

Local News

Bloomington's Gina LaMonica has 'upcycled curiosities' on view at the Sugar Creek Arts Festival

Lauren Warnecke

, September 30, 2026

More than 100 artist/vendors are participating in this year's juried art fair, which takes over Uptown Normal one weekend a year.

Listen • 4:46



Local News

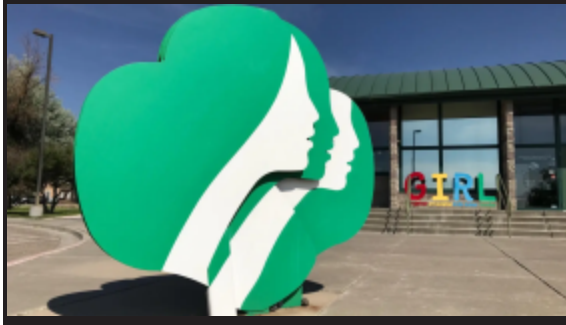
Sharing history: Normal names Terri Ryburn its 2026 Citizen of the Year

Ben Howell

, September 29, 2026

Mayor Chris Koos honored Terri Ryburn as the Town of Normal's Citizen of the Year at a reception on Tuesday. Ryburn is retiring in December as caretaker of the historic Sprague's Super Service on Pine Street.

Listen • 7:34



Local News

Historian says Girl Scouts must reckon with its 'difficult history'

Courtney Conroy

, September 29, 2026

Amy Erdman Farrell will discuss her award-winning book Oct. 5 at Illinois Wesleyan University.



Local News

Prairie Pride Coalition to host LGBTQ Legacy Wall in Bloomington for most of October

Lauren Warnecke, Cole Loiacano

, September 29, 2026

October is LGBTQ+ History Month. To celebrate, Prairie Pride Coalition is bringing a traveling exhibit which highlights 125 queer icons in an interactive digital display.



Local News

Sculpture park at One Normal Plaza a more pleasant place to play

Lauren Warnecke

, September 24, 2026

The garden unveiled a new addition this week: a bronze cast sculpture by Bloomington's Herb Eaton that nods to the Twin Cities' circus roots.



Local News

Art exhibit at University Galleries urges radical slowness in making and watching stop-motion films

[Lauren Warnecke](#)

, September 22, 2026

Mixed-media artist Selina Trepp has her first solo exhibition at University Galleries in Uptown. Running through Oct. 3, 'Unprofessional Practices' features two short films created through stop-motion animation.

Listen • 4:56



[Local News](#)

Joe Stamm unveils new music Friday night at the Castle

[Lauren Warnecke](#), [Cole Loiacano](#)

, September 18, 2026

The singer/songwriter from Metamora has a new EP called More Than Just Bones, part of his deepening collaboration with Charles Wesley Godwin of Pittsburgh-based band The Allegheny High.



[Local News](#)

For 30 years, 'the newspaper that wouldn't die' spoke truth to power in Bloomington-Normal

Cole Loiacano, Lauren Warnecke

, September 17, 2026

Bloomington-Normal was home to the oldest and longest continuously running underground newspaper in United States history. The paper, called Post Amerikan, ran from 1972-2004 and is now the subject of a feature length documentary screening Friday at the Normal Theater.

Listen • 4:32



Local News

Wartime deportation of Japanese from Peru to the U.S. led to questions of belonging

Charlie Schlenker

, September 15, 2026

This is a story of families torn apart during war and never reunited. It's a story of cultural identity and how that first disruption echoes into the present day. The internment of Japanese Americans during World War II is a well-known story. Little known is the deportation of people of Japanese descent from Central and South American countries to U.S. camps.

Listen • 7:39



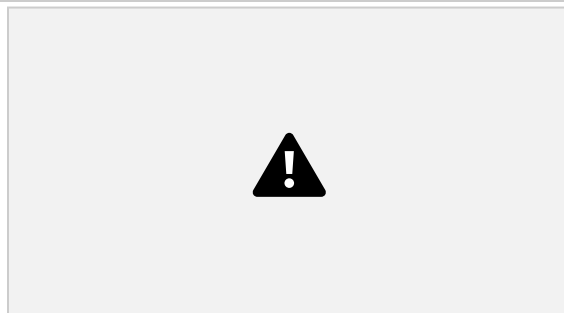
Local News

ISU educator, advocate and activist Bob Sutherland dies at age 88

Ben Howell, Eric Stock

, September 11, 2026

Bob Sutherland died Thursday morning at the age of 88. Family and friends are remembering him as a staunch advocate for civil rights and steward of the county's Jail Review Committee.



Local News

Community Players is finally ready for 'Angels in America'

Lauren Warnecke

, September 10, 2026

The century-old troupe performed golden age musicals the year Tony Kushner wrote his two-part masterpiece set at the height of the AIDS epidemic. Community Players says there's no time like the present for its debut production.

Listen • 4:53



Local News

Recalling David Foster Wallace's iconic essay on the 25th anniversary of Sept. 11

Jamie Hand

, September 10, 2026

As the nation marks the 25th anniversary of the attacks on Sept. 11, Bloomington-Normal literary enthusiasts are also marking 25 years of David Foster Wallace's essay, The View From Mrs. Thompson's.

Listen • 4:26



Local News

New fitness court aims to keep LeRoy moving

[Cole Loiacano](#)

, September 9, 2026

The fitness court was developed to expand free access to workouts and create equitable access to exercise for communities. LeRoy alderwoman Kelly Lay was a key part of developing the park.



Local News

El Paso burial site of first Black man to vote in Illinois confirmed 121 years after his death

[Lizzie Seils](#)

, September 8, 2026

Several volunteers and local history buffs gathered around David Strother's 1954 headstone to find out for certain if he and his family lay underneath.

Listen • 4:14



Local News

Supersized sculptures and crinkle-cut fries: How ISU's John Miller turns glass into pop art

Lou Warner

, September 2, 2026

WGLT's Maker to Maker series continues with artist John Miller, who turns molten glass into a vibrant, 1950s diner-inspired pop-art world. Step inside his studio to learn how rigorous safety, classical training, and a sense of humor drive his massive glass creations.

Listen • 15:17



Local News

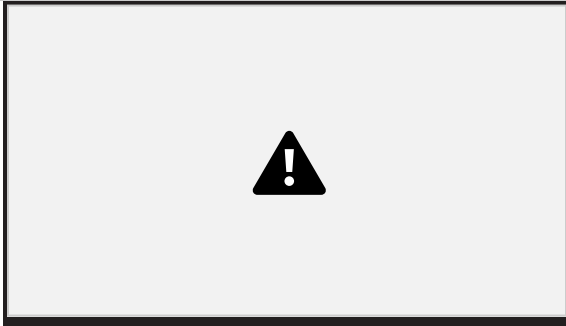
North Danvers Mennonite Church celebrates 175 years of faith through service

[Lauren Warnecke, Cole Loiacano](#)

, September 1, 2026

The North Danvers Mennonite Church is celebrating its 175th birthday, making it only 20 years younger than the county it stands in. The church still operates as usual, hosting Sunday services, celebrating holidays and sending members out for disaster relief.

Listen • 4:06



Local News

Route 66 Centennial boosts McLean County visitor count and sets stage for tourism growth

[Charlie Schlenker](#)

, August 31, 2026

Bloomington-Normal tourism officials said the Route 66 centennial celebrations have increased out-of-town visits to McLean County by 3% compared to year-to-date figures from last year.

Listen • 7:43



Local News

Hot air balloons primed to take flight in Lincoln's signature Balloons Over 66 festival

Lauren Warnecke

, August 27, 2026

The City of Lincoln's biggest event of the year faced a major hurdle, leaving stakeholders scrambling to ensure Balloons Over 66 would indeed have balloons. Mayor Tracy Welch says it just proved how important ballooning is to the community.

Listen • 4:40



Local News

Bloomington Public Library staff imagine possibilities with new Library of Things collection

[Michele Steinbacher, Avery Rawlings](#)

, August 27, 2026

The Bloomington Public Library is launching its latest collection, dubbed the Library of Things. From 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, BPL invites the community to come test-drive some of the more than 80 objects in the collection. Starting next week, patrons can borrow any of the items for up to a week at a time.

Listen • 4:36



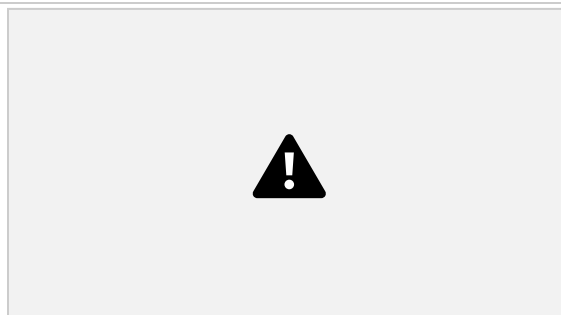
Local News

How Dolly Parton brought art and accessibility to McLean County

[Ben Howell, Eric Stock](#)

, August 25, 2026

The Dolly Parton's Imagination Library program has helped bring free books to 3,800 kids in McLean County since 2023. Dolly Parton, founder of the program and a prominent pop culture icon, died Tuesday at age 80.



Local News

Nonprofit completes renovation of old McLean water tower

Ben Howell, Lauren Warnecke

, August 24, 2026

Jeff Hake, director at CORE of McLean, said the tower includes every marker of the village, including the Dixie truck stop and a biking path.



Local News

Harmonious governance doesn't last in Heartland Theatre's 'Eureka Day'

Lauren Warnecke

, August 20, 2026

A fictional private school gets a wake-up call when a mumps outbreak challenges its consensus-based model. The play opens Heartland Theatre's 2026-27 season next week.

Listen • 4:45



Local News

Normal debuts public sculpture park, recommits to public art

Jamie Hand

, August 17, 2026

The sculpture park at One Town Plaza has been in progress for two years and features four art installations.



Local News

Prairie Fire and Studio Connect's 'Joseph' brings together studios, creatives and audiences

Lauren Fischer, Avery Rawlings

, August 13, 2026

Prairie Fire Theatre is collaborating with Music Connections Foundation for their summer production of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.

Listen • 4:53



Local News

Pakistan Day welcomes all of Central Illinois to a celebration of Pakistani culture and heritage

Ben Howell

, August 11, 2026

WGLT talks to Faisal Rashid from Bloomington, organizer of Central Illinois' first local celebration of Pakistan Day. It's set for Aug. 23 in Mahomet.



Local News

McLean County Arts Center reopens following a flea-induced temporary closing

Zachary Knox-Doyle

, August 7, 2026

The arts center's flea infestation is a "speed bump" in the nonprofit's goal of serving the community.

Listen • 8:15



Local News

Fight knight: Armored Medieval Martial Arts coming to Grossinger Motors Arena

Lizzie Seils

, August 6, 2026

Armored Medieval Martial Arts combines cage fighting with armored combat.

The competitors seem ripped from the Middle Ages, donning gambesons, gauntlets, greaves and helms before stepping into the ring. The blades are dulled.

Listen • 4:34



Local News

Music community mourns loss of Twin City producer Erik Nelson

Eric Stock, Lauren Warnecke, Braden Fogerson

, August 4, 2026

Erik Nelson was a music producer at Eclipse Studios at 404 Northtown Rd. in north Normal and previously owned Sinewave Studios in Bloomington. Nelson died of cancer on Sunday at age 57.



Local News

'American Pickers' wants to see Bloomington-Normal's stuff

Lauren Warnecke

, August 3, 2026

The History Channel show sifting through collectors' homes and garages is coming to Illinois and in search of places to film.



Local News

Illinois Symphony rolls out '26-27 season with a spooky take on 'Fantasia'

Courtney Conroy

, August 3, 2026

Plus, stars from Broadway's Wicked, a Gershwin tribute and a Shakespeare-inspired overture.



Local News

McLean County Penguin Project launches theater program for adult performers with disabilities

Courtney Conroy

, July 29, 2026

The Penguin Project of McLean County is launching Penguin Players, a new community theater program designed for performers with disabilities who are 22 years and older. The chapter's existing theater program, which modifies full-scale musicals for the stage, serves performers ages 10 to 24.



Local News

Stone & Snow reunites with Half Hazard Press as micro music venue relaunches in Bloomington

Lauren Warnecke, Courtney Conroy

, July 29, 2026

A Cincinnati-based Americana duo which once called Bloomington-Normal home is returning to play in the Twin Cities next month — in a venue they helped launch that's been on hiatus since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Listen • 4:47



Local News

Chicago Farmer and the Fieldnotes are parting ways after 7 years and a single album

Lauren Fischer

, July 28, 2026

The Bloomington-based band has announced that following its current tour, the Fieldnotes will disband. The group performs in Downtown Bloomington on Aug. 1 with Dan Hubbard as the finale to the Saturdays on the Square concert series.



Local News

The Beach Boys postpone summer tour dates to allow singer Mike Love time to 'recharge'

Lauren Fischer

, July 28, 2026

The Beach Boys' postponed nearly 30 dates of their 2026 North American tour, including in Bloomington. The show at Grossinger Motors Arena has been rescheduled from Aug. 13 to Oct. 9. Original tickets will be honored on the new date.



Local News

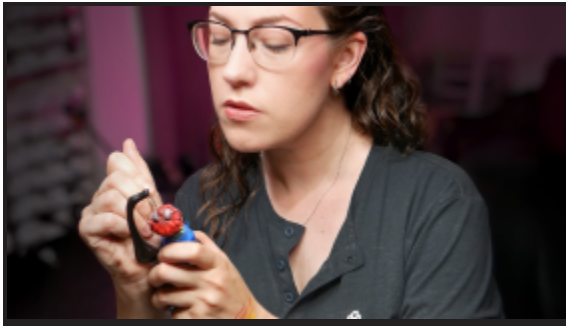
From the dawn of electronic library databases to AI in only 50 years

Charlie Schlenker

, July 28, 2026

As the world grapples with the growth of artificial intelligence and changes to work in many fields, it may seem odd that we are only about a half century into the digital era. The first electronic library card catalogs were developing back then. Coincidentally, Milner Library at Illinois State University is 50 years old this month.

Listen • 7:38



Local News

How Central Illinois mini painter Lyla Mev built a career and a community, one tiny statue at a time

Lou Warner

, July 24, 2026

WGLT's new series Maker to Maker debuts with Lyla Mev, a Central Illinois mini painter who's amassed a huge following on YouTube with tutorials for other painters of all skill levels.

Listen • 7:29



Local News

33rd Illinois Volunteer Regiment Band closes Concerts on the Quad series with Civil War tunes

Lauren Fischer

, July 23, 2026

The historical reenactment band will perform on Monday, July 27, on the ISU quad. The band will play Civil War Era music on authentic instruments from the era.

Listen • 4:35



Local News

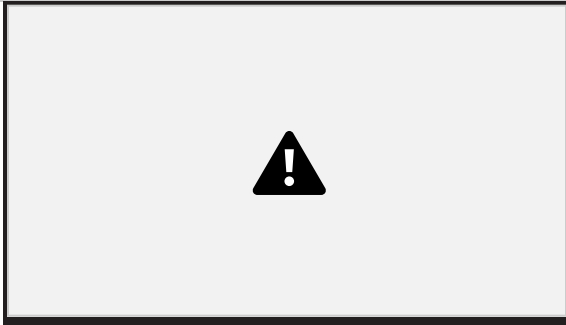
Bloomington prioritizes community and creativity at second annual Arts and Health Day

Jamie Hand

, July 18, 2026

"Arts and health are not separate," said Angelique Racki, co-chair of the Cultural Commission for the city. "Art is health."

Listen • 4:33



Local News

Naming rights price for Grossinger Motors Arena 'similar' to 2017

Lizzie Seils

, July 16, 2026

Grossinger Motors' naming rights expired in 2022. The city is still looking for a sponsor to give the arena a new name.

Listen • 7:02



Local News

B-N rock band Phydeaux reunites for its final concert at Make Music Normal

[Zachary Knox-Doyle](#)

, July 16, 2026

The band will celebrate the 30th anniversary of its only album, Revolutionary Product, during its 45-minute set on Friday.

Listen • 4:46



Local News

Bloomington 9-year-old to compete in 2026 Pokémon World Championships

[Lizzie Seils](#)

, July 15, 2026

From the legendary pocket monster known as Ogerpon on his hat, to the Croc charms of Squirtle, Bulbasaur and Charizard on his shoes, a Bloomington boy proudly displays his love for Pokémon.

Listen • 4:31



Local News

Short film 'Unfinished' prompts reflection on America at 250

Lauren Warnecke

, July 14, 2026

Central Illinois photographer and filmmaker Jason Lindsey compiled images of American flags around the country beginning about 15 years ago. The country's semiquincentennial provided inspiration to present them as a way to urge reflection on America's promises.

Listen • 7:22



Local News

How the cool came to McLean County

Charlie Schlenker

, July 13, 2026

As Central Illinois swelters in the summer heat, most people have someplace to go to cool off. Not so long ago, it wasn't like that. 1934 was the year air conditioning came to Bloomington-Normal.

Listen • 7:23



Local News

The Beach Boys to celebrate milestones with a night of 'Fun, Fun, Fun' at Grossinger Motors Arena

Lauren Fischer

, July 9, 2026

"America's Band" is coming to Bloomington for a concert celebrating 250 years of America and 60 years of their iconic album Pet Sounds.



Local News

History museum takes McLean County out to the ballgame in new exhibition

Lauren Warnecke

, July 9, 2026

More Than a Game! will remain installed at the McLean County Museum of History for at least five years. It's a rare new permanent exhibition drawing from the museum's collection and local baseball lore on loan for the occasion.

[Listen • 4:47](#)



[Watch](#)

[Local News](#)

Video: How Bloomington-Normal's first drone show took flight

[Ryan Denham](#)

, July 3, 2026

How do you get a fleet of 300 drones to fly perfectly in sync and create stunning LED animations in the sky? WGLT visited with the Firefly Drone Shows crew ahead of Thursday night's Bloomington show.



[Local News](#)

A look at the 2026-27 seasons for Community Players and Nomad Theatre

Lauren Fischer

, July 2, 2026

Community Players Theatre and Nomad Theatre Company have announced the shows for their 2026-27 seasons.



Local News

With ample sandwiches and a lot of luck, a Bloomington-made film shares one woman's story of resilience

Lauren Warnecke

, July 2, 2026

Nan is based on the true story of Stevi Zabawa's grandmother, who picked up the pieces when her husband unexpectedly left her and her children in 1960.

Listen • 5:05



Local News

Fourth of July weekend takes off with a 300-drone light show at the Interstate Center

Lauren Fischer

, July 1, 2026

A 300-drone light show is coming to the Interstate Center in Bloomington, as a way to kick off America 250 celebrations. The show will be held at 9 p.m. on Thursday, July 2.

Economy and Buisness



Braden Fogerson

/

WGLT

'War on 74' rivalry becomes official competition with Country Financial backing

Braden Fogerson

, September 30, 2026

The "War on 74" series will conclude each year with a traveling Rivalry Series trophy being presented to the school that scores the most points throughout the year in competitions against their rival.



Construction underway on \$41 million Empire Flats apartment complex

September 30, 2026



Congressional candidates offer positions on budget deficit and Social Security fixes

September 29, 2026

Listen • 4:49



Alleging 'unlawful conspiracy,' Country Financial sues American Farm Bureau Federation

September 29, 2026



Economy and Business

State Farm to add 3,000 more jobs across the country in the next year

Jamie Hand

, September 25, 2026

State Farm, by far the largest employer in McLean County, announced Friday that it is ramping up hiring for its Claims workforce.



Illinois News

Diesel has never been more expensive. That's squeezing farmers as harvest begins

Abigail Bottar

, September 25, 2026

Conflicts in Iran and Russia are causing diesel prices to spike globally. That's especially hurting U.S. farmers as they head into harvest season, the most fuel intensive period of the agricultural year.



Economy and Business

Heartland Bank and Trust to acquire First State Bank

Jamie Hand

, September 22, 2026

Heartland Bank and Trust has planned to acquire First State Bank, the latest in a series of acquisitions by Heartland Bank as they grow their regional footprint.



Economy and Business

Data center cooling failure hits Central Illinois credit union customers

Ryan Denham

, September 19, 2026

A data center cooling failure has disrupted online and mobile banking for customers at several Central Illinois credit unions for the past three days, part of a nationwide problem.



Economy and Business

2 Peoria Carle Health hospitals to become one this fall

Jamie Hand

, September 18, 2026

The current Carle Health Proctor Hospital on Knoxville Avenue will be known as the Carle Health Methodist Hospital- Proctor Campus, effective Nov. 1. There are no changes to the name of the current Carle Health Methodist Hospital on Glen Oak Avenue.



Economy and Business

McLean County residents imagine the future of Eastland Mall

[Lizzie Seils](#)

, September 16, 2026

WGLT asked McLean County residents for their ideas for revitalizing the Eastland Mall property. Thousands of you pitched your ideas. Here are the Top 5 that emerged.

Listen • 7:40



Economy and Business

Eastland Mall for sale as 'redevelopment opportunity'

[Lizzie Seils](#)

, September 16, 2026

Bloomington Mayor Dan Brady said a deal for the Eastland Mall property could be reached by the end of September, though he said the city doesn't control or have input on the bidding process.

Listen • 4:53



Economy and Business

Former Lincoln College campus to become a business incubator with \$1 leases on offer

Lauren Warnecke

, September 16, 2026

An investor purchased the property with the intention to offer businesses \$1 leases. Nonprofits looking to expand can operate from one of five campus buildings for free.



Economy and Business

New Economic Development Council leader promises better communication with government

Charlie Schlenker

, September 9, 2026

The new head of the Bloomington-Normal Economic Development Council is addressing past concerns and critiques of the organization as he lays out his vision for the future.

Listen • 7:23



Local News

Pritzker defends Logan prison closure; pumps 5-year plan to attract new business to Lincoln

Lauren Warnecke

, September 8, 2026

During a media appearance Tuesday in Bloomington, Pritzker said he's the most pro-economic development governor since Jim Thompson, who left office in 1991. He plans to work with Logan County officials to address state properties where industry has left, including the pending closure of Logan Correctional Center.



Local News

CIRA gets 2nd federal grant for runway rehabilitation project

Eric Stock

, September 8, 2026

The Federal Aviation Administration approved \$12.5 million for the first phase of CIRA's project last year.



Local News

With Logan Correctional Center set to close, Lincoln mayor urges state to not leave another mess

Lauren Warnecke

, September 5, 2026

Mayor Tracy Welch wants to see the women's prison site remediated, unlike what happened two decades ago at the 100-acre Lincoln Developmental Center site. It's part of the City of Lincoln's multi-pronged strategy boosting economic development in the Logan County seat.



Economy and Business

Unit 5 seeks outside legal help in Rivian tax appeal

Eric Stock

, September 4, 2026

Unit 5 and Rivian are locked in a property-tax dispute that could cost the school district an estimated \$6.8 million annually.



Economy and Business

Expert says data centers contribute to rising energy costs

Jamie Hand

, September 3, 2026

At the Bloomington Public Library on Wednesday, residents heard about the reasons behind the rising costs of energy from Nick Hylla, executive director of the Midwest Renewable Energy Association [MREA].



Local News

Tyler Cravens named B-N Economic Development Council head

Charlie Schlenker

, August 31, 2026

The new permanent CEO of the Bloomington-Normal Economic Development Council [BNEDC] is Tyler Cravens. Cravens has been the interim president and CEO since March when previous CEO Patrick Hoban left for another position.



Local News

The \$400 million dispute: Why Rivian thinks its Normal properties are overvalued and overtaxed

Ryan Denham

, August 31, 2026

Documents obtained by WGLT show Rivian trying to make its case for why its Normal properties are significantly overvalued and overtaxed. Millions of tax dollars are at risk for Unit 5 schools and other local taxing bodies.

Listen • 4:19



Local News

As Pritzker touts state progress on childcare, Twin City stakeholders seek local solutions

Lauren Warnecke, Courtney Conroy

, August 31, 2026

Leadership at YWCA McLean County is pitching government bodies for financial help to address the area's childcare crisis. President and CEO Liz German said there are significant gaps in the state subsidy for childcare — and change is not coming fast enough.



Local News

Route 66 Centennial boosts McLean County visitor count and sets stage for tourism growth

Charlie Schlenker

, August 31, 2026

Bloomington-Normal tourism officials said the Route 66 centennial celebrations have increased out-of-town visits to McLean County by 3% compared to year-to-date figures from last year.

Listen • 7:43



Local News

Meta agrees to \$17 billion settlement with states including Illinois in child safety trial

John Ruwitch

, August 26, 2026

Under the settlement, Illinois will receive up to nearly \$768 million.

Listen • 3:33



Local News

Special tourism fee under discussion for Bloomington-Normal overnight visitors

Charlie Schlenker

, August 24, 2026

Bloomington-Normal groups are having early conversations about creating a Tourism Improvement District that would impose fees of up to 5% for hotel and short-term rental guests.

Listen • 7:26



Local News

Data center energy consumption raises concerns about long-term costs and reliability

Eric Stock

, August 24, 2026

If Bloomington-Normal government leaders decide they want to bring a data center to the community, they would need to demonstrate that the community has the energy capacity to sustain it. That remains an open question.

Listen • 7:44



Local News

Rivian's tax appeal remains a sticking point for Unit 5's proposed \$252M budget

Braden Fogerson, Ryan Denham

, August 20, 2026

Unit 5 leaders say Rivian's fight to lower its property tax bill could cost the school district as much as \$6.8 million in lost revenue — uncertainty that looms over Unit 5's budget planning.



Local News

Ameren gives a boost to Illinois State's solar, wind energy lab

Cole Loiacano, Bella Mareello, Lauren Warnecke

, August 19, 2026

Ameren Illinois employees toured Illinois State University's new College of Engineering campus Wednesday while delivering a ceremonial check supporting its electrical engineering lab.



Illinois News

Insurance industry makes millions each day claims go unpaid, analysis shows

Stephanie Zimmermann

, August 18, 2026

Across all lines of property and casualty insurance — like home, auto and business — the industry gains a combined \$52.3 million in investment income per day when claims are delayed, according to Weiss Ratings for the nonprofit Consumer Federation of America.



Local News

CIRA intends to bring two gates back to full operation with community grant funding

Ben Howell

, August 14, 2026

Gates 3 and 4 at the Central Illinois Regional Airport each have their own problems, preventing them from accommodating large aircraft and being ADA compliant. Submission of a \$1.25 million grant would bring money to bring them up to requirements.



Local News

Governor candidates discuss estate tax, trade policies during ag forum in McLean County

Braden Fogerson

, August 11, 2026

Democratic Gov. JB Pritzker and Republican challenger Darren Bailey both appeared at the Illinois Agricultural Legislative Roundtable forum at Funk Farms Trust in Shirley.

Listen • 4:38



Illinois News

Excess nutrients can lie dormant in soil for years before polluting rivers, study finds

Rachel Cramer

, August 10, 2026

U.S. Geological Survey researchers developed models to better understand the timing and sources contributing to nutrient pollution in streams and rivers. They say their findings can help guide efforts to improve water quality.



Local News

Realty consultants say passion for west side is evident as they share early recommendations

Lizzie Seils

, August 7, 2026

The Counselors of Real Estate is an international network of around 1,000 real estate professionals. The group sent its Consulting Corps to survey Bloomington's Gridley-Allin-Prickett, near east side and Dimmitt's Grove neighborhoods over the past week.

Listen • 7:20



Local News

Amtrak reports banner year, though growth in Illinois is more mixed

Charlie Schlenker

, August 7, 2026

Amtrak is performing well nationally, according to an Illinois-based member of the board of the nation's passenger rail service. Illinois numbers were not as accomplished, according to Amtrak records.



Local News

Counselors of Real Estate gather public input on 3 Bloomington neighborhoods

Lizzie Seils

, August 4, 2026

The Counselors of Real Estate said they will use the community feedback to help generate recommendations for the Dimmitt's Grove, Gridley Allin Prickett, and Near East neighborhoods.



Local News

Pritzker signs bills allowing state to review insurance rate hikes

Peter Hancock

, August 4, 2026

Gov. JB Pritzker signed legislation Tuesday that will give the Illinois Department of Insurance authority to review and approve rate changes for homeowners and automobile policies. Bloomington's two insurers opposed the bills as they moved through the legislature.



Local News

DeKalb and Aurora are flush with data center cash. They differ in how to spend it

Ben Howell

, August 4, 2026

'Money, Money, Money' is what data centers promise to prospective communities willing to host them. In hubs Aurora and DeKalb, WGLT visited the sites to understand what their property tax revenue can offer and what projects are possible.

Listen • 4:32



Local News

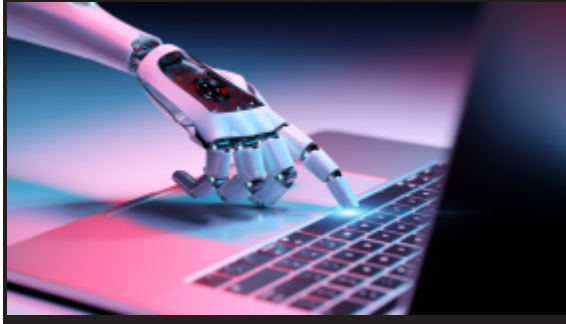
AI will change how insurance companies teach workers and how they work

[Charlie Schlenker](#)

, August 4, 2026

As artificial intelligence budes its way into the business world, insurance companies are grappling with the changes to the kind of work that happens, the types of workers they need and how to develop them.

Listen • 7:36



[Local News](#)

AI is already penetrating the insurance industry

[Charlie Schlenker](#)

, August 3, 2026

Most insurance companies, including State Farm and Country Financial, are already implementing AI across their businesses. Here's how they're going about it.

Listen • 7:34



[Local News](#)

Rivian to add second shift for R2 production in Normal by end of September

Ryan Denham

, July 31, 2026

The electric automaker Rivian confirmed Thursday it plans to add a second shift for R2 production at its Normal manufacturing plant within the next two months.



Local News

Rivian files lawsuit to get back refund from Trump administration's illegal tariffs

Ryan Denham

, July 26, 2026

The electric automaker Rivian has sued the Trump administration to get its refund on tariffs it paid that the courts later ruled were illegal.



Local News

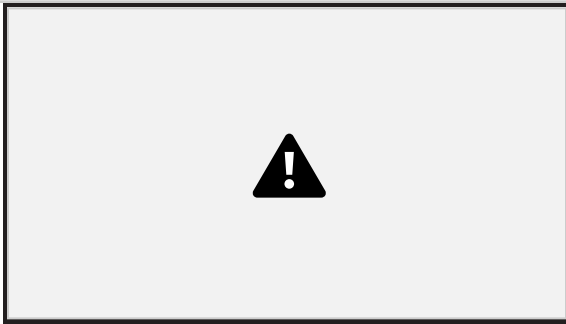
United Airlines' expected return to CIRA delayed another year

Lizzie Seils

, July 24, 2026

The Federal Aviation Administration enacted a limit on the number of daily flights out of Chicago's O'Hare International Airport a few days before the flights were set to begin. The new target was October 2026, but the FAA recently extended its limit to October 2027.

Listen • 7:02



Illinois News

These 9 Illinois communities say they're interested in new nuclear facilities

Maggie Dougherty

, July 24, 2026

DeWitt County Board Chair Joe Witte said supporting the county's existing relationship with Constellation, which has long operated the Clinton nuclear plant there and currently employs over 500 people, was also a priority.



Local News

Milestones in Bloomington becomes the latest childcare program to close

Ryan Denham

, July 22, 2026

Bloomington-Normal's shortage of affordable childcare options is about to get even worse. Milestones Early Learning Center and Preschool in Bloomington will permanently close July 31 – less than two weeks from now.



Illinois News

Morton Industries expands to East Peoria manufacturing facility in support of data center market

Joe Deacon - WGLT

, July 20, 2026

Morton Industries is expanding its operations in the Greater Peoria region with the addition of an 80,000-square-foot manufacturing facility in East Peoria. The company said the site will be dedicated to stainless steel production for the growing data center market.



Illinois News

Bayer won its Roundup case. Where does that leave thousands of pending lawsuits?

Jess Savage

, July 17, 2026

Attorneys say cases that claim the popular weedkiller causes cancer will have to change course to move forward in court after the U.S. Supreme Court sided with the agriculture company last month.



Local News

Bloomington mayor checks in with peers on data centers

Lizzie Seils

, July 15, 2026

The city recently announced its planning commission will meet publicly at 5 p.m. Aug. 26 at the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts. There will be a panel of experts and others who have experience with data centers.

Listen • 7:09



Local News

Bloomington-Normal retailers feel the need for NeeDoh

Braden Fogerson

, July 13, 2026

The NeeDoh is in short supply as kids and parents across the Bloomington-Normal area seek the popular fidget toy.

Listen • 4:12



Local News

A new state agency aims to ease McLean County's childcare crisis. Providers say the money problem remains

Courtney Conroy

, July 13, 2026

According to one study, Illinois is losing \$6.2 billion a year from people exiting the workforce due to childcare challenges. Experts say a new statewide department dedicated to early childhood is unlikely to provide immediate relief.

Listen • 7:14



Local News

Housing experts react to what federal housing legislation means for Central Illinois

Ben Howell

, July 10, 2026

With the passage of the 21st Century ROAD to Housing Act, Congress approved the first major housing legislation in three decades. Illinois housing experts react to what that means for Central Illinois.

Listen • 4:44



Illinois News

A potent weedkiller can drift for miles, killing crops and trees. EPA's new rules may not stop it

Will Bauer

, July 6, 2026

New federal rules for dicamba aim to help cotton and soybean farmers control weeds. But the herbicide, which can kill other crops and trees, remains controversial.

Listen • 3:58



Local News

Realtor group will study west Bloomington to recommend revitalization moves

Charlie Schlenker

, July 1, 2026

The City of Bloomington will get help from the public service arm of a realtors organization to revitalize several west side neighborhoods. The Counselors of Real Estate Consulting Corps will send a team to survey a broad batch of community stakeholders and write a proposal.

Education



Local News

ISU students focus on healing the

community with volunteer work in memory of 9/11

[Bella Marello](#)

, September 12, 2026

Illinois State University's Center for Civic Engagement on Saturday hosted Redbirds Remember, a day of service in memory of 9/11, including a ceremony and volunteer work.



[Local News](#)

Ceremony marks completion of ISU's new home for the College of Engineering

[Braden Fogerson](#)

, September 9, 2026

Among those who spoke were Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker, Illinois State University President Aondover Tarhule, Provost Ani Yazedjian, and dean of the college Tom Keyser.



Local News

ISU enrollment falls for first time in 5 years as 'demographic cliff' arrives; IWU headcount nears 1,700

Braden Fogerson, Charlie Schlenker, Lizzie Seils

, September 3, 2026

Leaders at both Bloomington-Normal universities say they're pleased with their fall enrollment numbers as they confront the long-dreaded "demographic cliff."



Local News

'A greenhouse for ideas': IWU celebrates opening of interdisciplinary Petrick Idea Center

Lizzie Seils

, September 2, 2026

In the foyer where the ribbon-cutting ceremony was held, a counter on one wall held 3D printers, laser cutters, and prototyping devices. The center also boasts embroidery and sewing machines, power tools and audio-visual equipment.



Local News

As Pritzker touts state progress on childcare, Twin City stakeholders seek local solutions

Lauren Warnecke, Courtney Conroy

, August 31, 2026

Leadership at YWCA McLean County is pitching government bodies for financial help to address the area's childcare crisis. President and CEO Liz German said there are significant gaps in the state subsidy for childcare — and change is not coming fast enough.



Local News

Bloomington Public Library staff imagine possibilities with new Library of Things collection

Michele Steinbacher, Avery Rawlings

, August 27, 2026

The Bloomington Public Library is launching its latest collection, dubbed the Library of Things. From 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, BPL invites the community to come test-drive some of the more than 80 objects in the collection. Starting next week, patrons can borrow any of the items for up to a week at a time.

Listen • 4:36



Local News

Baby Fold's Hammitt School adds new sensory-friendly space for serenity or stimulation

Braden Fogerson

, August 25, 2026

The space provides an option for kids to calm down or relax in a sensory-friendly environment that allows them to build coordination and fine and gross motor skills.



Local News

Unit 5 approves contracts for renovations tied to enrollment adjustments

Braden Fogerson

, August 24, 2026

The Unit 5 school board on Monday chose Design Mavens and the Farnsworth Group to develop designs and determine the scope of additions at Parkside Junior High and Towanda Elementary Schools, respectively.



Local News

Illinois Wesleyan University sets fundraising record

Bella Marello

, August 21, 2026

Illinois Wesleyan University supporters raised a record \$34.8 million in the last year.



Local News

ISU research using AI to detect heart irregularities off to a good start

Zachary Knox-Doyle

, August 21, 2026

An IT and nursing professor have partnered to study how artificial intelligence might aid early detection of atrial fibrillation, a leading cause of stroke.



Local News

Rivian's tax appeal remains a sticking point for Unit 5's proposed \$252M budget

Braden Fogerson, Ryan Denham

, August 20, 2026

Unit 5 leaders say Rivian's fight to lower its property tax bill could cost the school district as much as \$6.8 million in lost revenue — uncertainty that looms over Unit 5's budget planning.



Local News

Ameren gives a boost to Illinois State's solar, wind energy lab

Cole Loiacano, Bella Mareello, Lauren Warnecke

, August 19, 2026

Ameren Illinois employees toured Illinois State University's new College of Engineering campus Wednesday while delivering a ceremonial check supporting its electrical engineering lab.



Local News

Clean-up continues as school resumes in still soggy Bloomington-Normal

[Jamie Hand, Cole Loiacano, Ben Howell, Lauren Warnecke](#)

, August 17, 2026

Areas south and east of the City of Bloomington were hardest hit by Thursday's intense thunderstorm, but as rain continued to fall, basements started to get wet. That includes several buildings on Illinois State's campus, where classes started today.



Local News

ISU professors: Illinois must do more to solve world languages teacher shortage

[Braden Fogerson](#)

, August 17, 2026

World languages teachers at Illinois State University said the state needs to do more to support world languages education.

Listen • 4:35



Local News

Heartland Community College looks to save money by offering eligible employees voluntary separation program

Braden Fogerson

, August 14, 2026

The program would allow eligible Heartland employees to voluntarily leave employment in exchange for a one-time incentive benefit. It's designed to help Heartland achieve cost savings.



Local News

Community Schools programming makes cuts as school year begins with federal funding lost

Braden Fogerson

, August 12, 2026

The Community Schools program at two Unit 5 schools will be without federal funding to start the new school year. A legal effort to save the funding was unsuccessful.

Listen • 4:40



Illinois News

School funding stretched thin as costs rise, corporate revenue source shrinks

Peter Hancock

, August 7, 2026

Despite a \$350 million increase in base funding for public schools this year, Illinois is falling further behind in its quest to bring all school districts up to adequate funding levels.



Local News

Carle Health Mobile Clinic offers back-to-school physicals and immunizations in Bloomington ahead of 2026-27 school year

Lauren Fischer

, August 5, 2026

The Carle Health Mobile Clinic will provide back-to-school physicals and immunizations Friday and Saturday to prepare children for the upcoming school year.



Local News

Federal court blocks in-state tuition rates and financial aid for undocumented college students in Illinois

Charlie Schlenker

, August 5, 2026

Illinois State University leaders say they're "currently consulting with our state officials and legal counsel to determine what this decision means for affected students and the university."



Illinois News

Illinois offers temporary sales tax reduction on back-to-school shopping

Ben Szalinski

, August 3, 2026

Illinois will offer a sales tax reduction on school supplies from Aug. 7-16.



Illinois News

Pritzker signs laws regulating how social media platforms interact with children

Ben Szalinski

, July 31, 2026

Gov. JB Pritzker signed sweeping regulations Friday aimed at social media companies and cracking down on “addictive algorithms” that keep kids glued to their screens.



Local News

Why firing a teacher in Illinois is so hard — even after early red flags

Lauren Warnecke, Eric Stock

, July 29, 2026

A powerful teachers' union and Illinois law put up many barriers to firing tenured teachers, even ones with documented patterns of alleged misconduct.

Listen • 7:51



Local News

State's Attorney is using FOIA to seek Unit 5's communications with WGLT about Chiddix teachers

Lauren Warnecke, Eric Stock

, July 29, 2026

Unit 5 said it does not know the purpose of a FOIA request from the state's attorney's office for its emails, text messages and public records requests between WGLT and the district. It came after WGLT asked about the state's attorney's information sharing with Unit 5.



Local News

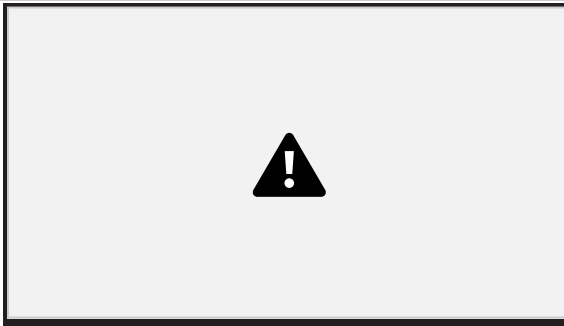
How siloed investigations and mistrust left Unit 5 in the lurch in Chiddix cases

Lauren Warnecke

, July 29, 2026

A review of dozens of emails and other documents revealed siloed information sharing which kept Unit 5 from knowing what law enforcement and child welfare officials knew about its employees, even when it involved students in their care.

Listen • 7:51



Illinois News

Pritzker signs school cellphone ban to avoid student distractions

Peter Hancock

, July 28, 2026

Students in all Illinois public schools will soon have to abide by rules barring them from using cellphones or other personal electronic communication devices

during school hours unless they have been given specific permission to use them.



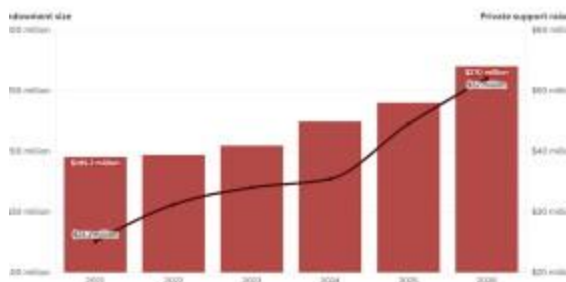
Local News

ISU board approves surplus budget; 3% merit raises set for nonunion employees

Braden Fogerson

, July 24, 2026

Illinois State University's board of trustees on Friday approved a new \$600.4 million operating budget — the first since a major overhaul to ISU's budget framework — that includes a surplus.



Local News

Donors gave Illinois State University a record \$52 million last budget year

[Charlie Schlenker](#)

, July 22, 2026

Illinois State University donors set a record amount for giving in the budget year that ended July 1. ISU took in more than \$52 million in private support. It is the sixth straight year of increased donations.



Local News

\$84 million science complex will create 'new front porch' where ISU meets Uptown

[Lizzie Seils](#)

, July 21, 2026

Construction is expected to start next spring on a three-building, \$84 million science complex that will create a "new front porch" where Illinois State University meets Uptown Normal.

Listen • 7:23



Local News

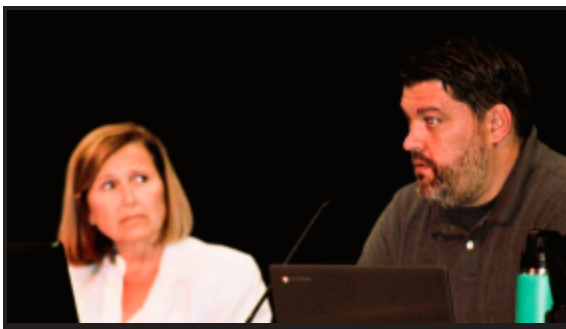
Video: Inside ISU's new home for the College of Engineering

Braden Fogerson, Avery Rawlings

, July 20, 2026

The more than 28-acre site at G.E. Road is ready for students to arrive for classes by the start of the 2026 fall semester.

Listen • 4:27



Local News

E-learning to remain an option for Unit 5 schools

Braden Fogerson

, July 16, 2026

The Unit 5 school board renewed the district's e-learning plan Wednesday after much deliberation.



Local News

High school kids learn what's in store for them in college and careers

Braden Fogerson

, July 15, 2026

High school students got the college experience staying on both Bloomington-Normal university campuses and learning from professionals from different career fields.

Listen • 4:23



Local News

New Connect Transit line connects Heartland Community College's Normal and Pontiac campuses

Lauren Fischer

, July 7, 2026

Heartland Community College and Connect Transit have partnered on a new bus line that will stop along the I-55 corridor from Normal to Pontiac. The line will be free for Heartland students.



Illinois News

New Department of Early Childhood launches full operations

Peter Hancock

, July 1, 2026

JB Pritzker called for creating a new agency in 2023 to consolidate and streamline services for infants and toddlers under one roof. The new agency is led by Secretary Teresa Ramos, who previously served as an education adviser in the Pritzker administration.



Local News

Head Start under threat, again, as demand remains high in Bloomington-Normal

September 30, 2026



Education

Schools are experimenting with AI with little evidence or policy to guide them

September 28, 2026



Local News

'Breath of fresh air': Hope Chicago scholarship program celebrates 5 years of impact

September 25, 2026



Local News

Student success, AI readiness among top priorities in ISU president's State of the University address

September 24, 2026

Listen • 7:15



Local News

McLean County superintendents say school sales tax has made a big impact

September 22, 2026

Health



Ashlee Rezin

/

Illinois alerts more than 700,000 people they will or could lose public health insurance

Kristen Schorsch

, September 15, 2026

The state has mailed letters to thousands of Medicaid enrollees with low incomes or a disability. They could lose coverage as soon as Oct. 1 due to legislation that President Donald Trump signed into law last year.



Lauren Warnecke

Officer turns his 'best worst day' at the Normal PD into a way to support others through tough times

Lauren Warnecke

, September 14, 2026

Evan Easter spends his days off from the Normal Police Department attending conferences and other speaking events through his speaking platform called The Fractured Mind. He recently launched an offshoot called Locker Room Resilience, using similarities from law enforcement to support competitive athletes. Easter was among the three officers who in 2021 pursued an active shooter in the Landings subdivision in Normal.

Listen • 4:42



New law makes medical aid in dying possible in McLean County — if you can find a provider

September 11, 2026

Listen • 7:27



OSF expands AI use to assess strokes

September 7, 2026



Community Health Care Clinic in Normal sees influx of patients tied to Medicaid cuts

September 4, 2026



Illinois News

Illinois hospitals to lose billions through Medicaid policy change, study finds

Peter Hancock

, September 2, 2026

Illinois hospitals stand to lose billions of dollars in revenue over the next several years due to changes in Medicaid rules brought on the One Big Beautiful Bill passed last year by Republicans in Congress.



Local News

Bloomington Public Library staff imagine possibilities with new Library of Things collection

Michele Steinbacher, Avery Rawlings

, August 27, 2026

The Bloomington Public Library is launching its latest collection, dubbed the Library of Things. From 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, BPL invites the community to come test-drive some of the more than 80 objects in the collection. Starting next week, patrons can borrow any of the items for up to a week at a time.

Listen • 4:36



Local News

Central Illinois nurses say 'very close follow-up' key to supporting postpartum moms

Jamie Hand

, August 25, 2026

The murder trial of Lindsay Clancy has thrust conversations about postpartum depression into the public. Providers who spoke to WGLT said mental health problems among new moms are more common than many people realize.

Listen • 4:48



Local News

ISU research using AI to detect heart irregularities off to a good start

Zachary Knox-Doyle

, August 21, 2026

An IT and nursing professor have partnered to study how artificial intelligence might aid early detection of atrial fibrillation, a leading cause of stroke.



Local News

'At least' \$17 million in damage at OSF St. Joseph after microburst, flooding

Lizzie Seils

, August 19, 2026

The president of OSF St. Joseph estimated the hospital incurred at least \$17 million worth of damage connected to last Thursday's microburst and heavy rain.



Local News

Risk of cyclosporiasis contraction is low in McLean County amid nationwide outbreak

Lauren Fischer

, August 18, 2026

The McLean County Health Department confirms the county is not experiencing a cyclospora outbreak, despite five confirmed cases. Four were contracted internationally.

Listen • 4:41



Local News

Serving sodas and smashing stigma, Bloomington sisters put new spin on recovery and community

Jamie Hand

, August 8, 2026

Jenn Carey and Susan Mayer started Twisted Sisters Sodas to provide fun, non-alcoholic drinks for teens and people in recovery.

Listen • 4:46



Local News

Surgical safety invention dreamed up by OSF nurses is coming to Bloomington-Normal soon

Jamie Hand

, August 6, 2026

DeviceWise, a program that helps hospital staff prepare patients with medical implants for surgery, has been in development for more than eight years. It's reduced cancellations in Peoria by 10%.

Listen • 4:24



Local News

FUSE program has led to fewer arrests among people with mental illness, substance use disorders

Lauren Warnecke

, July 24, 2026

The county-led program, in place since 2019, has contributed to fewer jail bookings for participants, including a steep decline in DUI and traffic charges.

Listen • 4:39



Local News

Bloomington prioritizes community and creativity at second annual Arts and Health Day

Jamie Hand

, July 18, 2026

"Arts and health are not separate," said Angelique Racki, co-chair of the Cultural Commission for the city. "Art is health."

Listen • 4:33



Local News

Planned Parenthood of Illinois appoints McLean County's Carolyn Moon as new board chair

Jamie Hand

, July 8, 2026

Carolyn Moon, who took the board chair position this month, is the first person from outside the Chicago area to serve in the role.

Listen • 7:23



Local News

American Heart Association expands prevention efforts in Bloomington-Normal

Jamie Hand

, July 7, 2026

Historically, the American Heart Association's focus has been on Champaign and Peoria. Dr. Colleen Blackburn wants to change that — including the renamed and repositioned Central Illinois Heart Ball fundraiser.

Politics and Government

Illinois News

Data centers emerging as key issue in Illinois governor's race

Maggie Dougherty and Ben Szalinski

, August 17, 2026

The emergence of a new class of data centers has garnered bipartisan opposition in communities across the state. What was once seen as an avenue for economic growth has become a political issue in Illinois.



Local News

Mayor of Normal to postpone vote on restrictions for home-based businesses

Eric Stock

, August 17, 2026

Normal Mayor Chris Koos said he intends to withdraw a proposal that would have banned home occupations from allowing customers to come to their home in the town.



Local News

Rep. Sorensen questions president's decision on vaccines, threats to Air Force One

Ben Howell

, August 14, 2026

U.S. Rep. Eric Sorensen questioned two recent actions taken by the Trump administration. He called for parents to do their own research on vaccines and for the president to be transparent.

Listen • 4:55



Local News

CIRA intends to bring two gates back to full operation with community grant funding

Ben Howell

, August 14, 2026

Gates 3 and 4 at the Central Illinois Regional Airport each have their own problems, preventing them from accommodating large aircraft and being ADA compliant. Submission of a \$1.25 million grant would bring money to bring them up to requirements.



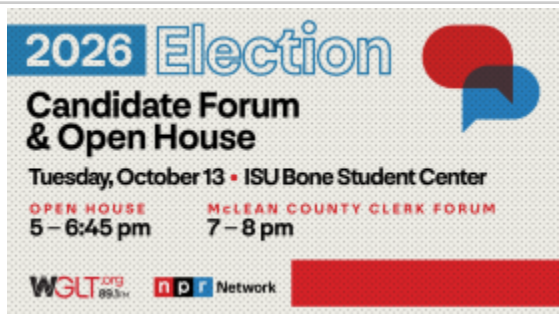
Local News

County approves permits for power storage units near Ellsworth and Arrowsmith

Jim Stahly Jr.

, August 13, 2026

The McLean County Board approved a pair of facilities in the eastern part of the county that will store energy produced when demand is low, and distribute when need is high.



Station Announcements

WGLT, campus and community partners to host fall election events Oct. 13

Melissa Libert

, August 13, 2026

WGLT will host a candidate open house and a forum for the McLean County Clerk's race on Tuesday, Oct. 13, at Illinois State University. Both events are free and open to the public.



Local News

Governor candidates discuss estate tax, trade policies during ag forum in McLean County

Braden Fogerson

, August 11, 2026

Democratic Gov. JB Pritzker and Republican challenger Darren Bailey both appeared at the Illinois Agricultural Legislative Roundtable forum at Funk Farms Trust in Shirley.

Listen • 4:38



Local News

Audit suggests Mental Health and Public Safety Fund has a deficit, not a surplus

Lizzie Seils

, August 10, 2026

The fund came under scrutiny in 2024 when town and city elected officials learned of a \$20 million balance, leading to calls for an audit. Normal and Bloomington temporarily paused sharing the tax revenue from April 2026 through June 2026.



Local News

State grant completes funding package for air cargo road project at CIRA

Charlie Schlenker

, August 7, 2026

The state of Illinois is giving the Central Illinois Regional Airport \$3 million to build an air cargo road. The grant is for half the \$6 million estimated cost of the project. A federal grant and airport money will make up the rest.



Illinois News

Pritzker pens letter to Trump, seeking tariff refunds for Illinois families

Maggie Dougherty

, August 6, 2026

In a letter sent to President Donald Trump on Thursday, Gov. JB Pritzker asked the president to send direct payments of \$1,700 to Illinois families. He also encouraged Trump to stop seeking new ways to enforce tariffs and to support legislation that would require corporations to pass refund relief back to consumers.



Local News

Change could give Illinois townships more ways to help people who are financially struggling

Braden Fogerson

, August 5, 2026

The Normal Township supervisor said the bill could "dramatically and positively impact" the ability to help residents in need. It awaits the governor's signature.

Listen • 4:22



Illinois News

'I'm embarrassed by it': Speaker Welch apologizes for interactions with former staffer

Ben Szalinski

, August 5, 2026

House Speaker Emanuel "Chris" Welch says he's sorry for his actions that a former House staff member said made her feel uncomfortable.



Local News

Mayor of Normal calls for commonsense enforcement of Uptown Station code of conduct

Charlie Schlenker

, August 5, 2026

The ACLU of Illinois has concerns about implementation of new restrictions on soliciting and unattended property near and in Uptown Station. WGLT asked Mayor Chris Koos about the issue during a Sound Ideas interview.

Listen • 7:24



Local News

Federal court blocks in-state tuition rates and financial aid for undocumented college students in Illinois

Charlie Schlenker

, August 5, 2026

Illinois State University leaders say they're "currently consulting with our state officials and legal counsel to determine what this decision means for affected students and the university."



Local News

Hauman quits Bloomington Election Commission after McLean County GOP complaint

Charlie Schlenker

, August 4, 2026

Bloomington Election Commissioner Diana Hauman has resigned in the face of a complaint about social media posts she made in May, rather than face a court fight over her status as a commissioner.



Local News

Counselors of Real Estate gather public input on 3 Bloomington neighborhoods

Lizzie Seils

, August 4, 2026

The Counselors of Real Estate said they will use the community feedback to help generate recommendations for the Dimmitt's Grove, Gridley Allin Prickett, and Near East neighborhoods.



Local News

Pritzker signs bills allowing state to review insurance rate hikes

Peter Hancock

, August 4, 2026

Gov. JB Pritzker signed legislation Tuesday that will give the Illinois Department of Insurance authority to review and approve rate changes for homeowners and automobile policies. Bloomington's two insurers opposed the bills as they moved through the legislature.



Local News

DeKalb and Aurora are flush with data center cash. They differ in how to spend it

Ben Howell

, August 4, 2026

'Money, Money, Money' is what data centers promise to prospective communities willing to host them. In hubs Aurora and DeKalb, WGLT visited the sites to understand what their property tax revenue can offer and what projects are possible.

Listen • 4:32



Local News

In data center hubs Aurora and DeKalb, two different approaches to setting restrictions

Ben Howell

, August 3, 2026

Before and once operation begins, data centers are becoming increasingly subjected to regulations by their host municipalities. WGLT visited Aurora, where some of the strictest rules exist, and DeKalb, which does not require much.

Listen • 4:39



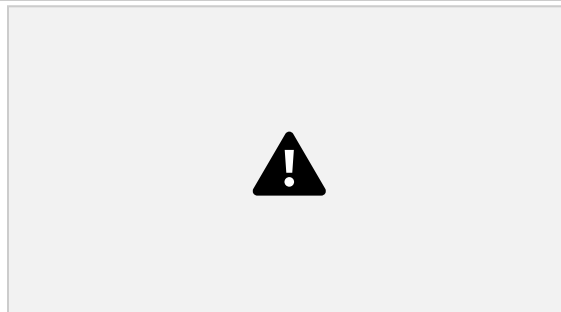
Illinois News

Judge denies Trump administration access to Illinois voter data

Peter Hancock

, August 3, 2026

A federal judge in Springfield says the Illinois State Board of Elections is not required to hand over the state's complete voter registration database, including sensitive personal information, to the Department of Justice.



Illinois News

Joining the Chicago mayor's race, Giannoulas casts himself as a coalition builder

Fran Spielman

, August 3, 2026

Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias enters the race as a presumed frontrunner, with a political target on his back after raising \$22 million from business leaders and building trade unions.



Local News

ACLU will be watching as new Uptown Normal code of conduct takes effect

Eric Stock

, August 3, 2026

The Town of Normal has rejected claims from the American Civil Liberties Union that its revised code of conduct in and around Uptown Station violates free speech and other rights.

Listen • 7:28



Local News

How Aurora and DeKalb are dealing with data centers

[Ben Howell](#)

, August 3, 2026

In a tale of two data center cities, Aurora and DeKalb are two examples of how location, regulation and revenue affect the residents where they sit. WGLT visited both to find answers.

Listen • 4:49



[Illinois News](#)

Illinois launches new program to provide food benefits to people who lost SNAP

[Ben Szalinski](#)

, August 2, 2026

Households that lost SNAP eligibility in recent months are eligible for a one-time \$400 payment from the state that began Saturday.



[Illinois News](#)

Report finds 'pattern and practice' of sexual harassment by ex-Rep. Harry Benton

Brenden Moore, Ben Szalinski

, July 31, 2026

Disgraced ex-Rep. Harry Benton, D-Plainfield, violated state law by committing two acts of sexual harassment, according to a summary legislative inspector general report made public Friday afternoon.



Local News

City of Bloomington to play a part in solving childcare crisis

Charlie Schlenker

, July 31, 2026

The City of Bloomington believes childcare accessibility and affordability are “critical” issues for the community, said Tyus. “It’s just as important as finding quality employees,” he said.

Listen • 7:21



Illinois News

A new Illinois law keeps hospital finances hidden from the public

Kristen Schorsch

, July 30, 2026

Financial documents that could alert communities to which hospitals are at risk of closing will be kept confidential under a new state law enacted by Gov. JB Pritzker. The move comes as doctors fear more hospitals could close next year



Local News

State's Attorney is using FOIA to seek Unit 5's communications with WGLT about Chiddix teachers

Lauren Warnecke, Eric Stock

, July 29, 2026

Unit 5 said it does not know the purpose of a FOIA request from the state's attorney's office for its emails, text messages and public records requests between WGLT and the district. It came after WGLT asked about the state's attorney's information sharing with Unit 5.



Local News

After forum, Bloomington-Normal unions endorse Democrats across the board for November elections

Braden Fogerson

, July 28, 2026

Bloomington-Normal unions hosted a forum Monday night to hear from candidates for McLean County Board and several countywide positions, including clerk.



Local News

Bloomington partners with Habitat for Humanity to build 2 homes on Trailside Court

Lizzie Seils

, July 27, 2026

The city council unanimously approved an agreement with Habitat for Humanity that includes allocating \$80,000 to develop two homes on Trailside Court as part of the city's "ReBloom the Block" program. City staff said the infusion of funds will speed up the non-profit's building schedule.



Local News

Sheriff's Lt. Jon Albee picked to weigh in on mental health sales tax spending

Lauren Warnecke

, July 24, 2026

Jon Albee is running unopposed to replace Sheriff Matt Lane, who is retiring. The Sheriff's Office runs the county jail, which draws heavily from a shared sales tax agreement.



Local News

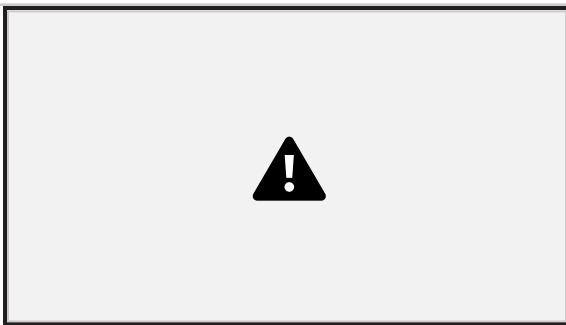
McLean County housing experts discuss state of homelessness at Bloomington conference

Ben Howell

, July 23, 2026

Representatives from five McLean County housing and service outreach organizations attended the Continuum of Care conference on Thursday in Bloomington. They spoke about their successes, challenges and what the future of housing looks like.

Listen • 7:11



Illinois News

Here's how Illinois election authorities guard against noncitizen voting

Peter Hancock

, July 23, 2026

Illinois election officials said this week they believe the state's voter registration are accurate and up to date and that safeguards are in place to prevent non-U.S. citizens from inadvertently becoming registered to vote.



Local News

Israel, transgender athletes and semiconductors: What Central Illinois congressmen considered in recent defense spending vote

Lizzie Seils

, July 23, 2026

The National Defense Authorization Act allocates funding for the Department of Defense and sets policy for the agency. This year's proposal includes raises for service members, more than a billion dollars for building barracks and housing, and tens of billions for weaponry, boats and aircraft.



Local News

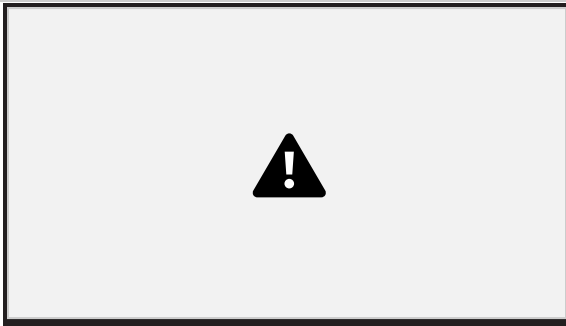
One Bloomington yard sign speaks on the other side of resident data center debate

Ben Howell

, July 22, 2026

The owner of the home on Fairway Drive said he posted the sign to raise awareness that not everyone opposes the idea of a data center near Bloomington-Normal.

Listen • 7:15



Illinois News

Pritzker for president? Handicapping the Illinois governor's political future

Tina Sfondeles

, July 22, 2026

The Illinois governor is showing up in presidential polls, and he's building coalitions with state parties while also strengthening his national name recognition. He's also explored fundraising that doesn't include self-funding — if a presidential run is truly in the cards.



Local News

Normal council greenlights Trail East and West proposals, clearing path to construction

Jim Stahly Jr.

, July 21, 2026

The proposal calls for a \$35 million, 203,000-square-foot building on the Beaufort Street side of Uptown Circle, as well as a \$25 million, 126,000-square-foot building on the North Street side.



Local News

Normal council revises Uptown Station code of conduct over objections it targets homelessness

Jim Stahly Jr.

, July 21, 2026

The revisions are meant to curtail “camping-type activities, excessive amounts of personal property, unattended personal property, storage of personal property on site, blocking of access points and excessive occupation of waiting areas,” according to a memo from city staff.



Local News

Bloomington City Council questions mental health, public safety spending procedures

Lizzie Seils

, July 20, 2026

The Bloomington City Council reviewed the funding and discussed how it is being represented on a McLean County council focused on mental and behavioral health.



Local News

McLean County Board chair addresses tax errors, delays in records overhaul

Ben Howell, Eric Stock

, July 20, 2026

The chair of the McLean County Board said she is not yet satisfied with the solution of a loan to the village of Hudson to make up for an error in tax collection.

Listen • 7:51



Local News

LaHood, Sorensen have big cash advantages in re-election bids

Eric Stock

, July 20, 2026

The candidates running to unseat two U.S. House members in Central Illinois are well behind in fundraising heading into the heart of campaign season.



Local News

Normal considers updating code of conduct to address homeless population in and near Uptown Station

Eric Stock, Ben Howell

, July 17, 2026

The Town of Normal is looking to strengthen its code of conduct in and around Uptown Station, which has seen an increase in homeless people gathering on the property in recent months.



Local News

Town staff lay out incentives for proposed Trail East, Trail West in Uptown Normal

Ben Howell, Eric Stock

, July 17, 2026

The two six-story buildings would bring more than 200 apartments to Uptown along with retail and restaurant space.



Local News

Andy Byars won't seek a second term on Normal Town Council

Eric Stock

, July 17, 2026

"My passion for supporting Normal's growth remains as strong as it has ever been, and I'll look forward to continuing to be involved, just not in an elected official capacity," Byars said in a social media post.



Local News

McLean County loans Hudson \$81,000 to cover property tax error

Jim Stahly Jr.

, July 16, 2026

The no-interest loan will cover the village for taxes not collected in 2026. The village will repay the loan by collecting the missing money in 2027 along with the tax funds from this year.

Listen • 7:51



Local News

Naming rights price for Grossinger Motors Arena 'similar' to 2017

Lizzie Seils

, July 16, 2026

Grossinger Motors' naming rights expired in 2022. The city is still looking for a sponsor to give the arena a new name.

Listen • 7:02



Local News

Normal plans to partner with Bloomington on data center forum

Ben Howell, Eric Stock

, July 16, 2026

Normal City Manager Pam Reece said Bloomington is giving Normal the opportunity to participate in the city's public forum on Aug. 26 at the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts.



Local News

Bloomington mayor checks in with peers on data centers

Lizzie Seils

, July 15, 2026

The city recently announced its planning commission will meet publicly at 5 p.m. Aug. 26 at the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts. There will be a panel of experts and others who have experience with data centers.

Listen • 7:09



Local News

Uptown Design Review Commission OKs proposals for Trail East, Trail West

[Michele Steinbacher](#)

, July 13, 2026

Two longtime empty buildings bordering Uptown Circle in Normal could be the site of new construction, after a design review committee approved a Joliet company's proposed Trail East and Trail West developments.

Listen • 7:34



Local News

Bloomington sets date at BCPA for public forum on data centers

[Lizzie Seils](#)

, July 13, 2026

The City of Bloomington will host a public planning commission meeting focused on hyperscale data centers at 5 p.m. Aug. 26 at the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts.



Local News

Bloomington gets more state dollars for home revitalization

Lizzie Seils

, July 13, 2026

The City of Bloomington is getting more money from the state of Illinois to refurbish and rehabilitate homes in the community.



Local News

IDOT highlights 7 construction projects across B-N and \$123M for road upgrades

Zachary Knox-Doyle

, July 13, 2026

Rebuild Illinois is investing nearly \$123 million in six projects to be completed in 2027 and one set for a 2028 finish.



Local News

Town of Normal resident and officials question conduct of council member Kathleen Lorenz

Charlie Schlenker

, July 10, 2026

A resident of the Town of Normal has accused council member Kathleen Lorenz of yelling and swearing at town workers about town leadership during an early evening incident in Uptown.



Illinois News

State Rep. Carol Ammons indicted for scheme to receive kickbacks, misusing campaign funds

Hannah Meisel and Ben Szalinski

, July 8, 2026

State Rep. Carol Ammons, D-Urbana, faces 10 counts of wire fraud, making a false statement to the FBI and conspiracy to obstruct justice, while her husband, Champaign County Clerk Aaron Ammons, faces two obstruction of justice counts.



Illinois News

Illinois 'reviewing' DOJ's threat to prosecute state election officials over noncitizen voting

Peter Hancock

, July 8, 2026

The U.S. Department of Justice sent letters to top election officials in all 50 states and Washington, D.C., warning they could be held criminally liable for allowing noncitizens to vote.



Local News

Illinois' U.S. Senate Republican nominee Don Tracy aims to slow cost-of-living increases

Zachary Knox-Doyle

, July 8, 2026

Tracy is running against Democratic Lt. Gov. Juliana Stratton in the race to replace retiring U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin.



Local News

Strategic plan for Normal lays out challenges and achievements for the town

Charlie Schlenker

, July 7, 2026

The Normal Town Council has adopted a new strategic plan for the next three years. Mayor Chris Koos talks about some of the details.

Listen • 7:07



Local News

Normal Town Council approves construction projects, strategic plan

[Braden Fogerson](#)

, July 6, 2026

The Normal Town Council awarded a \$4.6 million contract to Rowe Construction for general street resurfacing. Highlights include Willow Street from Main to Linden streets, Eastview Drive, and College Avenue from White Oak Road to I-55/74.



Politics and Government

House Democrats accuse Trump of 'hijacking' America's 250th birthday for his own gain

[Rachel Treisman](#)

, July 2, 2026

A 55-page report from House Democrats accuses Freedom 250 of America's birthday celebrations for profit, using questionable fundraising methods. Watchdog groups had already sounded alarms.



Local News

Realtor group will study west Bloomington to recommend revitalization moves

Charlie Schlenker

, July 1, 2026

The City of Bloomington will get help from the public service arm of a realtors organization to revitalize several west side neighborhoods. The Counselors of Real Estate Consulting Corps will send a team to survey a broad batch of community stakeholders and write a proposal.

Listen • 7:31



Local News

Normal Historic Preservation Committee OKs North Street demolitions, spares Beaufort building for now

Lizzie Seils

, July 1, 2026

The Town of Normal's Historic Preservation Commission approved two requests to demolish abandoned buildings in Uptown, but rejected a third. The three

buildings are marked for demolition to make way for the Trail East and West developments.



Local News

Farmer faces \$250K fine after pesticide drift near Morton school

Ben Howell

, July 1, 2026

A Morton farmer faces a potential \$250,000 fine by the Illinois Department of Agriculture for allegedly applying pesticides on a farm near the Bethel Lutheran School while the school hosted an outdoor event.

Listen • 4:51



Illinois News

New Illinois Republican Party chair hopes for 'JB fatigue' in tough midterm

Ben Szalinski

, July 1, 2026

New Illinois Republican Party Chair Bob Grogan hopes voters are getting tired of Gov. JB Pritzker and it will help Republican candidates in the midterm elections.

Local News

Documentation Project highlights how Trump policies are impacting higher ed, museums and health care in McLean County

Braden Fogerson

, September 30, 2026

The Documentation Project on Tuesday delivered another informational meeting on the effects of Trump administration cuts to federal grants and services in McLean County.



Local News

Congressional candidates offer positions on budget deficit and Social Security fixes

Charlie Schlenker

, September 29, 2026

The major party candidates for Congress in Central Illinois have significantly different views of how to deal with looming financial crises over the federal budget deficit, national debt, and Social Security.

Listen • 4:49



Local News

Bloomington council approves \$60M drinking water system project

Lizzie Seils

, September 28, 2026

Bloomington will spend more than \$60 million to build a new water distribution pump station, among other water system upgrades.



Local News

Sales tax dispute reignites between McLean County and Bloomington and Normal

Charlie Schlenker

, September 28, 2026

A legal cease fire between the Town of Normal and City of Bloomington on one side and McLean County government on the other shows signs of deterioration. The two sides again appear headed for court.



Local News

McLean County water capacity is a fluid conversation for data centers

Ben Howell

, September 28, 2026

How much potential water exists in Bloomington-Normal and McLean County is difficult to tell. Experts tell WGLT the lack of understanding and potential differences in each and every data center's need for water make it impossible to say how much one would need or use.

Listen • 7:29



Local News

McLean County park district gets notices of makegood tax bills after 2025 error

Eric Stock

, September 25, 2026

The McLean County Treasurer's Office says it sent certified letters on Thursday to more than 1,100 taxpayers in the Octavia Park District in Colfax notifying them of the error in which they will underbilled \$24,345.



Local News

McLean County safety agencies say new emergency dispatching system is one step forward, two steps back

Charlie Schlenker

, September 24, 2026

Delays and glitches in a new McLean County Computer Aided Dispatch system are frustrating public safety agencies. McLean County is implementing a new suite of software applications to speed up fire and police response in the county. It has not gone well.

Listen • 7:35



Local News

Early voting begins Thursday across Illinois

Eric Stock, Bella Marella

, September 23, 2026

Early voting polls are set to open Thursday across Illinois, giving voters more opportunity to cast their ballots ahead of Election Day.



Local News

Normal Town Council hears financial trends, approves data center moratorium extension

Braden Fogerson

, September 22, 2026

The council heard positive results from an annual audit presentation and extended Normal's data center moratorium during its Monday night meeting.



Local News

Bloomington looking at e-bike regulations ahead of new state law

Lizzie Seils

, September 21, 2026

The Bloomington City Council is looking into how impending changes to state law related to electric bikes and scooters could affect the city.



Illinois News

Gov. Pritzker opens up about his 80 lb. weight loss, use of GLP-1 — ‘I think it’s what I need to succeed’

Tina Sfondeles

, September 21, 2026

More than two years into his new weight loss journey, JB Pritzker says he wants to talk about it openly, largely in part because he knows millions of Americans are suffering from obesity-related health conditions. The disclosure also comes just months before Democrats are expected to announce their intentions to run for president.

Listen • 4:39



Illinois News

Republican-turned-independent Collin Corbett hopes to provide voters an alternative for governor

Ben Szalinski, Brenden Moore

, September 21, 2026

Collin Corbett said his campaign is about proving there is an appetite for independent, centrist candidates in Illinois as voters weigh their options between

staunch Democratic Gov. JB Pritzker and Trump-endorsed Republican Darren Bailey.



Local News

Proposed McLean County budget includes body cams for jail guards

Charlie Schlenker

, September 21, 2026

McLean County government is getting into the heart of its budget season. The proposed \$150 million spending plan would be up 4.1% from the current fiscal year — an increase of \$5.9 million.

Listen • 7:34



Local News

Normal proposes 6-month extension to data center moratorium

Eric Stock, Charlie Schlenker

, September 18, 2026

The town council will vote Monday on a plan to extend the moratorium on accepting any data center permits through May 2027.



Local News

Proposed McLean County budget would lower tax rate for 3rd straight year

Jim Stahly Jr.

, September 17, 2026

Coming in at just over \$150 million, the balanced budget is \$5.9 million more than 2026, but lowers the property tax rate slightly from \$0.83 to \$0.81, amounting to a decrease of \$15.86 for the owner of a \$255,000 home.



Local News

Bloomington mayor says recent police incident with assistant chief hurt public trust

Charlie Schlenker, Lauren Warnecke

, September 17, 2026

The mayor of Bloomington said the city and police department must work to regain public trust in the wake of the abrupt retirement of Assistant Chief Paul Williams. Williams was involved in a questionable traffic stop that sparked a lawsuit against Williams and the city.

Listen • 7:51



Local News

Environmentalists say proposed McLean County carbon wells are dangerously close to fresh water

Ben Howell

, September 16, 2026

The three wells to be used for carbon sequestration are just inside the eastern border of McLean County and about 5 miles west of Gibson City. Environmental advocates say that's too close to a fresh water source which replenishes the Mahomet Aquifer.

Listen • 4:38



Local News

BNWRD steps in to solve Colonial Meadows water woes

Charlie Schlenker

, September 15, 2026

The Bloomington-Normal Water Reclamation District will fix the longstanding bad water situation in the Colonial Meadows subdivision on the far east side of Bloomington. The water reclamation district also will spend \$2 million on a new exhibit at the Children's Discovery Museum. The district board has approved borrowing up to \$65 million. And BNWRD will probably raise its property tax rate to the maximum allowed.

Listen • 7:46



Local News

Normal Town Council will review plan to expand Children's Discovery Museum

Ben Howell

, September 14, 2026

The plan approved by the Uptown Design Review Commission asks for a waiver to enclose the museum's open arcade on the west side. The museum also wants space to expand its water table exhibit.



Local News

McLean County had \$42M in damage from August storm, says deputy Bloomington city manager

Lizzie Seils

, September 14, 2026

Deputy City Manager Sue McLaughlin reported Bloomington crews have hauled off 2,373 loads of brush.



Local News

Mike Matejka honored with 2026 Public Humanities Award

Ben Howell

, September 14, 2026

Mike Matejka is the only person from outside Chicago honored by Illinois Humanities this year, given the Public Humanities Award recognizing community leaders who further culture and civic engagement.



Illinois News

Public defense reform advances as Illinois moves to hire statewide public defender

Hannah Meisel

, September 11, 2026

After a two-year legislative process to create the Office of Statewide Public Defender, the Illinois Supreme Court is finally moving toward hiring for the position.



Local News

Ceremony marks completion of ISU's new home for the College of Engineering

Braden Fogerson

, September 9, 2026

Among those who spoke were Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker, Illinois State University President Aondover Tarhule, Provost Ani Yazedjian, and dean of the college Tom Keyser.



Local News

Normal Town Council begins process for new TIF, approves \$1.2 million bridge replacement

Braden Fogerson

, September 8, 2026

The Normal Town Council has set a date for a public hearing on a new Tax Increment Financing [TIF] district in north Normal.



Illinois News

Rep. LaHood says mail-in voting will not be disrupted; Trump should work on affordability

Ben Howell, Joe Deacon - WGLT

, September 8, 2026

U.S. Rep. Darin LaHood spoke to WCBU during a stop in Peoria to announce federal appropriation money for an industrial park in the city. He gave his thoughts on current events including the federal deficit, mail-in voting and data centers.

Listen • 7:25



Local News

Social Security fix requires political will that Sen. Durbin says is absent this year

Charlie Schlenker

, September 3, 2026

U.S. Senator Dick Durbin questioned direct government investment in private businesses and lamented lost momentum in fixing social security, during a stop in Bloomington.



Local News

Sen. Durbin offers advice and earmarks to Illinois Wesleyan University students

Charlie Schlenker

, September 1, 2026

U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin said health care is about more than treating the sick. It's about a healthy society. Durbin was on the Illinois Wesleyan University campus in Bloomington on Tuesday, talking to students and offering them advice.



Local News

Path to resolution of shared sales tax dispute remains unclear

Charlie Schlenker

, September 1, 2026

More than a year and a half after a dispute over shared sales tax money began, the City of Bloomington, Town of Normal and McLean County have no resolution and no talks scheduled.

Listen • 7:31



Local News

The \$400 million dispute: Why Rivian thinks its Normal properties are overvalued and overtaxed

Ryan Denham

, August 31, 2026

Documents obtained by WGLT show Rivian trying to make its case for why its Normal properties are significantly overvalued and overtaxed. Millions of tax dollars are at risk for Unit 5 schools and other local taxing bodies.

Listen • 4:19



Local News

McLean County GOP calls for Republican county auditor to resign

Eric Stock

, August 31, 2026

The county Republican party says Michelle Anderson is responsible for a host of delayed payments and grants and the annual 2024 audit which was held up for nine months.



Local News

McLean County mail-in voting currently unaffected by Supreme Court ruling

[Bella Mareello](#)

, August 28, 2026

Election officials in McLean County said the president's efforts to restrict voting by mail aren't affecting them, for now.



[Local News](#)

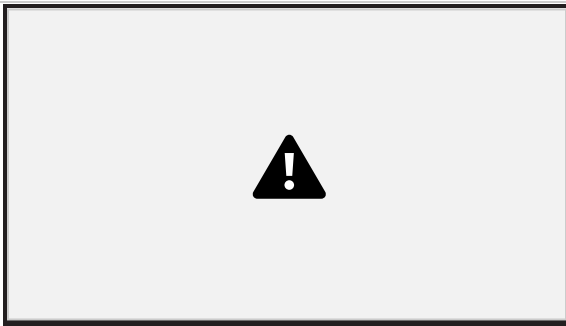
More data center deliberation to come in Bloomington-Normal

[Charlie Schlenker](#)

, August 27, 2026

The Bloomington city manager said a long public forum on data centers this week was just the early part of the discussion about data center policy.

[Listen • 7:34](#)



[Illinois News](#)

Illinois to receive up to \$768M in Meta settlement over teen social media addiction

Hannah Meisel

, August 27, 2026

Illinois will receive up to \$768 million over a 10-year period, which will be used for youth mental health and online safety training programs.



Local News

Pritzker says state won't trade farmland for data centers during McLean County stop

Courtney Conroy

, August 27, 2026

Gov. JB Pritzker said he doesn't want to see McLean County farmland given up for data centers. He said the state should be pumping the brakes on the industry rather than rolling out the red carpet for it.

Listen • 7:24



Illinois News

Putting on the brakes: New Illinois law establishes rules for e-bikes, scooters

Ben Szalinski

, August 26, 2026

JB Pritzker signed a new law to establish statewide rules and regulations for electronic bikes and scooters, also known as e-bikes.



Illinois News

Illinois attorney general joins suit against Postal Service over mail voting rules

Peter Hancock

, August 26, 2026

A lawsuit seeks to block the Postal Service from enforcing new rules prohibit transmitting mail ballots to or from anyone not listed on a federally approved database of U.S. citizens.



Local News

Callers deluged 911 call centers during Bloomington-Normal thunderstorms

Charlie Schlenker

, August 26, 2026

In all, 655 phone calls came into Bloomington and Normal emergency call centers during recent thunderstorms and high winds. That volume overloaded dispatchers at certain points, but the system functioned as designed.

Listen • 7:33



Local News

Darren Bailey urges voter engagement, addresses local issues at Bloomington GOP dinner

Jim Stahly Jr.

, August 26, 2026

Speaking to the group of well over 100, Republican candidate for governor Darren Bailey emphasized that despite his loss to incumbent Gov. JB Pritzker four years ago, he thinks Illinois residents are ready for change wherever they live.

Listen • 6:57



Local News

Police chief says Uptown ordinance gives officers a tool to address crime, not criminalize homelessness

Lauren Warnecke

, August 26, 2026

Normal Police Chief Steve Petrilli said officers have noticed an uptick in homelessness in and near Uptown Station, but that's not the focus of an ordinance update.

Listen • 4:23



Local News

Bloomington council member plans data center discussion with constituents

Lizzie Seils

, August 25, 2026

"I want everyone to sit down, have coffee, have cookies and educate one another," said John Danenberger.



Illinois News

Pritzker, Bailey offer different visions for Illinois education

Peter Hancock

, August 25, 2026

The leading candidates for governor respond to questions about school funding and education policy during their State Fair appearances.



Local News

Bloomington council approves West Bloomington Quality of Life Road Map study

Lizzie Seils

, August 24, 2026

The city council unanimously approved spending \$99,700 to contract with Evanston-based planning and design firm Teska Associates to develop the West Bloomington Quality of Life Road Map.



Local News

Thunderstorm waste hauling tops spring tornado debris in Normal

[Charlie Schlenker](#)

, August 20, 2026

Town of Normal crews have collected over 10,700 cubic yards of brush and debris over the past week. That's 580 truckloads.

Listen • 7:22



Local News

McLean County, city and town have more work to resolve shared sales tax dispute

[Charlie Schlenker](#)

, August 19, 2026

A clean audit of the McLean County Mental Health and Public Safety Fund won't wipe away all the disagreements over how the county spends sales tax money shared by Bloomington and Normal.

Listen • 7:21



Local News

Wind farm development could resume in Central Illinois

Charlie Schlenker

, August 19, 2026

After a pause, wind farm development could take a step forward in McLean County, according to County Board Chair Elizabeth Johnston. A battery energy storage system attached to a wind farm is moving ahead in McLean County.

Listen • 7:12



Local News

Study nears completion on safety for drivers, pedestrians on Veterans Parkway

Ben Howell

, August 18, 2026

The McLean County Regional Planning Commission set out to study Veterans Parkway over a year ago. Recommendations in the final plan include ways to make the road safer, including lowering the speed limit.

Listen • 7:38



Local News

Joint B-N data center forum to include a mix of environmental, energy and policy experts

Lizzie Seils

, August 18, 2026

The forum is scheduled for 5-8 p.m. on Aug. 26 at the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts. Questions will be submitted electronically before the event.



Local News

Kathleen Lorenz won't seek re-election in 2027, opening 2nd seat on Normal Town Council

Ryan Denham

, August 18, 2026

Three-term Normal Town Council member Kathleen Lorenz won't seek re-election. That creates a second open seat heading into the April 6 election.



Local News

Normal Town Council approves zoning amendments, 7 Brew and landscape waste fence

Braden Fogerson

, August 18, 2026

The Normal Town Council approved an amendment to various sections of the town zoning code, excluding a restriction on home-based businesses.



Local News

Bloomington extends dual disaster declarations tied to microburst, heavy rain

[Lizzie Seils](#)

, August 17, 2026

Mayor Dan Brady declared a local disaster emergency for the storm damage and power outages Thursday evening, and issued another Saturday as flooding became the focus. Now, both of those declarations are in place until Sept. 16.



Local News

Clean-up continues as school resumes in still soggy Bloomington-Normal

[Jamie Hand](#), [Cole Loiacano](#), [Ben Howell](#), [Lauren Warnecke](#)

, August 17, 2026

Areas south and east of the City of Bloomington were hardest hit by Thursday's intense thunderstorm, but as rain continued to fall, basements started to get wet. That includes several buildings on Illinois State's campus, where classes started today.



Local News

ISU professors: Illinois must do more to solve world languages teacher shortage

Braden Fogerson

, August 17, 2026

World languages teachers at Illinois State University said the state needs to do more to support world languages education.

Public Safety (aka Police and Courts)

Local News

Lt. Sheriff says jail guard body cameras add a layer of safety and security

Lauren Warnecke, Charlie Schlenker

, September 29, 2026

Correctional officers began wearing body worn cameras in the jail in mid-August. They were purchased as part of a 10-year technology upgrade for both jail and police operations within the McLean County Sheriff's Department.

Listen • 7:19



Local News

19-year-old found guilty of attempted murder in 2024 Traders Circle shooting in Normal

Lauren Warnecke

, September 27, 2026

Because of his age, Demetris Pace may be eligible for a parole hearing after 20 years in prison. He was convicted of attempted murder and other offenses related to a 2024 shooting that paralyzed a 20-year-old college athlete.



Local News

McLean County assistant public defender's law license suspended, charged with making racist threats online

Lauren Warnecke

, September 26, 2026

Sean Lenckus worked as an assistant public defender in McLean County for less than a year before his arrest in April. The Illinois Supreme Court has revoked his law license at least until the case is resolved.



Local News

Water Reclamation District OKs police drone docking at Bloomington treatment plants

Lauren Warnecke

, September 23, 2026

The agreement gets Bloomington Police one step closer to implementing remote-operated drones as a help to officers responding to a scene.

Listen • 4:21



Local News

McLean County looks to fill radio frequency gaps with police, fire system update

Charlie Schlenker

, September 23, 2026

The Emergency Telephone System Board in McLean County wants to update its unified emergency responder radio system. It will be expensive.

Listen • 7:30



Local News

McLean County Sheriff's Office responds to speeding complaints near Lake Bloomington

Eric Stock

, September 18, 2026

The McLean County Sheriff's Office has announced plans to increase patrols around Lake Bloomington due to "numerous complaints" about excessive speeding in the area.



Local News

Bloomington mayor says recent police incident with assistant chief hurt public trust

Charlie Schlenker, Lauren Warnecke

, September 17, 2026

The mayor of Bloomington said the city and police department must work to regain public trust in the wake of the abrupt retirement of Assistant Chief Paul Williams. Williams was involved in a questionable traffic stop that sparked a lawsuit against Williams and the city.

Listen • 7:51



Local News

Traffic stop wasn't the first power play for former Bloomington Police assistant chief

Lauren Warnecke

, September 17, 2026

Former Assistant Police Chief Paul Williams repeatedly leveraged his position and power during a four-decade career at the BPD, in ways which sometimes concerned his subordinates and superiors. The latest incident, involving a June traffic stop conducted while he was off duty, prompted a lawsuit followed by his abrupt retirement.



Local News

Former State Farm Holiday Classic insider pleads guilty to stealing more than \$100K from the tournament

Lauren Warnecke

, September 17, 2026

Kyle W. Myers of Normal admitted he used the nonprofit's money for personal expenses. He's already paid \$100,000 back to the organization.



Local News

Officer turns his 'best worst day' at the Normal PD into a way to support others through tough times

Lauren Warnecke

, September 14, 2026

Evan Easter spends his days off from the Normal Police Department attending conferences and other speaking events through his speaking platform called The Fractured Mind. He recently launched an offshoot called Locker Room Resilience, using similarities from law enforcement to support competitive athletes. Easter was among the three officers who in 2021 pursued an active shooter in the Landings subdivision in Normal.

Listen • 4:42



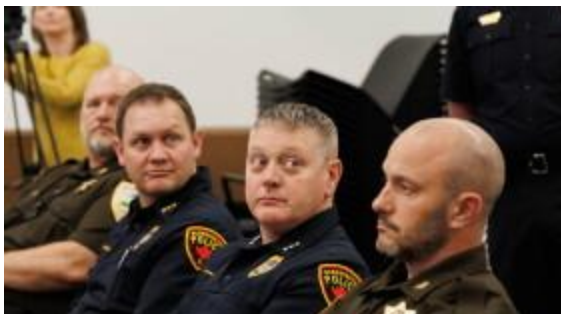
Illinois News

Public defense reform advances as Illinois moves to hire statewide public defender

Hannah Meisel

, September 11, 2026

After a two-year legislative process to create the Office of Statewide Public Defender, the Illinois Supreme Court is finally moving toward hiring for the position.



Local News

Second assistant chief departs Bloomington Police, takes training academy job in Decatur

Lauren Warnecke

, September 11, 2026

Assistant Chief Chad Wamsley filed for retirement after more than 25 years on the force. He is the second assistant chief to retire in recent weeks, with an Oct. 16 departure date.



Local News

19-year-old gets 12 years in prison following drunk driving crash that killed woman from Downs

Cole Loiacano, Lauren Warnecke

, September 9, 2026

Caleb Lawson, from Downs, has been sentenced to 12 years in prison after pleading guilty to aggravated DUI causing death and leaving the scene of an accident involving a death.



Local News

Federal court tosses out lawsuit by Bloomington couple accused of medical spa theft

Lauren Warnecke

, September 8, 2026

The court dismissed Cassandra and Jadeyn Lacey's claims they were subject to false arrest and mistreatment after being charged with stealing from Blueze medical spa. The couple was acquitted before the criminal case went to trial.



Local News

Man gets 104 years in prison for 2021 killing at Bloomington apartment

Lauren Warnecke

, September 4, 2026

Osman McLaurin, 29, was convicted of first-degree murder in June. Judge Jason Chambers sentenced him Thursday to more than a century in prison.



Local News

Bloomington firefighter struck at crash scene; driver arrested on fleeing charges

Eric Stock

, September 3, 2026

The Bloomington Fire Department is urging drivers to slow down and move over near crash scenes after a firefighter was struck Thursday by a hit-and-run vehicle at the scene of an earlier crash.



Local News

Mother from Normal gets 9-year sentence following child's death from heat exposure

Lauren Warnecke

, September 3, 2026

Quvonnay Collins, 26, must serve at least half of a 9-year sentence after pleading guilty to involuntary manslaughter.



Local News

Amid investigation and lawsuit, Bloomington Police officer files for retirement

Lauren Warnecke

, September 1, 2026

Bloomington Assistant Police Chief Paul Williams submitted notice of his retirement Tuesday after decades with the department.



Local News

McLean County Drug Court celebrates 20 years of 'changing lives forever'

Ben Howell, Lauren Warnecke

, August 28, 2026

Over the 20-year run of the problem-solving court, 200 McLean County residents have graduated from the program. Clients and their team members alike describe it as difficult but worth it.

Listen • 4:31



Local News

With Costigan set to retire, Circuit Judge Fellheimer will be chief judge again

Lauren Warnecke

, August 28, 2026

Mark Fellheimer was previously chief judge of Illinois' 11th Judicial Circuit, overseeing judges in five counties, including McLean County. He succeeds Chief Judge Casey Costigan, who retires in October.



Local News

Three remain in critical condition after rural Bloomington house explosion; cause still unknown

Lizzie Seils, Ryan Denham

, August 27, 2026

With a natural gas leak from Nicor ruled out, officials said Thursday they're still looking for the cause of a house explosion and fire in rural Bloomington that's left three people critically injured. A GoFundMe has been set up for the Hoefer family.



Local News

Callers deluged 911 call centers during Bloomington-Normal thunderstorms

Charlie Schlenker

, August 26, 2026

In all, 655 phone calls came into Bloomington and Normal emergency call centers during recent thunderstorms and high winds. That volume overloaded dispatchers at certain points, but the system functioned as designed.

Listen • 7:33



Local News

Rotten smell stretched from Carlock to Pipeline Road on Tuesday

Charlie Schlenker

, August 26, 2026

A bad odor detected over a wide stretch of McLean County north of Bloomington-Normal came from a Nicor utility chemical release, according to the

Hudson Fire Department. It's not related to the house explosion overnight in rural Bloomington.



Local News

8 taken to hospital after house explosion west of Bloomington

Ryan Denham

, August 26, 2026

Eight people were taken to the hospital early Wednesday after an apparent house explosion on Bloomington's far western edge. It happened just before midnight at a home along Old Peoria Court.



Local News

Police chief says Uptown ordinance gives officers a tool to address crime, not criminalize homelessness

[Lauren Warnecke](#)

, August 26, 2026

Normal Police Chief Steve Petrilli said officers have noticed an uptick in homelessness in and near Uptown Station, but that's not the focus of an ordinance update.

Listen • 4:23



Local News

Arrests of 2 B-N cheer coaches stir questions about youth sports oversight

[Lauren Warnecke](#)

, August 25, 2026

After two high-profile criminal cases against Twin City cheer coaches, WGLT looks into how coaches are vetted and supervised across local schools and private gyms.

Listen • 7:42



Local News

Normal Police launch program to ease communication with neurodivergent residents

Lauren Warnecke, Courtney Conroy

, August 19, 2026

The new, voluntary Blue Envelope Program is now part of the Normal Police Department's operations. It's used to improve interactions — usually traffic stops — with people who have autism, cognitive delays, communication differences or other neurodivergent conditions.



Local News

Assistant Bloomington Police chief on leave pending lawsuit alleging false arrest, First Amendment violations

Lauren Warnecke

, August 18, 2026

Paul Williams is named with the City of Bloomington as defendants in a federal lawsuit accusing the assistant police chief of misconduct during a June traffic stop.



Local News

Georgia man found guilty of first-degree murder at 2022 party in Bloomington

Lauren Warnecke

, August 17, 2026

A McLean County jury convicted Tomiyale Anderson, 22, on all counts related to the shooting death of 17-year-old Kanye Stowers, a student at Richwoods High School in Peoria.



Local News

1 in critical condition, 4 others remain hospitalized after Uptown Circle crash

Ryan Denham

, August 15, 2026

The five people injured when a pickup truck veered onto the sidewalk in Uptown Normal and struck a building remained hospitalized Saturday, including one in critical condition.



Local News

Coach gets 4.5-year sentence for abuse of a teen girl at Normal cheerleading gym

Lauren Warnecke

, August 14, 2026

Brady Stoewer, 24, of Normal was eligible for probation after pleading guilty to one count of criminal sexual abuse of a minor. A judge issued the 4.5-year sentence during an all-day hearing Friday in McLean County Court.



Local News

5 people injured in Uptown Circle crash that also damages children's museum exterior

Lizzie Seils, Ryan Denham

, August 14, 2026

Five people, including pedestrians, were injured and the Children's Discovery Museum was damaged after a two-vehicle crash near Uptown Circle on Friday afternoon.



Local News

McLean County jail employee charged with possession of child sexual abuse material

Ben Howell

, August 11, 2026

An employee at the McLean County jail is charged with possession of child sexual abuse material. He's now being held at a different jail in Champaign County.



Local News

New Illinois law empowering sexual assault survivors runs into shortage of female officers

Colleen Holden

, August 11, 2026

A new bill Gov. JB Pritzker has signed into law better accommodates survivors of sexual assault during the reporting process, but police are struggling to find the numbers to make it happen.

Listen • 7:31



Local News

Family of Mariah Kletz wants to keep her memory alive as Bloomington Police investigate her killing

Eric Stock, Ben Howell

, August 6, 2026

Friday marks six months since the death of Mariah Kletz, a 16-year-old who died in a mobile home in southwest Bloomington. Her family say they're anxious to see an arrest in the case.



Local News

Bloomington police launch August traffic enforcement plan on Veterans Parkway

Ben Howell

, August 5, 2026

Bloomington Police officers plan to respond to community complaints of excessive vehicle noise and unsafe driving by increasing traffic enforcement on Veterans Parkway.



Local News

Man dies after sport utility vehicle hits bicycle in Bloomington

Charlie Schlenker

, August 3, 2026

A man died when a sport utility vehicle hit the bicycle he was riding Sunday on the west side of Bloomington.



Local News

First look shows recidivism holding steady in McLean County

Lauren Warnecke

, July 29, 2026

New data spanning more than two decades of court records in McLean County shows two-thirds of people convicted on criminal charges do not reoffend.



Local News

Why firing a teacher in Illinois is so hard — even after early red flags

Lauren Warnecke, Eric Stock

, July 29, 2026

A powerful teachers' union and Illinois law put up many barriers to firing tenured teachers, even ones with documented patterns of alleged misconduct.

Listen • 7:51



Local News

How siloed investigations and mistrust left Unit 5 in the lurch in Chiddix cases

Lauren Warnecke

, July 29, 2026

A review of dozens of emails and other documents revealed siloed information sharing which kept Unit 5 from knowing what law enforcement and child welfare officials knew about its employees, even when it involved students in their care.

Listen • 7:51



Local News

FUSE program has led to fewer arrests among people with mental illness, substance use disorders

Lauren Warnecke

, July 24, 2026

The county-led program, in place since 2019, has contributed to fewer jail bookings for participants, including a steep decline in DUI and traffic charges.

Listen • 4:39



Local News

Bloomington will launch emergency notification system CodeRED

Ben Howell

, July 22, 2026

The City of Bloomington will launch a new emergency notification system next week to communicate with residents about severe weather, public safety issues and other urgent information.



Local News

California man gets 20-year sentence following cocaine bust in McLean County

Eric Stock

, July 13, 2026

Osvaldo Anaya Ramirez, 41, of Oakland, California, pleaded guilty to felony possession of over 900 grams of cocaine with intent to deliver in McLean County court.



Local News

14 new counts added to case against 2nd Chiddix teacher, cheer coach

Lauren Warnecke

, July 9, 2026

Teacher and cheer coach Andrew "Drew" Miller now faces a total of 56 felony charges related to grooming and possession of child sexual materials.



Local News

Bloomington Police say drones are an eye in the sky, not a surveillance state

Lizzie Seils

, July 7, 2026

Bloomington Police are trying to dispel rumors and stigmas surrounding drone use by the department.

Listen • 4:45



Local News

Bloomington woman pleads guilty to trying to vote twice in 2024 election

Lauren Warnecke

, July 7, 2026

Suniti Sud accepted a plea agreement, admitting to submitting two ballots in the 2024 general election.



Local News

Trial date set for first of two Chiddix teacher misconduct cases

Lauren Warnecke

, July 7, 2026

Brandon Knapp of Hudson is charged with two counts of grooming, accused of inappropriate behavior with students at the middle school in Normal where he worked for two decades.
