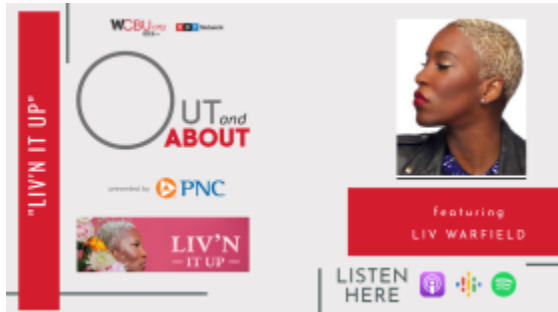


WCBU Q1 2026 FCC Report

Arts and Culture



Local News

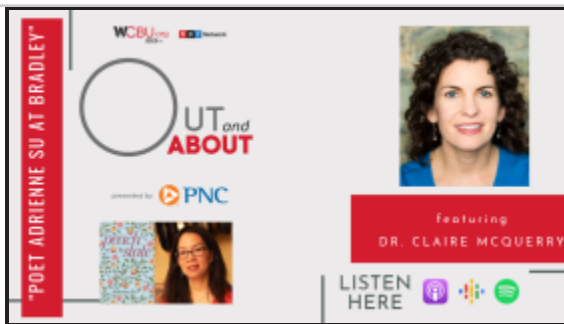
Liv Warfield performs with the Peoria Symphony Orchestra

Mae Gilliland Wright

, 2 hours ago

On this week's episode of Out and About, Dr. Mae Gilliland of ArtsPartners of Central Illinois talks with Peoria native and singer-songwriter, director, and performer Liv Warfield about her upcoming April 17 concert with the Peoria Symphony Orchestra at the Prairie Home Alliance Theater.

LISTEN • 4:30



Local News

Bradley University presents poetry reading and Q&A night with Adrienne Su

Mae Gilliland Wright

, March 26, 2026

On this week's episode of Out and About, Dr. Mae Gilliland of ArtsPartners of Central Illinois talks with Claire McQuerry, Associate Professor and Director of Creative Writing at Bradley University, about an upcoming poetry reading and Q&A with acclaimed poet Adrienne Su.

LISTEN • 4:30



Local News

Peoria Park District dedicates artist's new Bradley Park sculpture honoring Indigenous heritage

Joe Deacon

, March 20, 2026

Peoria Park District representatives joined acclaimed Peoria artist Preston Jackson and other community members Friday at a dedication ceremony for his artwork entitled, "Never Extinct: A Pictorial History of Indigenous People."



Local News

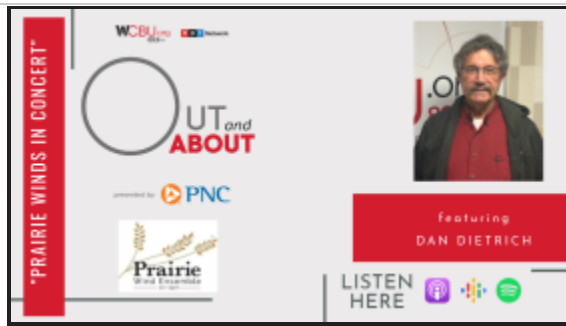
New Dallinger series celebrates the joy of learning and women's voices

Mae Gilliland Wright

, March 19, 2026

On this week's episode of Out and About, Dr. Mae Gilliland of ArtsPartners of Central Illinois talks with Catherine Lawless, Bradley University's Associate Director of Continuing Education, about the launch of the new Dallinger Series.

LISTEN • 4:30



Local News

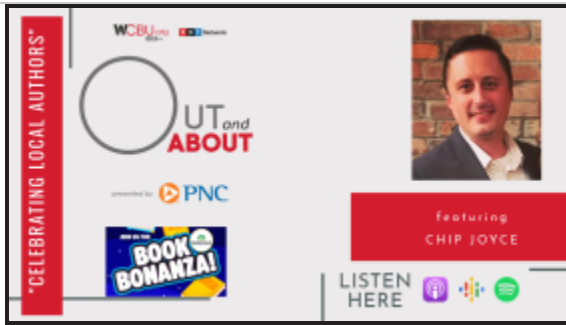
Prairie Wind Ensemble presents free concert on March 19 in Washington

Mae Gilliland Wright

, March 12, 2026

On this week's episode of Out and About, Dr. Mae Gilliland of ArtsPartners talks with Dan Dietrich, trombonist with the Prairie Wind Ensemble, about their upcoming concert March 19 at Five Points Washington.

LISTEN • 4:30



Local News

Brimfield Public Library's Local Author Fair

Mae Gilliland Wright

, March 5, 2026

On this week's episode of Out and About, Dr. Mae Gilliland of ArtsPartners of Central Illinois talks with Chip Joyce, Marketing and Outreach Coordinator for the Brimfield Public Library District, about the library's Local Author Fair. Taking place Saturday, March 21, the event brings together two dozen Central Illinois writers representing genres from mystery and romance to nonfiction and children's literature. Families can also enjoy the "Book Bonanza" story time and craft event while parents browse and meet local authors. The fair runs from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Brimfield Public Library and is free to attend.

LISTEN • 4:30



Local News

‘The Ebony Era’: Students at Peoria’s Mark Bills Middle School celebrate Black History Month

Joe Deacon

, February 26, 2026

The program, hosted by the school’s Future Teachers Club, featured student-crafted displays honoring important Black figures as part of a “living museum,” as well as musical selections and dance and spoken word performances.



Local News

Peoria Tribe connects with namesake city for exhibit commemorating American history

Thomas Pablo

, February 19, 2026

The Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma is collaborating with its namesake city in Illinois by building display cases for a year-long museum exhibit there.



Local News

An evening of Indian classical music and dance

Mae Gilliland Wright

, February 19, 2026

On this week's episode of Out and About, Dr. Mae Gilliland of ArtsPartners of Central Illinois talks with Chetna Maini, founder of Spandan School of Kathak, about SANGAM, an evening of Indian classical music and dance happening March 8 at the ICC Performing Arts Center. The program brings together Kathak dance and live Tabla in a three-part presentation that traces the artistic journey from student to master.

LISTEN • 4:30



Local News

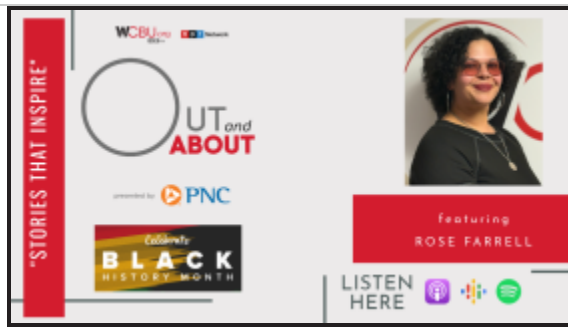
Central Illinois Friends celebrate with annual Mardi Gras fundraiser

Mae Gilliland Wright

, February 12, 2026

On this week's episode of Out and About, Dr. Mae Gilliland of ArtsPartners of Central Illinois talks with Selena Pappas of Central Illinois Friends about their annual Mardi Gras fundraiser, happening February 20 at Four Points by Sheraton in downtown Peoria. From dueling painters to tarot readers and stilt walkers, this art-filled event supports CI Friends' work providing inclusive, judgment-free care across Central Illinois.

LISTEN • 4:30



Local News

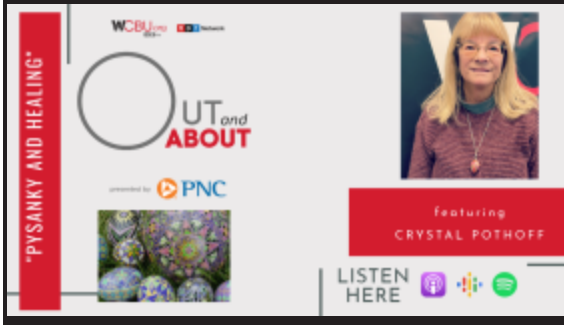
Peoria Public Library celebrates 100 years of Black History Month

Mae Gilliland Wright

, February 5, 2026

On this week's episode of Out and About, Dr. Mae Gilliland of ArtsPartners of Central Illinois talks with Rose Farrell of Peoria Public Library about how the library is celebrating 100 years of Black History Month.

LISTEN • 4:30



Local News

'Breaking Free' is a community art project on the meditative folk art of pysanky

Mae Gilliland Wright

, January 29, 2026

On this week's episode of Out and About, Dr. Mae Gilliland of ArtsPartners of Central Illinois talks with Crystal Potthoff, artist and facilitator of 'Breaking Free', a community art project centered on the meditative folk art of pysanky.

LISTEN • 5:00



Local News

Peoria Players Theatre presents 'Young Frankenstein'

Mae Gilliland Wright

, January 22, 2026

On this week's episode of Out and About, Dr. Mae Gilliland of ArtsPartners of Central Illinois talks with Steve Hausler, Director of "Young Frankenstein" at Peoria Players Theatre.

LISTEN • 5:00



Local News

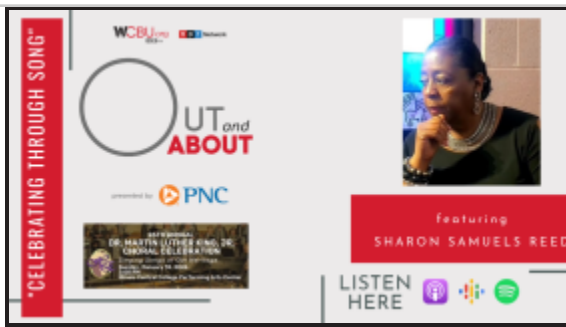
Morton Public Library Director Alissa Williams details winter activities

Mae Gilliland Wright

, January 15, 2026

On this week's episode of Out and About, Dr. Mae Gilliland of ArtsPartners of Central Illinois talks with Alissa Williams, Director of Morton Public Library.

LISTEN • 5:00



Local News

Heritage Ensemble's 26th consecutive Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Choral Celebration set for Jan. 18

Mae Gilliland Wright

, January 7, 2026

On this week's episode of Out and About, Dr. Mae Gilliland of ArtsPartners of Central Illinois talks to Sharon Samuels Reed, founder and artistic director of The Heritage Ensemble. Sharon reflects on founding the Ensemble and the mission that continues to guide its work.

LISTEN • 5:00

Business and Economy



Joe Deacon

Riggenbach hopes to apply 'Next Gen' lessons to Peoria-area housing initiatives

Joe Deacon

, March 27, 2026

Irina Riggenbach recently was selected to participate in the third cohort of the Next Generation Building Initiative, a statewide program led by the Illinois Housing Development Authority and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation.



Pekin, firefighters union agree on new 5-year contract

March 26, 2026



Peoria OKs extension, tax rate change for Westlake Shopping Center

March 25, 2026



Attorney tells Pekin City Council its votes will determine ultimate fate of controversial data center

March 24, 2026



Local News

ICC tabs Broward College's Rolle as its next president

Joe Deacon

, March 23, 2026

Jamonica Rolle was announced Monday as the choice to follow the retired Sheila Quirk-Bailey as president of Illinois Central College. Rolle comes to the Peoria area after serving in a leadership position at Broward College in Florida.



Local News

Trillium Place opens new facility in East Peoria

Joe Deacon

, March 20, 2026

The behavioral health and addiction recovery services affiliate of Carle Health of Greater Peoria transitioned to a medical office on River Road, in the city's main shopping and dining district.



Local News

Reception honors OSF HealthCare CEO Sehring ahead of his upcoming retirement

Joe Deacon

, March 20, 2026

Mayor Rita Ali, Bishop Louis Tylka and State Sen. Dave Koehler were among the many in attendance at Bob Sehring's retirement reception held at the OSF Cancer Institute, a \$250 million facility that opened two years ago.



Local News

Owner of Peoria's Pop-Up Chicken gets OK for a liquor license after long wait

Joe Deacon

, March 18, 2026

After almost two years of applications and denials, the Pop-Up Chicken restaurant in Peoria's Warehouse District is getting a liquor license.



Local News

ICC announces sale, planned reopening of student housing facility

Joe Deacon

, March 18, 2026

A shuttered student housing complex at Illinois Central College's East Peoria campus is on track to reopen in August.



Local News

East Peoria on track to adopt nearly \$80M budget for next fiscal year

Joe Deacon

, March 17, 2026

The city council on Monday unanimously approved a first reading of the spending plan that projects revenue at \$76.9 million and expenses at slightly more than \$79 million.



Local News

Pekin, high school agree to lease terms for city's bus facility

Steve Stein

, March 13, 2026

The transfer of Pekin Community High School bus transportation services from the City of Pekin to District 303 is back on track.



State News

First Rivian R2s will start at \$57,990; cheapest version not available until late 2027

Ryan Denham

, March 12, 2026

The first Rivian R2s will be delivered to customers this spring, beginning with a special “launch” version that starts at \$57,990. A base model of R2 starting around \$45,000 will not be available until late 2027.



Local News

Peoria area, nationwide gas prices spike as war with Iran drives fuel costs higher

Joe Deacon

, March 9, 2026

The average price of gas in the Peoria area is up more than 40 cents a gallon this week, as the war in Iran impacts the global oil market.



Local News

Denise Moore to retire from Peoria nonprofits

Joe Deacon

, March 5, 2026

Former Peoria City Council member Denise Moore is stepping down as CEO of the Black Business Alliance Peoria and the Minority Business Development Center at the end of June.



Local News

Q&A: Peoria City Manager Urich discusses plans for PNC Bank Building, end of battle over casino location

Joe Deacon

, March 5, 2026

Peoria City Manager Patrick Urich talks with WCBU about a range of topics, including the planned redevelopment of the PNC Bank Building and the end of the city's quest for a land-based casino.

LISTEN • 10:44



Local News

Renovation work on Peoria Civic Center's glass arcade to start next week

Joe Deacon

, February 27, 2026

The two-phase construction to make structural improvements to the feature will start Monday, with work continuing through September.



Local News

Illinois Gaming Board approves revised facility redevelopment plan for Par-A-Dice casino

Joe Deacon

, February 26, 2026

The corporate owner of the Par-A-Dice Hotel Casino has received permission to move forward with its plan to redevelop the existing East Peoria site.



Local News

Pekin gas stations can sell packaged liquor

Steve Stein

, February 25, 2026

Pekin gas stations have been given the opportunity to sell sell packaged liquor. The city council voted 5-1 this week to allow gas stations to apply for the requisite liquor license.



Local News

Peoria eyes incentive extension, tax increase for Westlake Shopping Center

Joe Deacon

, February 25, 2026

The proposed changes to the Westlake Special Service Area would extend its duration 15 years through 2055, and increase the area's supplemental sales tax rate by 0.25% to 1%.



State News

State Rep. Sharon Chung seeks compromise on insurance oversight

Evan Holden

, February 24, 2026

Bloomington state Rep. Sharon Chung has introduced a insurance bill that invites conversation and compromise between insurance companies and the state.



Local News

2 Pekin City Council members say they will vote against proposed data center

Steve Stein

, February 24, 2026

Pekin City Council members Dave Nutter and Jake Fletcher said Monday they will vote against the proposed data center in the city. There are seven council members, so two more "no" votes would kill the project.



Local News

OSF HealthCare set to expand Cancer Institute in Peoria

Joe Deacon

, February 20, 2026

Two years after opening, the OSF HealthCare Cancer Institute in Peoria is ready to expand. A new 29,000-square-foot fourth floor area will feature medical oncology, surgical oncology and research components, along with space for more clinical trials.



Local News

OSF set to start construction on new Brimfield primary care clinic

Joe Deacon

, February 18, 2026

OSF HealthCare representatives and community stakeholders participated in a groundbreaking Wednesday for the medical group's new primary care clinic at the southeast corner of U.S. Route 150 and Maher Road in Brimfield.



Local News

Peoria drops legal challenge to Par-A-Dice renovation plans

Joe Deacon

, February 16, 2026

The City of Peoria has decided to drop its lawsuit over the proposed \$160 million redevelopment of the Par-A-Dice Hotel Casino in East Peoria.



Local News

Pekin, high school hammering out details of school bus office, parking lot lease

Steve Stein

, February 13, 2026

The city of Pekin's efforts to hand over school bus transportation operations to Pekin Community High School this summer hit a snag this week.



Local News

Tazewell County adds notary alerts to its property fraud protection services

Joe Deacon

, February 12, 2026

A new program available in Tazewell County offers a way to protect notaries from fraudulent use of their legal stamps. The Notary Fraud Alert system from Fidlar Technologies is a free addition to the county's existing suite of property fraud protection services from the Iowa-based company.



Local News

IHSA moves Class 1A-2A baseball finals from Peoria to Champaign for the long term

Joe Deacon

, February 12, 2026

The Illinois state high school baseball tournament isn't coming back to Peoria's Dozer Park for the foreseeable future.



Local News

Peoria City Council establishes 2 new TIF districts

Joe Deacon

, February 11, 2026

The city council approved the creation of two new TIF Districts on Tuesday, one focused on Northwoods Mall and the surrounding area and the other centered on

the downtown Adams-Liberty block anchored by the city-owned PNC Bank Building.



Local News

Bradley University breaks ground on outdoor recreation complex

Joe Deacon

, February 6, 2026

Construction will begin next month on a new donor-funded outdoor activity space at the southwest end of the Bradley University campus. Officially named the Zaleski Recreation Complex, the venue will feature pickleball courts, a sand volleyball court and areas for yard games.



Local News

PAAR president draws optimism from recent boost in home sales

Joe Deacon

, February 6, 2026

Home sales in the Peoria area for 2025 were down a little from the previous year, but a slight boost over the final three months offers some optimism for this year.



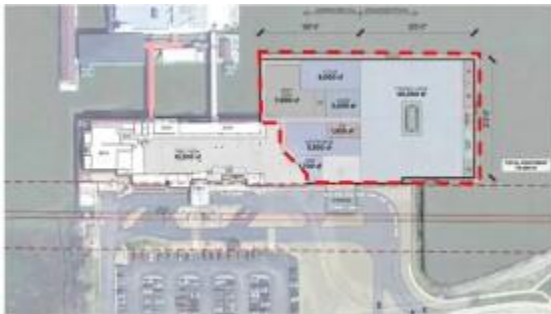
Local News

New restaurant moving into vacated space in downtown Morton

Steve Stein

, February 5, 2026

Restaurant space in the heart of downtown Morton, vacant since October, will be filled again. A new owner purchased the space at 120 W. Jefferson St. and took over lease payments.



Local News

Modified Par-A-Dice plan moves casino floor to a barge on the East Peoria side of the river

Joe Deacon

, February 5, 2026

Boyd Gaming shifted its plans for redevelopment of the Par-A-Dice casino site in East Peoria, moving the casino floor to a permanently moored barge on the Illinois River.



Local News

Peoria takes battle over casino redevelopment plans to court

Joe Deacon

, February 4, 2026

The City of Peoria is heading to court with its effort to block a proposed \$160 million redevelopment of the Par-A-Dice Hotel Casino property in East Peoria.



Local News

Split Peoria City Council rejects settlement with Par-A-Dice over \$160M redevelopment plan

[Joe Deacon](#)

, February 2, 2026

A possible agreement between the City of Peoria and the parent company of the Par-A-Dice Hotel Casino was voted down Monday, leaving the city open to contesting plans for a \$160 million overhaul of the existing riverboat gambling venue in East Peoria.



Local News

Peoria OKs fire department's automatic aid pact with Peoria Heights

[Joe Deacon](#)

, January 29, 2026

An automatic aid agreement between the Peoria and Peoria Heights fire departments is now in place. Peoria Fire Chief Shawn Sollberger said the intergovernmental agreement will see city fire personnel respond to working structure fires, automobile extrications and cardiac arrest calls within the village.



Local News

Illinois American Water wants a rate hike. A consumer watchdog vows to fight it

Joe Deacon

, January 29, 2026

Illinois American Water is seeking a rate increase to pay for more than a half-billion dollars in planned infrastructure improvements. But a statewide consumer watchdog group calls the potential hike “outrageous” and vows to fight it.



Local News

Peoria City Council OKs facility for parolees by one vote

Joe Deacon

, January 27, 2026

After two previous deferrals, a divided Peoria City Council voted to greenlight the proposal from GRO Community that will turn an empty building on the South Side into a 12-bedroom transitional residence for formerly incarcerated men.



Local News

Peoria International Airport eyes continued growth after record 2025

Joe Deacon

, January 22, 2026

Peoria International Airport administrators and staff gathered in the terminal Thursday for a ceremony to announce its final passenger count for 2025, after already breaking the annual record in November.



Local News

Bradley, ICC establish transfer partnership aided by \$1M grant for scholarships

Joe Deacon

, January 20, 2026

Bradley University and Illinois Central College have entered a transfer partnership to create a seamless pathway between the higher education schools, while boosting the Greater Peoria workforce.



Local News

Sister M. Mikela Meidl named new OSF HealthCare president as part of spring leadership transition

Ryan Denham

, January 19, 2026

A nun with years of health care executive experience has been named OSF HealthCare's president as a new leadership team prepares to take over in April.



Local News

Neighborhood House, Peoria Opportunities join forces on South Side rehab project

[Joe Deacon](#)

, January 15, 2026

A collaboration between Neighborhood House and the Peoria Opportunities Foundation will rehabilitate up to seven South Side residences for new homebuyers, with assistance from the Peoria City/County Health Department.



[Local News](#)

Washington has concerns about proposed billboard location

[Steve Stein](#)

, January 9, 2026

Should a large billboard be allowed in a busy Washington intersection? The city worries about "potential detrimental impacts."

Politics and Government



Courtesy

/

Peoria County Sheriff's Office

Peoria County Sheriff's Office gains its own access to national ballistics network

[Joe Deacon](#)

, March 31, 2026

The Peoria County Sheriff's Office now has its own equipment to use updated technology for testing evidence in shooting investigations.



Peoria, Bloomington and Normal join nationwide 'No Kings' protests

March 28, 2026



Riggenbach hopes to apply 'Next Gen' lessons to Peoria-area housing initiatives

March 27, 2026



Center for Prevention of Abuse breaks ground on new Pekin shelter

March 27, 2026



Local News

Coming soon to the Tazewell County Courthouse: Medal of Honor monument, new flag pole

Steve Stein

, March 26, 2026

A monument and a new flag pole will soon grace the grounds of the Tazewell County Courthouse. The monument honors the county's Medal of Honor recipients: John Ayers, Thomas Murphy and William Reed.



Local News

Pekin, firefighters union agree on new 5-year contract

Steve Stein

, March 26, 2026

The City of Pekin and its 54-member firefighters union have agreed on a new five-year contract. The Pekin City Council approved the contract Monday. Union ratification is expected this week.



State News

Rep. Sharon Chung wants to limit corporate money in elections

Evan Holden

, March 26, 2026

Democratic state Rep. Sharon Chung has introduced a bill changing the definition of a corporation to take away its legal power to spend money influencing elections.

LISTEN • 4:41



Local News

Sarah Howard on track to win race for Peoria school board seat

[Joe Deacon](#)

, March 25, 2026

Sarah Howard likely will join Andy Diaz as the two newcomers on the Peoria Public Schools Board of Education.



Local News

Peoria OKs extension, tax rate change for Westlake Shopping Center

[Joe Deacon](#)

, March 25, 2026

Improvements, upgrades and new retail tenants are coming to the Westlake Shopping Center after the Peoria City Council approved changes to the property's business development incentive.



Local News

Attorney tells Pekin City Council its votes will determine ultimate fate of controversial data center

Steve Stein

, March 24, 2026

The proposed data center project in Pekin isn't dead. The legal process that would void the contract between the city and developer and result in the data center's demise still must play out.



State News

Rep. Darin LaHood wants the war in Iran to wind down, doesn't think ICE in airports is 'the right approach'

Lauren Warnecke

, March 23, 2026

The Republican House member wouldn't commit to giving the Trump administration an additional \$200 billion for the war effort, saying constituents don't want to see "boots on the ground."

LISTEN • 7:31



Local News

Doggone it: Washington needs to buy a new police canine vehicle

Steve Stein

, March 19, 2026

Catastrophic engine failure has taken the Washington Police Department's current canine vehicle out of commission, perhaps forever. The Washington City Council came to the rescue this week.



Local News

Harwood touts accreditation for Peoria County Coroner's Office

Joe Deacon

, March 19, 2026

Peoria County Coroner Jamie Harwood views a recent accreditation as a testament to his office's level of service and commitment to residents.



State News

Central Illinois lawmaker joins calls to reform the Pretrial Fairness Act when it comes to domestic violence

Evan Holden, Lauren Warnecke

, March 19, 2026

Republican state Rep. Dennis Tipsword wants to reform the Pretrial Fairness Act by changing the burden of proof from the prosecutor to the defendant. Domestic violence advocacy organizations want to focus more on the implementation of the law instead of changing it.

LISTEN • 4:28



Local News

Q&A: Peoria County state's attorney touts juvenile justice efforts highlighted in annual report

Joe Deacon

, March 19, 2026

Peoria County State's Attorney Jodi Hoos talks with WCBU about progress reflected in her office's first annual report, covering topics including juvenile justice and violent crime.

LISTEN • 4:29



Local News

Owner of Peoria's Pop-Up Chicken gets OK for a liquor license after long wait

Joe Deacon

, March 18, 2026

After almost two years of applications and denials, the Pop-Up Chicken restaurant in Peoria's Warehouse District is getting a liquor license.



Local News

11 Republican candidates for Tazewell County Board earn spots on general election ballot

Steve Stein

, March 18, 2026

Thirteen open seats on the 21-member Tazewell County Board need to be filled this year. Candidates running for 11 of those seats cleared the first hurdle when they won races in the Republican primary.



Local News

Small voter turnout, big rejection for golf carts on Washington city streets

Steve Stein

, March 18, 2026

Washington voters don't want golf carts being driven on city streets. At least the nearly 19% of registered voters who weighed in on the issue in a nonbinding referendum on primary election ballot.



Local News

East Peoria on track to adopt nearly \$80M budget for next fiscal year

Joe Deacon

, March 17, 2026

The city council on Monday unanimously approved a first reading of the spending plan that projects revenue at \$76.9 million and expenses at slightly more than \$79 million.



Local News

Washington city leaders salute Class 3A high school girls basketball state champions

[Steve Stein](#)

, March 17, 2026

The Washington City Council took a detour from city business Monday to salute the state champion Washington Community High School girls basketball team and to receive recognition for the Nofsinger Road realignment project.



[Local News](#)

Peoria-area elections officials anticipate low to average turnout for primaries

[Joe Deacon](#)

, March 16, 2026

As Election Day arrives Tuesday, Peoria-area officials said they anticipate voting participation on par with typical primaries.



[Local News](#)

Pekin, high school agree to lease terms for city's bus facility

[Steve Stein](#)

, March 13, 2026

The transfer of Pekin Community High School bus transportation services from the City of Pekin to District 303 is back on track.



[State News](#)

Illinois Republican lawmakers look to stiffen penalties for child sex crimes

[Evan Holden](#)

, March 13, 2026

Illinois Republican lawmakers introduced bills stiffening penalties for charges related to child sex trafficking, including prohibiting plea deals and increasing prison time.



[Local News](#)

Peoria County Board approves wind farm road agreement

[Molly Hughes](#)

, March 13, 2026

This does not mean Peoria County will approve construction of the facility. The road use agreement is the first step in a long, multi-stage regulatory process — but it was enough to draw a packed room of supporters and opponents.



Local News

Pekin responds to unpopular switch from weekly recycling pickup

[Steve Stein](#)

, March 12, 2026

Following Pekin's change from weekly to every-other-week recycling pickup that began as planned March 2, the city intends to roll out steps in the coming weeks that aim to calm those who oppose the switch.



Local News

Last defendant sentenced in fatal Facebook Marketplace robbery

Joe Deacon

, March 12, 2026

A 20-year-old Peoria man will spend 15 years in prison for his role in a 2024 attempted robbery arranged through Facebook Marketplace that resulted in the death of one accomplice.



Local News

Tazewell County clerk's office adds AI search enhancement to analyze handwritten details in historic documents

Joe Deacon

, March 11, 2026

The Tazewell County clerk's office is making it easier to find information in certain historical documents by using artificial intelligence.



Local News

One more step needed in Pekin's decline of a data center project

Steve Stein

, March 10, 2026

The Pekin City Council is expected to vote on a legal end to its proposed agreement with data center developer Western Hospitality Partners at its next meeting March 23.



Local News

Data center won't be built in Pekin

Steve Stein

, March 9, 2026

Pekin will no longer consider having a data center built in the community. Mayor Mary Burress made the announcement Monday in a statement she read at a city council meeting.



Local News

Denise Moore to retire from Peoria nonprofits

Joe Deacon

, March 5, 2026

Former Peoria City Council member Denise Moore is stepping down as CEO of the Black Business Alliance Peoria and the Minority Business Development Center at the end of June.



Local News

Q&A: Peoria City Manager Urich discusses plans for PNC Bank Building, end of battle over casino location

Joe Deacon

, March 5, 2026

Peoria City Manager Patrick Urich talks with WCBU about a range of topics, including the planned redevelopment of the PNC Bank Building and the end of the city's quest for a land-based casino.

LISTEN • 10:44



Local News

2 former Washington police officers of the year promoted to deputy chief

Steve Stein

, March 4, 2026

The Washington Police Department's new deputy chiefs were sworn in this week. Steve Smith and Brian Simpson are only the third and fourth people to hold the position since it was created in 2007.



Local News

Illinois Municipal League wants more funding for local governments

Evan Holden

, March 4, 2026

The Illinois Municipal League wants more funding for local governments and quicker permitting process from state agencies to build infrastructure.



State News

Illinois lawmakers consider removing the 2-year foreign language requirement for high school

Evan Holden

, March 4, 2026

Two Illinois lawmakers want to remove the two-year foreign language requirement for high school because they want to let students choose their own elective.

LISTEN • 4:43



Local News

PHA clarifies details around leadership changes, emphasizes transparency and accountability

March 3, 2026

The Peoria Housing Authority's interim head and board chairman both sought to ease concerns surrounding the agency's recent leadership transition that has included a criminal investigation.



Local News

Flashing beacons will help pedestrians navigate troublesome Washington intersection

Steve Stein

, March 3, 2026

An intersection on one of Washington's busiest roads will be made safer for pedestrians. City council on Monday approved the installation of flashing beacons at Dallas Road and Westminster Drive.



Local News

Push to ban kratom on local levels expands in Greater Peoria

Joe Deacon

, March 2, 2026

Peoria Heights recently became the first municipality in Peoria County to enact a ban on the sale of kratom, while the Tremont village board is scheduled to act on its own prohibition Monday night.



Local News

Renovation work on Peoria Civic Center's glass arcade to start next week

Joe Deacon

, February 27, 2026

The two-phase construction to make structural improvements to the feature will start Monday, with work continuing through September.



State News

Durbin, Duckworth back Gilmore for U.S. Attorney for Central Illinois

Ben Howell

, February 27, 2026

With the strong support of U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth, the Senate Judiciary Committee advanced the nomination of Gregory Gilmore to be the U.S. Attorney for the Central District of Illinois.



State News

GOP Senate candidates make case for conservative replacement for Durbin

Jim Stahly Jr.

, February 26, 2026

Republicans Don Tracy, Casey Chlebek and Pamela Denise Long participated in a candidate forum broadcast Thursday on WTVP and presented by the League of Women Voters of Greater Peoria and the League of Women Voters of Illinois.



State News

Democrats vying to replace Durbin tout political achievements, bash Trump

Jim Stahly Jr.

, February 26, 2026

Democrats Robin Kelly, Raja Krishnamoorthi and Juliana Stratton participated in candidate forum broadcast Thursday on WTVP and presented by the League of Women Voters of Greater Peoria and the League of Women Voters of Illinois.



Local News

Tazewell County establishes position of director of court security

[Steve Stein](#)

, February 26, 2026

A new position in the Tazewell County Sheriff's Office – director of court security – has been created because of next year's opening of the county's Justice Center Annex.



[Local News](#)

Illinois Gaming Board approves revised facility redevelopment plan for Par-A-Dice casino

[Joe Deacon](#)

, February 26, 2026

The corporate owner of the Par-A-Dice Hotel Casino has received permission to move forward with its plan to redevelop the existing East Peoria site.



[Local News](#)

Peoria man convicted in 2021 murder sentenced to 50 years in prison

Joe Deacon

, February 25, 2026

A Peoria man found guilty of first-degree murder in a 2021 fatal shooting on the city's south side was sentenced Wednesday to 50 years in prison.



Local News

Peoria County preparing update of sustainability plan, requests public feedback

Joe Deacon

, February 25, 2026

Peoria County is working on the latest update to its internal Operational Sustainability Plan, and is offering an opportunity for the public to participate in the process.



Local News

Pekin gas stations can sell packaged liquor

Steve Stein

, February 25, 2026

Pekin gas stations have been given the opportunity to sell sell packaged liquor. The city council voted 5-1 this week to allow gas stations to apply for the requisite liquor license.



Local News

Peoria eyes incentive extension, tax increase for Westlake Shopping Center

Joe Deacon

, February 25, 2026

The proposed changes to the Westlake Special Service Area would extend its duration 15 years through 2055, and increase the area's supplemental sales tax rate by 0.25% to 1%.



State News

State Rep. Sharon Chung seeks compromise on insurance oversight

Evan Holden

, February 24, 2026

Bloomington state Rep. Sharon Chung has introduced a insurance bill that invites conversation and compromise between insurance companies and the state.



Local News

Peoria Housing Authority CEO resigns, while CFO dismissed with investigation underway

Joe Deacon

, February 24, 2026

Two key leadership positions at the Peoria Housing Authority are changing, amid the discovery of financial irregularities involving the authority's funds.



Local News

2 Pekin City Council members say they will vote against proposed data center

Steve Stein

, February 24, 2026

Pekin City Council members Dave Nutter and Jake Fletcher said Monday they will vote against the proposed data center in the city. There are seven council members, so two more "no" votes would kill the project.



Local News

Washington Police Department adds second deputy chief

February 20, 2026

The Washington Police Department will be adding to its command structure. The city council approved a recommendation from Chief Jeff Stevens to add a second deputy chief to his department's roster.



Local News

East Peoria approves spending \$1.7M on annual road maintenance

Joe Deacon

, February 19, 2026

The City of East Peoria is gearing up for this year's road maintenance effort with a \$1.7 million financial commitment.



State News

Central Illinois lawmakers react to governor's budget address

Evan Holden

, February 18, 2026

Democratic lawmakers mostly support the proposal, but have concerns about higher education funding. Republicans have concern about increases in taxes and increased spending.

LISTEN • 4:35



State News

Rep. Sorensen sees no end in sight to partial government shutdown

Lauren Warnecke

, February 18, 2026

Democrats are leveraging Department of Homeland Security funding to try and force reforms on Immigrations and Customs Enforcement. U.S. Rep. Eric Sorensen said Republicans need to come to the negotiating table.

LISTEN • 7:22



State News

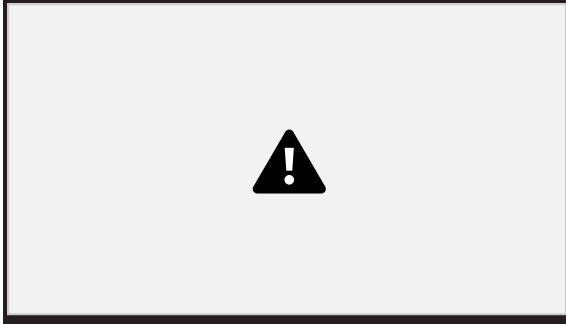
Sen. Durbin, Ray LaHood find common ground on perils, solutions to preserving democracy

Jim Stahly Jr.

, February 17, 2026

The two came together at Braden Auditorium at Illinois State University for a question-and-answer session moderated by WGLT's Charlie Schlenker, in the first of a series of Democracy Dialogues.

LISTEN • 8:15



State News

Illinois Republican senator pushes to outlaw abortion, loses leadership spots

Nikoel Hytrek

, February 17, 2026

Republican leaders called the proposal 'extreme' and said it is a no go



Local News

Peoria leaders reflect on impact, legacy of Jesse Jackson

Joe Deacon

, February 17, 2026

Leaders of Peoria's Black community remember Rev. Jesse Jackson as a trailblazer, an inspirational leader, and a champion of voting rights.



Local News

Good news for Washington High: City looks to replace troublesome water main

Steve Stein

, February 17, 2026

Replacing the water main under Bondurant Street that's broken six times in 10 years is on Washington's list of proposed projects. Bondurant is adjacent to Washington Community High School.



Local News

Peoria drops legal challenge to Par-A-Dice renovation plans

Joe Deacon

, February 16, 2026

The City of Peoria has decided to drop its lawsuit over the proposed \$160 million redevelopment of the Par-A-Dice Hotel Casino in East Peoria.



State News

Ranked choice voting stalled in Illinois, waiting for clarity from the courts

Evan Holden

, February 16, 2026

Illinois municipalities face confusion on whether the Illinois election code allows for the implementation of ranked choice voting. Illinois lawmakers introduced a bill that would clarify how local governments can implement ranked choice voting.

LISTEN • 4:43



Local News

Pekin, high school hammering out details of school bus office, parking lot lease

Steve Stein

, February 13, 2026

The city of Pekin's efforts to hand over school bus transportation operations to Pekin Community High School this summer hit a snag this week.



Local News

Ruffin granted pretrial release in second sexual misconduct case

Joe Deacon

, February 13, 2026

The former Peoria High School boys basketball coach facing multiple allegations of sexual misconduct with two female students has been granted pretrial release for a second time.



Local News

Proposal would give Peoria police access to Peoria School District's external cameras

Joe Deacon

, February 13, 2026

Under the proposal, Peoria Public Schools' outdoor cameras would be added to the police department's Axon Fusus camera integration platform in an effort to improve the response to any active emergencies or credible threats.



Local News

Tazewell County adds notary alerts to its property fraud protection services

Joe Deacon

, February 12, 2026

A new program available in Tazewell County offers a way to protect notaries from fraudulent use of their legal stamps. The Notary Fraud Alert system from Fidar Technologies is a free addition to the county's existing suite of property fraud protection services from the Iowa-based company.



Local News

Peoria City Council establishes 2 new TIF districts

Joe Deacon

, February 11, 2026

The city council approved the creation of two new TIF Districts on Tuesday, one focused on Northwoods Mall and the surrounding area and the other centered on the downtown Adams-Liberty block anchored by the city-owned PNC Bank Building.



Local News

Jury finds Peoria man guilty of killing 2 women

Joe Deacon

, February 10, 2026

A Peoria man was convicted Tuesday of killing his girlfriend and a neighbor in an August 2024 shooting in Peoria's El Vista neighborhood.



Local News

Opponent of proposed Pekin data center calls to 'shut it down'

Steve Stein

, February 10, 2026

There was no item on the Pekin City Council meeting agenda Monday concerning a proposed data center that would be built in the city, but opponents once again filled the meeting room.



State News

Illinois lawmakers not sure there's more higher ed money in a 'tricky' budget

Evan Holden

, February 10, 2026

Lawmakers have concerns about increasing higher education funding this year, with a tight budget. They are waiting for more information to decide on a change to the funding model.

LISTEN • 4:31



Local News

Proposed Pekin data center slips into Tazewell County Board candidate forum discussion

Steve Stein

, February 9, 2026

Three of the five Tazewell County Board candidates running in District 1 were asked a question about something that's outside the board's sphere of influence during a forum: the proposed data center in Pekin.



State News

Despite concerns, LaHood doesn't break with administration over vaccinations

[Charlie Schlenker](#)

, February 9, 2026

Congressman Darin LaHood is not breaking entirely with the Trump administration on the vaccine question – even while acknowledging he now has more than just concerns.

LISTEN • 7:37



State News

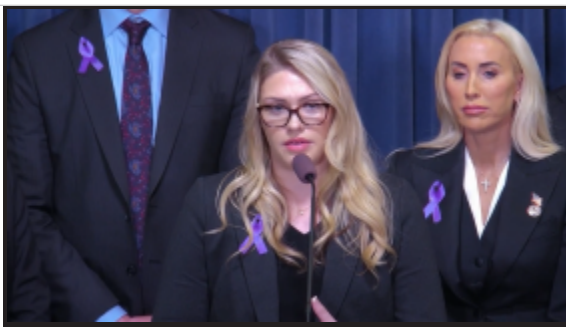
Rep. LaHood praises federal immigration policy

[Charlie Schlenker](#)

, February 6, 2026

U.S. Rep. Darin LaHood praised the Trump administration immigration policy and efforts to deport criminals, while expressing reservations about conduct toward children and warrantless searches.

LISTEN • 7:23



State News

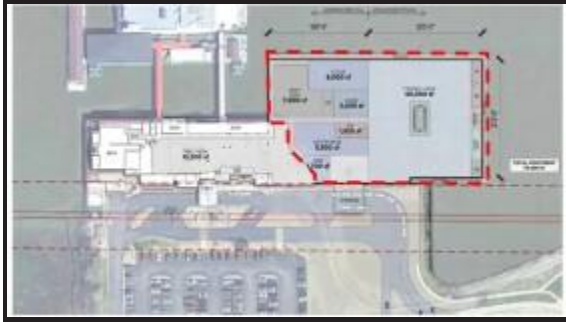
Illinois Senate Republicans introduce bills aimed at protecting victims of domestic violence

Evan Holden, Lauren Warnecke

, February 5, 2026

Illinois Senate Republicans introduced bills to protect victims of domestic violence by making it a felony to repeatedly violate orders of protection and give law enforcement the ability to detain violators for longer periods of time.

LISTEN • 4:26



Local News

Modified Par-A-Dice plan moves casino floor to a barge on the East Peoria side of the river

Joe Deacon

, February 5, 2026

Boyd Gaming shifted its plans for redevelopment of the Par-A-Dice casino site in East Peoria, moving the casino floor to a permanently moored barge on the Illinois River.



Local News

Suspect in shooting of Peoria deputy will remain in jail until trial

Joe Deacon

, February 4, 2026

The man charged with shooting a Peoria County Sheriff's deputy during a traffic stop will stay in jail until his trial begins.



Local News

Defendant sentenced to 28 years in deadly Facebook Marketplace robbery

Joe Deacon

, February 4, 2026

Sontarrius Williams, 29, received the maximum sentence under a plea agreement during Wednesday's sentencing hearing before Judge Sean Donahue.



Local News

Peoria takes battle over casino redevelopment plans to court

Joe Deacon

, February 4, 2026

The City of Peoria is heading to court with its effort to block a proposed \$160 million redevelopment of the Par-A-Dice Hotel Casino property in East Peoria.



Local News

New Washington city administrator opts to use own car for city business, saving the city money

Steve Stein

, February 3, 2026

Washington's new city administrator will drive his own car for city business instead of a vehicle the city was ready to provide for him. The change will benefit both Jeff Fiegenschuh and the city.



Local News

Split Peoria City Council rejects settlement with Par-A-Dice over \$160M redevelopment plan

Joe Deacon

, February 2, 2026

A possible agreement between the City of Peoria and the parent company of the Par-A-Dice Hotel Casino was voted down Monday, leaving the city open to contesting plans for a \$160 million overhaul of the existing riverboat gambling venue in East Peoria.



Local News

Tazewell County Board member resigns, adding another layer to a year of transition

Steve Stein

, February 2, 2026

A year of transition for the Tazewell County Board has become a bit more unsettled. Aaron Phillips, who was appointed to the board last year, resigned last month.



Local News

Peoria council calls special meeting to consider deal for casino redevelopment

Eric Stock

, January 31, 2026

The Peoria City Council has scheduled a special meeting for 6 p.m. Monday to consider a proposed agreement that would allow the city to collect additional gaming revenue from Nevada-based Boyd Gaming if the city drops its legal challenges against the redevelopment project.



Local News

Hospital campus improvements, data center among Pekin mayor's 'State of the City' topics

Steve Stein

, January 30, 2026

Pekin Mayor Mary Burress took time out from calling 2025 the city's breakout year in her "State of the City Address" to assure residents that a data center project is still in the exploratory stage.



Local News

Peoria OKs fire department's automatic aid pact with Peoria Heights

Joe Deacon

, January 29, 2026

An automatic aid agreement between the Peoria and Peoria Heights fire departments is now in place. Peoria Fire Chief Shawn Sollberger said the intergovernmental agreement will see city fire personnel respond to working structure fires, automobile extrications and cardiac arrest calls within the village.



State News

House rejects Sen. Tammy Duckworth's bid for independent ICE investigations

Eric Stock

, January 29, 2026

Duckworth said on NPR's Morning Edition she called for an independent investigation for any use of force by immigration agents in the spending bill. Her request was denied.



Local News

Pekin, not Tazewell County, will determine fate of Lutticken Farm data center project

Steve Stein

, January 29, 2026

Tazewell County Board members were told Wednesday that Pekin has the sole authority to make decisions about a proposed data center in the city.



Local News

Illinois American Water wants a rate hike. A consumer watchdog vows to fight it

Joe Deacon

, January 29, 2026

Illinois American Water is seeking a rate increase to pay for more than a half-billion dollars in planned infrastructure improvements. But a statewide consumer watchdog group calls the potential hike “outrageous” and vows to fight it.



Local News

Peoria police chief, mayor, residents decry ICE activities

Joe Deacon

, January 28, 2026

Peoria Mayor Rita Ali and Police Chief Eric Echevarria spoke strongly Tuesday against U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement activity that turned deadly in Minnesota as they sought to assure residents of the city's commitment to protect the public.



Local News

Peoria City Council OKs facility for parolees by one vote

Joe Deacon

, January 27, 2026

After two previous deferrals, a divided Peoria City Council voted to greenlight the proposal from GRO Community that will turn an empty building on the South Side into a 12-bedroom transitional residence for formerly incarcerated men.



Local News

Opponents speak out against proposed Pekin data center

Steve Stein

, January 27, 2026

Nearly 2,000 signatures on petitions opposing a proposed data center in Pekin were turned in Monday to the Pekin City Council.



State News

Rep. LaHood calls latest Minneapolis shooting 'deeply concerning' and demands local and state role in investigation

Ryan Denham

, January 25, 2026

The statement from Rep. Darin LaHood, a former federal prosecutor, appears to break from the Trump administration's claims about what happened — as well as its efforts to block state and local law enforcement from participating in the investigation.



Local News

Organizers launch Peoria-based Braver Angels chapter to 'disagree better' and ease political tension

Joe Deacon

, January 23, 2026

Members of both political parties from throughout Central Illinois are invited to participate in a new Peoria-based chapter of a national bipartisan organization that aims to ease growing tensions between Republicans and Democrats.



Local News

East Peoria gearing up to open new police station this summer

Joe Deacon

, January 22, 2026

With construction progressing on East Peoria's new \$21.5 million police station, the city is taking steps to make sure the facility is ready to go once it opens.



Local News

Washington new home construction in 2025 was the highest in a decade

Steve Stein

, January 22, 2026

Forty-one permits for new residential construction were issued by the city of Washington in 2025, the most since 90 were issued in 2015.



State News

Advocates cheer new Illinois law that seals non-violent convictions 3 years after completing a sentence

Evan Holden

, January 22, 2026

Gov. JB Pritzker signed a law that will automatically seal a person's non-violent criminal record three years after completing a sentence. When a felony conviction is sealed it will not show up on a background check that, removing restrictions on getting certain loans, jobs and buying or renting a home.



Local News

Washington shuts out the lights on a proposed digital billboard

Steve Stein

, January 21, 2026

A plan to place a digital billboard at a busy Washington intersection did not go over well with the city council, city staff, planning and zoning commission, or residents.



Local News

Former administrator arrested for felony theft of school funds from Spring Lake Elementary

Joe Deacon

, January 20, 2026

The former secretary and financial officer at Spring Lake Elementary School in Tazewell County is facing felony theft charges for allegedly using the school's financial accounts for personal gain while employed by the school.



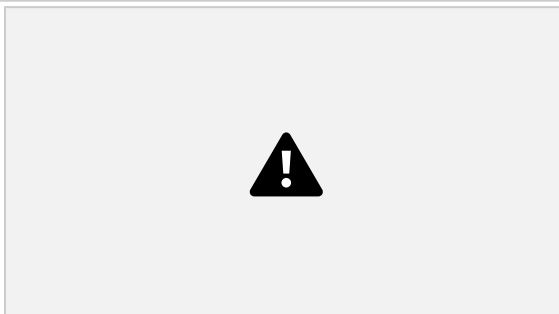
Local News

Peoria Park District gets \$600K state grant to upgrade Chartwell Park

Joe Deacon

, January 16, 2026

A state grant of more than \$500,000 will cover the Peoria Park District's expenses for a host of upgrades at Chartwell Park on the city's northwest side.



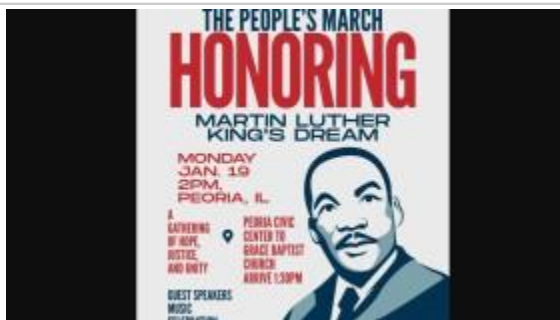
State News

Illinois 'Clean Slate' law allows automatic sealing of nonviolent criminal records

Maggie Dougherty

, January 16, 2026

Advocates say measure could affect 1.7M Illinoisians, allow people to reenter workforce



Local News

MLK Day observances include 'The People's March' in Peoria

Joe Deacon

, January 16, 2026

The Greater Peoria area is gearing up for events and observances in recognition of Martin Luther King Jr. Day on Monday. In Peoria, organizers have announced “The People’s March” from outside the Peoria Civic Center to Grace Baptist Church.



State News

GOP candidates for governor blast sanctuary cities and SAFE-T Act in Central Illinois forum

Charlie Schlenker

, January 16, 2026

The four Republican Party candidates for governor of Illinois told a Central Illinois audience Thursday evening they favor property tax caps, pension reform, ending Illinois' status as a "sanctuary state," and rolling back the SAFE-T criminal justice reform act which ended cash bail.

LISTEN • 7:29



Local News

Neighborhood House, Peoria Opportunities join forces on South Side rehab project

Joe Deacon

, January 15, 2026

A collaboration between Neighborhood House and the Peoria Opportunities Foundation will rehabilitate up to seven South Side residences for new homebuyers, with assistance from the Peoria City/County Health Department.



Local News

Illinois county clerks alert public to postal changes that could delay mail-in ballots

Joe Deacon

, January 15, 2026

Elections officers across Illinois are concerned delays in mail delivery could disrupt mail-in voting in upcoming elections.



Local News

Friends and colleagues reflect on George Jacob's impact in Peoria

Joe Deacon

, January 14, 2026

Rare, respected, sincere, dedicated. Just a few of the words used by some friends and colleagues in describing popular community leader and former Peoria City Council member George Jacob, 61, who died Sunday at his home.



Local News

Federal prison pays Pekin \$214K that was owed from the government shutdown

Steve Stein

, January 14, 2026

The recent federal government shutdown caused the Federal Correctional Institution in Pekin to fall behind on its payments to Pekin for city services. That was resolved this week when the city council approved a contract with the prison.



Local News

Peoria City Council approves 3-year contract with union firefighters

Joe Deacon

, January 13, 2026

The Peoria City Council approved the new collective bargaining agreement during its first regular meeting of the calendar year. Members of Peoria Firefighters Local 50 previously ratified the agreement on Jan. 6.



State News

Pritzker doubles down on insurance industry regulation, would revisit cashless bail and higher ed funding

Lauren Warnecke

, January 13, 2026

During a visit to Bloomington-Normal on Tuesday, Gov. JB Pritzker said he supports changing how state colleges and universities are funded, but wouldn't commit to releasing discretionary funds held back last fall.



Local News

Pekin City Council taking a look at town hall meetings

Steve Stein

, January 13, 2026

Does Pekin need a policy on what constitutes a town hall meeting and what rules would need to be followed? City council members are examining a policy suggested by city staff.



Local News

Peoria Fire Department gets \$3M in federal funding to boost staffing

Joe Deacon

, January 13, 2026

The Peoria Fire Department has been awarded more than \$3 million in federal funding to cover costs of adding more firefighters, boosting its emergency response capabilities.



Local News

Washington has concerns about proposed billboard location

Steve Stein

, January 9, 2026

Should a large billboard be allowed in a busy Washington intersection? The city worries about "potential detrimental impacts."



Local News

Peoria County sheriff urges Gov. Pritzker to revisit cashless bail

Ben Howell

, January 9, 2026

Sheriff Chris Watkins released updated jail data, which shows an uptick in nonviolent, nondetainable offenses and an increase in missed court appearances.



State News

Pritzker signs major energy reform bill amid projected shortages

Maggie Dougherty

, January 8, 2026

The Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability Act incentivizes battery storage among other measures aimed at bolstering grid reliability.



Local News

Ceremony marks opening of Peoria Public Schools' practice dome at Peoria Stadium

[Joe Deacon](#)

, January 8, 2026

A ribbon-cutting ceremony Thursday morning held in conjunction with the Peoria Public Schools Foundation's annual breakfast fundraiser marked the final step ahead of the \$12.3 million dome's opening.



State News

Rep. Sorensen says he's willing to bargain on health care subsidies: 'Something is better than nothing'

[Eric Stock](#)

, January 7, 2026

U. S. Rep. Eric Sorensen, a Democrat from Moline, said he's willing to consider some limits or cost controls that would help the plan pass in the Senate, where 60 votes are required for passage.

LISTEN • 4:23



Local News

Peoria wants to know problem spots ahead of pedestrian accessibility upgrades

Lauren Warnecke

, January 6, 2026

A survey asking for feedback about pedestrian problem spots and priorities is available on the city's website through Feb. 9.



State News

Health care data breach affects over 600,000 patients, Illinois agency says

Kade Heather

, January 6, 2026

Information such as addresses and case numbers were publicly viewable for around 32,000 customers with the Illinois Department of Human Services' division of rehabilitation services and another 670,000 Medicaid and Medicare Savings Program recipients, the agency said.



State News

Illinois political leaders react to U.S. capture of Venezuela's president

Eric Stock, Lauren Warnecke

, January 3, 2026

Republican U.S. Rep. Darin LaHood is praising the U.S. military operations in Venezuela, which included the capture of its president Nicolás Maduro and his wife. Democratic U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth, a former combat veteran, calls the Trump administration's actions unconstitutional.

Public Safety



Courtesy

/

Peoria County Sheriff's Office

Peoria County Sheriff's Office gains its own access to national ballistics network

[Joe Deacon](#)

, March 31, 2026

The Peoria County Sheriff's Office now has its own equipment to use updated technology for testing evidence in shooting investigations.



Immigration Project grapples with reduction of accredited legal program for immigrant families

March 30, 2026



Peoria man receives 25-year sentence for fatal downtown shooting

March 30, 2026



Riggenbach hopes to apply 'Next Gen' lessons to Peoria-area housing initiatives

March 27, 2026



Local News

Center for Prevention of Abuse breaks ground on new Pekin shelter

Joe Deacon

, March 27, 2026

Construction is about to begin on the Center for Prevention of Abuse's new emergency domestic violence shelter in Pekin. The nonprofit social services organization held a groundbreaking for a rebuilt Carol House of Hope on a 1.8-acre property on 2nd Street acquired from the City of Pekin two years ago.



Environment & Sustainability

Tri-County area under watch for severe storms

Joe Deacon

, March 26, 2026

The National Weather Service has issued a severe thunderstorm watch until 11 p.m. that includes Peoria, Tazewell and Woodford counties.



Local News

Coming soon to the Tazewell County Courthouse: Medal of Honor monument, new flag pole

Steve Stein

, March 26, 2026

A monument and a new flag pole will soon grace the grounds of the Tazewell County Courthouse. The monument honors the county's Medal of Honor recipients: John Ayers, Thomas Murphy and William Reed.



Local News

Elderly Bartonville man dies after being struck by a vehicle

Joe Deacon

, March 26, 2026

A 90-year-old Bartonville man died Tuesday after being struck by a vehicle near Bartonville Grade School.



Local News

Pekin, firefighters union agree on new 5-year contract

Steve Stein

, March 26, 2026

The City of Pekin and its 54-member firefighters union have agreed on a new five-year contract. The Pekin City Council approved the contract Monday. Union ratification is expected this week.



Local News

Peoria OKs extension, tax rate change for Westlake Shopping Center

Joe Deacon

, March 25, 2026

Improvements, upgrades and new retail tenants are coming to the Westlake Shopping Center after the Peoria City Council approved changes to the property's business development incentive.



Local News

Peoria Park District dedicates artist's new Bradley Park sculpture honoring Indigenous heritage

Joe Deacon

, March 20, 2026

Peoria Park District representatives joined acclaimed Peoria artist Preston Jackson and other community members Friday at a dedication ceremony for his artwork entitled, "Never Extinct: A Pictorial History of Indigenous People."



Local News

Doggone it: Washington needs to buy a new police canine vehicle

Steve Stein

, March 19, 2026

Catastrophic engine failure has taken the Washington Police Department's current canine vehicle out of commission, perhaps forever. The Washington City Council came to the rescue this week.



Local News

Harwood touts accreditation for Peoria County Coroner's Office

Joe Deacon

, March 19, 2026

Peoria County Coroner Jamie Harwood views a recent accreditation as a testament to his office's level of service and commitment to residents.



State News

Central Illinois lawmaker joins calls to reform the Pretrial Fairness Act when it comes to domestic violence

Evan Holden, Lauren Warnecke

, March 19, 2026

Republican state Rep. Dennis Tipsword wants to reform the Pretrial Fairness Act by changing the burden of proof from the prosecutor to the defendant. Domestic violence advocacy organizations want to focus more on the implementation of the law instead of changing it.

LISTEN • 4:28



Local News

Q&A: Peoria County state's attorney touts juvenile justice efforts highlighted in annual report

Joe Deacon

, March 19, 2026

Peoria County State's Attorney Jodi Hoos talks with WCBU about progress reflected in her office's first annual report, covering topics including juvenile justice and violent crime.

LISTEN • 4:29



Local News

East Peoria on track to adopt nearly \$80M budget for next fiscal year

Joe Deacon

, March 17, 2026

The city council on Monday unanimously approved a first reading of the spending plan that projects revenue at \$76.9 million and expenses at slightly more than \$79 million.



Local News

Pekin, high school agree to lease terms for city's bus facility

Steve Stein

, March 13, 2026

The transfer of Pekin Community High School bus transportation services from the City of Pekin to District 303 is back on track.



State News

Illinois Republican lawmakers look to stiffen penalties for child sex crimes

Evan Holden

, March 13, 2026

Illinois Republican lawmakers introduced bills stiffening penalties for charges related to child sex trafficking, including prohibiting plea deals and increasing prison time.



Local News

Peoria man handed 99-year sentence for killing his girlfriend

Joe Deacon

, March 13, 2026

A Peoria man convicted of killing his girlfriend at a Peoria apartment complex last year was sentenced Friday to a total of 99 years in prison.



Local News

2nd person dies following head-on collision in North Peoria

Ben Howell

, March 13, 2026

Two people are dead and two others, including an infant, were injured after a crash on North Allen Road and West Altorfer Drive. The Peoria Fire Department said a mid-size sedan and an SUV had a head-on collision.



Local News

Peoria Police arrest suspect in fatal West Bluff stabbing

Joe Deacon

, March 12, 2026

A suspect has been arrested for first-degree murder in connection with a fatal stabbing last week in Peoria's West Bluff neighborhood.



Local News

Last defendant sentenced in fatal Facebook Marketplace robbery

Joe Deacon

, March 12, 2026

A 20-year-old Peoria man will spend 15 years in prison for his role in a 2024 attempted robbery arranged through Facebook Marketplace that resulted in the death of one accomplice.



Local News

Coroner IDs victim in rural East Peoria house fire

Ryan Denham

, March 11, 2026

Authorities have identified the 65-year-old who was found dead after a house fire in rural East Peoria this week.



Local News

Coroner: Woman dead after driveway accident with her vehicle in Pekin

Ryan Denham

, March 11, 2026

An 82-year-old woman is dead after an accident with her vehicle in her driveway in Pekin, authorities said.



Local News

One person killed in apartment fire near Washington

Joe Deacon

, March 9, 2026

One person is dead following an apartment fire early Monday morning northwest of Washington.



Local News

Man's fatal stabbing marks Peoria's first homicide of 2026

Joe Deacon

, March 6, 2026

A 35-year-old man is dead following a stabbing Thursday night in Peoria's West Bluff neighborhood.



Local News

Peoria County Sheriff's Office gets \$50K to buy new AEDs

Joe Deacon

, March 6, 2026

The Peoria County Sheriff's Office is getting 45 new automated external defibrillators, or AEDs, thanks to a grant of nearly \$53,000 from the Gary Sinise Foundation.



Local News

Q&A: Peoria City Manager Urich discusses plans for PNC Bank Building, end of battle over casino location

Joe Deacon

, March 5, 2026

Peoria City Manager Patrick Urich talks with WCBU about a range of topics, including the planned redevelopment of the PNC Bank Building and the end of the city's quest for a land-based casino.

LISTEN • 10:44



Local News

2 former Washington police officers of the year promoted to deputy chief

Steve Stein

, March 4, 2026

The Washington Police Department's new deputy chiefs were sworn in this week. Steve Smith and Brian Simpson are only the third and fourth people to hold the position since it was created in 2007.



Local News

PHA clarifies details around leadership changes, emphasizes transparency and accountability

March 3, 2026

The Peoria Housing Authority's interim head and board chairman both sought to ease concerns surrounding the agency's recent leadership transition that has included a criminal investigation.



Local News

Flashing beacons will help pedestrians navigate troublesome Washington intersection

[Steve Stein](#)

, March 3, 2026

An intersection on one of Washington's busiest roads will be made safer for pedestrians. City council on Monday approved the installation of flashing beacons at Dallas Road and Westminster Drive.



[Local News](#)

[Push to ban kratom on local levels expands in Greater Peoria](#)

[Joe Deacon](#)

, March 2, 2026

Peoria Heights recently became the first municipality in Peoria County to enact a ban on the sale of kratom, while the Tremont village board is scheduled to act on its own prohibition Monday night.



[Local News](#)

Peoria man convicted in 2021 murder sentenced to 50 years in prison

Joe Deacon

, February 25, 2026

A Peoria man found guilty of first-degree murder in a 2021 fatal shooting on the city's south side was sentenced Wednesday to 50 years in prison.



Local News

Peoria eyes incentive extension, tax increase for Westlake Shopping Center

Joe Deacon

, February 25, 2026

The proposed changes to the Westlake Special Service Area would extend its duration 15 years through 2055, and increase the area's supplemental sales tax rate by 0.25% to 1%.



Local News

Deceased victim found inside burned vehicle in Tazewell County

Joe Deacon

, February 25, 2026

Tazewell County authorities are investigating a fatal traffic crash Tuesday in a rural area north of Manito.



Local News

Peoria Housing Authority CEO resigns, while CFO dismissed with investigation underway

Joe Deacon

, February 24, 2026

Two key leadership positions at the Peoria Housing Authority are changing, amid the discovery of financial irregularities involving the authority's funds.



Local News

Washington Police Department adds second deputy chief

February 20, 2026

The Washington Police Department will be adding to its command structure. The city council approved a recommendation from Chief Jeff Stevens to add a second deputy chief to his department's roster.



Local News

East Peoria approves spending \$1.7M on annual road maintenance

Joe Deacon

, February 19, 2026

The City of East Peoria is gearing up for this year's road maintenance effort with a \$1.7 million financial commitment.



Local News

After police chase, 6 people arrested for allegedly targeting students at Peoria high schools

Joe Deacon

, February 17, 2026

Peoria Police said an early morning traffic pursuit Tuesday involved individuals in a stolen vehicle who had been attempting to run over students in the parking lots at both Richwoods and Peoria high schools.



Local News

Good news for Washington High: City looks to replace troublesome water main

Steve Stein

, February 17, 2026

Replacing the water main under Bondurant Street that's broken six times in 10 years is on Washington's list of proposed projects. Bondurant is adjacent to Washington Community High School.



Local News

Ruffin granted pretrial release in second sexual misconduct case

Joe Deacon

, February 13, 2026

The former Peoria High School boys basketball coach facing multiple allegations of sexual misconduct with two female students has been granted pretrial release for a second time.



Local News

Proposal would give Peoria police access to Peoria School District's external cameras

Joe Deacon

, February 13, 2026

Under the proposal, Peoria Public Schools' outdoor cameras would be added to the police department's Axon Fusus camera integration platform in an effort to improve the response to any active emergencies or credible threats.



Local News

Tazewell County adds notary alerts to its property fraud protection services

Joe Deacon

, February 12, 2026

A new program available in Tazewell County offers a way to protect notaries from fraudulent use of their legal stamps. The Notary Fraud Alert system from Fidler Technologies is a free addition to the county's existing suite of property fraud protection services from the Iowa-based company.



Local News

Richwoods girls basketball coach Ronald Ruffin resigns amid alleged inappropriate conduct

Joe Deacon, Steve Stein

, February 11, 2026

An assistant girls basketball coach at Richwoods High School in Peoria has left his position following a social media post alleging inappropriate conduct.



Local News

Jury finds Peoria man guilty of killing 2 women

Joe Deacon

, February 10, 2026

A Peoria man was convicted Tuesday of killing his girlfriend and a neighbor in an August 2024 shooting in Peoria's El Vista neighborhood.



Local News

Suspended Peoria coach Ruffin facing additional sexual misconduct charges

Joe Deacon

, February 10, 2026

Suspended Peoria High School varsity boys basketball coach Daniel Ruffin is back in custody and facing additional sexual misconduct charges after a second victim contacted police.



Local News

Peoria woman gets 45-year prison sentence in fatal stabbing

Joe Deacon

, February 6, 2026

A Peoria woman convicted of first-degree murder for a 2023 fatal stabbing at a Western Avenue gas station will spend 45 years in prison.



Local News

Suspect in shooting of Peoria deputy will remain in jail until trial

Joe Deacon

, February 4, 2026

The man charged with shooting a Peoria County Sheriff's deputy during a traffic stop will stay in jail until his trial begins.



Local News

Defendant sentenced to 28 years in deadly Facebook Marketplace robbery

Joe Deacon

, February 4, 2026

Sontarrius Williams, 29, received the maximum sentence under a plea agreement during Wednesday's sentencing hearing before Judge Sean Donahue.



Local News

Basketball coach faces 2 felony charges after teen solicitation arrest

Joe Deacon

, February 4, 2026

Peoria High School boys basketball coach Daniel Ruffin faces two felony charges following his arrest Monday for alleged solicitation of a female student.



Local News

Peoria High School basketball coach arrested on teen solicitation charge

Ben Howell

, February 3, 2026

Daniel C. Ruffin, the head boys basketball coach at Peoria High, was arrested Monday morning. The Peoria Police Department said officers discovered text messages between the 41-year-old school employee and a 16-year-old female student.



Local News

Peoria County Sheriff's Office names deputy wounded in shooting

Joe Deacon

, February 2, 2026

The Peoria County Sheriff's deputy who was shot during a traffic stop Saturday has been identified as Jack Evans.



Local News

Peoria County Sheriff's deputy is stable after being shot; suspect arrested

Eric Stock

, February 1, 2026

The Peoria County Sheriff's Office reports one of its deputies was shot several times during a traffic stop Saturday night and is hospitalized with serious injuries.



State News

Lutheran Church leader arrested for allegedly producing child pornography

Lauren Warnecke

, January 30, 2026

Michael Mohr, 54, leads the Central Illinois region of the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church. Authorities allege he filmed three juveniles using hidden cameras.



Local News

Peoria OKs fire department's automatic aid pact with Peoria Heights

Joe Deacon

, January 29, 2026

An automatic aid agreement between the Peoria and Peoria Heights fire departments is now in place. Peoria Fire Chief Shawn Sollberger said the

intergovernmental agreement will see city fire personnel respond to working structure fires, automobile extrications and cardiac arrest calls within the village.



Local News

Pekin, not Tazewell County, will determine fate of Lutticken Farm data center project

Steve Stein

, January 29, 2026

Tazewell County Board members were told Wednesday that Pekin has the sole authority to make decisions about a proposed data center in the city.



State News

Driver dies in I-39 crash with a semi near El Paso

Eric Stock

, January 29, 2026

Woodford County Sheriff Chief Deputy Dennis Tipsword said deputies were called to the southbound lanes of Interstate 39 just north of El Paso around 12:05 p.m. for the two-vehicle crash.



Local News

Peoria police chief, mayor, residents decry ICE activities

Joe Deacon

, January 28, 2026

Peoria Mayor Rita Ali and Police Chief Eric Echevarria spoke strongly Tuesday against U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement activity that turned deadly in Minnesota as they sought to assure residents of the city's commitment to protect the public.



Local News

Peoria County Sheriff's Office investigating shooting that left one dead, one hospitalized

Eric Stock

, January 28, 2026

Peoria County Sheriff Chris Watkins said an adult male was found with at least one gunshot wound. He died at a Peoria hospital. A woman with a gunshot wound to her leg was transported to the hospital with injuries not considered life threatening.



Local News

Peoria City Council OKs facility for parolees by one vote

Joe Deacon

, January 27, 2026

After two previous deferrals, a divided Peoria City Council voted to greenlight the proposal from GRO Community that will turn an empty building on the South Side into a 12-bedroom transitional residence for formerly incarcerated men.



Local News

Opponents speak out against proposed Pekin data center

Steve Stein

, January 27, 2026

Nearly 2,000 signatures on petitions opposing a proposed data center in Pekin were turned in Monday to the Pekin City Council.



Local News

CFPA gets \$2M from Howard G. Buffett Foundation to bolster human trafficking prevention

Joe Deacon

, January 26, 2026

A grant of almost \$2 million will help the Center for Prevention of Abuse enhance its services for victims of human trafficking.



Local News

East Peoria gearing up to open new police station this summer

Joe Deacon

, January 22, 2026

With construction progressing on East Peoria's new \$21.5 million police station, the city is taking steps to make sure the facility is ready to go once it opens.



Local News

Washington new home construction in 2025 was the highest in a decade

Steve Stein

, January 22, 2026

Forty-one permits for new residential construction were issued by the city of Washington in 2025, the most since 90 were issued in 2015.



State News

Retiring U.S. Marshal Brendan Heffner laments loss of 'warrior mindset' in law enforcement

Eric Stock

, January 22, 2026

Brendan Heffner said he's concerned that many in law enforcement have lost what he calls the "warrior mindset" and it's putting officers and the public at risk.

LISTEN • 7:35



State News

Advocates cheer new Illinois law that seals non-violent convictions 3 years after completing a sentence

[Evan Holden](#)

, January 22, 2026

Gov. JB Pritzker signed a law that will automatically seal a person's non-violent criminal record three years after completing a sentence. When a felony conviction is sealed it will not show up on a background check that, removing restrictions on getting certain loans, jobs and buying or renting a home.



Local News

Washington shuts out the lights on a proposed digital billboard

[Steve Stein](#)

, January 21, 2026

A plan to place a digital billboard at a busy Washington intersection did not go over well with the city council, city staff, planning and zoning commission, or residents.



Local News

62-year-old dead after 2nd fatal fire near Chillicothe in the past week

Ryan Denham

, January 20, 2026

A 62-year-old man is dead after a house fire Tuesday on Old Galena Road near Chillicothe. It's the second fatal fire in the area in the past week.



Local News

Former administrator arrested for felony theft of school funds from Spring Lake Elementary

Joe Deacon

, January 20, 2026

The former secretary and financial officer at Spring Lake Elementary School in Tazewell County is facing felony theft charges for allegedly using the school's financial accounts for personal gain while employed by the school.



Local News

Pedestrian dead after being hit by pickup along Washington Road

Ryan Denham

, January 17, 2026

The incident happened around 5:50 p.m. Friday in the 2300 block of Washington Road between Meadow Lane and Briargate Road, near city limits between East Peoria and Washington.



Local News

Peoria Park District gets \$600K state grant to upgrade Chartwell Park

Joe Deacon

, January 16, 2026

A state grant of more than \$500,000 will cover the Peoria Park District's expenses for a host of upgrades at Chartwell Park on the city's northwest side.



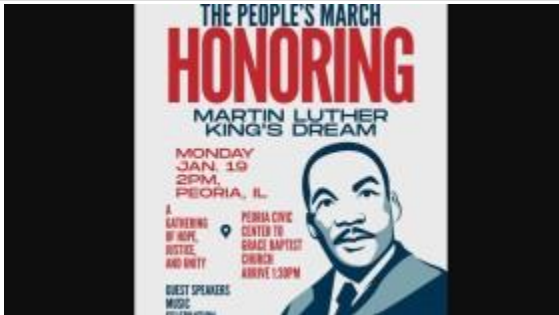
State News

Illinois 'Clean Slate' law allows automatic sealing of nonviolent criminal records

Maggie Dougherty

, January 16, 2026

Advocates say measure could affect 1.7M Illinoisians, allow people to reenter workforce



Local News

MLK Day observances include 'The People's March' in Peoria

Joe Deacon

, January 16, 2026

The Greater Peoria area is gearing up for events and observances in recognition of Martin Luther King Jr. Day on Monday. In Peoria, organizers have announced

“The People’s March” from outside the Peoria Civic Center to Grace Baptist Church.



Local News

Neighborhood House, Peoria Opportunities join forces on South Side rehab project

Joe Deacon

, January 15, 2026

A collaboration between Neighborhood House and the Peoria Opportunities Foundation will rehabilitate up to seven South Side residences for new homebuyers, with assistance from the Peoria City/County Health Department.



Local News

8-month-old infant dies in Chillicothe mobile home fire

Eric Stock

, January 14, 2026

Deputies said they were unable to get in the home at first due to heavy smoke and fire conditions. They said the mother and two juveniles were outside the mobile home. The mother told authorities her infant child remained inside and that she couldn't reach her.



Local News

Federal prison pays Pekin \$214K that was owed from the government shutdown

Steve Stein

, January 14, 2026

The recent federal government shutdown caused the Federal Correctional Institution in Pekin to fall behind on its payments to Pekin for city services. That was resolved this week when the city council approved a contract with the prison.



Local News

Elevated lead levels again found in some Peoria water system samples

Joe Deacon

, January 14, 2026

Illinois American Water is again notifying customers that test samples from some homes and businesses in the Peoria District water system show elevated levels of lead.



Local News

Peoria City Council approves 3-year contract with union firefighters

Joe Deacon

, January 13, 2026

The Peoria City Council approved the new collective bargaining agreement during its first regular meeting of the calendar year. Members of Peoria Firefighters Local 50 previously ratified the agreement on Jan. 6.



Local News

Peoria Fire Department gets \$3M in federal funding to boost staffing

Joe Deacon

, January 13, 2026

The Peoria Fire Department has been awarded more than \$3 million in federal funding to cover costs of adding more firefighters, boosting its emergency response capabilities.



Local News

Minneapolis ICE shooter lived in Peoria, graduated from Richwoods

Lauren Warnecke, Ryan Denham, Eric Stock, Steve Stein

, January 9, 2026

The ICE agent who shot and killed a woman in Minnesota this week is a 2001 Peoria Richwoods graduate, WCBU has learned through an examination of school and court records.



Local News

Peoria man found guilty in 2025 shooting death at Grove Apartments

Lauren Warnecke

, January 6, 2026

Derreck S. Hall, 46, was found guilty of first-degree murder and unlawful possession of a weapon in connection with the shooting death of Latrista Warfield, 37, a year ago.
