

WGLT ISSUES AND PROGRAMS Second Quarter 2023

April 2023-June 2023

The following issues were addressed during WGLT Newscasts during MORNING EDITION from 5 to 9 am M-F and during ALL THINGS CONSIDERED from 3-6PM, M-F, and during Sound Ideas, 5-5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The story lengths range from one minute to 20 minutes.

Politics and Government

[After narrow vote, Bloomington creates gun violence commission](#)

[Michele Steinbacher](#) , June 26, 2023

The Bloomington City Council voted Monday to create a commission focused on gun violence, but the 5-4 vote shows it's not a universally backed idea.

[Bloomington looks to clarify amusement tax after Tailgate and Tallboys confusion](#)

[Ryan Denham](#), June 26, 2023

Bloomington city leaders are looking to clarify when the city should impose its 4% amusement tax, amid confusion as to whether that should include the Tailgate and Tallboys country music festival.

[Do you believe in 'magic' lobbyists? Illinois businesses stick by Madigan-connected lobbyists.](#)

[Dave McKinney | WBEZ](#), June 23, 2023

The "Magic Lobbyist List" included former House Speaker Michael Madigan's preferred lobbyists. They still represent some big clients.

[Housing navigator is the tip of housing iceberg problem in B-N](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), June 21, 2023

Eight months ago, a housing coalition in Bloomington-Normal asked for help, and a share of Town of Normal and City of Bloomington pandemic relief money to support as people go

through rental assistance, eviction avoidance, and affordable housing programs. But the lack of housing and affordable housing is a much broader issue than one advocate can solve.

Normal to use 'bugs' to test removal of ammonia in drinking water

[Charlie Schlenker](#), June 20, 2023

The Town of Normal is exploring ways to remove some ammonia from its drinking water. If the ammonia-eating bacteria works at scale, the town could save some money by reducing the chlorine it uses and labor expense.

Normal council pitching in to hire 'housing navigator' to address tight market

[Jim Stahly Jr.](#), June 19, 2023

The position, jointly funded with the City of Bloomington for a two-year period, will help people navigate housing assistance programs and coordinate resources so they can compete in a housing market where properties sell quickly.

Businessman James T. Weiss guilty of bribing 2 state lawmakers, lying to the FBI

[Jon Seidel](#), June 16, 2023

The verdict is the second in less than two months to address separate bribery schemes inside the Illinois Capitol. Weiss is a son-in-law of former Cook County Assessor Joseph Berrios.

McLean County Board approves new precinct maps; delays vote on license plate cameras for LeRoy

[Eric Stock](#), June 15, 2023

One county board member argued for two voting precincts to be eliminated, while the county clerk said her office had little to do with the precinct-drawing process.

Mulling run for Congress, farmer Bailey sows seeds for support from indicted Trump: 'It's an honor to stand with this man'

[Tina Sfondeles](#), June 15, 2023

Former GOP gubernatorial nominee Darren Bailey is cozying up to Donald Trump as Bailey considers challenging Republican U.S. Rep. Mike Bost. "What President Trump went through yesterday could happen to anyone [sic] of us for any reason!" Bailey wrote on Wednesday.

The fine print of Illinois' ban on book bans

[Alex Degman](#), June 14, 2023

Gov. JB Pritzker signed a measure that will withhold state funds from libraries that ban books. The move sparked a lot of questions.

Regan Deering launches campaign for Illinois legislature

[Sean Crawford](#), June 14, 2023

Deering lost a race for congress last year to Democrat Nikki Budzinski.

Illinois continues to enact abortion protections a year after Roe v. Wade reversal

[Mawa Iqbal](#), June 14, 2023

A year after Roe v. Wade fell, Illinois Democrat and GOP lawmakers fight for legislation.

Water reclamation district to issue \$100 million in bonds for improvements

[Charlie Schlenker](#), June 13, 2023

The Bloomington-Normal Water Reclamation District is moving toward issuing \$100 million in bonds for improvements to sewage treatment and runoff in the area. District executive director Tim Ervin said that is roughly a third of a larger effort to modernize the system and comply with tighter federal standards on phosphorous and other nutrient emissions.

Dan Brady explores a run for Congress or return to the state legislature

[Eric Stock](#), June 13, 2023

Former state representative and Secretary of State candidate Dan Brady says he's considering a run for Congress. He would run in the central and western Illinois district held by first-term Democrat Eric Sorensen.

Bloomington council approves Washington Street housing development, despite laborers' concerns

[Michele Steinbacher](#), June 13, 2023

Developers can build an \$18.5 million housing development at the former Coachman Motel property, after the Bloomington City Council approved the project Monday night.

Illinois becomes the first state in the U.S. to ban book bans

[Alex Degman](#), June 12, 2023

Citing a “vitriolic strain of white nationalism,” Gov. JB Pritzker signed the measure withholding state grant money from libraries if they ban books.

Normal mayor talks Amtrak improvements, guns and marijuana

[Charlie Schlenker](#), June 12, 2023

The massive influx of federal money for Amtrak from the infrastructure law will help the Chicago-to-St. Louis corridor — even though much of the rolling stock on the corridor has been replaced over the last decade, says Normal Mayor Chris Koos, a nominee to serve on the board of the passenger rail system.

Why Sen. Sally Turner voted against the new state budget, despite liking parts of it

[Ryan Denham](#), June 8, 2023

Republican State Sen. Sally Turner voted against it. She represents southeast Bloomington and smaller communities such as Downs, LeRoy and Heyworth. WGLT interviewed Turner in her district office in Lincoln for a recap of the spring session.

Pritzker touts early education funding in signing \$50.4 billion budget

[Tina Sfondeles](#), June 7, 2023

Gov. J.B. Pritzker has traveled the state this week to tout the budget’s funding of his Smart Start initiative, a focal point of his 2024 budget aimed at improving access to preschool, increasing funding for child care providers and investing in early childhood facilities.

U.S. Rep. Darin LaHood explains his recent 'no' vote on raising the federal debt ceiling

[Collin Schopp](#), June 6, 2023

U.S. Rep. Darin LaHood voted “no” on a compromise bill aimed at raising the nation’s debt ceiling and delaying a potentially catastrophic default for at least a few more years.

Normal town leaders reconsider rules for new marijuana dispensaries

[Michele Steinbacher](#), June 5, 2023

The town currently has issued special-use permits to three such businesses. Two more are considering applying for similar permits, said Mayor Chris Koos.

Sen. Bennett likes some things in the new state budget, but says it was not transparent

[Eric Stock](#), June 5, 2023

State Sen. Tom Bennett voted against the recently-approved \$50.6 billion budget, but pointed to some areas he sees as positive.

City of Bloomington makes pandemic relief grant awards to 5 nonprofits

[Charlie Schlenker](#), June 5, 2023

The City of Bloomington is putting a chunk of its pandemic relief money into homeless services, youth education and support, a program for sexual assault survivors, and the facility of a human services agency.

Vernon Avenue in Normal to get redesign and rebuild

[Charlie Schlenker](#), June 2, 2023

The Town of Normal is exploring how to redesign a 1.85-mile stretch of Vernon Avenue, running from Beaufort Street on the west to Towanda Avenue on the east.

State Sen. Dave Koehler praises education funding in new state budget

[Eric Stock](#), June 1, 2023

Democratic state Sen. Dave Koehler says he was pleased to see more higher education funding in this year's budget.

LaHood votes no, Sorensen says yes as House passes debt limit bill

[Ryan Denham](#), May 31, 2023

A compromise bill to avoid an unprecedented debt default overwhelmingly cleared the U.S. House on Wednesday night – but without the support of one of Bloomington-Normal's congressmen.

Pritzker touts new budget's higher education spending

[Peter Hancock](#), May 31, 2023

MAP grant increase will make community college tuition-free for many

QuikTrip project in Bloomington still needs approvals

[Charlie Schlenker](#), May 30, 2023

More than a year after the Bloomington City Council signed off on a proposal to build a QuikTrip travel station on West Market Street, construction has yet to begin. Deputy City Manager Billy Tyus said the city recently issued building permits.

Illinois lawmakers passed bills on book bans, abortion rights and other issues

[Alex Degman](#), May 30, 2023

It took more than a week longer than expected, but Illinois lawmakers wrapped up their spring legislative session early Saturday with a budget and hundreds of measures that passed. The spending plan and bills now go to Democratic Gov. J.B. Pritzker.

Prevailing wage dialogue expands in advance of Bloomington council vote on apartment project

[Charlie Schlenker](#), May 30, 2023

A Bloomington City Council discussion about whether to apply prevailing wage rules to a private development if there are government incentives at stake is spreading beyond the apartment project in question. That's according to deputy city manager Billy Tyus who said in a WGLT interview the ongoing dialogue is not just about wages.

Budget vote brings General Assembly's 2023 spring session to a close

[Peter Hancock](#), May 27, 2023

The 2023 spring legislative session came to an end in the early hours of Saturday morning after the Illinois House gave its approval to a \$50.6 billion spending plan for the upcoming fiscal year that begins July 1.

State budget clears first hurdle with Senate vote — but elected school board map hits possible stall until next year

[Tina Sfondeles](#), May 26, 2023

A day after Gov. J.B. Pritzker and Democratic lawmakers announced a budget agreement, a revised version of the state spending plan moved a bit further along, passing the Illinois Senate late Thursday.

Pritzker, Democratic leaders take victory lap for reaching budget deal — and only drag their feet a bit in actually filing bill

[Tina Sfondeles](#), May 25, 2023

Democrats finally filed a state budget bill Wednesday night — five days after blowing a self-imposed deadline and nearly six hours after Gov. J.B. Pritzker and party leaders held a celebratory news conference to declare they had reached agreement on a “good” and “balanced” budget.

Durbin says all options are on the table as a Senate committee investigates Supreme Court ethics

[Eric Stock](#), May 24, 2023

U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin said Supreme Court justices can't argue that separation of powers shields them from ethics laws.

Working across the aisle a theme of Rep. Sorensen's telephone town hall

[Jim Stahly Jr.](#), May 23, 2023

The congressman addressed various national issues during the event that featured call-in questions from throughout the 17th Congressional District, but much of the discussion centered around how he's trying to help constituents.

Durbin meets with Bloomington mayor to discuss federal funding for local projects

[Eric Stock](#), May 23, 2023

Bloomington Mayor Mboka Mwilambwe met with U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., on Tuesday to discuss several projects the city will likely require some federal funding to complete.

Bloomington council votes on O'Neil Park Project contracts; hears \$10M streets plan

[Michele Steinbacher](#), May 23, 2023

The Bloomington City Council voted Monday on several items related to the nearly \$14 million O'Neil Park and Pool project, including changing the skatepark designer.

Split Bloomington council stalls proposed \$18.5M development amid calls for prevailing wages

[Michele Steinbacher](#), May 23, 2023

An \$18.5 million proposal to create a high-end housing complex near downtown is on hold, after the Bloomington City Council opted Monday to postpone a scheduled vote until June 12.

Democrats move to allow punitive damage awards in wrongful death lawsuits

[Hannah Meisel](#), May 19, 2023

Democrats in the General Assembly this week lined up to push a measure that would allow state courts to award punitive damages in wrongful death lawsuits – a departure from the status quo for more than a century in Illinois.

Illinois Senate passes McLean County airport bill, sending it to governor's desk

[Ryan Denham](#), May 19, 2023

The Illinois Senate on Friday approved a bill that changes who pays property taxes to support the Central Illinois Regional Airport, sending it to the governor's desk for a signature.

Normal library asbestos removal project to cost millions

[Charlie Schlenker](#), May 18, 2023

It will be expensive to remove asbestos from the Normal Public Library. Estimates range from \$3.5 million to more than \$5 million if other improvements are done at the same time.

As budget negotiations continue, Pritzker announces launch of stalled tax incentive program

[Jerry Nowicki](#), May 18, 2023

Blue Collar Jobs Act was approved on bipartisan lines in 2019 before governor froze it amid pandemic

McLean County airport bill nears final passage in Springfield

[Ryan Denham](#), May 17, 2023

A bill that would change who pays property taxes to support the Central Illinois Regional Airport is one step closer to final passage. The bill, SB 684, passed the Illinois House on Wednesday. It now moves to the Senate.

Tax breaks for Bears punted to state legislature's fall veto session

[Alex Degman](#), May 17, 2023

A legislative proposal to help the Bears pay for a new stadium and entertainment complex in Arlington Heights got its first hearing, but final action is still a ways away.

Mayor Brandon Johnson assures asylum-seekers Chicago will embrace them

[Emmanuel Camarillo](#), May 17, 2023

Brandon Johnson spent part of his first full day as mayor Tuesday visiting asylum-seekers who have been sleeping on the floor of the 12th District police station and others staying at a temporary shelter in Little Village, saying he needed to see the crisis “first-hand.”

Lawmakers advance bills mandating salary transparency, community college credit parity

[Andrew Adams](#), May 16, 2023

One week remains in General Assembly’s spring legislative session

History, humility, hope — and a few hugs — mark swearing in of younger, more diverse City Council

[Mitchell Armentrout](#), May 16, 2023

Some were nervous, a few stumbling over their oaths of office because it was, as Mayor Brandon Johnson acknowledged, “your day, too.”

Victims of ‘deepfake porn’ and ‘doxing’ could have right to sue under pair of bills

[Nika Schoonover](#), May 16, 2023

Bills moving unanimously amid concerns from ACLU of Illinois

Exelon is paying the legal tab for two former executives convicted in ComEd bribery scheme

[Dave McKinney | WBEZ](#), May 16, 2023

Exelon has been paying the legal fees for two now-convicted former Commonwealth Edison executives who were part of a conspiracy to bribe former Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan, WBEZ has learned.

Bloomington police, fire chiefs brief city council on 2022 performance

[Colin Hardman](#), May 15, 2023

Police chief Jamal Simington praised the department for its efforts, handling about 69,000 calls for service and 10,000 traffic stops in 2022, leading to a total of 1,637 arrests.

Giant Route 66 roadside sign coming to Normal to greet centennial visitors

[Michele Steinbacher](#), May 15, 2023

The Normal Town Council on Monday approved final plans for a giant Route 66 sign, spelling out the town's name at One Normal Plaza.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis teases presidential run in speech to Republicans in Peoria

[Tim Shelley](#), May 12, 2023

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis on Friday in Peoria teased at a presidential run he's widely expected to announce later this month.

As assault weapons ban faces challenges, lawmakers consider more gun restrictions

[Peter Hancock](#), May 12, 2023

Illinois lawmakers are considering further legislation restricting the possession and marketing of firearms, even as state and federal courts are weighing the constitutionality of an assault weapons ban passed in January.

He used to do business with reputed mob figures. Now, he's licensed by the Illinois Gaming Board.

[Robert Herguth](#), May 12, 2023

Lemont resident Jeffrey Bertucci admitted in federal court in 2010 that he'd obtained video gaming devices for his Cicero diner from an amusement company linked to one of the most feared figures in the Chicago mob, James Marcello.

McLean County requires special-use permit for CO2 wells; approves plans for small business grants

[Eric Stock](#), May 11, 2023

The McLean County Board will require a special-use permit for companies that want to drill liquefied carbon dioxide deep underground in the county.

All eyes on Peoria ahead of Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis' Friday appearance at GOP dinner

[Tim Shelley](#), May 11, 2023

The governor is trading barbs with Central Illinois Republicans ahead of the Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis' appearance in Peoria on Friday evening.

[A former Illinois State Senator convicted in corruption scheme gets a new job — state lobbyist](#)

[Dan Mihalopoulos | WBEZ](#), May 10, 2023

Eleven days after serving a federal prison term for corruption, a former Illinois legislator from Chicago's western suburbs registered as a state government lobbyist last month, according to federal and state records.

[Rep. Mary Flowers removed from leadership after saying staff member resembled Hitler](#)

[Alex Degman](#), May 9, 2023

The longtime Chicago Democrat called her removal "petty," noting no one filed a complaint against her.

[As McLean County jail faces staffing crunch, Jail Review Committee stands ready to help](#)

[Ryan Denham](#), May 9, 2023

The Jail Review Committee was founded in 1980 at the suggestion of then-Sheriff Steve Brien. It is a free-standing volunteer body whose members are appointed by various community groups to serve as their representatives.

[Bloomington council OKs major remodel of two Government Center floors; part of city reorganization](#)

[Michele Steinbacher](#), May 8, 2023

The Bloomington City Council voted Monday to take the next step in a major reorganization of city space needs, approving a more than half-million-dollar office-space remodel.

[Illinois isn't reimbursing allegedly stolen SNAP benefits](#)

[Kristen Schorsch | WBEZ](#), May 8, 2023

After wrapping up her volunteer shift at a food pantry last spring, Carolina Torres stopped by the store to buy tortillas, chorizo, eggs and avocados to make dinner for her family.

[The ComEd jury foreman says Madigan is a dangerous force in Illinois politics](#)

[Dave McKinney | WBEZ](#), May 8, 2023

Sarah Goldenberg didn't know much about former Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan when she answered a federal jury summons this spring that later became a front-row seat to Illinois' biggest political corruption case in a decade.

Rep. Eric Sorensen tours Bloomington, Normal with mayors

[Lyndsay Jones](#), May 5, 2023

The Democratic U.S. congressman talked about revitalizing both downtown Bloomington and Uptown Normal, saying there's an emphasis on "bringing our communities back together to this livable, central core."

Fruits, veggies and maybe wine? Bloomington council to vote on farmers market liquor licenses

[Michele Steinbacher](#), May 5, 2023

Shoppers at this summer's downtown Bloomington farmers market may find wine and beer tastings at some booths, if a proposed change to liquor licenses is approved next week.

Illinois' government has spent billions in federal pandemic aid. What do some programs do when the money runs out?

May 5, 2023

Illinois has received billions in federal relief money during the COVID-19 pandemic. But there will be no new rounds of aid from Washington after federal and state COVID emergency orders expire on May 11.

Salvation Army says city wants it to take in fewer shelter guests due to capacity limits

[Lyndsay Jones](#), May 4, 2023

The Salvation Army of Bloomington operates Safe Harbor, the only 24-hour emergency winter shelter in McLean County. The number of people who seek shelter there is beyond the site's capacity to handle safely, according to city officials.

Airport board chair says expanded tax base would create financial flexibility

[Charlie Schlenker](#), May 3, 2023

A bill moving through the state legislature to make the tax base larger for the Central Illinois Regional Airport also would increase the maximum tax rate that could support the facility. It has passed the Senate and cleared a House committee.

What the ComEd trial guilty verdicts means for Illinois politics

[Dave McKinney | WBEZ](#), May 3, 2023

The convictions could impact the bribery trial next year of one-time House Speaker Michael Madigan, but could also ignite new ethics reforms and questions about how politicians are lobbied.

Normal mayor says more research needed on potential campus area grocery store

[Charlie Schlenker](#), May 2, 2023

Normal Mayor Chris Koos says a potential campus area grocery store may require both the university and town to help it succeed. And he said Tuesday that a lot more work needs to be done before such a project is ready to move forward.

Illinois' House speaker, an ally to organized labor, faces a push from his own employees to unionize

[Alex Degman](#), May 2, 2023

Employees have formed the Illinois Legislative Staff Association, but Speaker Welch won't voluntarily recognize them.

Normal OKs 2 new pot dispensaries; seats Andy Byars as newest member

[Michele Steinbacher](#), May 1, 2023

Normal's second and third pot shops are good to go, after the Normal Town Council on Monday approved both cannabis dispensary projects.

New Bloomington City Council members take oath of office

[Philip Walker](#), May 1, 2023

The new council members are Jenna Kearns, Ward 1; John Wyatt Danenberger, Ward 4; Cody Hendricks, Ward 6; and Kent Lee, Ward 8. Ward 2 incumbent Donna Boelen also was sworn in following her reelection.

McLean County awaits transfer for some jail inmates who are being held in the booking area

[Eric Stock](#), April 26, 2023

McLean County administrator Cassy Taylor said inmates who require 24-hour supervision are still getting the attention and treatment they need.

Movement being seen on new restaurants in Uptown Circle

[Charlie Schlenker](#), April 25, 2023

City Manager Pam Reece said there is interest in the former Subway sandwich space in Uptown Station. The town issued a request for proposal a couple months ago after the business closed in October 2022.

Bloomington council greenlights Connect Transit downtown hub at Market Street garage

[Michele Steinbacher](#), April 24, 2023

The Bloomington City Council on Monday OK'd a plan to transform the aging Market Street parking deck into Connect Transit's new downtown hub.

Bloomington council to vote on proposal to make Market Street deck Connect Transit downtown hub

[Michele Steinbacher](#), April 24, 2023

Connect Transit's proposal to transform the Market Street parking deck into a downtown bus hub could get Bloomington City Council approval Monday.

LaHood, Sorensen seek \$15M for Bloomington-Normal projects

[Eric Stock](#), April 20, 2023

Six Bloomington-Normal projects are included in a list of federal funding requests from the area's two members of Congress. Reps. Darin LaHood and Eric Sorensen have submitted requests for Community Project Funding for 2024.

Mwilambwe testifies before Illinois House committee on state tax sharing

[Eric Stock](#), April 19, 2023

Mayors from Bloomington and more than a dozen other Illinois cities are calling on state lawmakers to restore the share of income tax revenue that goes to local governments.

Pat Brady brings his political prescription to the League of Women Voters fundraiser

[Jim Stahly Jr.](#), April 19, 2023

Pat Brady, a regular commentator on political news, told guests at the annual fundraiser for the McLean County League of Women Voters that a variety of factors contributed to the current state.

O'Neil Pool and Park project delayed until late summer at the earliest

[Colin Hardman](#), April 18, 2023

Bloomington's O'Neil Park and Pool project won't be ready to open this summer as originally planned. City parks and recreation director Eric Veal says construction lost a few months to unexpected on-site problems with the ground.

Normal council OKs negotiating contract to build \$5M east side fire station

[Michele Steinbacher](#), April 17, 2023

Normal is a step closer to a new \$5 million east side fire station, after the town council on Monday OK'd negotiating a contract for building the future firehouse at Shepard and Hershey roads.

Bloomington names city attorney Jeff Jurgens 2nd deputy city manager

[Eric Stock](#), April 17, 2023

City Manager Tim Gleason requested the additional staff person to help manage the city's growth and strengthen government accountability, he told the city council last week.

Rural mayors slam CIRA tax plan, urge the McLean County Board to oppose it

[Eric Stock](#), April 13, 2023

The McLean County Board has not taken a position on the Central Illinois Regional Airport's plan to expand its tax base to the entire county. A county committee delayed a vote earlier this week.

Impact of Donald Trump charges years away from clarity

[Charlie Schlenker](#), April 12, 2023

Prosecutors may want to view the case against Donald Trump absent a political lens, but Illinois State University Political Scientist Lane Crothers said there is no way for prosecutors to avoid that framing.

Bill calls for review of teacher licensing standards in Illinois

[Peter Hancock](#), April 11, 2023

Some Illinois lawmakers are calling for a review of one of the tests prospective teachers must pass in order to be licensed in Illinois.

U-High student gets bill passed to protect child influencers online

[Emily Bollinger](#), April 11, 2023

University High School student Shreya Nallamothu played a key role in getting state legislation to protect child influencers.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis to speak in Peoria in May

[Tim Shelley](#), April 11, 2023

The likely 2024 GOP presidential candidate will be the keynote speaker for the Peoria and Tazewell County Republican Lincoln Day Dinner on May 12.

McLean County delays resolution to oppose Central Illinois Regional Airport's tax plan

[Eric Stock](#), April 11, 2023

The head of the Bloomington-Normal Airport Authority says the airport is looking to expand its tax base to help it respond to future crises and to have the flexibility to take advantage of unexpected development opportunities.

Bloomington council adopts \$290M budget; creates second deputy city manager position

[Michele Steinbacher](#), April 11, 2023

The Bloomington City Council adopted a \$290 million budget on Monday — the largest in the city's history, and nearly 8% higher than the current year's spending plan.

Chris Koos says election results send clear message against negativity and hate

[Charlie Schlenker](#), April 10, 2023

Normal Mayor Chris Koos said the hefty margins of victory for moderates in school board and town council races and the Unit 5 referendum show the electorate rejects the negativity of recent years from the far right. Koos also ties McLean County results to state and national trends.

Changes likely for Trail East and West proposals in Uptown Normal

[Charlie Schlenker](#), April 6, 2023

There are changes coming to plans for two large, mixed-use buildings on Uptown Circle in Normal. "We're in active discussions with two developers looking to do trailside east and trailside west," said Mayor Chris Koos.

McLean County exploring carbon capture technology, potential guardrails

[Eric Stock](#), April 6, 2023

CO2 pipeline developers with Omaha-based Navigator are talking with landowners in southwestern McLean County about setting up injection wells, part of a pipeline project that would carry liquefied carbon dioxide from Iowa and other Midwestern states to central Illinois.

Bloomington Township voters approve higher taxing authority for fire, ambulance services

[Eric Stock](#), April 5, 2023

The Bloomington Township Fire Protection District sought the referendum because of state-mandated minimum wage increases, higher equipment costs and the need to stay competitive in recruiting emergency personnel.

John Wyatt Danenberger and Cody Hendricks elected to Bloomington City Council

[Eric Stock](#), April 4, 2023

John Wyatt Danenberger and Cody Hendricks will be two of four new members on the Bloomington City Council next month.

Lorenz, Smith and Byars win Normal Town Council seats

[Charlie Schlenker](#), April 4, 2023

Normal Town Council incumbents Kathleen Lorenz and Karyn Smith, along with newcomer Andy Byars, defeated the opposition ticket of incumbent Stan Nord, Marc Tiritilli and Karl Sila in Tuesday's election.

Normal council OKs 500-unit Carden Springs housing plan, construction could begin in fall

[Michele Steinbacher](#), April 3, 2023

The 36-acre site in northeast Normal stands north of Beech Street, bordered by Towanda Avenue and the property lines of Pfitzer Road homes.

After Normal's move, Bloomington's city manager hesitant to abolish vehicle use tax

[Charlie Schlenker](#), April 3, 2023

The city manager of Bloomington hopes the city council will not be too quick to eliminate the vehicle use tax. The sales tax on Bloomington residents who buy vehicles outside the city raises about \$1.3 million per year.

As referendum vote looms, Carlock mayor says school closure could be devastating

[Ryan Denham](#), April 2, 2023

The mayor of Carlock, Rhonda Baer, says the potential closure of her town's elementary school could be devastating to her community.

These Bloomington-Normal high schoolers are voting for the first time Tuesday

[Ryan Denham](#), March 31, 2023

Three Bloomington-Normal high schoolers say they're excited to vote for the first time this week.

Illinois Senate passes bill to expand tax base for Central Illinois Regional Airport

[Ryan Denham](#), March 31, 2023

The Illinois Senate has passed a bill that would expand the property-tax base for Central Illinois Regional Airport – from Bloomington and Normal city limits to the entire county.

Arts and Culture

How the Town of Normal prepares for July 4 fireworks after a dry spring

[Lauren Warnecke](#), June 28, 2023

There's rain ahead in the forecast, but weeks of drought increase fire risk for communities preparing their July 4 fireworks displays. WGLT talked to officials from the Town of Normal Parks and Recreation and Fire Departments to get the skinny on how they mitigate risk.

When V8 Vast Change is called to leave the Twin Cities, he will. But he's not done here yet.

[Lauren Warnecke](#), June 22, 2023

WGLT catches up with V8 Vast Change ahead of his Saturday set at Make Music Normal. A new album, "The Melanin King," is scheduled to drop this summer.

Sunset on the Longest Day — and a new earthwork at ISU's Horticulture Center

[Lyndsay Jones](#), June 22, 2023

A performance centering on Native American voices served as a sort-of groundbreaking for a natural art piece at Illinois State University's Horticulture Center that will be developed over the course of eight years.

Swashbuckling satire 'Pirates of Penzance' marks MIOpera's BCPA debut

[Lauren Warnecke](#), June 21, 2023

A modernized version of the Gilbert and Sullivan 1879 operetta kicks off MIOpera's new partnership with the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts. A previously-planned July run of "Romeo and Juliet" has been postponed until next February.

Photos and video: Juneteenth celebration in Bloomington

[Emily Bollinger](#), June 19, 2023

The community celebrated Juneteenth on Saturday at Miller Park. The event was hosted by the Bloomington-Normal Black History Project in partnership with the City of Bloomington.

2 new Atlanta museums look for 'giant' impact, enticing Route 66 tourists to stay awhile

[Lauren Warnecke](#), June 16, 2023

Atlanta, Illinois is ramping up tourism efforts, anticipating an influx of travelers for the Route 66 centennial. Visitors to the J.H. Hawes Grain Elevator can now view a decommissioned mine shaft on the grounds. The Atlanta Coal Mining Company Museum tells the story of Atlanta's 40 years of failed attempts at sourcing its own black gold. A nearby American Giants Museum is scheduled to open in July.

Bloomington mayor dreams of regional Juneteenth observance

[Charlie Schlenker](#), June 15, 2023

Bloomington Mayor Mboka Mwilambwe said he has a big vision for the annual Juneteenth celebration at Miller Park, emphasizing that marking the end of slavery is important for the entire community.

Bloomington's city-backed Juneteenth event celebrates freedom — with lots of free stuff to do!

[Lauren Warnecke](#), June 15, 2023

Juneteenth has been celebrated in Bloomington off and on for 30 years. Last year's move to Miller Park came with a boost of city support. The 2023 Juneteenth promises to be bigger than ever, with V.I.P. the Little Mermaid making an appearance.

Photos and video from WGLT's first Highway 309 LIVE concert

[Ryan Denham](#), June 15, 2023

Jaimee Harris and emily the band brought their talents to the Normal Theater for the inaugural Highway 309 LIVE show presented by CEFCU. See photos and videos.

No neon lights, just stunning homes 'On Broadway' for this year's Old House Society tour

[Lauren Warnecke](#), June 9, 2023

The weather should be perfect for the 2023 Old House Society Tour of Homes, returning to Normal for the first time in over a decade.

Brotherhood: Army honors Normal Mayor Koos for helping fellow veterans

[Charlie Schlenker](#), June 8, 2023

The U.S. Army has made the mayor of Normal a distinguished member of the 506th Infantry Regiment, a designation given to those who preserve the history and traditions of the unit.

Getting to know Highway 309 LIVE headliner Jaimee Harris

[Lauren Warnecke](#), June 8, 2023

WGLT's inaugural Highway 309 LIVE event features rising star Jaimee Harris, whose sophomore album "Boomerang Town" reflects on her life growing up in Waco, Texas.

Meet the Highway 309 LIVE openers: emily the band

[Ariele Jones](#), June 8, 2023

Emily the band is the opener for Highway 309 LIVE presented by CEFCU on June 12. Band members Abbey Haste, Cami Proctor, and Emily Antonacci talk about how the band wants to be perceived by its audience, and about being based in Peoria.

Baroque Artists of Champaign-Urbana bring 'The Three Bs' to Bloomington — and Bach's not coming

[Lauren Warnecke](#), June 2, 2023

In a rare Bloomington performance at Illinois Wesleyan University on Saturday, the Baroque Artists of Champaign-Urbana share music by Bonds, Burleigh and Boulanger.

Enriching: Miller Park zookeepers keep animals engaged and energized

[Charlie Schlenker](#), June 1, 2023

Unlike young children on a car ride chanting, "Are we there yet," zoo animals can't tell you when they're bored to tears. Some of them don't even have tear ducts. It's the job of zookeepers to make sure the animals in their care stay active — mentally as well as physically.

Bloomington-Normal Sister Cities strengthens bonds with Vladimir, Russia, despite no exchange trips

[Eric Stock](#), June 1, 2023

Bloomington-Normal's Sister Cities committee has found other ways to connect with its colleagues in Vladimir, Russia and Canterbury, England since exchange trips have stopped.

From 650 submissions, Heartland Theatre's 20th anniversary fest puts on 8 plays in 80 minutes

[Lauren Warnecke](#), May 31, 2023

An international pool of 650 applicants submitted their bite-sized plays for Heartland Theatre's 2023 10-Minute Play Festival. The rules are simple: Plays must be 10-minutes long, with no more than four characters, and stick to this year's "Waiting Room" theme.

McHistory: 'King of Swedes' kept Bloomington streets clean

[Charlie Schlenker](#), May 26, 2023

Wherever humans gather, there is garbage. And getting rid of it is a challenge. The start of trash removal in Bloomington dates to the start of the 20th century and to a man known in his day as the King of Swedes.

Let's play two! It's opening day at the Corn Crib!

[Lauren Warnecke](#), May 25, 2023

WGLT's Lauren Warnecke stopped by the Corn Crib earlier this week as final preparations were being made for opening day, including Corny's Big Summer Blowout on Saturday night. A few staff members took a brief break in the shade to talk about what goes into creating great game day experiences.

[Downtown Bloomington walking tour of social justice sights and stories goes online](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), May 24, 2023

The McLean County Museum of History and Not In Our Town partnered to create an interactive website based on their long-running Social Justice Walking Tour. The D-I-Y tour includes locations pivotal to various social movements related to gender and racial equality, immigrant rights and organized labor.

[From 'skeet, scat, skiddly-doo' to directing Illinois Shakes, Stark retires from ISU theater](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), May 18, 2023

Scenic designer and professor John C. Stark has retired after 32 years at the helm of Illinois State University's scenic design program. In this career retrospective, Stark notes crossing paths with legendary faculty at the beginning of his tenure and other notable memories.

[Catching up with TyJon Charlie as Twin Cities summer music heats up](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), May 17, 2023

Bloomington singer-songwriter TyJon Charlie went solo a few years ago, dissolving his band the Unemployed Architects in lieu of a "one-man band" setup. TyJon Charlie is lined up to play in Bloomington and Normal as part of both cities' outdoor concert series.

[Missing Trego painting found in Bloomington library, hiding in plain sight](#)

[Megan Spoerlein](#), May 10, 2023

A 19th century William B. T. Trego painting, titled "The Charge of Custer at Winchester," was discovered when cleaning out the library for their art auction.

[Town of Normal seeks survey responses on public art](#)

[Ryan Denham](#), May 8, 2023

Members of the public are asked to complete a short online survey, which is available through May. The results will be one of the considerations used in determining where to place public art in the community.

Community Players celebrates the underdog in Potter-inspired 'Puffs'

[Lauren Warnecke](#), May 8, 2023

For its last play of the season, Community Players takes on Matt Cox's hilarious Off-Off-Broadway play "Puffs." It's not Potter, exactly, but follows seven eventful years at a certain wizarding school accessible by train from platform 9 and 3/4.

#3YearsIn3Lines at Illinois Art Station captures youth pandemic experiences through art

[Lauren Warnecke](#), May 5, 2023

A new gallery at Illinois Art Station called #3YearsIn3Lines encourages youth to reflect on the long arc of their pandemic experiences. The community-sourced exhibition will be contributed to a COVID-19 archive at the McLean County Museum of History.

Fruits, veggies and maybe wine? Bloomington council to vote on farmers market liquor licenses

[Michele Steinbacher](#), May 5, 2023

Shoppers at this summer's downtown Bloomington farmers market may find wine and beer tastings at some booths, if a proposed change to liquor licenses is approved next week.

Illinois Wesleyan alum T.J. Newman's writing career takes off after a decade in the sky

[Ryan Denham](#), May 5, 2023

Illinois Wesleyan University alum T.J. Newman spent 10 years working as a flight attendant. Now, her decade in the sky has helped her launch a successful career as a novelist.

Illinois Symphony concludes season 30 with an 'epic' tribute to the American spirit

[Lauren Warnecke](#), May 5, 2023

A festive season finale at ISU features music by Béla Bartók, Antonin Dvořák and living composer Michael Torke.

With United Sound, ISU students boost music access for B-N adults with disabilities

[Lauren Warnecke](#), May 3, 2023

Illinois State University is the first college in Illinois to launch a United Sound chapter. The nationwide program aims to reduce barriers to music participation for people with disabilities.

The ‘visual delights’ of The Floating World at Joe McCauley Gallery

[Lauren Warnecke](#), April 28, 2023

Joe McCauley Gallery's current exhibit highlights four artists with varying degrees of influence from Japanese art and culture, including a printmaker and textile artist working in central Illinois.

Coffeehouse hosts an art gallery and healing letters for sexual assault survivors

[Lauren Warnecke](#), April 24, 2023

For just one more week at the Coffeehouse in Uptown Normal, “Survivor Love Letters” is a collection of fine art, poetry, short stories and letters written to victims of sexual assault. Curator Kylie Ashton Maurer discusses how the project helped her and others heal.

The Gamma Phi Circus teaches ISU students more than flips and tricks—but the flips are great, too!

[Lauren Warnecke](#), April 21, 2023

The Gamma Phi Circus returns to CEFCU Arena with a new show called "Dance On!" Artistic Director Ivan Stoinev said the theme speaks to everyone's inclination to boogie—from infants to seniors.

ISU student stars in dystopian climate change film at Normal Theater

[Emily Bollinger](#), April 20, 2023

Ben Meenan is a mass media major. He plays the lead role in SUNDAY*.

With something for everyone, the BoDeans are back at the Castle with a blend of old and new

[Lauren Warnecke](#), April 20, 2023

'80s rockers the BoDeans rose to national fame from Milwaukee's music scene. The band has changed through the decades, but they're still writing songs and committed to a unique sound rooted in American rock and roll.

Mayan show at ISU Planetarium magnifies the essence of astronomy

[Jayla Johnson](#), April 20, 2023

The ISU Planetarium is presenting “Mayan Archeoastronomy: Observers of the Universe” through May 6. The animated show is an imaginative look at how the ancient Mayans interpreted the night sky.

[For the Bloomington-based Union Avenue, vintage rockabilly is both personal taste and a mission](#)

[Jon Norton](#), April 20, 2023

Union Avenue is a Bloomington-Normal based vintage rockabilly trio. Frontman Christopher Myers says vintage is both personal taste and a mission. That includes releasing their debut EP on vinyl only.

[Heartland Community College marks Lesbian Visibility Week with queer indie films by Catherine Crouch](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), April 17, 2023

Veteran indie filmmaker Catherine Crouch comes to Heartland Community College for a Lesbian Visibility Week public screening and dialog about five short films. For two decades, Crouch has written, directed and produced films from a distinctly lesbian perspective.

[NCHS junior inspires other youth at Disney Dreamers Academy](#)

[Megan Spoerlein](#), April 14, 2023

Bradley Ross Jackson, a junior at Normal Community High School, recently graduated from the Disney Dreamers Academy, a four-day immersive learning experience, that was part of an all-expense paid trip to Disneyland.

[The Lois Jett Collection gets groovy with a 1960s fashion exhibit](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), April 13, 2023

The Lois Jett Historic Costume Collection is home to thousands of garments spanning more than a century of fashion. But students continually gravitate toward 1960s wear for its unique colors and textures — as seen in a new exhibit at the gallery called "Grooving Through the 1960s."

[New book by ISU professor Rose Marshack details life with the punk-rock band Poster Children](#)

[Jon Norton](#), April 13, 2023

"Play Like a Man: My Life in Poster Children" is a new book authored by Illinois State University professor Rose Marshack. The Director of ISUs Creative Technologies program

documents her life as a woman in the punk-rock band Poster Children and details the band at the forefront of the DIY music scene.

[The world's only citywide Slow Art Day is in Bloomington-Normal](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), April 11, 2023

The international initiative known as Slow Art Day has garnered participation from more than 1500 galleries and museums worldwide. The goal? To encourage folks to take a short break from the hustle bustle and enjoy art. Bloomington was first in the world to organize a citywide event, taking place this Saturday.

[Greg Koos receives lifetime achievement award from state historical society](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), April 10, 2023

The Illinois State Historical Society is giving a lifetime achievement award to a McLean County man. Greg Koos is the retired Director of the McLean County Museum of History.

[Mahler, Jolivet and a dash of Pink Floyd in Illinois Symphony's spring chamber concert](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), April 10, 2023

Andrew Joon Choi makes his Illinois Symphony debut with chamber orchestra works highlighting three composers' global, cross-genre influences.

[DaZ Exotic returns, bringing local artists together for a night at Nightshop](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), April 6, 2023

Bloomington native DaZ Exotic chats with WGLT about a one-night-only show at Nightshop. Expect beats from his latest album, but an interdisciplinary celebration of local artistry.

[Global comedy export Vir Das will bring Mumbai, universal laughs, to ISU's Indian Cultural Dinner](#)

[Michele Steinbacher](#), April 1, 2023

Emmy-nominated Vir Das — who's been called India's biggest comedy export — is the guest speaker for the April 11 Indian Cultural Dinner at Illinois State University.

Health and Medicine

Big hearts from many are saving the heart of a Bloomington-Normal woman

[Charlie Schlenker](#), June 22, 2023

The author and activist Bell Hooks once wrote “rarely, if ever, are any of us healed in isolation. Healing is an act of communion.” The story of a Bloomington-Normal woman's effort to get lifesaving heart surgery is an example of just that.

Health and Medicine

McHistory: 'King of Swedes' kept Bloomington streets clean

[Charlie Schlenker](#), May 27, 2023

Wherever humans gather, there is garbage. And getting rid of it is a challenge. The start of trash removal in Bloomington dates to the start of the 20th century and to a man known in his day as the King of Swedes.

Doulas, educators and more try to fill in the gaps of rural health care in Illinois

[Lyndsay Jones](#), May 18, 2023

Experts in rural health care say significant, systemic changes are needed across a litany of issues — public and private insurance reimbursement rates, malpractice rates and staffing among them — for rural hospitals to survive.

Illinois Senate passes fertility fraud bill

[Charlie Schlenker](#), April 3, 2023

The Illinois Senate has passed a bill creating the civil offense of fertility fraud, which happens when a health provider knowingly uses their own sperm or eggs in a fertility treatment without the knowledge or consent of the patient.

Bloomington-Normal churches join a campaign to erase medical debt

[Lyndsay Jones](#), June 28, 2023

A Danville-based woman and medical bill navigator started the fundraising campaign with the nonprofit RIP Medical Debt. An inquiry from First Baptist Church in Bloomington led to McLean County's inclusion in the campaign.

Lyndsay Jones

Durbin and health care leaders unveil plan to bolster rural workforce

[Lyndsay Jones](#), May 22, 2023

Called "Roadmap to Grow Illinois' Rural Health Workforce," the plan has been in the works for more than a year, Durbin said, and prioritizes recruitment and incentives for working in rural areas, as well as expanding educational programming at colleges and universities.

Science and Technology

Most, but not all, crime categories are steady in Normal

[Charlie Schlenker](#), June 13, 2023

Overall crime rates in the town of Normal have remained fairly static over the last five years, said Police Chief Stephen Petrilli, though weapons offenses and gun incidents jumped last year. Department reports showed a 79% increase in gun incidents and nearly 60% growth in weapons offenses. There were 52 gun incidents last year and 67 weapons offenses in the town.

Take off: ISU rocket team lands a win

[Charlie Schlenker](#), May 26, 2023

Illinois State University has won a Department of Defense-sponsored rocket competition for the second straight time. The U of I Laboratory for Advanced Space Systems hosted the competition in Rantoul.

B-N leaders say affordable broadband builds social equity and economic development

[Charlie Schlenker](#), April 19, 2023

Bloomington-Normal leaders are emphasizing the need for more broadband connectivity in underserved and rural areas.

Education and Schools

What the Supreme Court ruling striking affirmative action means for Bloomington-Normal colleges and universities

[Lauren Warnecke](#), June 29, 2023

The U.S. Supreme Court has determined that race-conscious admissions at colleges and universities are unconstitutional. For Bloomington-Normal's three institutions, the ruling doesn't change much.

The Supreme Court ruling on affirmative action in college admissions: 'This decision marks the end of an era'

[Lisa Philip](#), June 29, 2023

A Northwestern professor expects schools to pursue race-neutral alternatives after the ruling striking down race-conscious admissions policies.

ISU breaks ground on expanded Nursing Simulation Center

June 23, 2023

Unit 5 board OKs solar panels plan, fittingly on summer solstice

June 22, 2023

Governor taps ISU alum, State Farm insurance agency owner as new trustee

June 16, 2023

The fine print of Illinois' ban on book bans

[Alex Degman](#), June 14, 2023

Gov. JB Pritzker signed a measure that will withhold state funds from libraries that ban books. The move sparked a lot of questions.

Illinois becomes the first state in the U.S. to ban book bans

[Alex Degman](#), June 12, 2023

Citing a "vitriolic strain of white nationalism," Gov. JB Pritzker signed the measure withholding state grant money from libraries if they ban books.

Illinois State sorority returns after a year-long suspension for hazing and abuse

[Lauren Warnecke](#), June 12, 2023

The Lambda Epsilon chapter of Zeta Phi Beta is approved to resume activity after a 12-month suspension for hazing activity, but the accusers are not confident anything will change.

Bloomington-Normal resumes student exchange with Asahikawa, Japan, after 3-year hiatus

[Eric Stock](#), May 31, 2023

A student foreign exchange program for Bloomington-Normal has returned after a delay that began with the COVID-19 pandemic. Organizers hope the program can grow to where it was decades ago.

Take off: ISU rocket team lands a win

[Charlie Schlenker](#), May 26, 2023

Illinois State University has won a Department of Defense-sponsored rocket competition for the second straight time. The U of I Laboratory for Advanced Space Systems hosted the competition in Rantoul.

District 87 Q&A on tax incentives, AI, and a retiring administrator

[Eric Stock](#), May 25, 2023

District 87 superintendent David Mouser said he supports an incentive plan to build a high-end housing complex in Bloomington, despite the potential loss of future tax revenue.

Gender enrollment gap is wide at ISU, Bradley, Heartland

[Charlie Schlenker](#), May 24, 2023

More women go to Illinois State University than men — a lot more. The same is true of Bradley University and Heartland Community College. It's part of a nationwide trend that began in the 1980s and has grown since then.

Selective colleges face pressure to drop admissions policies that help alumni children

[Lisa Philip](#), May 22, 2023

Every fall, fewer than 1 in 10 applicants to the University of Chicago walk beneath a flock of gargoyles adorning a fortresslike stone gate onto the main quad as admitted students.

State replacement tax revenue helps Unit 5 shave millions off working cash transfer

[Michele Steinbacher](#), May 18, 2023

Unit 5 is reaping the benefits of the state's replacement tax revenue coming in higher than projected. The the district intended to transfer \$11.7 million from its working cash fund to cover key fund deficits, but instead it only needed \$8.4 million.

Illinois Wesleyan signs guaranteed admission agreement with Lincoln Land Community College

[Eric Stock](#), May 16, 2023

IWU will ensure admission to students who complete a transfer-oriented program at the Springfield-based college and earn at least a 3.0 grade point average, according to the agreement.

HEAT Academy helps students explore careers in cybersecurity, clean energy and EVs

[Megan Spoerlein](#), May 12, 2023

McLean County high school students are given the chance to work with industry professionals through the Bloomington Area Career Center's HEAT Academy.

ISU trustees approve tuition increase and engineering and data science majors

[Lyndsay Jones](#), May 12, 2023

Illinois State University's governing board also did a first-read of a proposed amendment that would enable trustees to set "differential" tuition rates, as is done at other institutions.

Lawmakers approve District 87 waiver for building to expand pre-K

[Eric Stock](#), May 12, 2023

District 87 officials hope to begin negotiations soon on where it can expand early childhood education.

School crossing guard gig endears great-grandfather to Normal neighborhood

[Michele Steinbacher](#), May 10, 2023

When Glenn Elementary students and their families reach Normal's busy Fell Avenue, crossing guard Gayle Thomas is there to meet them. The retired construction manager, who's a great-grandfather, stands at the ready each weekday.

Back to school: Olympia middle and high school students return after April 13 fire

[Eric Stock](#), May 8, 2023

Olympia middle school and high school students have returned to the classroom, weeks after their school in western McLean County was heavily damaged by fire.

Homeschooling trends in Illinois during and after COVID are hard to see due to limited data

[Lyndsay Jones](#), May 8, 2023

With no centralized data, there's no way to definitively know how many families are homeschooling in Illinois. Anecdotally, Bloomington-Normal homeschool advocates say the numbers are up after the COVID-19 pandemic. But will they stay up?

Unit 5 board seats new members Adams, Williams; considers rooftop solar panel system

[Michele Steinbacher](#), April 27, 2023

McLean County's largest school district is considering using solar panels on some buildings, after a year of researching the possibility.

Illinois wants to revamp how reading is taught. Lawmakers want to give it a deadline.

[Cassie Walker Burke](#), April 26, 2023

Amid a national crusade around how reading is taught, lawmakers are weighing a bill to give Illinois until 2024 to come up with a new plan.

Illinois Wesleyan's nursing program makes changes following probation

[Charlie Schlenker](#), April 25, 2023

Illinois Wesleyan University's nursing school has received a blow to its reputation, and its accreditation could come into question. For the second year in a row, IWU has fallen below the minimum 75% passage rate on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX). Passage last year was 63%.

Illinois colleges, universities partnering with cannabis companies on classes

[Alex Degman](#), April 25, 2023

A cannabis career? More Illinois colleges are offering classes to meet the growing demand for educated pot workers

Cathy Lust appointed to the District 87 school board

[Eric Stock](#), April 24, 2023

Cathy Lust ran for a seat on the school board in the April 4 election. Regional superintendent Mark Jontry chose her from among four applicants for the vacant seat.

ISU president seeks to calm furor over Athletics missteps

[Charlie Schlenker](#), April 21, 2023

New Illinois State University Interim Athletics Director Jeri Beggs has a large set of tasks following the departure of Kyle Brennan under a cloud. In this interview with WGLT's Charlie Schlenker, ISU Interim President Aondover Tarhule lays out his expectations for Beggs and tries to put the upheaval in context.

Olympia High School, Middle School students on remote learning this week following fire

[Eric Stock](#), April 17, 2023

The head of Olympia schools says she doesn't know when its middle school and high school building in rural Stanford will reopen following last week's fire.

ISU gets \$800,000 grant for early childhood faculty preparation

[Ryan Denham](#), April 16, 2023

Illinois State University is getting a grant worth more than \$800,000 to support the ongoing education of early childhood teachers.

ISU student government will consider calling for suspension of student fee increases for Athletics

[Eric Stock](#), April 14, 2023

The donor flight to Indianapolis involving ISU athletics staff and boosters — and a subsequent trip to a strip club — has prompted the university's Student Government Association to consider a response.

Olympia High School and Middle School cancel classes on Friday following fire

[Eric Stock](#), April 13, 2023

Olympia Superintendent Laura O'Donnell said the cause of the fire is unknown, but it appears to have started along the solar panels installed on the high school roof. There were no injuries reported.

Unit 5 school board reverses cuts after tax hike referendum passes

[Michele Steinbacher](#), April 11, 2023

Superintendent Kristen Weikle also announced Tuesday that McLean County's largest school district will launch a major strategic planning initiative next year.

U-High student gets bill passed to protect child influencers online

[Emily Bollinger](#), April 11, 2023

University High School student Shreya Nallamothe played a key role in getting state legislation to protect child influencers.

Normal Community students stage walkout to demand tougher gun safety laws

[Eric Stock](#), April 5, 2023

Hundreds of Normal Community High School students walked out of school Wednesday, part of a national campaign of students calling for tougher gun safety laws.

Cordial races for District 87 and Heartland Community College boards are too close to call

[Lauren Warnecke](#), April 5, 2023

The District 87 and Heartland Community College board races were exceptionally close after Tuesday's consolidated election.

Pro-referendum candidates win 4 seats on Unit 5 school board

[Lyndsay Jones](#), April 4, 2023

Incumbents Amy Roser and Kelly Pyle, along with newcomers Alex Williams and Mark Adams, won seats on the board, according to vote tallies late Tuesday.

Business and Economy

Todd Maisch, ISU alum who led Illinois Chamber of Commerce, dies at age 57

[Sean Crawford](#), June 1, 2023

Todd Maisch was head of the business group since 2014.

State Farm to stop selling new homeowners policies in California over wildfire and construction-cost concerns

[Ryan Denham](#), May 27, 2023

State Farm has stopped selling new homeowners insurance policies in California, effective Saturday, over concerns about destructive wildfires and the rising cost of construction.

How the pandemic set the stage for rapid-fire auto insurance rate hikes at State Farm

May 22, 2023

Developer plans \$18.5 million housing project near downtown Bloomington

Shelter leader says ‘we are not doing enough’ to help the homeless in Bloomington-Normal

May 17, 2023

West Bloomington garden rebrands as an urban farm as it seeks to feed more in need

[Erik Dedo](#), May 15, 2023

Sunnyside Urban Farm serves several nonprofits, and will employ 10 teenagers from within a two-mile radius in west Bloomington.

Rivian is preparing for a future in which just being electric won't be enough

[Ryan Denham](#), May 9, 2023

Rivian's founder and CEO RJ Scaringe said Tuesday that the constant tinkering they're doing now to lower the cost of manufacturing will serve the company well as the electric-vehicle business gets a lot more crowded in the coming years.

Bloomington-Normal cake maker Maria Alvarez is adding new layers

[Ryan Denham](#), May 9, 2023

Maria Alvarez from Maria's Cakes is now one of Bloomington-Normal's most successful professional cake makers. She became popular, in part, by making cakes for Bloomington-Normal's Hispanic families for quinceañeras.

DeWitt County wind farm that helps power Meta goes online

[Eric Stock](#), June 30, 2023

The Alta wind farm west of Wapella has a power purchase agreement with Meta and its DeKalb Data Center.

How unreliable EV charging stations set the stage for Tesla's format-war victory

[Ryan Denham](#), June 27, 2023

An analyst who closely follows electric vehicles says the widespread shift to Tesla's charging technology is a big deal – and likely means an industry standard is established for EV charging stations.

Bloomington-Normal unemployment holds at 3.5%

June 23, 2023

Food truck growth in Illinois hits speed bumps

June 22, 2023

Connect Transit temporarily suspends fares

June 21, 2023

Bloomington-Normal housing supply gap widens

[Charlie Schlenker](#), June 15, 2023

Bloomington-Normal is losing ground on its housing gap. A 2021 housing study showed an unmet need for more than 4,000 housing units. Patrick Hoban, director of the area economic development council, said an update to the study takes Rivian employment into account, and shows the number is going in the wrong direction.

Busey Bank exec: Recession not off the table despite economic improvement

[Charlie Schlenker](#), June 14, 2023

There's still a risk of recession even though the economy is much better than it was a year ago, according to the chief investment officer for central Illinois-based Busey Bank.

DCFS hosts on-the-spot hiring event in Bloomington to keep up with increase in investigations

[Eric Stock](#), June 12, 2023

The state of Illinois needs child welfare workers. The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services looked to fill at least 50 child welfare and case investigator positions on Monday during an on-the-spot job fair in Bloomington.

Corn (and soybean) king: McLean County farmers led state, nation in 2022 production

[Tim Alexander](#), June 6, 2023

For a second consecutive year, McLean County has led all Illinois and U.S. counties in total production of both commodities with almost 71 million bushels of corn and 22 million bushels of soybeans harvested in 2022, according to the United States Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

Illinois Wesleyan University adds new majors in public health, quantitative finance, and professional sales

[Charlie Schlenker](#), May 30, 2023

Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington has added three new majors — public health, quantitative finance, and professional sales — as part of an ongoing campus-wide effort to appeal to more workforce-oriented families and students.

'Shrinkflation' still hitting store shelves

[Stephanie Zimmermann](#), May 30, 2023

Don't expect your morning cereal box to grow back to its former size or those missing paper towel sheets to return to the roll.

Bloomington-Normal shows modest job gains as unemployment stays at 3.4%

[Eric Stock](#), May 25, 2023

Bloomington-Normal's unemployment rate held steady last month, as the area added 1,400 jobs since last April.

Survey shows rural McLean County residents are unhappy with their internet service

[Eric Stock](#), May 19, 2023

McLean County officials are studying the results of what they call an eye-opening survey on rural residents' level of satisfaction with their internet service.

Incoming Heartland Bank CEO says stay the course

[Charlie Schlenker](#), May 1, 2023

The incoming CEO of Bloomington-based Heartland Bank and Trust says the \$5 billion company will seek only growth opportunities that make sense to its core community bank mission.

B-N job growth numbers solid in March

[Charlie Schlenker](#), April 27, 2023

The Bloomington-Normal area labor market grew by 2,900 jobs from March of last year to the same month this year, but other central Illinois cities also had big job gains over the 12-month period.

Bloomington gets state grant for home improvement projects

[Erik Dedo](#), April 27, 2023

The Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) has announced the opening of the Home Repair and Accessibility Program, designed to assist low and very-low income homeowners by providing five-year, forgivable loans of up to \$45,000.

After SNAP reduction, food demand spikes at central Illinois pantries

[Tim Alexander](#), April 25, 2023

The end of expanded federal nutrition benefits come at a time when central Illinois food banks already were struggling to ensure everyone is fed.

B-N leaders say affordable broadband builds social equity and economic development

[Charlie Schlenker](#), April 19, 2023

Bloomington-Normal leaders are emphasizing the need for more broadband connectivity in underserved and rural areas.

Banking sector still at some risk, according to ISU business dean

[Charlie Schlenker](#), April 12, 2023

There are likely to be more bank failures in the next couple years. That's according to Ajay Samant, dean of the College of Business at Illinois State University.

Climate change threatens central Illinois maple syrup production

[Charlie Schlenker](#), April 11, 2023

The largest maple syrup producer in Illinois may not have a future as global climate change progresses.