

WGLT ISSUES AND PROGRAMS Fourth Quarter 2022

October – December 2022

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, 5-5:30p M-F. The story lengths range from one minute to 22 minutes.

Politics and Government

Bloomington city leaders look ahead to 2023

[Charlie Schlenker](#) December 19, 2022

Bloomington City Manager Tim Gleason and Mayor Mboka Mwilambwe said 2022 has been a good year for the city with COVID largely in the rear-view mirror and the city starting to get past the 50% to 100% COVID-related cost increases in materials and projects.

Normal mayor wants town to draft rules to allow auxiliary housing

[Charlie Schlenker](#) December 9, 2022

Normal Mayor Chris Koos is praising Bloomington for enacting auxiliary housing rules that allow a small second dwelling on a property.

Barickman's soon-to-be vacant Senate seat already drawing interest

[Charlie Schlenker](#) December 6, 2022

Central Illinois Republican party leaders say they expect a lot of interest in the appointment to the soon-to-be vacant 53rd Senate District seat that Jason Barickman is giving up at the end of the year.

'Timing is right': Barickman leaving Illinois Senate in January

[Charlie Schlenker](#) December 5, 2022

Less than a month after winning an uncontested new term in office, State Sen. Jason Barickman of Bloomington said Monday he'll resign instead of taking office again next year.

Inspector General slams Pontiac prison workplace culture

[Charlie Schlenker](#) December 5, 2022

A scathing report from the State Executive Inspector General shows a climate of hazing and sexual discrimination created a hostile work environment at the state prison in Pontiac, including stating there is reason for disciplinary action against 10 employees for discriminating against a guard who was perceived to be gay.

Dan Brady named to Giannoulis' Secretary of State transition team

[Charlie Schlenker](#) December 1, 2022

It's not unusual for members of a minority party to serve on transition teams for newly elected statewide officeholders in Illinois. It's far less common to have a defeated opponent in a particular race on the team. But that's what has happened.

Past Bloomington arena management blamed for premature heating and cooling expenses

[Charlie Schlenker](#) December 1, 2022

Bloomington's city manager said the heating and cooling units at Grossinger Motors Arena should have lasted four to nine years longer than they have.

Bloomington mayor: Unit 5 should go back to voters with another referendum

[Charlie Schlenker](#) November 22, 2022

Mayor Mboka Mwilambwe said the presence of two universities and a community college in the Twin Cities offer a counter to the potential impression given to businesses by the referendum's defeat.

To win, Barickman says GOP needs more moderate voices

[Charlie Schlenker](#) November 21, 2022

State Sen. Jason Barickman said Illinois voters punished Republicans in the midterm election, in part, because of the GOP stance on abortion. He said his party needs to acknowledge there are instances in which abortion should be legal and be willing to say what those legal conditions are.

Making a list: Normal council setting priorities for near future

[Charlie Schlenker](#) November 18, 2022

By the end of the month, Normal Town Council members will have registered their individual priorities for the next few years with staff. Assistant City Manager Eric Hanson said the exercise will merge individual tallies before a final council vote on the list that includes short-term goals and long-term ones, like finding a site for a new police station.

ISU alum and ambassador Donald McHenry: Foreign policy starts at home

[Charlie Schlenker](#) November 18, 2022

Former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Donald McHenry urged the nation to get its domestic house in order during addresses this week at Illinois Wesleyan and Illinois State universities, as part of the Adlai Stevenson lecture series.

Woman from Normal says earlier refugee waves offer practical experience to deal with Ukraine war refugees in Europe

[Charlie Schlenker](#) November 9, 2022

As of October, 4.5 million Ukrainians had registered as war refugees in various European Union countries for temporary protection. They are disproportionately women and children.

Mayor Koos affirms conservative property tax stance going forward in Normal

[Charlie Schlenker](#) November 9, 2022

Normal Mayor Chris Koos said the town is keeping a flat property tax levy and reducing the tax rate because elected officials don't want to contribute to a rise in the overall tax rate homeowners pay — and he thinks the levy will stay flat even if required pension payments rise.

In Normal, GOP House leader Kevin McCarthy raises cash for Esther Joy King

[Charlie Schlenker](#) November 4, 2022

The U.S. House minority leader came to central Illinois on Friday to raise money for GOP congressional candidate Esther Joy King.

Unit 5 referendum by the numbers

[Charlie Schlenker](#) November 3, 2022

The central argument for a Unit 5 education fund referendum is that district revenue has not kept pace with costs since the last referendum in 2008, that the district has, in effect, squeezed all the blood it can out of the existing turnip by tightening its belt and using resources efficiently and needs help. The numbers support the case.

McLean County Board District 8 candidates have different approaches to the same issues

[Charlie Schlenker](#) November 1, 2022

The four candidates running to represent the west side of Bloomington on the McLean County Board have different philosophical approaches and different ways to approach the same issues.

Barickman suggests revamping state's cannabis regulation

[Charlie Schlenker](#) October 31, 2022

Marijuana is too expensive in Illinois, according to Republican state Sen. Jason Barickman of Bloomington, who says he'd support lowering taxes on legal cannabis in the state.

Clinton nuclear plant owner asking for 20-year operating extension

[Charlie Schlenker](#) October 31, 2022

The owner of the Clinton nuclear power plant in Dewitt County is following through on its end of the deal that led to passage of the state Climate and Equitable

Jobs Act. Constellation Energy is asking the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to extend the reactor's license for 20 years. It had been scheduled to expire in 2027.

Rededication of refurbished World War II memorial set in Bloomington

[Charlie Schlenker](#) October 31, 2022

The McLean County Museum of History is about to rededicate a memorial honoring the 336 McLean County men and women who gave their lives for freedom during World War II.

Bloomington quietly moving toward Smart Cities tech

[Charlie Schlenker](#) October 26, 2022

The Town of Normal is making Smart Cities technology a big priority. The City of Bloomington has been less vocal on that front, but also is leveraging new tech. Smart Cities technology, broadly defined, is supposed to make city operations smoother for the public and more efficient for the municipality.

Parties struggle to gain control of McLean County Board

[Charlie Schlenker](#) October 25, 2022

Democrats have never held a majority on the McLean County Board. It's a 10-10 split now, and they'd like to get over the edge to a majority. Republicans, of course, really don't want that to happen.

Smart cities and pedestrian safety among Normal council priorities

[Charlie Schlenker](#) October 21, 2022

City Manager Pam Reece said the Vision Zero-Go Safe Plan to eliminate auto collisions with walkers and bikers is one the themes to emerge from a recent strategic planning session.

Property assessments rise, but appeals do not

[Charlie Schlenker](#) October 6, 2022

Property assessments are used to figure how much property tax home and other property owners must pay. The assessment is supposed to be about a third of the market value. As most people probably know by now, sale prices of homes are going way up in central Illinois.

Koos: Bloomington-Normal well positioned to withstand potential recession

[Charlie Schlenker](#) October 5, 2022

Normal Mayor Chris Koos says he's pleased with the picture created by the annual financial trends report for the town, noting that revenues are strong in income tax, sales tax, and on-line sales tax reimbursement.

91st District state representative campaigns call each other tax hike lovers

[Lyndsay Jones](#) October 3, 2022

Republican hopeful Scott Preston held a news conference Monday, criticizing Democratic opponent Sharon Chung's support for the failed graduated tax initiative during a candidate debate six days earlier. Meanwhile, a recent state Democratic Party mailer on behalf of Chung calls Preston and tax hikes a "love story for the ages."

ISU condemns frat hazing that turns into bigoted vandalism

[Charlie Schlenker](#) October 4, 2022

The Dean of Students office at Illinois State University and the campus PRIDE organization are condemning bigoted vandalism of Greek houses by members of a campus fraternity.

Education and Schools

Filing period begins for Illinois school board races; 7 file for Unit 5 seats

[Eric Stock](#) December 12, 2022

Monday was the first day to file to run for school board in Illinois. Seven candidates filed in the Normal-based Unit 5 school district. Four seats will be on the ballot next spring.

Heartland Community College proposes tax rate decrease in 2023 levy

[Eric Stock](#) December 12, 2022

Heartland Community College's Board of Trustees will consider a \$30.1 million property tax levy on Tuesday. The district expects a big increase in equalized assessed valuation (EAV).

Bloomington seeks increase in property tax levies for city, library

[Michele Steinbacher](#) December 6, 2022

Bloomington has proposed a \$22 million property tax levy — about 6.5% higher than last year. The proposed levy for the Bloomington Public Library would increase by 7%.

5 finalists named to become Illinois State University's first College of Engineering dean

[Ryan Denham](#) December 2, 2022

Students, faculty and staff this month can meet the five finalists to become Illinois State University's first dean of the new College of Engineering.

Normal dedicates new, more accessible park playground outside Prairieland Elementary

[Erik Dedo](#) November 28, 2022

Normal's Carden Park has a new and improved playground for nearby children to enjoy.

'Successes are pretty cool to see:' New Bridge Academy already changing lives in central Illinois

[Charlie Schlenker](#) November 22, 2022

Those involved in the Central Illinois Bridge Academy say the new program for adolescents with mental health concerns is going very well. The academy, which opened Sept. 12 in space shared with MarcFirst just off Shepard Park in Normal, has 16 junior high and high school students.

Bloomington mayor: Unit 5 should go back to voters with another referendum

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Mayor Mboka Mwilambwe said the presence of two universities and a community college in the Twin Cities offer a counter to the potential impression given to businesses by the referendum's defeat.

The Washington Elementary School family celebrates Thanksgiving together, year after year

[Ryan Denham](#) November 22, 2022

For over 25 years, the students and teachers at Washington Elementary School in Bloomington have shared a Thanksgiving meal together. Here's what they're thankful for this year.

ISU says it's responding to LGBTQIA+ student concerns

[Lyndsay Jones](#) November 18, 2022

"Sometimes when things come to a head, if you will, and there's concerns, it becomes really an opportunity for the university to look at what we're doing well and what we're not doing well," said ISU Chief Equity and Inclusion officer Doris Houston.

Unit 5 proposes \$139M tax levy with a lower property tax rate

[Michele Steinbacher](#) November 17, 2022

Unit 5 has proposed a nearly \$139 million-dollar property tax levy — about 5% more than last year's proposal, while the tax rate is projected to decrease more than 10 cents.

'Safe and sound:' Emergency management and pets subject of new book by ISU professor

[Lyndsay Jones](#) November 16, 2022

Ashley Farmer says the book she and co-author Sarah DeYoung wrote explores the practicalities of managing pets during emergency situations.

ISU students win statewide rocket competition

[Jack Podlesnik](#) November 11, 2022

The competition, funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Defense, is meant to help launch interest in aerospace engineering and the space industry among participating students.

Weikle: 'Too soon' for Unit 5 board to chart next steps after referendum rejection

[Charlie Schlenker](#) November 9, 2022

Unit 5 school district leaders said Wednesday they are disappointed the education fund tax referendum did not pass on Tuesday. Superintendent Kristen Weikle tells WGLT they knew it would be a close vote, but hoped for passage to allow the district to eliminate an \$11 million deficit that is growing each year.

'Very difficult decisions' loom after voters reject Unit 5 tax referendum

[Michele Steinbacher](#) November 9, 2022

Unit 5 leaders say tough days are ahead, after voters rejected a referendum that could have tackled the district's nearly \$12 million budget deficit.

In editorial, NCHS students endorse the Unit 5 referendum — and worry about their younger peers if it fails

[Ryan Denham](#) November 7, 2022

The Normal Community High School student media outlet, the Inkspot, published an editorial over the weekend endorsing the referendum.

Illinois student test scores are in. They remain far below pre-pandemic levels in reading and math.

[Susie An](#) October 27, 2022

The results on state math and reading exams mirror last year's scores, showing the ongoing toll of COVID-19 and remote learning.

State report card shows schools and students are still recovering from pandemic learning loss

Peter Hancock October 27, 2022

Student test scores continued to fall last year, but new data shows Illinois' students are on the path to recovering from the learning loss that occurred during the pandemic.

Unit 5 warns of cuts to sports, art, music, language

Philip Walker October 26, 2022

Unit 5 school superintendent Kristen Weikle warned of drastic budget cuts during a Tuesday night webinar on the district's upcoming education fund tax rate referendum.

Students raise concerns about ISU's response to anti-LGBTQIA+ incidents

Lyndsay Jones October 21, 2022

Student Jakai Martin said they understand the investigation is still underway, but wished the university would have been more proactive in condemning homophobia and hate crimes in general.

Unit 5 school board hears referendum presentation, meets award-winning tech teachers

Michele Steinbacher October 19, 2022

With less than a month before voters head to the polls, Unit 5 Superintendent Kristen Weikle addressed the school board Wednesday night, reviewing the district's proposed tax rate increase.

Heartland Community College names plaza for former president Rob Widmer

Eric Stock October 19, 2022

The college held a ribbon-cutting celebration on Wednesday for Widmer Family Plaza in honor of Rob Widmer, Heartland's president for five years who worked 22 years at the college.

Trustees' vote makes it official: Redbird Arena is now CEFCU Arena

[Lyndsay Jones](#) October 14, 2022

The vote was 6-1 in favor of the \$3.1 million agreement with the Peoria-based credit union.

McLean County Chamber of Commerce won't take a position on Unit 5 referendum

[Ryan Denham](#) October 13, 2022

McLean County's leading business group says it will help educate its members about the Unit 5 tax referendum but won't be taking a position for or against it.

League of Women Voters of McLean County endorses Unit 5 referendum

[Ryan Denham](#) October 12, 2022

The League of Women Voters of McLean County is endorsing the Unit 5 referendum. It will be on the ballot Nov. 8.

Eureka College welcomes 2nd largest class ever, focuses on growth

[Collin Schopp](#) October 12, 2022

With an almost 20% increase in its student population, Eureka College is turning the focus toward growth and improving the services that help support those students.

And we're off: Meet the influencers shaping public opinion on the Unit 5 referendum

[Ryan Denham](#) October 5, 2022

From Bloomington-Normal's mayors to political parties and local unions, those with the power to influence votes on the Unit 5 referendum are starting to form their own opinions about it.

ISU condemns frat hazing that turns into bigoted vandalism

[Charlie Schlenker](#) October 4, 2022

The Dean of Students office at Illinois State University and the campus PRIDE organization are condemning bigoted vandalism of Greek houses by members of a campus fraternity.

For Unit 5 parents, opinions on the referendum are shaped by deeply personal experiences

[Ryan Denham](#) October 3, 2022

WGLT interviewed more than a dozen parents, voters, former students, and other stakeholders for a temperature-check on the referendum now that public campaigning is underway.

'A new way of playing': Huge natural playground all but complete in Normal

[Charlie Schlenker](#) December 15, 2022

Bloomington-Normal's next big thing in playgrounds is all but complete — a \$5 million, 16-acre natural playground at Colene Hoose Elementary School in Normal.

Past Bloomington arena management blamed for premature heating and cooling expenses

[Charlie Schlenker](#) December 1, 2022

Bloomington's city manager said the heating and cooling units at Grossinger Motors Arena should have lasted four to nine years longer than they have.

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Marijuana is too expensive in Illinois, according to Republican state Sen. Jason Barickman of Bloomington, who says he'd support lowering taxes on legal cannabis in the state.

Arts and Culture

A fruitcake of an estimable age finds a home at Bloomington's Ewing Manor

[Charlie Schlenker](#) December 22, 2022

Famed late night TV entertainer Johnny Carson once joked that there is only one fruitcake in the world and people just keep mailing it to each other. If so, this could be that fruitcake.

Local artists' new poetry collections notice small, but significant, details

[Lauren Warnecke](#) December 22, 2022

Looking for last-minute gift ideas? Two new poetry collections by Bloomington-Normal artists may be just what you need for a cozy holiday at home.

ISO Holiday Pops seats young musicians with the pros — and hosts a Christmas sing-along for all

[Lauren Warnecke](#) December 16, 2022

The Illinois Symphony's popular "Holiday Pops in the Heartland" comes to Illinois State University's Concert Hall Saturday with a combined orchestra, joining players from Bloomington-Normal Youth Symphony, Springfield Choral Society and more.

Highway 309's Top 100 Songs of 2022

[Jon Norton](#) December 15, 2022

Songs from Khruangbin and Leon Bridges, Lo Moon, Mannie Fresh, and Hurray For the Riff Raff were among the most played on WGLT in 2022.

Lexington sculptor talks community-supported art, a scrap metal elephant — and running for president

Lauren Warnecke December 9, 2022

We caught up with Kasey Wells, a Lexington scrap metal artist who campaigned for president in 2020 toting a large scrap metal elephant sculpture around the U.S.

Matthew Curry plays one night at the Castle — expect rock guitar with a singer/songwriter vibe

Lauren Warnecke December 9, 2022

As a young rocker known for his searing guitar solos, Bloomington native Matthew Curry opened for some of rock music's GOATs like the Steve Miller Band and Peter Frampton. His 2019 album "Open Road" marked a shift toward songwriting as Curry immersed himself in Nashville's music scene. He plays Friday night at the Castle Theatre in Bloomington.

'Holiday Spectacular' and 'Holiday on Robinhood Lane' bring a double dose of cheer

Lauren Warnecke December 2, 2022

The holidays are officially here, and two long-standing Twin City traditions are just the thing to take your family's ho-ho-ho to the next level. WGLT's Lauren Warnecke visited Community Players and the Bloomington Center for the Arts as they made final preparations for their holiday revues.

Red wolf dies at Bloomington's Miller Park Zoo

Charlie Schlenker December 1, 2022

One of the red wolves at the Miller Park Zoo in Bloomington has died. The zoo said the wolf overheated and collapsed during a routine health exam and, after a daylong effort to save the wolf, he was euthanized.

Classical comfort food: Brahms and Beethoven headline Illinois Symphony's 'Breathtaking Beauty'

[Lauren Warnecke](#) November 18, 2022

With a third work, Jacques Ibert's 1956 "Hommage a Mozart," Saturday evening's concert creates a chronology of three generations of canonical composers.

Sondheim's 'Sunday in the Park with George' is on stage at Illinois Wesleyan

[Ariele Jones](#) November 17, 2022

It has almost been a year since Stephen Sondheim passed away, which makes Illinois Wesleyan's production of "Sunday in the Park with George" very timely.

New EP from Bloomington's 'DT' is a joyous debut

[Jon Norton](#) November 17, 2022

Bloomington's Darrin Thompson parlayed his joy for music into a joyous debut EP titled "Milk & Chinese Food."

TedXNormal returns in person with "The Power of Two"

[Erik Dedo](#) November 10, 2022

For the first time in three years, the TED-x-Normal speaker series will return this weekend with an in-person event at the Normal Theater in Uptown.

'The Revolutionists' at Heartland Theatre a metaphor for the modern fight for equality

[Lauren Warnecke](#) November 4, 2022

Heartland Theatre Company's latest production tells the story of four women who made waves during the French Revolution — and paid the ultimate price. Lauren Gunderson's dark comedy, "The Revolutionists," is being performed through Nov. 19 in Normal.

Q&A: Evening of Stars speaker Jon Dorenbos on magic, tragedy and forgiveness

[Eric Stock](#) November 3, 2022

This year's Red Cross Evening of Stars keynote speaker plans a night of magic, comedy and some hard life lessons when he addresses a gathering in Normal. Jon Dorenbos is a former pro football player who turned to magic when he was a kid to take his mind off his mother's murder. Dorenbos' father killed her.

The 'joyful pressure' that's kept Community Players Theatre on stage for 100 years, and counting

[Lauren Warnecke](#) October 26, 2022

WGLT checks in with Community Players Theatre, which celebrates its a milestone in 2023. The volunteer-led theater has managed to stay open continuously since 1923 — including during the pandemic.

WGLT announces yearlong music performance series: Highway 309 LIVE presented by CEFCU

[Melissa Libert](#) October 26, 2022

WGLT's Highway 309 LIVE presented by CEFCU will continue to champion local and new music. The series will bring artists from radio to stage to share intimate details of their life, artistic process and more.

The Invincible Czars bring their live soundtrack for 'Nosferatu' to the Normal Theater

[Ryan Denham](#) October 21, 2022

A group of musicians called the Invincible Czars tours the country providing a live score for "Nosferatu" screenings, including one next Thursday, Oct. 27, at the Normal Theater.

Bloomington's new arts and entertainment manager talks about filling the arena and repairing a 'toxic' workplace at BCPA

[Eric Stock](#) October 19, 2022

Anthony Nelson has a tough job. Grossinger Motors Arena, until recently, has been managed by outside firms and consistently lost money.

Illinois Symphony opens season with music about overcoming challenges (plus a cheery waltz)

Lauren Warnecke October 14, 2022

Guest conductor Rei Hotoda leads the Illinois Symphony in “Virtuosic Voices,” kicking off the 2022-23 season Oct. 15 at Illinois State University’s Center for the Performing Arts. The engagement is the first since Ken Lam's departure and a move to Illinois State University after nearly two decades in downtown Bloomington.

University Galleries exhibit gazes at queerness, but it’s about life in general

Lauren Warnecke October 7, 2022

Work by St. Louis-based photographer Jess T. Dugan blends photographs and text in an exhibit at University Galleries. Called "I Want Your to Know My Story," the show journeys through portraiture and still life with a queer lens — but it's not about queerness.

Peoria's Emily the Band releases an angsty pop gem

Jon Norton October 7, 2022

Peoria’s emerging 3-piece queer girl group Emily the Band lays out their angst on the just released hooky pop-gem “The Heartbreak Album.”

In new play at IWU, adult children seek 'Appropriate' way to deal with their father's disturbing past

Ariele Jones October 4, 2022

"Appropriate" by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins is a play that is exploring themes of family dysfunction and how a family must come to terms with the past of their patriarch. It's running Wednesday through Sunday at Illinois Wesleyan’s Mirza Theatre.

Business and Economy

How to entertain out-of-town visitors to Bloomington-Normal during the holidays

[Ryan Denham](#) December 19, 2022

For Bloomington-Normal's many new residents, this year may be their first time hosting out-of-town visitors for the holidays. And yes, the weather may be frigid, but there's still plenty of ways to show off your hometown – no matter how long you've lived here.

[Some Rivian workers see hope in unionization to address safety issues](#)

[Ryan Denham](#) December 16, 2022

Six years later, there's increasing pressure to measure Rivian's record by more than just its headcount. Some former and current workers tell WGLT the plant is a challenging and, at times, unsafe place to work.

[Why the UAW is so hungry for a unionization win at Rivian](#)

[Ryan Denham](#) December 16, 2022

Just this month, employees at a battery plant in Ohio voted to join the United Auto Workers (UAW) union – an apparent first for an electric vehicle or battery cell plant not owned entirely by the Big Three legacy automakers. The UAW would very much like Rivian to be next.

[Rivian and Mercedes pause plans to build electric vans together in Europe](#)

[Ryan Denham](#) December 12, 2022

Rivian and Mercedes had planned a new joint venture manufacturing company that would build a new plant somewhere in Europe. It wasn't expected to impact Rivian's plans in Normal.

[Developers propose luxury townhouses in 477-unit project in north Normal](#)

[Eric Stock](#) December 7, 2022

A proposed development in north Normal aims to help address the Twin City area's housing shortage. Fairlawn Capital of Champaign has unveiled plans for Carden Springs.

[State will hold informational session for 120 laid-off Reditus Labs employees](#)

[Tim Shelley](#) December 6, 2022

One hundred and twenty Reditus Laboratories employees are losing their jobs.

[Court filing: DOJ is investigating Reditus' billing and contracting practices](#)

[Ryan Denham](#) December 2, 2022

The U.S. Department of Justice is conducting “criminal and civil investigations” into Reditus Labs’ billing and contracting practices and also presumably former CEO Aaron Rossi, according to a new court filing that suggests a broadening probe into the COVID-19 testing giant.

[CEFCU distributes \\$35 million to members](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#) December 1, 2022

A central Illinois based credit union has given an extra \$35 million to owners. Peoria-based CEFCU said in a news release the extraordinary dividend reflects strong financial results. Credit unions are member-owned and participate in profits.

[Bloomington-Normal tries to bring IHSA football title games back to Hancock Stadium](#)

[Ryan Denham](#) December 1, 2022

Bloomington-Normal and ISU have submitted a bid to the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) to host the state football title games from 2023 to 2027, said Crystal Howard, president and CEO of the Bloomington-Normal Area Convention and Visitors Bureau.

[Center for minority business opens at Eastland Mall](#)

[Lyndsay Jones](#) November 30, 2022

Longtime central Illinois business veteran Denise Moore is opening the second Minority Business Development Center in the area, after launching an office in Peoria around a year ago.

[Home prices soar, even as frenzied Bloomington-Normal market cools off](#)

[Ryan Denham](#) November 28, 2022

The frenzied Bloomington-Normal housing market has cooled off, though a local Realtors group says rapidly rising prices might not level off until the middle of 2023.

[How a craft machining shop in Bloomington adapted its way to a fourth generation](#)

[Ryan Denham](#) November 21, 2022

You've heard a lot about the global supply chain over the past few years. This is a story about the Bloomington-Normal supply chain.

[ISU nutritionist shares tips for a healthy Thanksgiving, even with rising grocery prices](#)

[Jayla Johnson](#) November 21, 2022

In Illinois, the average price for a Thanksgiving meal for 10 is expected to jump 13% this year, to \$65.53, according to the American Farm Bureau Federation's latest Thanksgiving Cost Survey.

[Rivian wants to force arbitration in sexual harassment case, despite new law prohibiting it](#)

[Ryan Denham](#) November 18, 2022

Congress this year passed a new law that means employers can no longer force their employees into arbitration to resolve claims of on-the-job sexual harassment or assault. The electric automaker Rivian wants to do it anyway.

[In lawsuit, State Farm accuses Amazon of patent infringement over smart speaker tool for seniors](#)

[Ryan Denham](#) November 11, 2022

State Farm has filed a federal lawsuit alleging Amazon of willfully infringing on its patent for a smart speaker tool aimed at older adults. State Farm says this is the first time it's filed a patent infringement lawsuit.

Rivian's second shift in Normal is now making vehicles, as supply chain 'uncertainty' continues

[Ryan Denham](#) November 10, 2022

A second shift of workers is now making electric vehicles at Rivian's plant in Normal, even as global supply chain issues continue to be the "largest source of uncertainty" for the company.

Why Illinois farmers are slow to hop on the hops bandwagon, despite the craft beer boom

[Tim Alexander](#) November 9, 2022

The reasons Illinois specialty farmers are slow to embrace hops production include a high risk for crop failure — no federal crop insurance is offered to cover hops production in Illinois — and an underdeveloped statewide market for their harvested crop.

State and local leaders break ground (again) for new Ferrero facility

[Lyndsay Jones](#) November 2, 2022

The Italian chocolate and confectionary company is expected to bring 200 more manufacturing jobs to the Twin City area in 2024 via its \$214.4 million facility.

Amid legal woes, Pekin's Reditus Labs is going out of business

[Tim Shelley](#) October 31, 2022

Reditus will cease all testing as of this Friday. The company was placed into receivership in April.

Rivian to double-check fastener in voluntary recall impacting over 12,000 vehicles

[Ryan Denham](#) October 10, 2022

Rivian will recall nearly all of the vehicles it's made so far to double-check and address what the company calls a rare issue with a fastener on the steering system.

Study: Immigrants contribute \$1.2 billion to McLean County's economy

[Edith Brady-Lunny](#) October 8, 2022

The 11,800 immigrants who call Bloomington-Normal home pay \$73 million in taxes and contribute \$1.2 billion towards the county's domestic product, according to data provided Friday to an audience attending The Immigration Project's fundraising event at Illinois State University.

Judge denies Rivian bonds in Georgia; opposition groups grateful

October 4, 2022

A judge in Georgia ruled that the Joint Development Authority could not prove the Rivian project was "sound, reasonable, and feasible", so the company is not eligible for the bonds.

Science and Technology

Peoria Ag Lab develops healthier butter (like) spread

[Tim Alexander](#) November 22, 2022

Scientists at the Peoria Ag Lab have been working to develop a healthier alternative to butter. They want to replace saturated fats with plant-based and other natural oils that mimic the taste and texture of butter.

Bloomington quietly moving toward Smart Cities tech

[Charlie Schlenker](#) October 26, 2022

The Town of Normal is making Smart Cities technology a big priority. The City of Bloomington has been less vocal on that front, but also is leveraging new tech. Smart Cities technology, broadly defined, is supposed to make city operations smoother for the public and more efficient for the municipality.

Smart cities and pedestrian safety among Normal council priorities

[Charlie Schlenker](#) October 21, 2022

City Manager Pam Reece said the Vision Zero-Go Safe Plan to eliminate auto collisions with walkers and bikers is one the themes to emerge from a recent strategic planning session.

Vehicle production accelerates at Rivian plant in Normal

[Charlie Schlenker](#) October 4, 2022

Rivian produced 7,363 electric vehicles during the third quarter of the year, according to a company news release. That's a 67% step-up from the prior three-month period, and more than six times the number produced in the first quarter of 2022.

Environment and Nature

'A new way of playing': Huge natural playground all but complete in Normal

[Charlie Schlenker](#) December 15, 2022

Bloomington-Normal's next big thing in playgrounds is all but complete — a \$5 million, 16-acre natural playground at Colene Hoose Elementary School in Normal.

Coming clean: B-N companies work to reduce carbon footprints

[Charlie Schlenker](#) December 6, 2022

State Farm and Rivian are both contracting with clean energy providers to reduce their carbon footprints. State Farm said it's buying enough zero emission renewable energy to power its buildings in Bloomington.

Clinton nuclear plant owner asking for 20-year operating extension

[Charlie Schlenker](#) October 31, 2022

The owner of the Clinton nuclear power plant in Dewitt County is following through on its end of the deal that led to passage of the state Climate and Equitable Jobs Act. Constellation Energy is asking the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to extend the reactor's license for 20 years. It had been scheduled to expire in 2027.

Aesthetically pleasing pumpkins are a dry weather perk for growers

[Lyndsay Jones](#) October 7, 2022

"What we typically find in a drier year ... we typically have really nice pumpkins," said Rader Family Farm's Adam Rader.

Central Illinois farmer reflects on a changing industry during his final harvest pass

[Tim Alexander](#) October 6, 2022

After 55 years in the field, central Illinois farmer Mike Wurmnest is preparing to make his final harvest pass at the wheel of his John Deere S670 combine.

Higher Education

IWU adding women's wrestling, reinstating men's team after 23 years

[Charlie Schlenker](#) November 21, 2022

In its quest to build enrollment, Illinois Wesleyan University is adding a women's wrestling team, and also reinstating men's wrestling that ended in 1985 after 23 years of competition.

Eureka College welcomes 2nd largest class ever, focuses on growth

[Collin Schopp](#) October 12, 2022

With an almost 20% increase in its student population, Eureka College is turning the focus toward growth and improving the services that help support those students.

ISU fraternity members expelled from chapter over slurs

[Charlie Schlenker](#) October 7, 2022

The Illinois State University fraternity involved in discriminatory vandalism has expelled some of its members, who recently painted anti-LGBTQ slurs on the houses of other Greek organizations.

ISU condemns frat hazing that turns into bigoted vandalism

[Charlie Schlenker](#) October 4, 2022

The Dean of Students office at Illinois State University and the campus PRIDE organization are condemning bigoted vandalism of Greek houses by members of a campus fraternity.