINGS CONSIDERED from 3-6PM, M-F, and during Sound Ideas, 5p.m.-5:30 p.m., M-F and on our website at www.wglt.org. The story lengths range from one minute to 21 minutes. Other examples of WGLT addressing community issues can be found at www.wglt.org

Politics and Government

Austerity and persuasion key to Bloomington passing grocery tax

[Charlie Schlenker](#) , September 26, 2025

When the state rollback of the locally shared grocery tax first passed, then-Mayor Mboka Mwilambwe said he believed there was no appetite on the Bloomington City Council to impose a local tax. Though the vote was still split, the council passed the tax this week.

Central Illinois Republicans rally for increased student privacy

[Lauren Warnecke](#), September 26, 2025

At a joint news conference Friday, Carlock resident Desi Anderson was joined by state and national lawmakers to announce proposed legislation clamping down on student directory data that is not protected by current privacy laws.

Rep. LaHood on the government shutdown, Tylenol guidance, and foreign aid after US AID

[Eric Stock](#), September 26, 2025

"I'm cautious of some of the things that have come from the HHS secretary," said Rep. Darin LaHood. "What I would tell people is rely on evidence and facts that are based on science."

During B-N stop, conservative governor candidate Ted Dabrowski vows to fight for economic change in Illinois

[Paul J. Aguilar](#), September 26, 2025

Conservative Illinois GOP candidate Ted Dabrowski discusses the most pressing issues in the state and how he hopes to deal with them if elected in 2026.

Republican Darren Bailey visits Bloomington as he joins race for governor a second time

[Braden Fogerson](#), September 25, 2025

Republican Darren Bailey stopped in Bloomington as part of a three-leg tour announcing another run for governor of Illinois.

Pritzker directs agencies to limit spending in response to Trump's economic policies

[Ben Szalinski](#), September 23, 2025

Illinois agencies must identify spending reductions and create reserves in their budgets to prepare for an economic downturn, according to an executive order issued Tuesday by Gov. JB Pritzker.

Illinois Democrats want answers from DHS Secretary Noem about ICE operations

[Tina Sfondeles](#), September 23, 2025

A letter to Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem questions the “military-style tactics” of ICE agents and asks for a definitive answer into how many Illinois arrests have been made since federal authorities announced the launch of “Operation Midway Blitz” on Sept. 8.

Bloomington council OKs local grocery tax, increases video gaming licenses

[Joe Deacon - WGLT](#), September 22, 2025

Add Bloomington to the list of Illinois municipalities enacting a local grocery tax to replace the state tax that’s set to expire at the start of next year.

Illinois declined to give sensitive voter data to the DOJ. Some GOP states are doing the same

September 22, 2025

As the Trump administration demands that states turn over voter data, some Republican state officials are pushing back.

Bloomington and Normal claim McLean County has defaulted on shared sales tax agreement

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 19, 2025

The dispute over shared sales tax money for mental health and public safety has escalated again. Normal and Bloomington have formally accused the county of defaulting on the decade-old intergovernmental agreement on use of the shared revenue.

U.S. Army veteran wants to continue oath of service in 16th Congressional District

[Ben Howell](#), September 19, 2025

Brendyn Morgan credited several aspects of his life in deciding to run for public office, including his six years in the Army, his work in public housing and lessons from his single mom.

[**Nuclear power, battery storage funding at center of energy policy debate**](#)

[Andrew Adams](#), September 19, 2025

After twice failing to pass an energy reform package this year, lawmakers and renewable energy advocates are aiming to reach a deal in time for a brief legislative session in October.

[**Bloomington to consider adding local grocery tax and more gambling licenses**](#)

[Eric Stock](#), September 19, 2025

Gov. JB Pritzker called the grocery tax regressive and abolished it last year, effective in January 2026. Local communities can approve their own 1% percent sales tax on groceries.

[**Town of Normal financial trends look healthy**](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 18, 2025

The annual financial trends report for the Town of Normal shows a largely positive picture. The town says most of its leading indicators are healthy, though there are a couple things to watch.

[**Environment and climate advocates persist through Trump administration cuts to the clean energy industry**](#)

[Ben Howell](#), September 17, 2025

The implementation of climate and environmental policy may become more challenging during the Trump administration, but the fight is far from over, according to one national environmental advocate.

[**ISU legal scholar on the First Amendment: 'It's very misunderstood'**](#)

[Eric Stock](#), September 17, 2025

The head of Illinois State University's legal studies program says public employees have some free speech protections, but those protections have been successfully challenged in court.

[**Illinois House speaker says lawmakers are more aware of their surroundings**](#)

[Jim Stahly Jr.](#), September 16, 2025

While the recent killing of conservative activist Charlie Kirk has escalated fears of political violence, Illinois House Speaker Emanuel "Chris" Welch has been on high alert since June 14, when Democratic former Minnesota House Speaker Melissa Hortman and her husband were killed in their home.

Town of Normal shows positive financial trends, passes audit from prior fiscal year

[Braden Fogerson](#), September 16, 2025

Finance director Andrew Huhn presented an overview of financial trends from the 2024-25 fiscal year compared with previous years. The report largely showed growth or steady trends.

Amid backlash, Pritzker calls for leaders — especially Trump — to tone down rhetoric

[Ben Szalinski](#), September 15, 2025

Gov. JB Pritzker said political leaders — starting with President Donald Trump — need to do more to condemn political violence.

McLean County Nursing Home 'swiftly and severely' addresses social media post about Charlie Kirk's killing

[Eric Stock](#), September 15, 2025

The staffer joins dozens of people across the country whose social media posts about Kirk have put their jobs in jeopardy. McLean County Nursing Home Administrator Tim Wiley posted on social media Saturday. but didn't say what disciplinary action was taken against the employee.

Young Democrat Montez Soliz to challenge incumbent Eric Sorensen in 17th District primary

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 15, 2025

Montez Soliz says he's running against Democratic U.S. Rep. Eric Sorensen in the March primary for the 17th Congressional District that includes parts of Bloomington-Normal and Greater Peoria.

Jim Edgar, former Illinois governor, dies at 79

[Selena Kuznikov](#), September 14, 2025

U.S. Department of Transportation withdraws grant for Route 66 bike trail in McLean County

[Braden Fogerson](#), September 12, 2025

The \$675,000 federal grant was withdrawn due to changing priorities for the DOT.

State grant to help pay for sewer study in Colonial Meadows subdivision

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 12, 2025

Residents of the Colonial Meadows subdivision nestled in the shadow of the Central Illinois Regional Airport have some good news about their water and sewer problems.

Normal Town Council to consider allowing more pets per household

[Ben Howell](#), September 12, 2025

Households in Normal could soon be allowed to have a maximum limit of one more pet, if an ordinance change is approved by the town council on Monday.

McLean County Board hears details of proposed \$144.5 million budget

[Braden Fogerson](#), September 12, 2025

A budget of almost \$144.5 million for the 2026 fiscal year was presented to the McLean County Board on Thursday.

Young Republican leaders in Central Illinois share what connected them to Charlie Kirk

[Ryan Denham](#), September 12, 2025

Leaders with Young Republican groups in Central Illinois say they felt a deep connection to the slain conservative activist Charlie Kirk and that his death will further galvanize his movement.

Fired CDC worker seeks to rebuild trust in public health at conference in Normal

[Paul J. Aguilar](#), September 11, 2025

Abby Tighe was fired from her "dream" job in overdose prevention at the Centers for Disease Control in February. That's when the Trump administration fired all probationary workers at the health agency.

Mayor Brady soothes zoning worries and calls for talks on shared sales tax

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 10, 2025

Bloomington Mayor Dan Brady is trying to reassure citizens concerned about potential changes in zoning.

Bloomington City Council takes steps to address housing crisis

[Joe Deacon - WGLT](#), September 8, 2025

The Bloomington City Council adopted code text amendments pertaining to downtown development and multi-family residential districts, while acknowledging receipt of the "missing middle" housing analysis report from Opticos Design, Inc.

Chicago Republican enters congressional primary against Rep. LaHood, who he calls a 'RINO'

[Ben Howell](#), September 8, 2025

John Kitover is a former Internal Revenue Service employee who worked in project and facilities management. He previously served for four years in the Army National Guard. He resigned from his job in May to run full time in the district of central and northwestern Illinois.

Normal Township supervisor draws 2 paychecks

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 5, 2025

Legally, Krystle Able can take on roles for the township, the McLean County Board, and the advocacy group she serves. Whether she can practically do so is a different question.

Dueling letters show rising tension between local leaders over shared sales tax

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 4, 2025

The Town of Normal is ratcheting up its rhetoric on the shared sales tax agreement the town and City of Bloomington have with McLean County government. And the county is pushing back hard.

McLean County CASA program looks to expand further to Ford County

[Lauren Warnecke](#), September 4, 2025

An intergovernmental agreement, approved this week by the McLean County Board's Justice Committee, is modeled after a similar expansion to Logan County.

Illinois attorney general joins push for bond hearings for detained immigrants

[Mary Norkol](#), September 4, 2025

Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul urged a federal court to strike down a Department of Homeland Security policy denying bond hearings to detained immigrants in a legal brief filed Tuesday.

Normal Town Council approves continuing municipal insurance agency

[Braden Fogerson](#), September 2, 2025

The Normal Town Council approved a measure to extend a municipal insurance agency during its Tuesday meeting.

Bloomington's water taste and smell problem flares up again, partly due to dry weather

[Ryan Denham](#), September 2, 2025

The City of Bloomington confirmed Tuesday that recent testing shows increased taste and odor compounds. Officials said they're taking several steps to address the recurring problem.

As Trump declares 'we're going in,' Pritzker says 'terror and cruelty is the point'

[Ben Szalinski](#), September 2, 2025

Gov. JB Pritzker said Tuesday he expects Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents to employ the same aggressive strategies they used in Los Angeles earlier this summer after President Donald Trump said he will deploy the National Guard to Chicago.

Juvenile justice and child welfare advocates are optimistic the Illinois FAIR Act will bring change

[Lauren Warnecke](#), September 2, 2025

The new law brings reform to the state's public defense system for the first time in decades. Public defenders play an outsized role in juvenile and child welfare courts.

Officials: Incorrect info included on property value notices sent to much of McLean County

[Ryan Denham](#), August 31, 2025

Officials say property owners in much of McLean County have been sent incorrect information about their property's value due to a printing error. It's at least the second substantial mistake involving property taxes in McLean County this year.

Only counter-protesters show up for 'March on Bloomington' after flyers with swastika-like imagery

[Ryan Denham](#), August 30, 2025

A WGLT reporter at both Miller Park and Downtown Bloomington early Saturday found only counter-protesters, and no March on Bloomington. "It's better safe than sorry," one organizer said.

Carroll County Board chair, farmer Julie Bickelhaupt announces bid for Rep. Sorensen's seat

[Eric Stock](#), August 29, 2025

Julie Bickelhaupt is a farmer and chair of the Carroll County Board, a rural county along the Mississippi River border with Iowa. She said she's running to lower costs for Americans, support farmers and strengthen education.

ACLU of Illinois sounds off on civil liberties in Bloomington and beyond

[Ben Howell](#), August 29, 2025

The American Civil Liberties Union [ACLU] of Illinois is responding to multiple civil liberties issues across the state, including the possibility of a camera company illegally sharing its data with federal immigration enforcement.

Town of Normal opens applications for All About Normal civic education program

[Courtney Conroy](#), August 28, 2025

Applications are now open for "All About Normal," the Town of Normal's free civic education program. Applications are due Sept. 26.

As DOJ questions Illinois voter rolls, McLean County election authorities double down on their confidence

[Ben Howell](#), August 27, 2025

The two top election officials in McLean County also defended mail-in voting — a common practice that's facing renewed attacks from President Trump. He's made baseless claims about the security of mail-in ballots.

Rep. Sorensen says Democrats must 'fight back' after Texas gerrymander

[Eric Stock](#), August 26, 2025

Political maps are typically redone once a decade after each census. Texas is looking to adopt a mid-decade map change at the behest of President Donald Trump in hopes of adding five more Republican congressional seats in 2027.

Group urges Bloomington leaders to sign pledge against intolerance, bigotry

[Joe Deacon - WGLT](#), August 25, 2025

A longtime organization that fosters an inclusive community has called on Bloomington city officials to reaffirm a pledge against intolerance and bigotry.

In response to military deployment, Pritzker tells Trump: 'Do not come to Chicago'

[Ben Szalinski](#), August 25, 2025

Illinois' Democratic leaders showed a united front Monday against President Donald Trump's threats to deploy the military into Chicago's streets to fight crime with one message: "Mr. President, do not come to Chicago."

Rep. Sorensen joins AFSCME union members to bash the GOP's tax cut and spending plan

[Ben Howell](#), August 25, 2025

Union members with AFSCME said Monday that the GOP's tax and spending plan passed this summer will bring devastating cuts to the Illinois State University community and beyond.

Town of Normal is working on growth in new strategic plan

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 22, 2025

The Normal Town Council has reviewed elements of a new strategic plan and approved changes to the Enterprise Zone that would offer development incentives in portions of Bloomington-Normal, including Bloomington's under-performing Eastland Mall.

Effort revived to push for fair maps constitutional amendment in Illinois

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 21, 2025

Amid Republican party efforts to gain congressional seats through off-cycle redistricting in Texas, there's an effort to revive a push for an Illinois state constitutional amendment to make political redistricting less, well, political.

McLean County property values will continue to rise at a higher-than-average rate

[Ben Howell](#), August 21, 2025

McLean County's chief assessment officer will host four public information sessions to help clear up confusion over the difference between a property's assessed value or market value — and how that relates to how much a taxpayer pays in property taxes.

Amid high-profile court challenges, ISU's new Legal Studies chief says education is key to building trust in the system

[Ryan Denham](#), August 20, 2025

With countless court cases shaping life in the Trump era, the new head of Illinois State University's Legal Studies program says public education about the legal system is critical to maintaining trust in it.

Election lawyers, Obama alumni renew Illinois redistricting reform push

[Andrew Adams](#), August 19, 2025

A group of former Obama administration officials and election lawyers announced Tuesday they are attempting to reform the way the state draws district maps for the state legislature. They want to do this by passing a state constitutional amendment via a ballot initiative during the 2026 general election.

Town of Normal expands enterprise zone to encourage more business development

[Braden Fogerson](#), August 19, 2025

The Normal Town Council also approved a solar addition at Heartland Community College, updates to park signage and heard updates on the town's strategic plan.

Bloomington seeks solutions to 'missing middle' housing gaps

[Joe Deacon - WGLT](#), August 18, 2025

Bloomington city leaders continue to explore potential plans and opportunities to address the “missing middle” portion of the city's housing shortage, as the administration seeks guidance on potential zoning and subdivision code changes.

Origin unknown for 'March on Bloomington' flyers with swastika imagery

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 18, 2025

A series of flyers with a logo that evokes a swastika inside an American flag has caused alarm after being found on the Illinois Wesleyan University campus and at Miller Park.

Billboard promoting far-right group Proud Boys springs up in Southern Illinois

August 18, 2025

A billboard rising from a Clinton County cornfield near Breese that appears to be a recruiting tool for the Proud Boys — a far-right extremist group tied to the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol — has touched off outrage in the small southern Illinois community.

Illinois waives licensing fees for retired health care workers who volunteer

[Eric Stock](#), August 18, 2025

The bill allows retired health care workers in Illinois to work as volunteers without having to pay a license fee.

Texas Democrats in Illinois end two-week walkout, return to the Lone Star state

[Mawa Iqbal](#), August 18, 2025

The departure marked the end of a nationally-watched standoff between the lawmakers and Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, who pushed the remap plan at President Donald Trump's urging in a bid to add five more Republican seats in the U.S. House.

Raoul sues Trump administration for access to crime victim funding

[Peter Hancock](#), August 18, 2025

Attorney General Kwame Raoul announced Monday that he has joined a multistate lawsuit seeking to block the Trump administration from withholding federal funding to support crime victims in Illinois due to the state's policy on immigration.

DOJ demands sensitive Illinois voter registration data after state responds

[Peter Hancock](#), August 15, 2025

The U.S. Department of Justice is insisting Illinois election officials hand over the state's entire computerized voter registration database, including sensitive information such as driver's license and partial Social Security numbers.

Market Street parking deck to close in Bloomington

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 15, 2025

The City of Bloomington is declining to throw good money after bad to repair its Market Street parking deck. The city said it will close the parking garage on Aug. 22.

Mayor Brady says Bloomington Police should not take part in immigration-related events

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 15, 2025

The City of Bloomington pulled out of a planned event related to immigration issues. Mayor Dan Brady said he wasn't aware of the event until someone brought a flyer to his attention.

McLean County Board fills vacancy in District 3, approves more wind turbines

[Ben Howell](#), August 14, 2025

County Administrator Cassy Taylor said the special use application will add 35 wind turbines to a field with 58 turbines already in operation.

Jeffries says working-class focus is key to Democrats retaking U.S. House

[Peter Hancock](#), August 13, 2025

The man who hopes to be the next speaker of the U.S. House told an audience of Illinois Democrats Wednesday that President Donald Trump is a threat to American democracy and that Democrats can win back control of Congress if they stand up for middle class values.

Rock City Democrat travels to Bloomington-Normal and beyond in bid for state position from 16th Congressional District

[Ben Howell](#), August 13, 2025

Kevin Lamm of Rock City is seeking a state party position as the Democratic state central committeeman for the 16th Congressional District. The seat is currently held by John Daniel, who is not seeking re-election.

16th Congressional District candidate Scott Best runs as outsider, even from other Democrats

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 13, 2025

Scott Best, a Rivian worker from Normal, says he's running for the 16th Congressional District seat as a Democrat in the 2026 election.

Construction begins for downtown Bloomington's streetscape project Phase 1

[Vivienne Hughes](#), August 13, 2025

The work now underway is concentrated in the 600 block of North Main Street, right where it hits East Street as it curves in front of the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts. The plaza in that area will be reimaged, including a lighted ring hovering above a new outdoor activity/performance space.

GOP candidate for 17th Congressional District is active early this election cycle

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 12, 2025

'Tis the season for political candidates to firm up plans to run for party primaries next year. Dillan Vancil is running for Congress as a Republican in the 17th district. That U.S. House seat is currently held by Democrat Eric Sorensen.

Bloomington agrees to vacate block next to former Winners bar if Annie's Eats pursues expansion

[Joe Deacon - WGLT](#), August 11, 2025

The City of Bloomington has agreed to vacate a one-block portion of Elm Street in front of a former tavern south of downtown, paving the way for a growing local restaurant business to expand.

Normal's public works director explains temporary traffic fixes coming to ISU campus

[Braden Fogerson](#), August 8, 2025

Eight select locations will see temporary measures implemented starting Sept. 3. These measures could help to calm traffic, improve crossing safety and limit accidents.

Texas senator says FBI will help find Democrats who fled the state, Pritzker calls it 'grandstanding'

[Tina Sfondeles](#), August 7, 2025

The request sets the stage for an escalation of a war between the Trump administration and Illinois Democrats, with Gov. JB Pritzker at the helm. But it's unclear what role federal agents can play in the matter, and there were no reports of FBI activity in the area housing Texas Democrats as of Thursday morning.

First of 5 public meetings shows worry about outward expansion in McLean County's draft land use plan

[Paul J. Aguilar](#), August 7, 2025

A public comment session was held after the McLean County Regional Planning Commission and the Twin City officials received pushback about public engagement on a long-term strategic land use plan showing growth at the fringes of Bloomington and Normal.

Gov. Pritzker says Illinois could retaliate if GOP redistricts in Texas

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 6, 2025

Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker has told NPR if Texas and other Republican majority states redraw new congressional districts outside the usual schedule after census periods, Illinois and blue states might follow the political escalation.

After DOJ inquiry, McLean County election authorities explain how voter rolls are updated

[Braden Fogerson](#), August 6, 2025

The U.S. Department of Justice last month requested information regarding statewide election procedures.

Bomb threat reported at Chicago-area hotel hosting Texas Democrats; hundreds evacuated

[Mary Norkol](#), August 6, 2025

Around 400 people were evacuated and have safely returned to the premises after police conducted a search, St. Charles police said. Texas Democrats are in Illinois to deny Republicans a quorum on a controversial redistricting.

Woodford County Coroner Tim Ruestman to run for state representative

[Vivienne Hughes](#), August 5, 2025

Longtime Woodford County Coroner Tim Ruestman said Tuesday he will run for the Republican nomination for state representative in the 105th District.

Bill to promote Celiac disease safety among food handlers in Illinois becomes law

[Vivienne Hughes](#), August 5, 2025

A food safety bill that requires all food handlers to receive training on Celiac disease and safe handling of gluten-free foods has been signed into law. It was sponsored by two lawmakers who represent McLean County.

Koos: McLean County's failure to approve sales tax pause would chill conversation about intergovernmental agreement

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 5, 2025

Normal Mayor Chris Koos said if the county board does not act on an amendment to pause sales tax sharing that lasts at least a year, it would chill conversation among the town, city, and county over potential changes to an intergovernmental agreement.

Rep. LaHood won't run for Senate, aims to keep his seat in the House

[Lauren Warnecke](#), August 5, 2025

Rep. Darin LaHood, a Peoria Republican, was rumored to be considering a run for the U.S. Senate. He announced Tuesday he'll campaign to continue representing Illinois' 16th Congressional District.

[**New B-N group hopes to improve justice system experience for crime victims**](#)

[Ryan Denham](#), August 5, 2025

A new organization wants to improve the justice system experience for victims of crime in McLean County.

[**Gov. Pritzker says Illinois remap is 'possible' as DNC chair vows to fight Texas GOP efforts 'tooth and nail'**](#)

[Tina Sfondeles](#), August 5, 2025

Democrats in New York, California and Illinois are threatening to redraw their own maps in retaliation to Republican redistricting efforts in Texas.

[**League of Women Voters to study McLean County election authorities**](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), August 5, 2025

The study explores voter and candidate confusion in McLean County caused by having elections administered by two separate authorities.

[**Texas Democrats ready to stay in Illinois 'as long as it takes' to fight GOP congressional maps**](#)

[Mitchell Armentrout](#), August 5, 2025

The Texas quorum-breakers met Monday in west suburban Warrenville alongside Illinois and Texas Congress members to denounce Texas GOP Gov. Greg Abbott's redistricting efforts and "to call out the injustices."

[**New traffic safety measures coming to ISU campus this fall**](#)

[Braden Fogerson](#), August 5, 2025

Ryan Otto, Normal's director of public works and engineering, presented a list of findings from a pedestrian and roadway campus safety initiative to the town council on Monday.

[**Texas Democrats flee to Illinois to block Trump-backed GOP redistricting plan**](#)

[Tina Sfondeles](#), August 4, 2025

Texas Democrats joined Gov. JB Pritzker at a Sunday night news conference in Carol Stream, where the Democratic governor railed on President Donald Trump as a “cult leader” and “would-be dictator of the United States” for demanding redistricting.

Renewable and clean energy sector faces uncertainty amid federal tax incentive cuts

[Ben Howell](#), August 1, 2025

Those inside the renewable energy sector find themselves at a crossroads as the GOP's massive tax cut and spending bill will sunset tax credits and incentives from the industry. Those groups now face the difficult decision of how to handle environmental projects which are usually years in the making.

Rep. Sorensen decries local effects coming from Medicaid cuts

[Joe Deacon - WGLT](#), August 1, 2025

U.S. Rep. Eric Sorensen spoke against patient loss of Medicaid coverage during a tour of a OSF HealthCare facility in Peoria.

Q&A: Lt. Jon Albee launches campaign for McLean County sheriff

[Eric Stock](#), July 31, 2025

McLean County Sheriff's Lt. Jon Albee is looking to replace retiring sheriff Matt Lane next year. Albee says his role as lieutenant in multiple divisions has prepared him to lead the department.

Normal Community senior attends mock Senate in D.C.

[Braden Fogerson](#), July 31, 2025

A senior at Normal Community High School learned about federal policymaking at Girls Nation this month.

Front N Center building demolition prompts Connect Transit to move transfer center

[Eric Stock](#), July 30, 2025

Connect Transit says all bus routes that use the Front Street Transfer Center will now transfer at a new temporary location at Roosevelt and Jefferson streets.

Rep. LaHood hosts roundtable in Bloomington touting 'Big Beautiful' tax provisions

[Paul J. Aguilar](#), July 30, 2025

U.S. Rep. Darin LaHood met with the U.S. and McLean County Chambers of Commerce to discuss tax provisions for local businesses as outlined in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act signed into law on July 4.

During B-N stop, Rep. LaHood defends higher tariffs and new landscape of trade agreements

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 30, 2025

U.S. Rep. Darin LaHood is hailing this week's announcement of a trade agreement with the European Union and recent ones with Vietnam, the United Kingdom, Indonesia, and Japan as the Trump administration continues to reshape the global economy.

McLean County wants more negotiations after Bloomington and Normal approve tax-sharing pause

[Eric Stock](#), July 29, 2025

McLean County Board Chair Elizabeth Johnston says she's encouraged to hear the City of Bloomington reaffirm its commitment to mental health, but the county is resisting efforts by the city and Town of Normal to suspend sharing tax revenue for the mental health and public safety fund.

Mental health top of mind for law enforcement — as pause to mental health fund looms over McLean County

[Lauren Warnecke](#), July 29, 2025

An Illinois State University researcher says more than half of the McLean County jail population has a mental or behavioral health condition. Mental health programming at the jail is one of the topics ISU's Stevenson Center is studying right now.

Chicago hospitals are scaling back trans care for youth. A rapid response team is stepping in.

[Kristen Schorsch](#), July 29, 2025

The team has a network of practitioners in Illinois who don't rely on payments from the federal government, which threatens to cut funding to gender-affirming care providers.

Q&A: Bloomington City Manager Jeff Jurgens on sales tax sharing pause

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 29, 2025

The Bloomington City Council has now approved an audit and a pause on giving city sales tax money to McLean County government for jail bond debt, criminal justice technology, and mental health services. So, now what?

[Bloomington follows suit, approves funding pause on mental health sales tax fund](#)

[Joe Deacon - WGLT](#), July 28, 2025

The Bloomington City Council voted Monday to approve a one-year pause on contributing revenue to the McLean County mental health and public safety sales tax fund, following last week's matching action by the Town of Normal.

[McLean County Board chair says a tax-sharing pause would be premature](#)

[Eric Stock](#), July 25, 2025

McLean County Board chair Elizabeth Johnston said she made no assumptions about whether the city and town would still push the suspension after the county tried to let the idea die, but she said she supports the audit and hopes it can provide a new framework "so that we were all beginning the negotiations again from a shared financial footing."

[McLean County Regional Planning Commission revises land use plan review process](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 23, 2025

The McLean County Regional Planning Commission is making good on a promise to the county board to get more public input on the draft of a regional land use plan.

[LaHood introduces legislation to rename Bloomington Veterans Affairs clinic for Civil War soldier](#)

[Ben Howell](#), July 23, 2025

U.S. Rep. Darin LaHood has introduced legislation to rename the Department of Veterans Affairs clinic in Bloomington. If passed, the community-based outpatient facility would be known as the Andrew Jackson Smith Medal of Honor Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic.

[McLean County Democrats leader will seek state party position](#)

[Ben Howell](#), July 23, 2025

Patrick Cortesi, chair of the McLean County Democratic Party, has announced his candidacy for Democratic state central committeeman in Illinois' 16th Congressional District.

[Residents of an East Bloomington enclave live without reliable quality water](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 23, 2025

Water and sewer are the most basic things a city typically provides. Through a complicated cluster of circumstances, neither of those services is dependable in a subdivision on the east side of Bloomington. And it's not at all clear how that will change.

Consumer advocate pushes for legislative action regarding State Farm rate spike

[Vivienne Hughes](#), July 22, 2025

Abe Scarr, Illinois Public Interest Research Group state director, said the massive increase will "impact countless families across the state," as 1.5 million State Farm policyholders will be impacted by the near half-billion rate hike — a 27% increase.

Trio of lawmakers, including U.S. Rep. Eric Sorensen, seeks answers after Texas floods

[Eric Stock](#), July 22, 2025

The Illinois Democrat and former TV weatherman is pushing the Trump Administration to deliver a plan as extreme weather events become more frequent.

Normal approves funding pause and audit of mental health sales tax fund

[Braden Fogerson](#), July 22, 2025

The Normal Town Council on Monday approved two changes to the intergovernmental agreement for the McLean County 1% mental health and public safety sales tax fund.

Looming cuts to SNAP threaten food insecurity resources in McLean County

[Cindy Alcazar](#), July 21, 2025

Federal cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program risk destabilizing food insecurity resources in McLean County, in Illinois and across the nation.

Following state rep's encounter, Pritzker signs 'squatter bill' into law

[Ben Szalinski](#), July 21, 2025

A new law signed by Gov. JB Pritzker on Monday will make it easier for police to remove squatters who are illegally staying at a residence.

McLean County Board approves audit of mental health and public safety sales tax fund

[Ben Howell](#), July 17, 2025

The McLean County Board on Thursday approved an audit of the county's mental health and public safety sales tax fund. The resolution to the intergovernmental agreement [IGA] will require approval by the Town of Normal and City of Bloomington.

Bloomington mayor says reassessing sales tax sharing with McLean County hinges on what's in it for the city

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 17, 2025

Bloomington Mayor Dan Brady said the decision by the county board executive committee against approving a hiatus on sales tax sharing drives home the seriousness of the matter.

Governor JB Pritzker pens letter urging President Trump's education secretary to unfreeze \$6.8B in grants

[Tina Sfondeles](#), July 17, 2025

The letter to Secretary Linda McMahon comes just days after 24 states and the District of Columbia sued the Trump administration over the funding freeze in education grants for K-12 schools and adult education.

Town and city still want a dialogue with McLean County on sales tax sharing

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 16, 2025

Normal City Manager Pam Reece says some of the mental health and behavioral health initiatives McLean County runs are, in effect, pre-funded.

State Sen. Chris Balkema announces reelection bid

[Eric Stock](#), July 16, 2025

Chris Balkema won a special election last year in the 53rd Senate District, a large, mostly rural district north of Bloomington-Normal. It stretches from the Peoria area to the Indiana border.

Bloomington City Council OKs cost adjustments to streetscape project

[Joe Deacon - WGLT](#), July 14, 2025

A modified plan for the first phase of Bloomington's downtown streetscape project sparked a lengthy discussion during Monday's city council meeting.

McLean County Board to consider audit of mental health, public safety sales tax fund

[Ben Howell](#), July 14, 2025

The McLean County Board Executive Committee on Monday approved an audit of the county's 1% mental health and public safety sales tax fund. The full board will consider the resolution at its regular meeting Thursday.

John Hooker, first of 'ComEd Four' to be sentenced, gets 1½ years in prison

[Hannah Meisel](#), July 14, 2025

A former executive for electric utility Commonwealth Edison has been sentenced to 18 months in prison for his role in bribing ex-Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan for jobs and contracts for the Democratic power broker's political allies.

Economic mobility top priority of Krishnamoorthi's Senate campaign

[Ben Szalinski](#), July 14, 2025

Raja Krishnamoorthi told Capitol News Illinois in an interview that Democrats must make addressing affordability their top priority in the 2026 election. It's particularly true, he said, as Democrats found themselves on the losing end of a battle in Congress with Republicans over a proposal to slash spending on social service programs like food stamps.

McLean County Clerk Kathy Michael to run for re-election in 2026

[Joe Deacon - WGLT](#), July 14, 2025

Kathy Michael officially is running for a fifth term as the McLean County Clerk in next year's election.

ISU scholar expects birthright citizenship will be upheld after 'confusion and harm'

[Eric Stock](#), July 14, 2025

Matt Kuenning, who teaches at Illinois State University and practices law in Champaign, says a New Hampshire judge's ruling to certify a class-action lawsuit will reduce the harm caused by the Trump administration's executive order.

Bloomington negotiates lower cost for first phase of downtown streetscape

[Eric Stock](#), July 13, 2025

The city council is scheduled to vote on the \$13.2 million agreement on Monday that the city reworked after the only bid came in substantially higher than the city has planned to spend on the 300-600 blocks of North Main Street.

McLean County to consider suspending tax collection for mental health services

[Eric Stock](#), July 12, 2025

The tax money would instead stay with the municipalities during that time. The County Board's Executive Committee is expected to consider the measure during its 4 p.m. meeting on Monday.

In Bloomington, Senate candidate Raja Krishnamoorthi sounds off on midterm outlook, Trump agenda and party messaging

[Braden Fogerson](#), July 11, 2025

U.S. Senate candidate Raja Krishnamoorthi spoke to Bloomington-Normal area Democrats during a stop Friday in downtown Bloomington.

Public commenters pan process and product of a draft McLean County land use plan

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 10, 2025

A draft McLean County Land Use Plan is getting pushback from various stakeholders. Regional Planning Commission staff now say they'll change the process.

Speech and hearing clinic at Illinois State University braces for Medicaid cuts

[Eric Stock](#), July 10, 2025

The clinical director of ISU's speech and hearing clinic says she's concerned some clients could lose access to care because of cuts to the federal program for low-income Americans, and those with disabilities. About 75% of the clinic's clients are on Medicaid.

Rep. LaHood supports Medicaid cuts and SNAP reductions in the GOP megabill

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 9, 2025

U.S. Rep. Darin LaHood is voicing full-throated support for the massive Republican tax and spending bill, despite past opposition to Medicaid cuts and concern over the mounting federal budget deficit. LaHood represents parts of Bloomington-Normal.

Sen. Durbin says Trump's push to defund public media is an attack on rural America

[Ryan Denham](#), July 9, 2025

Sen. Dick Durbin on Wednesday urged his Republican colleagues to vote against defunding public media, citing WGLT's election events as one example of how local stations serve their communities.

McLean County Board member Lyndsay Bloomfield resigns

[Eric Stock](#), July 9, 2025

McLean County Board chair Elizabeth Johnston has confirmed Lyndsay Bloomfield, a Republican serving District 3, previously submitted her resignation, effective July 4.

McLean County Center for Human Services expects more youth will need support when LGBTQ+ hotline ends

[Braden Fogerson](#), July 8, 2025

Starting July 17, the federal government's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA] will no longer offer specially trained counselors for LGBTQ+ youth on its suicide prevention hotline.

Advocacy group for people with criminal records launches Fully Free BloNo chapter

[Michele Steinbacher](#), July 7, 2025

A Chicago-based nonprofit advocating for people living with criminal records is branching out, with its first chapter launching in the Bloomington-Normal area. Fully Free BloNo chapter hosts a kickoff party 3 p.m. Saturday, July 12, at Bloomington's Miller Park.

Normal's 61761 among 3 McLean County ZIP codes added to list for high lead exposure risk

[Joe Deacon - WGLT](#), July 7, 2025

Three McLean County ZIP codes are among the 180 added to the state's list of areas considered at high risk for childhood lead exposure, including 61761 in Normal.

'We think about the state in the same way': Christian Mitchell ready to back up Pritzker

[Ben Szalinski](#), July 7, 2025

At 38 years old, Christian Mitchell has been inside most corners of state government as a top advisor on political campaigns, state legislator, deputy governor and civic engagement leader at a major university. All those experiences make him ready to be Gov. JB Pritzker's running mate next year in the governor's campaign for a third term, Mitchell said.

Protesters rail against Trump's megabill at Bloomington 4th of July rally

[Paul J. Aguilar](#), July 4, 2025

Protesters gathered on Independence Day in downtown Bloomington to speak against recent actions taken by the Trump Administration.

State Rep. Dennis Tipsword seeks reelection

[Eric Stock](#), July 3, 2025

Republican State Rep. Dennis Tipsword, who was first elected in 2022, has announced he will seek a third term representing the 105th House District.

A mix of concern and ambivalence to GOP megabill at Normal's Activity and Recreation Center

[Lauren Warnecke](#), July 3, 2025

Seniors hanging out together at the ARC senior center in Normal on Thursday afternoon were not talking politics, but some members are concerned about people falling through the cracks.

LaHood votes yes, Sorensen votes no on Republican spending and tax cut bill

[Ryan Denham](#), July 3, 2025

U.S. Rep. Darin LaHood, a Peoria Republican, voted in favor of the GOP megabill. Rep. Eric Sorensen, a Democrat from Moline, voted against it. Together they represent Bloomington-Normal in the House.

Bloomington Planning Commission recommends former Pantagraph building as a historic site

[Braden Fogerson](#), July 2, 2025

The Bloomington Planning Commission on Wednesday recommended designating the former Pantagraph building at 301 W. Washington St. as a historical landmark.

Twin City health care providers brace for Medicaid cuts wrapped in GOP megabill

[Lauren Warnecke](#), July 2, 2025

WGLT talks to Chestnut Health Systems and the Community Health Care Clinic about the potential impact of the Republican tax cut and spending bill.

Bloomington-Normal faith leaders protest and pray over cuts at rally on Medicaid and SNAP

[Ben Howell](#), July 2, 2025

Faith leaders in Bloomington-Normal came together Wednesday in Uptown Normal in protest and prayer, asking Congress to vote no on President Donald Trump's reconciliation bill.

AG Kwame Raoul joins suit against Trump administration over immigrant Medicaid data

[Violet Miller](#), July 2, 2025

The suit, announced Tuesday, seeks to stop federal immigration officials from securing more health documentation or using the already obtained Medicaid records of millions nationwide to target enrollees for immigration enforcement.

[**Some massage therapists feel heard as Bloomington modifies regulations, but concerns linger**](#)

[Eric Stock](#), July 1, 2025

For the first time, the City of Bloomington is regulating an industry that it says has been a source for sex trafficking and other illicit behavior. Two massage therapists share their views on the new regulations.

[**Illinois becomes first state to include music therapy in Medicaid as federal cuts loom in 'Big Beautiful Bill'**](#)

[Colleen Holden](#), July 1, 2025

A music therapist from Bloomington-Normal said the ability to bill Medicaid lowers barriers for people with disabilities—and makes it easier for her to stay in business.

[**Democrats deride Senate passage of Trump bill, as activists target GOP lawmakers ahead of House vote**](#)

[Tina Sfondeles](#), July 1, 2025

As the measure heads back to the House for approval, Democratic activists are now focusing their efforts on the three Republican members of the Illinois delegation, despite their allegiances to President Donald Trump.

[**Gov. JB Pritzker taps Christian Mitchell as lieutenant governor pick in campaign for third term**](#)

[Mitchell Armentrout](#), July 1, 2025

Christian Mitchell is a former Hyde Park state representative who also served as JB Pritzker's deputy governor.

Arts and Culture

[**A.J. Croce plays his father's catalog — and a few from his own — on his birthday in Bloomington**](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), September 25, 2025

For decades, singer-songwriter A.J. Croce refused to play songs by his famous father, Jim Croce, establishing a career on his own terms. That changed when he turned 50.

New music this fall from Bloomington-Normal artists Yea Big and Swim Ignorant Fire

[Cole Loiacano](#), September 25, 2025

Bloomington-Normal artists Stefen Robinson and Stephen Holliger both have new albums with unique sounds.

Together again as a virtual band, Hotter Than June has a new record—and one last chance to hear the songs live

[Lauren Warnecke](#), September 25, 2025

Hotter Than June frontman Josh Humphries will perform the band's songs live for the last time in a solo acoustic set in Bloomington. But it's not the end of the band or Humphries' musical ambitions.

Children's author Jasmine Shegog debuts a new self-help book for grownups in need of a reset

[Colleen Holden](#), September 24, 2025

Bloomington author Jasmine Shegog's new book, "The Power of Reframe," is out. The book focuses on the concept of healing by reframing your mindset into one of proactivity — claiming healing starts with a choice to do so, rather than closure.

Threshold to Hope sparks kindness with kid-led community service

[Cole Loiacano](#), September 17, 2025

Spreading Peace and Acts of Random Kindness in Blo-No, or SPARK, teaches children the importance of empathy and helping their local communities.

Nomad Theatre kicks off season 2 with a suite of fictional courtroom dramas — and one real one — in an historic McLean County courtroom

[Lauren Warnecke](#), September 16, 2025

Nomad Theatre Company will begin its second season as a year-round company by bringing courtroom dramas to a real-life courtroom in Bloomington. One play is based on true events following a group of ax-wielding ladies from Towanda.

Ballet 'La Llorona' spotlights maternal mental health in Twin City debut of Ballet 5:8

[Cindy Alcazar](#), September 16, 2025

Postpartum depression is placed front and center in Ballet 5:8's production of "La Llorona," taking place Sunday at the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts.

McHistory: Modern electronics rests with Bloomington-Normal's only Nobel Prize winner

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 15, 2025

McLean County has one Nobel Prize winner — but oh what a one! Modern electronics rests upon Clinton Davisson's physics experiments bombarding a block of crystalized nickel with electrons.

Heyworth native Britt Lower wins Emmy for 'Severance'

[Ryan Denham](#), September 14, 2025

Heyworth native Britt Lower won her first Emmy Award on Sunday for her mind-bending role on the Apple series "Severance."

Hangar Art Company prepares to tear down walls—again—in new Bloomington location

[Lauren Warnecke](#), September 12, 2025

After five years in a rented retail storefront downtown, Hangar Art Co. is moving into a stand-alone building across town.

Rare McLean County items exhumed for 'Mourning in McLean' at the history museum

[Lauren Warnecke](#), September 11, 2025

The coordinated display, arranged on each of the museum's three floors, includes rarely seen items surrounding the theme of death and funerary customs.

Retired broadcaster, speechwriter Steve Vogel of Bloomington pens 'tell-a-lot' book

[Eric Stock](#), September 10, 2025

Steve Vogel made a career out of telling other people's stories. Now he's telling his.

Rader Family Farms partners with Country Financial to launch 2025 corn maze

[Paul J. Aguilar](#), September 9, 2025

Rader Family Farms and Country Financial announced a corn maze celebrating Country Financial's 100th anniversary at a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

BCPA vies for a grant to bring more free concerts to Bloomington

[Lauren Warnecke](#), September 5, 2025

The City of Bloomington is a finalist for a three-year, \$120,000 grant to provide free concerts in downtown Bloomington. Awards are decided by a community vote, open until Sept. 15.

[Photo exhibition in Bloomington shares the living history of handmade Mexican dolls](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), September 4, 2025

Bloomington's Yolanda Alonso took pictures of women who make traditional Lele dolls and pass the craft down to future generations.

[New podcast explores the disappearance of a plumber at a Normal orphanage](#)

[Ryan Denham](#), September 3, 2025

Andrea Munday is co-creator of "A Normal Disappearance" along with her nieces, Finley and Piper. Together, they're investigating the disappearance of James F. Sarsfield, a plumber at the former Illinois Soldiers' and Sailors' Children's School in Normal.

['KPop Demon Hunters' lead actress Arden Cho talks about her days at the University of Illinois](#)

September 2, 2025

A University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign graduate stars in Netflix's most popular original movie.

[Heartland season opener, 'Venus in Fur,' is a time-traveling battle of the sexes](#)

[Cole Loiacano](#), August 28, 2025

Heartland Theatre Company brings Venus in Fur, by David Ives, to Bloomington-Normal for its 39th season opener. Kathleen Kirk directs the play, a comedy with a sharp message about gender equality.

[Bloomington author's children's book spotlights kids facing medical challenges](#)

[Ryan Denham](#), August 27, 2025

A Bloomington woman is the author of a new children's book that spotlights real kids living with medical challenges.

[Bloomington bladesmith competes on History Channel forging show 'Forged in Fire'](#)

[Emily Bollinger](#), August 27, 2025

Taylor Mathews is a competitor on the History Channel show "Forged in Fire." Mathews is co-owner of his family-owned shop, Edge of Normal Workshop, which just moved to a new location near Downtown Bloomington.

Video and photos: How to cook 240 ears of corn in 10 minutes

[Sami Johnson](#), August 25, 2025

Delightfully mild weather helped to bring out big crowds for this year's Sweet Corn Circus in Uptown Normal – enough to gobble up thousands of ears of corn.

Bloomington-Normal record stores host live music and 'just trying to do something nice, okay?'

[Nicholas Rynerson](#), August 22, 2025

Waiting Room Records is hosting its 4th annual free music fest, 'We're Just Trying to Do Something Nice, Okay?' at the Connie Link Amphitheater at 5 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 30. The show will raise donations to support Clover's Cat Club, an animal rescue service in Normal.

Unhoused writers in B-N seek understanding and self-expression

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 21, 2025

Every Friday a group of unhoused people meets in a room at the Junction in Downtown Bloomington to write. They are part of a writing group, an effort to help the unhoused enrich their lives amid a stressful existence.

Rader Family Farms grows variety of sunflowers for visitors to walk through, photograph and pick

[Emily Bollinger](#), August 21, 2025

The Sunflower Days Festival at Rader Family Farms in Normal is for the community to admire, take photos and pick their favorite flowers.

'Shift Rotate Reflect' redux at University Galleries: A risk that's right

[Lauren Warnecke](#), August 14, 2025

Jen Bervin's first career survey was stunted by the COVID-19 pandemic. University Galleries has decided "Shift Rotate Reflect" deserved another chance. The show runs Aug. 15 to Dec. 10.

Musical-loving Twin Cities haven't had a production of 'Wicked' composer Stephen Schwartz's least-known show — until now

[Lauren Warnecke](#), August 7, 2025

Pat Gaik proposed The Baker's Wife as Prairie Fire Theatre's summer production. Once they heard it, they couldn't say no.

Rhys Lovell to step down from Heartland Theatre in 2026

[Lauren Warnecke](#), August 7, 2025

After a decade as the Normal theater company's artistic director, Rhys Lovell has announced he'll step down at the end of next season.

Bloomington Public Library creates 2025 time capsule to be opened in 2050

[Paul J. Aguilar](#), August 4, 2025

The Bloomington Public Library got the idea to create a 2025 time capsule after finding one from 1977 during the library's renovation project.

Whimsical work in an 'elegant' setting: BPL hosts art by Nashville collagist David Wilson

[Lauren Warnecke](#), July 31, 2025

Nashville collagist David Wilson hasn't had a solo show in Bloomington-Normal since his MFA thesis at Illinois State. But the community remains an important touchstone of his quarter-century career since then.

Baseball legend Adam Wainwright brings his country music game to Bloomington this fall

[Lauren Warnecke](#), July 31, 2025

Adam Wainwright, a former St. Louis Cardinal, retired in 2023 as the third-winningest pitcher in franchise history. Now, he's a rising country artist who has already debuted at the Grand Ole Opry.

'Join or Die' is Strong Towns BloNo's pitch to join a club and solve problems together

[Lauren Warnecke](#), July 29, 2025

The civic organization Strong Towns BloNo will host a screening of the 2023 documentary based on Harvard University professor Robert Putnam's "Bowling Alone."

Normal Public Library officially reopens after renovation

[Paul J. Aguilar](#), July 25, 2025

Normal Public Library officially reopened Friday after a 16-month renovation that added an all-ages makerspace, nursing lounge, and other improvements.

Scope for imagination and small town vision: 4th vintage arcade in McLean

[Nicholas Rynerson](#), July 24, 2025

McLean County's namesake town likely has the highest arcade-to-people ratio in the world. And Arcadia is still growing.

Illinois Shakes outperforms 2024 with 10 days to go

[Lauren Warnecke](#), July 23, 2025

The festival's three productions—The Importance of Being Earnest, A Midsummer Night's Dream and Hamlet—run in rotation through Aug. 2.

IWU School of Theatre Arts loses beloved head

[Colleen Holden](#), July 22, 2025

It's the end of an era for Illinois Wesleyan University's School of Theatre Arts, which housed a bodiless Aphrodite head on top of their building for more than two decades.

First Stride & Ride closes streets to cars — making room to walk, jog and bike through the heart of Normal

[Lauren Warnecke](#), July 17, 2025

The inaugural event is part of Parks & Recreation Month, a nationwide campaign celebrating active lifestyles in community green spaces.

COVID-19 outbreak cancels 'Spongebob' performance at Community Players

[Lauren Warnecke](#), July 17, 2025

The theater said a COVID-19 outbreak prompted the cancellation. Ticketholders are encouraged to call the box office after 6 p.m. Thursday to reschedule.

Inaugural event combines health and the arts Saturday in Bloomington

[Lauren Warnecke](#), July 16, 2025

Fifteen community partners will be on hand at Franklin Park and the Creativity Center to explore ways the arts intersect with health and wellness. Free mini classes begin at 9:30 a.m. Saturday.

MIOpera brings 'Nunsense' to Bloomington while forging a regional approach

[Lauren Warnecke](#), July 15, 2025

MIOpera returns to Bloomington-Normal for its first full-length performance in the Twin Cities in two years. "Nunsense" exemplifies the company's desire to be more "portable," bringing opera to several communities across Central Illinois.

Bloomington's Darius resurfaces with new music and a new sound at Make Music Normal

[Paul J. Aguilar](#), July 10, 2025

Bloomington-based rapper and hip-hop artist Darius will showcase new music at Make Music Normal later this month. Ahead of the show, Williams talks to WGLT about his journey in music.

B-N tourism group gets state grant for Route 66 renovations at Sprague's in Normal

[Ben Howell](#), July 4, 2025

The Bloomington-Normal Area Convention and Visitors Bureau has received a \$150,000 state tourism grant to further restore Sprague's Super Service in Normal ahead of Route 66's 100th anniversary next year.

Home gardeners will show off backyard oases during David Davis Mansion's Glorious Garden Festival

[Lauren Warnecke](#), July 2, 2025

Nancy and Ben Pounds' Bloomington yard is featured as part of a 10-home garden tour benefiting the David Davis Mansion.

Business and Economy

Industry leaders convene in Normal to talk economic challenges facing Illinois truckers

[Paul J. Aguilar](#), September 25, 2025

Members of the Illinois Trucking Association heard from an industry leader and a military veteran at their annual meeting this week in Normal.

Bloomington becomes a 'lifesaver' for family that opens grocery in food desert

[Eric Stock](#), September 16, 2025

Dabrona Alzebdieh and her son Joshua opened South of Chicago Groceries across the street from Miller Park in Bloomington, after seeing the neighborhood lacked a place to get fresh food nearby.

Rivian plans job cuts as it plans for R2 production in Normal

[Eric Stock](#), September 4, 2025

Rivian isn't saying how many employees at the Normal plant will be affected, but a source familiar with the matter tells WGLT nine jobs are being cut in Normal.

State Farm rolls out voluntary employee exit program

[Eric Stock](#), September 3, 2025

In an email obtained by WGLT, the insurer says "if and when" changes are needed, the company will start with voluntary staff reductions whenever possible, but did not rule out the possibility of layoffs.

Carroll County Board chair, farmer Julie Bickelhaupt announces bid for Rep. Sorensen's seat

[Eric Stock](#), August 29, 2025

Julie Bickelhaupt is a farmer and chair of the Carroll County Board, a rural county along the Mississippi River border with Iowa. She said she's running to lower costs for Americans, support farmers and strengthen education.

Town of Normal is working on growth in new strategic plan

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 22, 2025

The Normal Town Council has reviewed elements of a new strategic plan and approved changes to the Enterprise Zone that would offer development incentives in portions of Bloomington-Normal, including Bloomington's under-performing Eastland Mall.

Job cuts ahead at Bridgestone tire plant in Normal

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 21, 2025

There will be a significant workforce reduction at the Bridgestone Off-the-Road Tire Plant in Normal. Neither the company nor the United Steelworkers union representing workers could provide a precise number of jobs targeted.

GOP candidate for 17th Congressional District is active early this election cycle

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 12, 2025

'Tis the season for political candidates to firm up plans to run for party primaries next year. Dillan Vancil is running for Congress as a Republican in the 17th district. That U.S. House seat is currently held by Democrat Eric Sorensen.

During B-N stop, Rep. LaHood defends higher tariffs and new landscape of trade agreements

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 30, 2025

U.S. Rep. Darin LaHood is hailing this week's announcement of a trade agreement with the European Union and recent ones with Vietnam, the United Kingdom, Indonesia, and Japan as the Trump administration continues to reshape the global economy.

ISU trustees approve \$566 million budget and a worker pay raise

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 25, 2025

Illinois State University President Aondover Tarhule said the painful efforts to address a structural budget deficit have found about \$12 million. That's enough to offer nonunion workers a 3.5% pay raise starting in October.

McLean County Regional Planning Commission revises land use plan review process

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 23, 2025

The McLean County Regional Planning Commission is making good on a promise to the county board to get more public input on the draft of a regional land use plan.

Auto seat maker Adient to locate \$8 million facility in Normal

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 21, 2025

Automobile seat maker Adient will open a facility in Normal to serve Rivian. The \$8 million investment will create 75 new full-time jobs.

Public commenters pan process and product of a draft McLean County land use plan

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 10, 2025

A draft McLean County Land Use Plan is getting pushback from various stakeholders. Regional Planning Commission staff now say they'll change the process.

Rep. LaHood supports Medicaid cuts and SNAP reductions in the GOP megabill

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 9, 2025

U.S. Rep. Darin LaHood is voicing full-throated support for the massive Republican tax and spending bill, despite past opposition to Medicaid cuts and concern over the mounting federal budget deficit. LaHood represents parts of Bloomington-Normal.

B-N tourism group gets state grant for Route 66 renovations at Sprague's in Normal

[Ben Howell](#), July 4, 2025

The Bloomington-Normal Area Convention and Visitors Bureau has received a \$150,000 state tourism grant to further restore Sprague's Super Service in Normal ahead of Route 66's 100th anniversary next year.

Regional planning commission wants feedback on draft land use plan for McLean County

[Charlie Schlenker](#), June 26, 2025

The draft of a new McLean County Land Use Plan suggests future growth will largely happen on the fringes of Bloomington and Normal.

Education

During B-N stop, conservative governor candidate Ted Dabrowski vows to fight for economic change in Illinois

[Paul J. Aguilar](#), September 26, 2025

Conservative Illinois GOP candidate Ted Dabrowski discusses the most pressing issues in the state and how he hopes to deal with them if elected in 2026.

ISU's first engineering students on how it's going so far

[Paul J. Aguilar](#), September 15, 2025

Students majoring in the inaugural programs at Illinois State University's new College of Engineering are feeling positive.

Mark Jontry retiring after this term as Regional Superintendent of Schools, endorses assistant superintendent for the role

[Paul J. Aguilar](#), August 20, 2025

Mark Jontry, the regional superintendent of schools for McLean County and other nearby counties, will not run for re-election after this term ends, but he has a new candidate in mind to replace him.

Pritzker names ADM executive Kris Lutt to Illinois State University Board of Trustees

Eric Stock, July 28, 2025

Kris Lutt is president of sustainable materials and strategic initiatives at ADM. He earned an MBA from Illinois State in 2006.

Boys and Girls Club of Bloomington-Normal cuts more than half its staff

Charlie Schlenker, April 24, 2025

The Boys and Girls Club of Bloomington-Normal has cut "55% of its team" as part of the response to a loss of grant funding.

Central Illinois Republicans rally for increased student privacy

Lauren Warnecke, September 26, 2025

At a joint news conference Friday, Carlock resident Desi Anderson was joined by state and national lawmakers to announce proposed legislation clamping down on student directory data that is not protected by current privacy laws.

ISU president cites fiscal challenges, lauds campus achievements in annual address

Charlie Schlenker, September 25, 2025

During his State of the University address, the president of Illinois State University said "funding pressures remain high and very concerning."

ISU's first engineering students on how it's going so far

Paul J. Aguilar, September 15, 2025

Students majoring in the inaugural programs at Illinois State University's new College of Engineering are feeling positive.

Illinois Wesleyan reports biggest incoming class in 15 years

Lauren Warnecke, September 9, 2025

Nearly 600 new students began classes at the Bloomington campus this fall. Almost half are student-athletes.

'It was never about him': Bloomington-Normal leader Bill Sulaski passes away

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 15, 2025

Bill Sulaski, a longtime community leader and booster of Illinois State University, has died at age 85. He was the first chair on ISU's Board of Trustees.

ISU to digest U.S. attorney general's message on unlawful DEI

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 5, 2025

Illinois State University is sending a calming message to students and employees as the Trump administration ramps up efforts to squelch diversity, equity, and inclusion programs.

ISU, IWU and Heartland international student enrollment is down, following national trend

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 4, 2025

The number of international students attending Bloomington-Normal colleges and universities will be down significantly when classes begin this month because of the anti-immigration stance of the Trump administration.

GOP tax cut and spending law heightens uncertainty for colleges and universities

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 31, 2025

The massive GOP tax cut and spending plan has huge implications for the American way of life. The bill impacts food assistance, health care for low-income people, farm policy, energy, the environment, and not least, higher education.

ISU trustees approve \$566 million budget and a worker pay raise

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 25, 2025

Illinois State University President Aondover Tarhule said the painful efforts to address a structural budget deficit have found about \$12 million. That's enough to offer nonunion workers a 3.5% pay raise starting in October.

Heartland Community College board elects alum to fill trustee vacancy

[Colleen Holden](#), July 22, 2025

Senesta "Angell" Howard fills a seat on the board left by Cecelia Long, who resigned in June with plans to move out of the district.

Unit 5 superintendent gives update on enrollment, transportation needs and cell phones

September 30, 2025

[District 87 superintendent provides updates on facilities work, teachers and students](#)

September 30, 2025

[Bent Elementary School welcomes new playground and greenspace](#)

September 29, 2025

[Central Illinois Republicans rally for increased student privacy](#)

September 26, 2025

[ISU president cites fiscal challenges, lauds campus achievements in annual address](#)

September 25, 2025

Unit 5

1. [Unit 5 board approves annual budget, learns of Weikle's retirement plans](#)
2. [Unit 5 and District 87 start school year with new high school phone policies](#)
3. [Unit 5 board presented outline of annual budget, OKs new contract for Weikle](#)
4. [Unit 5 mourns death of 'beloved' Kingsley Junior High teacher in bike crash](#)
5. [Normal Community senior attends mock Senate in D.C.](#)
6. [Unit 5 board approves purchasing new flooring, used buses](#)
7. [Unit 5 waiting on nearly \\$1 million as Trump administration withholds education grant money](#)

District 87

1. [District 87 superintendent provides updates on facilities work, teachers and students](#)
2. [Bent Elementary School welcomes new playground and greenspace](#)
3. [District 87 considers easing graduation requirements for students new to the country](#)
4. [Unit 5 and District 87 start school year with new high school phone policies](#)
5. [Promise Council provides warm welcome to students at two dozen McLean County schools](#)

6. [YWCA after-school programming expands to Bloomington Junior High](#)
7. [Accessibility-focused playground coming to Stevenson Elementary School](#)

Higher Education

1. [Biotech startup Symbio Bioculinary engineers the elimination of food waste in Bloomington laboratory](#)
2. [Rep. Sorensen stands with Democrats, blames Republicans for government shutdown](#)
3. [Football lifts up Ted Schmitz on way to ISU Athletics Hall of Fame honor](#)
4. [ISU tops preseason men's basketball MVC picks](#)
5. [Former State Farm CEO Ed Rust Jr. reflects on liberal arts at Illinois Wesleyan University](#)
6. [Photos: Redbird football grab double OT win over North Alabama after weather delays](#)
7. [Historian Doris Kearns Goodwin to speak at IWU and give master class at ISU in October](#)

More education stories

[ISU's first engineering students on how it's going so far](#)

[Paul J. Aguilar](#), September 15, 2025

Students majoring in the inaugural programs at Illinois State University's new College of Engineering are feeling positive.

[Illinois Wesleyan reports biggest incoming class in 15 years](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), September 9, 2025

Nearly 600 new students began classes at the Bloomington campus this fall. Almost half are student-athletes.

[Illinois State University approaches 22,000 students as enrollment sets new record](#)

[Eric Stock](#), September 4, 2025

Illinois State University has set an enrollment record for the fourth year in a row, according to officials figures released Thursday for the fall 2025 semester.

LeRoy's newest drivers taught how to stay safe during harvest season

[Braden Fogerson](#), September 4, 2025

High school students from LeRoy learned how to stay safe when they see farm equipment on the road this fall.

Classes are underway at the Bloomington Career Academy's new location

[Braden Fogerson](#), August 26, 2025

The Bloomington Career Academy is largely moved in at the Willie G. and Gloria Brown Education Center that District 87 purchased from State Farm in 2024.

Heartland Head Start wins \$4.4 million federal grant renewal

[Ryan Denham](#), August 22, 2025

A Bloomington-based early childhood program for low-income families has won renewal of a critical grant to keep operating for at least another five years.

Mark Jontry retiring after this term as Regional Superintendent of Schools, endorses assistant superintendent for the role

[Paul J. Aguilar](#), August 20, 2025

Mark Jontry, the regional superintendent of schools for McLean County and other nearby counties, will not run for re-election after this term ends, but he has a new candidate in mind to replace him.

Illinois legislature passes bill to shed more light on how schools support homeless students

[Peter Medlin](#), August 20, 2025

A bill waiting for Governor J.B. Pritzker's signature would provide more transparency about homeless students in the state and how schools use money meant to support them. WNJI's Peter Medlin reports...

New union representing ISU lab school employees hopes to start negotiating first contract this fall

[Ryan Denham](#), August 18, 2025

A new union representing employees at Illinois State University's lab schools hopes to begin negotiating its first contract sometime this fall.

Dressers, TVs, Mini fridges: ISU Office of Sustainability offers free items for students at recycle event

[Ben Howell](#), August 15, 2025

ISU's annual Front-Yard Freecycle event offered new and returning students on campus to claim dorm room and apartment must haves with no charge.

City of Bloomington to host free symposium to discuss future of inclusion and access

[Vivienne Hughes](#), August 12, 2025

The City of Bloomington will hold an Inclusion & Access Compliance Symposium from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Aug. 26 at Heartland Community College's Astroth Building.

New Hammitt School principal is not new to the Baby Fold

[Braden Fogerson](#), August 11, 2025

Joe McQueen is the new principal at Hammitt Elementary in Normal. He worked there as an Illinois State University student two decades ago.

ISU to digest U.S. attorney general's message on unlawful DEI

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 5, 2025

Illinois State University is sending a calming message to students and employees as the Trump administration ramps up efforts to squelch diversity, equity, and inclusion programs.

ISU, IWU and Heartland international student enrollment is down, following national trend

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 4, 2025

The number of international students attending Bloomington-Normal colleges and universities will be down significantly when classes begin this month because of the anti-immigration stance of the Trump administration.

Appeals court sends ISU scuffle over union membership back to labor board

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 1, 2025

An Illinois appeals court wants the Illinois Education Labor Relations Board to take another look at a dispute between Illinois State University and a union representing about 300 campus workers.

GOP tax cut and spending law heightens uncertainty for colleges and universities

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 31, 2025

The massive GOP tax cut and spending plan has huge implications for the American way of life. The bill impacts food assistance, health care for low-income people, farm policy, energy, the environment, and not least, higher education.

Pritzker names ADM executive Kris Lutt to Illinois State University Board of Trustees

[Eric Stock](#), July 28, 2025

Kris Lutt is president of sustainable materials and strategic initiatives at ADM. He earned an MBA from Illinois State in 2006.

ISU trustees approve \$566 million budget and a worker pay raise

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 25, 2025

Illinois State University President Aondover Tarhule said the painful efforts to address a structural budget deficit have found about \$12 million. That's enough to offer nonunion workers a 3.5% pay raise starting in October.

Media literacy education lacks consistency across Illinois

[Jason Piscia](#), July 24, 2025

A survey of Illinois educators reveals a significant disparity in how they interpret a three-year-old state law's requirement to teach high school students a "unit of instruction" on media literacy.

Heartland Community College board elects alum to fill trustee vacancy

[Colleen Holden](#), July 22, 2025

Senesta "Angell" Howard fills a seat on the board left by Cecelia Long, who resigned in June with plans to move out of the district.

For this Carlock family, there's plenty to show off at the McLean County 4-H Show

[Ryan Denham](#), July 22, 2025

WGLT visits a family from Carlock that's getting ready for the McLean County 4-H Show, which begins Wednesday. They're showing chickens, vegetables, a young calf, Lego creations, and more.

Governor JB Pritzker pens letter urging President Trump's education secretary to unfreeze \$6.8B in grants

[Tina Sfondeles](#), July 17, 2025

The letter to Secretary Linda McMahon comes just days after 24 states and the District of Columbia sued the Trump administration over the funding freeze in education grants for K-12 schools and adult education.

District 87 planning around federal grant funding delays, change in SNAP eligibility requirements

[Braden Fogerson](#), July 16, 2025

District 87 schools are planning other avenues of payment if the federal grants delayed this month do not come.

High schoolers hone their professional craft at nationwide career skills competition

[Braden Fogerson](#), July 10, 2025

WGLT talked with students and teachers from Bloomington Career Academy about competing in the SkillsUSA Championships — the largest workforce development event in the country.

Metcalf School sixth-graders design, build and donate a tiny house to homeless shelter village in Bloomington

[Emily Bollinger](#), July 9, 2025

Thomas Metcalf School sixth-graders designed and built a tiny house that Home Sweet Home Ministries will put in its shelter village.

Protesters rail against Trump's megabill at Bloomington 4th of July rally

[Paul J. Aguilar](#), July 4, 2025

Protesters gathered on Independence Day in downtown Bloomington to speak against recent actions taken by the Trump Administration.

Police and Courts

Bloomington woman sentenced to 40 years for death of man found in a ditch

[Eric Stock](#), September 30, 2025

Gabrielle Stine, 24, reached a plea agreement in McLean County court on Tuesday, requiring her to serve 100% of her sentence. Charges of aggravated kidnapping and residential burglary were dropped.

13-year-old boys arrested after shots fired near Franklin Park in Bloomington

[Lauren Warnecke](#), September 30, 2025

Two 13-year-olds being detained in McLean County Juvenile Detention Center face weapons charges and resisting a peace officer.

Bloomington woman dies after vehicle crashes into house

[Eric Stock](#), September 24, 2025

A 24-year-old woman is dead after she crashed her car into a tree and a residence early Tuesday in Bloomington.

At first, the Pretrial Fairness Act reduced McLean County's jail population. It didn't last

[Lauren Warnecke](#), September 23, 2025

After an initial decline in beds filled at the McLean County jail, numbers have crept back up since cashless bail began in Illinois. Experts say pretrial release violations are to blame.

A new kind of asbestos case gets its first day in court with nationwide implications

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 22, 2025

The lawsuit with origins in Central Illinois involves shotgun shells and has nationwide implications.

Bicyclist dies weeks after collision in Bloomington

[Eric Stock](#), September 19, 2025

A bicyclist has died several weeks after being struck by a pickup truck in Bloomington in late August. It was one of two fatal bicycle crashes within three days in McLean County.

Fed immigration agencies used McLean County Sheriff's Department camera data despite Illinois law

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 9, 2025

The McLean County Sheriff's department is fessing up to an error that allowed federal immigration agencies to search its database of Flock Safety license plate reading cameras for more than four months this year.

Police departments in McLean County say camera data not shared with immigration officers

[Eric Stock](#), September 5, 2025

Police departments in McLean County that use automatic license plate reading cameras [ALPRs] say none of their data has been shared with federal immigration officers. This comes after Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias said camera company Flock shared data with those federal agencies.

Bloomington Police investigate 2 serious motorcycle crashes on Veterans Parkway

[Eric Stock](#), September 3, 2025

Police said a motorcyclist crashed near the intersection of Veterans Parkway and Clearwater Avenue on Tuesday night. Police said the driver, an adult male, was found unresponsive in the roadway. Another motorcyclist suffered potentially life-threatening injuries in a crash at Veterans at Eastland Drive on Sunday night.

Juvenile justice and child welfare advocates are optimistic the Illinois FAIR Act will bring change

[Lauren Warnecke](#), September 2, 2025

The new law brings reform to the state's public defense system for the first time in decades. Public defenders play an outsized role in juvenile and child welfare courts.

Bloomington review board hears its first police complaint in 2 years

[Lauren Warnecke](#), August 28, 2025

For several members of the city's Public Safety and Community Relations Board, it was their first time reviewing a complaint, leading to discussion about the board's function and role.

Jurgens: Community policing is not at risk by pulling BPD out of immigration event

[Lauren Warnecke](#), August 28, 2025

Bloomington's city manager said the decision was primarily related to a flyer suggesting police could advise what to do in an ICE raid.

Pickup truck hits 2 bicyclists on U.S. 150 near Evans Junior High in Bloomington

[Ryan Denham](#), August 25, 2025

A pickup truck struck two bicyclists Monday morning near Evans Junior High in Bloomington, sending both to the hospital. It was at least the second serious incident involving a bicyclist and vehicle in McLean County in the past few days.

McLean County judge holds man in custody in homicide of unborn child case

[Lauren Warnecke](#), August 25, 2025

Emerson Evans, 31, appeared before Judge Amy McFarland Monday afternoon for a pretrial detention hearing on two counts of intentional homicide of an unborn child. Prosecutors argued Evans should be held in McLean County Jail awaiting trial; McFarland agreed.

Boston man on bicycle struck and killed by car near Danvers

[Ben Howell](#), August 25, 2025

A 57-year-old Boston man has died after being struck by a car while riding a bike near Danvers over the weekend.

In court, hallucinations can overshadow A.I.'s promise in closing 'access to justice' gap

[Ryan Denham](#), August 25, 2025

A Central Illinois attorney has been sanctioned after filing a brief written partially by artificial intelligence that cited several “hallucinated,” or non-existent, cases. It’s believed to be one of the first known cases of an Illinois lawyer being punished for misusing A.I. in a real case.

Man faces homicide charge after allegedly slipping pregnant girlfriend the abortion pill

[Ryan Denham](#), August 23, 2025

A 31-year-old man from Normal was charged Saturday with causing the intentional homicide of an unborn child, after allegedly sneaking the abortion pill mifepristone to his girlfriend in Bloomington without her consent.

Past State Farm Holiday Classic president arrested, charged with theft from the charity tournament

[Lauren Warnecke](#), August 15, 2025

A former president of the State Farm Holiday Classic is accused of stealing over \$100,000 from the nonprofit organization that runs the annual high school basketball tournament in Bloomington-Normal.

State Police still looking for Gibson City gunman, but there's no 'active threat to the public'

[Ryan Denham](#), August 14, 2025

Authorities are still looking for a 70-year-old man who allegedly shot two police officers in Gibson City, but that there was no "active threat to the public." Both injured officers have been released from the hospital.

First major public defense reform in decades awaits governor's pen

[Lauren Warnecke](#), August 12, 2025

The FAIR Act seeks to establish a state public defenders office to ease equity gaps for under-resourced counties, cap caseloads and provide oversight and advocacy. Illinois is one of five states without such an office.

39-year-old man booked for attempted murder in Bloomington stabbing

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 11, 2025

Bloomington Police have arrested a 39-year-old man for allegedly stabbing a woman several times.

State police ask for public's help in naked gunman case

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 11, 2025

State police are asking for public help in the weekend case of a naked gunman in Gibson City who allegedly wounded two officers. Troopers said they hope area people and businesses may have relevant video footage.

Naked gunman sought after two police officers are shot and house catches fire in Gibson City

[Ryan Denham](#), August 9, 2025

Authorities are trying to find a 70-year-old man who allegedly shot two police officers early Saturday in Gibson City before his home went up in flames and he disappeared naked. The officers are expected to survive.

Longtime ComEd lobbyist gets 1 year in prison for role in Madigan bribery scheme

[Hannah Meisel](#), August 5, 2025

Longtime Chicago lobbyist Jay Doherty was sentenced Tuesday to a year and a day in prison for his role in a yearslong bribery scheme between his biggest client, electric utility Commonwealth Edison, and former Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan.

[New B-N group hopes to improve justice system experience for crime victims](#)

[Ryan Denham](#), August 5, 2025

A new organization wants to improve the justice system experience for victims of crime in McLean County.

[Man from Normal sentenced to 60 years on child pornography charges](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), August 5, 2025

Steven T. Johnson must serve at least half of his 60-year sentence after pleading guilty to multiple counts of possessing child pornography.

[Bloomington mobile home park residents reach settlement over tenants' rights lawsuit](#)

[Ben Howell](#), August 4, 2025

Two Bloomington mobile home residents have reached a settlement with their Texas-based landlord, after they filed a lawsuit in 2024. The mobile homeowner and his partner rent a lot in Hilltop Mobile Home Park on the southern end of Bloomington, one of five properties owned by Oak Wood Properties.

[Hudson man drowns at Clinton Lake](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 3, 2025

A 45-year-old Hudson man died Saturday at Clinton Lake in DeWitt County.

[State Police seize \\$3.6 million in cocaine during Interstate 74 stop](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 2, 2025

State Police said a traffic stop of a box truck Friday on Interstate 74 near U.S. 51 south of Bloomington uncovered nearly 80 pounds of cocaine in one-kilogram packages

[Q&A: Lt. Jon Albee launches campaign for McLean County sheriff](#)

[Eric Stock](#), July 31, 2025

McLean County Sheriff's Lt. Jon Albee is looking to replace retiring sheriff Matt Lane next year. Albee says his role as lieutenant in multiple divisions has prepared him to lead the department.

Bloomington Police get a state grant to assist with FOID compliance

[Lauren Warnecke](#), July 30, 2025

Bloomington Police was the only downstage agency to receive funding for gun seizures in partnership with Illinois State Police.

McLean County Sheriff's Office joins task force to combat human trafficking

[Eric Stock](#), July 28, 2025

McLean County Sheriff Matt Lane said the department will assign one detective, as needed, to investigate trafficking cases. That officer will have statewide jurisdiction.

Statewide crime trends support McLean County dialing in on emerging adults

[Lauren Warnecke](#), July 25, 2025

Research presented to the county's Criminal Justice Coordinating Council indicate young adults are a critical population in the criminal justice system.

Carlock teen dies following July 7 vehicle-pedestrian crash

[Eric Stock](#), July 24, 2025

Authorities say Dylan Burroughs, 18, was a pedestrian when he was hit near County Road 825 East and 2100 North in rural Carlock on the night of July 7.

Bloomington juvenile charged as adult in first-degree murder case

[Eric Stock](#), July 19, 2025

The teen, who was arrested Friday and sent to the McLean County Juvenile Detention Facility, is being charged as an adult for the alleged murder of Darius Floyd, 35, of Bloomington, on Thursday night.

17-year-old arrested in Bloomington fatal shooting

[Eric Stock](#), July 18, 2025

Bloomington Police said they took a 17-year-old male into custody without incident and seized two firearms during the operation.

John Hooker, first of 'ComEd Four' to be sentenced, gets 1½ years in prison

[Hannah Meisel](#), July 14, 2025

A former executive for electric utility Commonwealth Edison has been sentenced to 18 months in prison for his role in bribing ex-Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan for jobs and contracts for the Democratic power broker's political allies.

50+ supporters write letters for Aaron Rossi ahead of sentencing in criminal case

[Ryan Denham](#), July 14, 2025

Lawyers for former Reditus Labs CEO Aaron Rossi are pointing to his traumatic childhood and a desire to "prove his worth to everyone" in seeking leniency from a judge sentencing him this week.

Bloomington man gets 2-year prison sentence for reckless homicide in 2023 crash

[Eric Stock](#), July 11, 2025

A judge sentenced Kameron Major on Friday to two years in prison and six months of supervised release for his role in a fatal 2023 crash in Bloomington.

Bloomington man dies in single-vehicle crash

[Eric Stock](#), July 10, 2025

Bloomington Police said officers and the Bloomington Fire Department responded to Center Street and Oakland Avenue at about 11:30 a.m. Wednesday. A truck had veered off the road and struck a tree.

McLean County prosecutor Emily Young appointed associate judge

[Lauren Warnecke](#), July 8, 2025

Young will primarily hear cases in Logan County, filling a vacancy left by Judge Bill Workman's retirement from the bench.

Environment and Nature

McLean County updates temporary open burn ban after rain improves conditions

[Ben Howell](#), September 26, 2025

Bloomington and Normal have both returned to their former policies concerning recreational fires.

Nuclear power, battery storage funding at center of energy policy debate

[Andrew Adams](#), September 19, 2025

After twice failing to pass an energy reform package this year, lawmakers and renewable energy advocates are aiming to reach a deal in time for a brief legislative session in October.

Environment and climate advocates persist through Trump administration cuts to the clean energy industry

September 17, 2025

Green infrastructure could help reduce flooding and water pollution in Bloomington-Normal

September 10, 2025

Littered fishing line in waterways concern Bloomington-Normal bird experts and residents

September 2, 2025

Rader Family Farms grows variety of sunflowers for visitors to walk through, photograph and pick

[Emily Bollinger](#), August 21, 2025

The Sunflower Days Festival at Rader Family Farms in Normal is for the community to admire, take photos and pick their favorite flowers.

Trained weather spotter grows online community of weather watchers in Central Illinois

[Paul J. Aguilar](#), August 20, 2025

A Facebook group providing frequent reports on weather events in Central Illinois has gained traction.

Clean water advocates say new law will protect drinking water from PFAS contamination

[Ben Howell](#), August 18, 2025

Gov. JB Pritzker has signed legislation that clean water advocates say will reduce toxic water pollution.

Town of Normal will expand electric vehicle infrastructure with help from Ameren Illinois

[Ben Howell](#), August 18, 2025

Ameren Illinois will give the Town of Normal money to help it implement a transportation electrification plan developed with the utility company.

Video: Bloomington Public Library unveils native plant species in Prairie on the Patio Garden

[Emily Bollinger](#), August 15, 2025

More than 280 native plants and over 22 species were planted at the Bloomington Public Library's Prairie on the Patio Garden.

Dressers, TVs, Mini fridges: ISU Office of Sustainability offers free items for students at recycle event

[Ben Howell](#), August 15, 2025

ISU's annual Front-Yard Freecycle event offered new and returning students on campus to claim dorm room and apartment must haves with no charge.

Renewable and clean energy sector faces uncertainty amid federal tax incentive cuts

[Ben Howell](#), August 1, 2025

Those inside the renewable energy sector find themselves at a crossroads as the GOP's massive tax cut and spending bill will sunset tax credits and incentives from the industry. Those groups now face the difficult decision of how to handle environmental projects which are usually years in the making.

Bloomington follows suit, approves funding pause on mental health sales tax fund

[Joe Deacon - WGLT](#), July 28, 2025

The Bloomington City Council voted Monday to approve a one-year pause on contributing revenue to the McLean County mental health and public safety sales tax fund, following last week's matching action by the Town of Normal.

Appointments available for Oct. 4 household hazardous waste collection in McLean County

[Colleen Holden](#), July 17, 2025

The deadline to make appointments for the Oct. 4 hazardous waste collection event in Bloomington is noon Friday, Sept. 26.

Bloomington City Council OKs cost adjustments to streetscape project

[Joe Deacon - WGLT](#), July 14, 2025

A modified plan for the first phase of Bloomington's downtown streetscape project sparked a lengthy discussion during Monday's city council meeting.

Slow-moving storm dumps heavy rain in Bloomington-Normal

[Eric Stock](#), July 9, 2025

One location near Towanda reported over 4.5 inches of rain Tuesday during the afternoon and evening hours, according to storm reports from the National Weather Service.