

Third Quarter 2022 WGLT ISSUES AND PROGRAMS

July 2022 – September 2022

The following issues were addressed during WGLT Newscasts during MORNING EDITION from 5 to 9 am M-F during ALL THINGS CONSIDERED from 3-6PM, M-F, and during Sound Ideas, M-F 5p-5:30. The story lengths range from one minute to 59 minutes.

POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

[Examining The Record: Pritzker touts fiscal and crisis management; critics see campaign management](#)

[Tina Sfondeles](#) September 30, 2022

Over the past four years, Pritzker made good on campaign promises, but faced criticism for pandemic-related restrictions and a failed tax revamp.

[Examining The Record: Darren Bailey pushed to fix the state's ills, but critics call him ineffective](#)

[Dave McKinney | WBEZ](#) September 30, 2022

The GOP nominee for governor gained fame as the voice of opposition on cultural issues — gun rights, abortion — at the statehouse. But he passed few bills of his own.

[Pandemic relief money could boost services to homeless in Bloomington](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 29, 2022

Bloomington City Manager Tim Gleason said pandemic relief money could be used to help the homeless, after Prairie State Legal Services promoted the idea of a renter-landlord community navigator program a couple of months ago.

[Pritzker stumps in Bloomington as early voting begins](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 29, 2022

Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker said he's open to tweaking the Safe-T Act that will do away with the cash bail system in the state starting in January. "The Safe-T Act is about keeping people safe all across our state, keeping murderers, rapists, and domestic abusers in jail, not letting them buy their way out, which is the system that we had," he said.

Boelen announces reelection bid for Bloomington City Council

[Eric Stock](#), September 29, 2022

Ward 2 council member Donna Boelen says she will seek a second term in the nonpartisan election next year.

The national wave of unfounded election-fraud accusations does not spare Illinois

[Dan Mihalopoulos | WBEZ](#), September 29, 2022

Conspiracy theorists inundate election officials across the state with form letters demanding voter records and threatening lawsuits.

Illinois takes Equal Rights Amendment to appeals court

[Peter Hancock](#), September 28, 2022

Attorneys for the state of Illinois joined their colleagues in Nevada and Virginia Wednesday in asking a federal appellate court to declare that the Equal Rights Amendment has been legally ratified as the 28th amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Residents offer feedback to create master plan for Uptown South

[Chris Francis](#), September 28, 2022

The attendees came to listen to a new presentation related to creation of a master plan for the eight-acre block of Uptown South.

Chung and Preston outline differences in criminal justice and taxes in 91st House debate

[Eric Stock](#), September 27, 2022

Illinois House candidates Sharon Chung and Scott Preston outlined differences on taxes, the budget and criminal justice during a debate Tuesday evening at Illinois State University.

[Connect Transit unveils new charging infrastructure](#)

[Lyndsay Jones](#), September 27, 2022

The system expects to have 12 electric buses by the end of 2022, another five by the end of 2023, and five more being purchased as part of a \$13 million grant.

[Sen. Barickman sounds off on ethics, prisons and immigration](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 27, 2022

Bloomington state Sen. Jason Barickman says the recent indictment of another senator, Emil Jones III, shows current ethics laws do a poor job of holding lawmakers accountable to the people they serve.

[Sports betting in Illinois: growing, but not a fix-all](#)

[Alex Degman](#), September 27, 2022

Revenues continue to grow as professional sports maintain schedules and betting options increase

[Bloomington leaders propose nonprofits, small businesses and homeowners get ARPA-funded grants](#)

[Michele Steinbacher](#), September 26, 2022

The Bloomington City Council on Monday started to hone in possible projects for its \$13.4 million in COVID-relief funds, specifically focusing on infrastructure, and creating grant opportunities for small business owners, nonprofits, and certain homeowners.

['Yes For Unit 5' group forms to push for passage of tax referendum](#)

[Ryan Denham](#), September 26, 2022

The pro-referendum community group calling itself Yes For Unit 5 stepped into public view Monday. It aims to sell the community on a referendum that would finally address Unit 5's multimillion-dollar budget deficit.

Bloomington City Council race emerges in spring 2023 election

[Eric Stock](#), September 26, 2022

Jordan Baker, a legislative aide to state State Sen. Jason Barickman, wants to represent Ward 6 on the Bloomington City Council.

Time and TIF affect timeline for Main Street water main project in Normal

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 23, 2022

The Main Street Water Main project is big, more than 5,000 feet in length. Two stretches of Main Street would see pipes replaced — between Division Street and Virginia Avenue, and from Beaufort Street to College Avenue.

State's largest union backs Republican Dan Brady for Secretary of State

[Eric Stock](#), September 21, 2022

State Rep. Dan Brady of Bloomington is the only Republican seeking statewide office to get the endorsement of the Illinois Education Association (IEA), the largest union in the state.

'The Serpent Beguiled Me:' Criminal justice and the use of fear

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 21, 2022

A noted central Illinois jurist has taken aim at the criminal justice system, some rulings by the current Supreme Court, and the negative effect on the nation from the oft-recurring use of fear to shape political ends in the U.S.

State Sen. Emil Jones III charged in red light camera bribery scheme

[Peter Hancock](#), September 20, 2022

State Sen. Emil Jones III has been charged in federal court with three criminal counts tied to his dealings with a red light camera company.

Judge rules Normal districting effort is legally invalid; referendum won't be on the ballot

[Lyndsay Jones](#), September 20, 2022

McLean County Associate Judge Scott Kording said the ruling was "not what I wanted to be saying as a man and a citizen... but I do believe it is the legally correct decision."

New approach to child welfare challenges the definition of neglect

[Edith Brady-Lunny](#), September 20, 2022

Each state creates its own definitions of abuse and neglect and sets a threshold for when a child should be removed from a home. Is it time to rethink Illinois' definitions?

Normal council OKs nearly \$4M contract for water main replacement along Main Street

[Michele Steinbacher](#), September 19, 2022

The project targets Division Street to Virginia Avenue, and further north, from Beaufort Street to College Avenue.

Judge postpones ruling in Normal districting case to Tuesday

[Lyndsay Jones](#), September 19, 2022

Another court date has been set for 1:30 p.m. Tuesday. It will be available via Zoom.

Getting it right: How other states have fixed broken child welfare systems

[Edith Brady-Lunny](#), September 19, 2022

Child welfare experts acknowledge that meaningful reform often follows the chaos of dysfunction and years of litigation. Here's how other states and cities have done it.

[Normal Town Council set to award nearly \\$4M water contract for Main Street project](#)

[Michele Steinbacher](#), September 17, 2022

The work will focus on two lengths of Main Street — from Division Street to Virginia Avenue, and further north from Beaufort Street to College Avenue.

[Judge sets Monday hearing date in Normal petition case](#)

[Lyndsay Jones](#), September 16, 2022

McLean County associate judge Scott Kording said he expects to issue a ruling by Tuesday at the latest, after he hears oral arguments on Monday.

[What happens when cash bail ends in Illinois?](#)

[Jerry Nowicki](#), September 16, 2022

Beginning Jan. 1, 2023, cash bail will be abolished in Illinois. The measure that will eliminate it has been on the books since early 2021, giving the justice system two years to plan for the major overhaul of the state's pretrial detention system.

[McLean County names Erika Reynolds next state's attorney; presents \\$127 million budget](#)

[Eric Stock](#), September 15, 2022

Erika Reynolds said one of her first goals is to bring stability to an office that's seen a high turnover rate among prosecutors over the last decade.

[Bloomington Election Commission names new director as elections approach](#)

[Eric Stock](#), September 15, 2022

The Bloomington Election Commission has named a new executive director as early voting is set to begin soon.

Judge sets hearing for Friday on Normal petition challenge

[Eric Stock](#), September 14, 2022

A judge has scheduled a hearing for Friday on a request to get a referendum on the November ballot to change how Normal Town Council members are elected.

McLean County could start billing for mental health treatments and outsource triage center operations

[Eric Stock](#), September 14, 2022

The McLean County Center for Human Services will take over operations of the county's walk-in crisis facility, if the County Board approves.

Bloomington marks Welcoming Week with international soccer game and downtown music

[Ryan Denham](#), September 14, 2022

The City of Bloomington's Welcoming Week events continue through the weekend, with an international soccer game, music, and a speech from an immigrant to the city council.

League of Women Voters may advocate against dividing Normal into districts

[Lyndsay Jones](#), September 14, 2022

Whether the local government advocacy group takes action depends on the outcome of a pending court case on a referendum effort aimed at changing how Normal's town council is elected.

Normal Town Council member says balance between freedom and regulation is tricky

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 13, 2022

The senior member of the Normal Town Council says it's reasonable that revisions of the town's sign ordinance will attract some heat, with competing interests to balance.

Voter roll purges are ‘not going to happen’ in Illinois, a state election official says

[Mawa Iqbal](#), September 13, 2022

Ahead of Election Day, Illinois statehouse reporter Mawa Iqbal checked in with the Illinois Board of Elections. Here's what you need to know about keeping your voting registration active.

Bloomington council OKs special-use permits for religious centers near Veterans Parkway

[Michele Steinbacher](#), September 12, 2022

On Monday, the Bloomington City Council unanimously approved special-use permits for two places of worship — a Christian church, and an Islamic center — to use spaces in commercially-zoned areas.

3 state's attorney candidates interview with McLean County Board members

[Eric Stock](#), September 12, 2022

Three candidates, who have filed to replace Don Knapp as McLean County state's attorney, interviewed Monday with the County Board's Executive Committee. Knapp will be sworn in as a circuit judge on Friday.

3 apply for McLean County state's attorney

[Eric Stock](#), September 9, 2022

The county is looking for a new state's attorney after Don Knapp resigned last month to become a circuit judge.

Normal Mayor Koos pushes more long-distance routes in his bid for Amtrak's board

[Eric Stock](#), September 8, 2022

Normal Mayor Chris Koos says he'll push for more long-distance passenger train routes if he's confirmed to Amtrak's Board of Directors.

Rep. LaHood calls for manufacturing sector revival as national security measure

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 7, 2022

The Republican congressman is calling for tax credits to boost manufacturing, and a drop in government spending, except for dollars that benefit local projects.

Ahead of amendment vote, union membership grows in Illinois

[Peter Hancock | Capitol News Illinois](#), September 7, 2022

As voters in Illinois prepare to decide on a state constitutional amendment that would guarantee workers the right to organize, a new study shows union membership in the state grew last year for the first time in four years.

McLean County will consider 2 more solar farms

[Eric Stock](#), September 6, 2022

A New York company, EDP Renewables, has requested a permit to build a five-megawatt solar farm east of Bloomington, while Denver-based ASD McLean IL Solar III wants to build a two-megawatt solar farm south of the city.

Rep. Brady pledges electronic titles and liens if elected Secretary of State

[Eric Stock](#), September 1, 2022

The Republican state representative from Bloomington says the General Assembly approved the office's move to paperless titles and liens two decades ago, but the Secretary of State's office never made the changes.

Bloomington City Council candidate announces early for Ward 6

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 1, 2022

The November election campaign season has not peaked, yet a Bloomington City Council candidate has already announced a run for Ward 6 in the nonpartisan municipal consolidated election next April 4.

Normal electoral board finds petition to change town government legally invalid

[Lyndsay Jones](#), August 30, 2022

Backers of a petition aimed at getting a referendum question before Normal voters in November appear headed to court after an electoral board found the petition to be legally invalid.

Barickman: Political attacks on educators have worsened teacher shortage

[Ryan Denham](#), August 30, 2022

A Republican state senator from Bloomington said unfairly blaming educators for the state's pension problems contributed to what's become a stubborn teacher shortage.

Illinois Republicans look to gain control of the state Supreme Court this election

[Dave McKinney | WBEZ](#), August 30, 2022

The potential for a shift in control of the state's highest court could impact major issues, including abortion and gun rights.

Normal electoral board plans to issue written order Tuesday on petition and related challenges

[Lyndsay Jones](#), August 29, 2022

During a meeting Tuesday evening, the town's electoral board is expected to issue a written ruling on the objection to the referendum question and the related opposition to that objection.

McLean County Board fills vacancy at special meeting

[Eric Stock](#), August 26, 2022

The McLean County Board voted 16-1 on Friday to appoint Jay "Ryan" Lawler Jr. to the vacant District 4 board seat. He will serve the remaining three months of Matt Coates' term.

Candidates for governor talk agriculture policy in Lexington

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 25, 2022

Illinois candidates for governor talked agriculture policy at an ag sector roundtable Wednesday consisting of more than 100 industry leaders. The session was held in McLean County at Shuler Farms in rural Lexington.

Illinois' new legislative inspector general says he's a watchdog, not a prosecutor

[Eric Stock](#), August 24, 2022

Illinois' new legislative watchdog is six months into the job and he says he's not found evidence of wrongdoing.

Social studies teacher applies for McLean County Board seat

[Eric Stock](#), August 24, 2022

Jay Lawler of Normal has applied for the seat in District 4, which represents parts on Normal. Lawler wants to replace Democrat Matt Coates, who resigned from the county board in July to accept a job with the Illinois Prisoner Review Board.

As Evidence Based Funding formula turns 5, lawmakers reflect on historic legislation

[Peter Hancock](#), August 23, 2022

Five years later, huge disparities still exist among districts, both in funding and academic performance, but lawmakers from both parties who were part of negotiating the new law say it has provided huge benefits, especially to those schools that were most underfunded.

Sen. Duckworth and Ag Secretary Vilsack push ethanol incentives during LeRoy visit

[Eric Stock](#), August 23, 2022

U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack joined U.S Sen. Tammy Duckworth to push new incentives for biofuels during a visit Tuesday in LeRoy, where they

announced the Ag Department is offering \$100 million in grants to retrofit gas stations to use E-85 fuel.

[Divided Bloomington City Council moves forward with downtown street design](#)

[Michele Steinbacher](#), August 22, 2022

A divided Bloomington City Council argued over the time and cost needed for a conceptual plan to redesign downtown streets, but supporters successfully pushed it forward on a 5-4 vote Monday night.

[Normal's Electoral Board lays out ground rules and timeline for hearing objection to referendum](#)

[Ryan Denham](#), August 22, 2022

Normal's Electoral Board laid out the ground rules Monday for how it will decide whether a politically charged ballot question on overhauling town council elections makes it to the ballot in November.

[Koehler, Anderson make their cases for representing the new 46th State Senate District](#)

[Joe Deacon](#), August 22, 2022

Democratic incumbent Dave Koehler of Peoria has held the seat since 2006, while Republican challenger Desi Anderson of Carlock is seeking elected office for the first time.

[Normal city manager: Wintergreen developer addressing resident concerns](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 19, 2022

Normal's city manager expects the developer of a controversial addition to the Wintergreen subdivision off Beech Street near Interstate 55 will make changes to satisfy neighborhood objections.

[Normal's Electoral Board to hear objection to Town Council redistricting plan](#)

[Ryan Denham](#), August 19, 2022

A Normal resident has filed an objection to a petition effort to overhaul how voters elect Town Council members, arguing that supporters have misinterpreted state law and not collected enough signatures.

GOP rallies at State Fair to 'Restore Illinois'

[Peter Hancock](#), August 18, 2022

Illinois Republicans gathered for their annual day at the State Fair on Thursday to showcase their candidates in the Nov. 8 election, vowing that the party will “restore Illinois.”

Underpass talk leads to altercation between Cities staffer and Normal council member

[Ryan Denham](#), August 17, 2022

A tense exchange at Monday’s Normal Town Council meeting spilled out into the hallway afterward, escalating into an altercation between a council member and a writer for a conservative media outlet that some feared would turn physical.

Connect Transit will add electric buses, micro-transit vans with 'system changing' \$13 million federal grant

[Ryan Denham](#), August 16, 2022

Connect Transit will get a \$13 million federal grant that will pay for five new electric buses, electric vans for a new on-demand micro-transit service, and a new training and storage facility.

\$750,000 plan is Bloomington's first step toward major downtown streetscape project

[Jim Stahly Jr.](#), August 16, 2022

A streetscape project discussed by the Bloomington City Council on Monday night aims to turn the downtown into a destination by improving walkability, sidewalks and lighting, among other things.

Normal council learns how \$3M grant will lessen inflation's impact on underpass project

[Michele Steinbacher](#), August 15, 2022

On Monday, Normal leaders celebrated the town securing a \$3.1 million federal grant that will be used for the planned construction of a pedestrian underpass in Uptown.

ISU trustees vote to purchase sites on Raab Road in Normal, expand nursing program to Springfield

[Lyndsay Jones](#), August 15, 2022

As Illinois State University prepares for the 2025 launch of a new College of Engineering, trustees on Monday approved the purchase of a former Lincoln College building and the site of a beauty school to house non-engineering administrative workers.

Normal council to consider pickleball courts, denser housing for Wintergreen

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 12, 2022

The Normal Town Council will consider spending close to \$561,000 to improve tennis and pickleball courts at Anderson and Underwood parks when it meets Monday evening. Town staff said none of those courts have been resurfaced in two decades with the infrastructure spending taking into account the growing popularity of pickleball.

McLean County Board rejects board appointment; Knapp appointed circuit judge

[Eric Stock](#), August 11, 2022

The McLean County Board has reopened the filing period for candidates who want to fill a vacancy in District 4, covering parts of Normal, after voting 8-7 against the appointment of Democrat Krystle Able.

Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi defends trip to Taiwan amid threats from China

[Mawa Iqbal](#), August 11, 2022

The Schaumburg Democrat joined House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and other federal lawmakers on this trip in the hopes of strengthening ties with the nation.

McLean County joins national effort to keep ‘familiar faces’ out of shelters and the justice system

[Eric Stock](#), August 11, 2022

McLean County's mental health initiatives are getting national attention. The National Association of Counties has tabbed McLean County and about a dozen other counties and cities to share ideas through the new Familiar Faces Initiative.

Q&A: Police review board's Kimberly Howard and Ashley Farmer say new teen member bridges generation gap

[Michele Steinbacher](#), August 10, 2022

Bloomington's Public Safety and Community Relations Board is getting ready to bridge the generation gap, bringing on its first teen member.

Rivian's RJ Scaringe joins JB Pritzker at White House for CHIPS bill-signing

[Ryan Denham](#), August 9, 2022

Rivian founder and CEO RJ Scaringe was at the White House on Tuesday as President Biden signed legislation that will pump more than \$50 billion into research and manufacturing of semiconductor chips.

Bloomington council directs bulk of \$7M streets budget to resurfacing, teases \$2M more

[Michele Steinbacher](#), August 8, 2022

The Bloomington City Council agreed Monday to authorize a \$5.2 million contract for the upcoming year's street resurfacing projects, and likely will add a \$2 million boost, thanks to federal COVID-relief funds.

Supporters turn in signatures for ballot question that would create Normal Town Council districts

[Lyndsay Jones](#), August 8, 2022

About 2,200 people signed petitions to put a ballot question in front of voters that would change the Town of Normal's form of representative government from its current at-large system to one that is district-based, organizers said.

West College Avenue and ISU nursing college projects to receive federal funding

[Jack Podlesnik](#), August 8, 2022

The money is going toward rehabilitating West College, and building a new facility for the Illinois State University Mennonite College of Nursing.

1 candidate files for short-term McLean County Board appointment

[Eric Stock](#), August 8, 2022

Krystle Able of Normal is the only candidate to file for the McLean County Board vacancy in District 4. The Democratic party recently slated Able to run in the general election in November.

Federal Illinois lawmakers say declaring Monkeypox virus a national emergency is critical

[Mawa Iqbal](#), August 5, 2022

The lawmakers praise President Joe Biden's move to declare Monkeypox a public health emergency but say much more work needs to be done to curb outbreaks.

Normal Planning Commission hears from upset Wintergreen subdivision residents

[Michele Steinbacher](#), August 4, 2022

More than 150 people came out for the Normal Planning Commission meeting on Thursday, with most of them upset about proposed changes for future development in the Wintergreen subdivision.

10-day sales tax reduction on clothing, school supplies begins Friday

[Jerry Nowicki](#), August 4, 2022

Beginning Friday and lasting through Aug. 14, the state will reduce its sales tax rate from 6.25 percent to 1.25 percent for certain clothing items costing less than \$125 and school supplies.

Normal mayor advocates for Amtrak, Uptown, and industrial park

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 2, 2022

Normal Mayor Chris Koos would like to see the community develop guidelines for a shovel-ready industrial park, something the Economic Development Council has begun to talk about. But during a WGLT interview on Sound Ideas, he shied away from specifying what the town should provide to make it happen.

Normal council OKs funding agreement with IDOT for underpass project

[Philip Walker](#), August 1, 2022

The Normal Town Council, meeting Monday night, also awarded a bid for a water main replacement project, and approved payment to Carle Health for the operation of a mobile health clinic.

Republican candidate for governor Darren Bailey struggles to unite his party

[Dave McKinney | WBEZ](#), August 1, 2022

GOP heavyweights haven't backed Bailey's campaign directly since he won the nomination, and even his supporters worry about how he'll secure statewide support.

Underpass funding agreement and mobile health clinic go before Normal council

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 29, 2022

The Normal Town Council on Monday will consider a joint funding agreement for the Uptown underpass project. The agreement with the Illinois Department of Transportation covers development of a detailed construction design and formalizes part of a grant-supported funding scenario approved by the council in July 2021.

Grocery store is high on the wish list in public input for Uptown South's future

[Jim Stahly Jr.](#), July 29, 2022

A grocery store in the middle of a “food desert” around Illinois State University, and an emphasis on smaller businesses and buildings, topped public input Thursday night on possible design plans for Uptown South.

Bloomington to consider transformational downtown streetscape vision

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 27, 2022

Bloomington City Manager Tim Gleason estimates the price tag for a new downtown streetscape at \$25-30 million. That's not to say anything like that has been decided, but now that the O'Neil Pool Project and the Bloomington Public Library expansion are under way, Gleason said it's time to pay a lot more attention to the city's core.

U.S. Sen. Tammy Duckworth suggests a 'national FOID card,' assault weapons ban as remedies for mass shootings

[Tim Shelley](#), July 26, 2022

Duckworth said the biggest killer of children under the age of 16 is gun violence in the United States.

Bloomington council OKs revamped ward map ahead of spring election

[Michele Steinbacher](#), July 25, 2022

A new ward map for Bloomington reshapes the city's districts ahead of the April 2023 election, with downtown now entirely falling within Ward 6.

Bloomington council looks to spend \$9M in ARPA funding to upgrade water, sewer systems

[Eric Stock](#), July 22, 2022

Bloomington City Council members stressed the need for funding roads and sewers with federal American Rescue Plan Act (APRA) money when they discussed the issue last fall.

[Normal seeing interest in apartment complex projects](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 20, 2022

So far this year, the Town of Normal has approved plans for 80 new single-family homes to help address a 4,000-unit housing shortage in Bloomington-Normal. But City Manager Pam Reece said those have all been within existing subdivisions and don't address a lack of upscale apartments — until recently.

[LaHood votes against Respect for Marriage Act](#)

[Eric Stock](#), July 20, 2022

U.S. Rep. Darin LaHood voted against a measure that would have codified same-sex marriage, while two Illinois Republicans whose terms in Congress are set to end next year voted for the bill.

[Gov. Pritzker tests positive for COVID-19 after appearing at Florida event](#)

[Dave McKinney | WBEZ](#), July 19, 2022

Pritzker says he's experiencing mild symptoms and is taking anti-viral medication after an attendee at Florida rally also tests positive.

[Normal Police Department to begin using license-plate reading cameras](#)

[Michele Steinbacher](#), July 19, 2022

The Normal Police Department is the latest central Illinois force to adopt license-plate reading cameras.

[Bloomington council hears plan to navigate process for receiving housing assistance](#)

[Philip Walker](#), July 18, 2022

The United Way McLean County Housing Coalition is proposing a three-year trial for a project to help people facing homelessness to navigate the maze of red tape required to receive housing assistance.

[As Gov. JB Pritzker takes center stage in Florida, speculation of a presidential run increases](#)

[Dave McKinney | WBEZ](#), July 15, 2022

The Illinois governor said he wouldn't oppose President Joe Biden, and he lacks the name recognition of other potential candidates. But he's hitting the national circuits.

[McLean County names a new mental health leader as it plans a reorganization](#)

[Eric Stock](#), July 14, 2022

McLean County has hired a new leader for its behavioral health initiatives and plans to outsource care of the mental health triage center in a reorganization that county officials think could save the county money long term.

[How a plan took shape to change the way Normal's Town Council is elected](#)

[Lyndsay Jones](#), July 13, 2022

A petition effort in Normal is aimed at potentially changing the town council's at-large representation system to one that is district-based. It's raising questions among some residents regarding the timing and political point of origin.

[Bloomington to spend almost \\$225,000 to repair aging Market Street Parking Deck](#)

[Michele Steinbacher](#), July 11, 2022

The Bloomington City Council is split on whether to keep pouring money into the aging Market Street Parking Deck downtown.

[Bloomington considers amnesty for overdue parking tickets](#)

[Eric Stock](#), July 8, 2022

The City of Bloomington could soon offer amnesty to parking violators with overdue fines.

Trustees appoint now-former ARC operations director as new Normal Township supervisor

[Lyndsay Jones](#), July 8, 2022

Sarah Grammer resigned from her position as Normal Township Supervisor during a trustees meeting on Thursday night. ARC director of operations Jess Ray was appointed to fill the remainder of Grammer's term as supervisor.

How an influx of out-of-state patients could impact abortion access in McLean County

[Ryan Denham](#), July 7, 2022

Planned Parenthood's Bloomington health center is already seeing an increase in abortion patients from out-of-state — just two weeks after Roe v. Wade was overturned.

Normal Mayor Koos is unsure if he'll back license plate reading cameras

[Eric Stock](#), July 6, 2022

Normal Mayor Chris Koos said he has concerns about privacy protections that he will discuss with the police chief before he votes July 18 on a plan to buy license plate reading cameras.

New grant-funded climbing structure set for Children's Discovery Museum

[Michele Steinbacher](#), July 5, 2022 The Normal Town Council voted Tuesday night to authorize a contract for a new climbing structure for the Children's Discovery Museum.

Timeline unclear for special session on abortion rights

[Peter Hancock](#), July 5, 2022

Gov. JB Pritzker and top Democratic leaders in the Illinois General Assembly said Tuesday that while they still plan to call a special session this year to strengthen

abortion rights, they expect to take the “remainder of the summer” to craft policies before lawmakers return to the Capitol.

McLean County Board write-in candidates advance; 2 barely hit the minimum

[Eric Stock](#), July 1, 2022

Two write-in candidates for McLean County Board barely reached the minimum number of votes to advance to the general election, while three other write-ins easily advanced, based on unofficial election data from the McLean County Clerk’s office and the Bloomington Election Commission.

Less hassle for yard signs could be coming to Normal

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 1, 2022

It could be easier to plant a bunch of signs in your yard in Normal. Town staff have requested that the council ask the Planning Commission to rework the sign ordinance.

BUSINESS AND ECONOMY

What the hot housing market could mean for your home's assessed value — and tax bill

[Ryan Denham](#), September 2, 2022

McLean County’s new supervisor of assessments says the hot housing market means more people might have questions about how their homes are being assessed this year.

Texas doctor uses his Rivian truck to power a vasectomy

[Ryan Denham](#), September 2, 2022

With new settlement, more Mexican workers at Rivian plant will get owed overtime pay

[Ryan Denham](#), August 23, 2022

More Mexican laborers who helped get Rivian's electric vehicle plant ready for production will finally get the overtime pay they were owed but never received.

Rivian to add second shift at Normal plant this fall

[Ryan Denham](#), August 11, 2022

The electric automaker Rivian plans to add a second shift at its Normal manufacturing plant by the end of next month, creating a need for even more hiring, the company said Thursday.

Rivian's RJ Scaringe joins JB Pritzker at White House for CHIPS bill-signing

[Ryan Denham](#), August 9, 2022

Rivian founder and CEO RJ Scaringe was at the White House on Tuesday as President Biden signed legislation that will pump more than \$50 billion into research and manufacturing of semiconductor chips.

Lots of new restaurants popping up around Bloomington-Normal

[Jack Podlesnik](#), August 9, 2022 Eleven new restaurants have opened or are in the process of opening in Bloomington-Normal.

10-day sales tax reduction on clothing, school supplies begins Friday

[Jerry Nowicki](#), August 4, 2022

Beginning Friday and lasting through Aug. 14, the state will reduce its sales tax rate from 6.25 percent to 1.25 percent for certain clothing items costing less than \$125 and school supplies.

'We're not going to stop': Group continues push to bring a grocery store to west Bloomington

[Eric Stock](#), August 3, 2022

The head of the West Market Street Council says the group continues to work on plans to acquire the former Fox Plaza West shopping center to open a grocery store in the west Bloomington neighborhood. Those efforts stalled recently when the property failed to sell at an auction.

Access and equity are key priorities for state's first electric vehicle coordinator

[Ryan Denham](#), August 1, 2022

The state's first electric vehicle coordinator says access and equity are guiding principles as she gets to work promoting a new rebate program and helping to decide where chargers are placed.

Many factors are driving up the price of farmland in central Illinois

[Tim Alexander](#), July 28, 2022

Are these robust prices squeezing new and beginning farmers — defined by the USDA as producers with less than 10 years experience in the field — out of the land market?

Rivian confirms 6% workforce cut, but manufacturing jobs in Normal are safe

[Ryan Denham](#), July 27, 2022

Manufacturing jobs in Normal will not be affected when Rivian cuts 6% of its workforce in the face of challenging economic conditions, the electric automaker said Wednesday.

18-year-old Realtor follows his family into the real estate business

[Colleen Reynolds](#), July 25, 2022

The attraction to flexible hours and sizable commissions lured even teenagers into the profession, including 18-year-old Gavin Devore of Bloomington.

Fight over COVID auto insurance data might set the stage for broader regulatory fight in Illinois

[Ryan Denham](#), July 13, 2022

A consumer advocacy group says newly disclosed data show that auto insurers made excessive profits during the pandemic — and that it's proof that Illinois needs to regulate the industry more tightly.

Field Day at ISU Farm focuses on watershed progress and strategies

[Tim Alexander](#), July 13, 2022

Agronomists, farmers and researchers met at the Illinois State University Farm in Lexington on Tuesday to discuss Lake Bloomington-Evergreen Lake (LB-EL) watershed planning efforts, along with farm conservation practices that can help reach watershed goals.

CEO Scaringe says Rivian will 'be as thoughtful as possible' as it considers job cuts

[Ryan Denham](#), July 12, 2022

Rivian founder and CEO RJ Scaringe has confirmed layoffs are being considered as the electric automaker looks to “grow sustainably” in the face of a changing economic landscape.

Report says Rivian is planning layoffs, but impact on Normal plant is unclear

[Ryan Denham](#), July 11, 2022

The electric automaker Rivian is reportedly planning hundreds of layoffs – though it’s unclear whether any of those cuts will happen in Normal.

Rivian's EV production in Normal jumped sharply from March to June

[Ryan Denham](#), July 6, 2022

The electric automaker Rivian said Wednesday that it produced 4,401 vehicles in Normal between April and June — a 72% increase from the previous three-month period.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Artificial intelligence program ignites debate over the nature of art

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 13, 2022

A piece of digital art that won a prize at the Colorado State Fair has reignited an old furor over what art is and how artists create in an authentic way.

Computer literacy lags for rural seniors in a digital world

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 30, 2022

Illinois State University researcher Elizabeth Kosuth said a survey of 800 McLean County seniors showed older people have a wide range of expertise and comfort with computers.

Red letter day: Ag startup bought out by Bayer works closely with ISU researchers

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 3, 2022

A chemical and agricultural behemoth has bought a St. Louis-based startup company that works closely with Illinois State University, where researchers have worked to domesticate the weed pennycress into a cover crop and oil seed plant dubbed CoverCress.

Weed being domesticated at ISU and WIU to produce biodiesel, animal feed, and jet fuel

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 18, 2022

For years, conservationists have promoted cover crops as ways to fix nitrogen in the soil and prevent soil erosion. Farmers haven't been leaping for joy because it costs money and labor to plant and then to scrape the cover crop off the field in time for spring planting. Incentives to plant cover crops through conservation grants barely offset that.

'We'll learn so much!' Webb Telescope's wow factor huge for McLean County observer

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 12, 2022

A McLean County stargazer is over the moon about the first images released from the James Webb Space Telescope, millions of light years beyond the moon. The telescope launched at Christmas and until now has gone through startup routines and tests. It's now ready to do the science.

ARTS AND CULTURE

After 17 years at BCPA, most Illinois Symphony Orchestra concerts in Twin Cities moving to ISU

[Lauren Warnecke](#), September 1, 2022

The Illinois Symphony Orchestra (ISO) will change venues this fall, moving its main concert series in the Twin Cities to Illinois State University's Center for Performing Arts after nearly two decades at the downtown Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts.

It's the Hat-titude and the gospel music with Coalescence Theatre Project's production of 'Crowns'

[Ariele Jones](#), August 27, 2022

This is the last weekend to see "Crowns" at the Normal Activity Center. It's a production of the Bloomington-based Coalescence Theatre Project. You can find tickets on the theatre's website.

A tip for seeing 'Suddenly Last Summer' at Heartland Theatre: Don't watch the movie

[Lauren Warnecke](#), August 26, 2022

Director Tom Mitchell makes his Heartland Theatre debut with 'Suddenly Last Summer,' the Normal troupe's season opener. Mitchell finds relevance in Tennessee Williams' timelessly salient themes — and encourages newcomers to avoid dated interpretations cemented on film.

Beauty in the banal: Exhibit celebrates painter who wrote the book on Midwest landscapes — and much more

[Lauren Warnecke](#), August 19, 2022

Through Aug. 26, 60 artists and more than 70 artworks are part of an eclectic exhibit at the McLean County Arts Center. At first, they might not appear to go together, but the pieces that make up "The Painter's Pedagogy" all have a connection to Harold Gregor.

Pierre Lacocque of Mississippi Heat talks about the women in his life

[Jon Norton](#), August 19, 2022

Mississippi Heat bandleader Pierre Lacocque gives a nod to his maternal grandmother and his wife on the band's new album "Madeleine."

'Understanding Horror' series at Normal Theater unpacks the psychology of horror movies

[Ryan Denham](#), August 16, 2022

The first film in the "Understanding Horror" series is "Night of the Living Dead" on Aug. 25 at the Normal Theater.

McHistory: Press Butler the great detective

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 9, 2022

One doesn't think of Bloomington and central Illinois as a lurid hotbed of crime. But it certainly seems it could have been that way during the mid-to-late 1800s as portrayed by the three city newspapers of the day.

Garrett Scott remembered: Chess coach, Normal Town Council member, and educator

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 9, 2022

Garrett Scott, a longtime Normal Town Council member, speech pathologist, and chess educator who helped thousands of school children learn and play chess, has died. He was 78.

IWU graduate to study music and composers silenced by Nazis in Austria

[Sarah Nardi](#), August 9, 2022

A graduate of Illinois Wesleyan University will soon be on her way to Vienna, Austria as a Fulbright Scholar for the upcoming school year.

Art that defies expectation: 2 McCauley Gallery shows invite everyone to the table

[Lauren Warnecke](#), August 5, 2022

Two shows this summer are collectively aimed at reducing barriers to art with works made from unique materials. “Within Reach” runs through Aug. 12, followed by a solo exhibition called, “Have Your Cake,” from Aug. 22 through Oct. 7.

Brazil’s musical melting pot highlights guitar recital at Normal church

[Lauren Warnecke](#), August 5, 2022

Normal First United Methodist Church music director Nander Novaes will play a solo recital of classical guitar works, starting at 7 p.m. Friday. The concert features Brazilian composers — with cookies to follow.

During B-N visit, journalist Catalina Maria Johnson will connect music and the roots, history, and culture of U.S. Latinos

[Jon Norton](#), August 4, 2022

Chicago-based journalist Catalina Maria Johnson will use music illustrations as a way of understanding the history, roots, and concerns of Latinos in this land when she appears at the Normal Public Library on Saturday, Aug. 6.

Artist who painted iconic Uptown tree mural is 'ecstatic it's still there'

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 1, 2022

Lauran Bryant painted the mural of a gnarled and craggy mulberry tree a dozen years ago when Uptown Normal was torn up and in the middle of a revitalization plan.

Bloomington blues-rockers Old Smoke find a complementary sound

[Jon Norton](#), July 29, 2022

The Bloomington-based blues-rockin' band Old Smoke continues its music evolution despite key band member Adam Humphreys moving to Georgia.

The Andalusian Material Girl: Carmen and Madonna have more in common than you might think

[Lauren Warnecke](#), July 29, 2022

You might not think opera and the #MeToo movement have much in common, but MIOpera director Tracy Koch says the latest production of "Carmen" is about a woman who takes control of her own life. WGLT stopped by a rehearsal to talk to Koch and learn more about opera's sultriest leading lady.

Illinois Shakes' final weeks have arrived — and you don't want to miss it

[Lauren Warnecke](#), July 28, 2022

The Illinois Shakespeare Festival is back to pre-pandemic operations with “The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)” opening the season in June and, through Aug. 5, a rotation of “King Lear” and “Much Ado About Nothing” — both well worth seeing.

BCPA is back in full swing with a full lineup of shows

[Jack Podlesnik](#), July 25, 2022

This year's lineup features the musical acts, Lonestar and Sara Evans (on acoustics), as well as "Madagascar the Musical" to finish off the season.

B-N high school students showcase diversity with a cultural arts night

[Matt Cherry](#), July 23, 2022

A student group that aims to foster diversity brought artists of all types and from various backgrounds to Uptown Normal for a cultural arts event on Friday night.

Magic to do: Community Players' 'Matilda' drives home the message of standing up for yourself

[Lauren Warnecke](#), July 22, 2022

There's the magic of theater, and then there's theater about magic. Community Players latest production, “Matilda The Musical,” has both. The production runs through July 31 at Community Players, with antics galore and a few optical illusions that will, above all, remind you of the power kids have.

The Record Company's Chris Vos knows 'Black Dirt'

[Jon Norton](#), July 20, 2022

Ahead of the Black Dirt Music Festival in Bloomington this weekend, Chris Vos of the Record Company digs into his story growing up on a Wisconsin dairy farm.

From anime to activism: Everything but the kitchen sink in Teen Art Group's show at University Galleries

[Lauren Warnecke](#), July 15, 2022

What happens when you get a bunch of teenagers in a room, feed them pizza and talk about art? As you might expect, they all have different ideas, but eclecticism and imagination have come together for "In Living Color" at University Galleries.

New mural 'Creates Safe Space' for youth in Miller Park

[Lauren Warnecke](#), July 10, 2022

A crowd gathered in Miller Park on Saturday to celebrate a new public art piece about "Creating Safe Spaces." More than 40 youth artists worked with local arts organizations and police officers to create the colorful, large-scale painting while community building.

It's all about O.P.P. (or Other People's Patios) with Nomad Theatre's Patio Plays

[Ariele Jones](#), July 8, 2022

Nomad Theatre is theater that moves to site-specific locations for performances. And just in time for summer viewing, the Patio Plays are back and making their way around Bloomington-Normal.

Brianna Thomas nods at current events on her new jazz album with a Nina Simone classic and an original about forgiveness

[Jon Norton](#), July 8, 2022

Peoria native Brianna Thomas on her new album reaches back to Nina Simone for current context, and writes about forgiveness on her new album "Everybody Knows."

Bloomington-Normal artist with Alzheimer's depicts the decline of the human body through art

[Sarah Nardi](#), July 6, 2022

Through his work, a Bloomington-Normal artist suffering from Alzheimer's provides a new perspective on the human form.

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURE

Water resources panel points to complex tangle of challenges

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 14, 2022

Illinois water issues are legion. They are pressing. And those who deal with those issues face serious challenges meeting them: Rapidly shifting science, a legacy of underfunded agencies, a reluctant public, and an ever-changing environment.

First seasonal West Nile virus found in McLean County

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 1, 2022

McLean County has its first positive test for West Nile virus this year. The county health department said a dead bird tested positive for the virus in the 61705 area code west of Bloomington.

McLean County household hazardous waste collection canceled

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 19, 2022

The state environmental protection agency has canceled a household hazardous waste collection day in McLean County that was set for September.

Red letter day: Ag startup bought out by Bayer works closely with ISU researchers

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 3, 2022

A chemical and agricultural behemoth has bought a St. Louis-based startup company that works closely with Illinois State University, where researchers have

worked to domesticate the weed pennycress into a cover crop and oil seed plant dubbed CoverCress.

'Build on this momentum:' ISU has a plan to be more sustainable

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 28, 2022

Illinois State University already recycles, tries to reduce food waste, and is swapping out lighting fixtures for lower energy LED fixtures. Elisabeth Reed, the director of ISU's Office of Sustainability and member of the Presidential Sustainability Council, said ISU's first Sustainability Strategic Plan plan offers a road map to do more.

EDUCATION AND SCHOOLS

Few show up for Unit 5 referendum information session; leaders hope virtual option more convenient

[Michele Steinbacher](#), September 29, 2022

After a paltry turnout for a Unit 5-hosted information session on the tax referendum before voters in November, district leaders are hopeful the next two bring more participants. The school district is asking voters to approve an increase in the education fund tax rate, that if approved, could bring in an additional \$20.5 million in property tax revenue.

'Yes For Unit 5' group forms to push for passage of tax referendum

[Ryan Denham](#), September 26, 2022

The pro-referendum community group calling itself Yes For Unit 5 stepped into public view Monday. It aims to sell the community on a referendum that would finally address Unit 5's multimillion-dollar budget deficit.

Unit 5 adopts annual budget; sets public information sessions about referendum

[Michele Steinbacher](#), September 22, 2022

The 2022-2023 budget summary shows the district spending nearly \$216 million, but drawing revenue closer to \$202 million. Expenses are up about 1.5% from the previous year.

Teacher whose resignation was rejected by Unit 5 speaks out

[Michele Steinbacher](#), September 21, 2022

One Unit 5 teacher who had her resignation rejected says she feels like a hostage now, working for the district.

District 87 school board considers gun safety storage campaign

[Eric Stock](#), September 20, 2022

District 87's school board will consider a plan Wednesday night to remind parents about safe gun storage. Superintendent David Mouser says the district's director of safety and security proposed the idea, part of the national Be Smart gun safety campaign.

So far, there's been little campaigning over the Unit 5 tax referendum

[Eric Stock](#), September 15, 2022

Early voting begins in two weeks, but McLean County residents have heard little about a ballot issue involving the county's largest school district.

How to get today's kids excited about science and agriculture

[Ryan Denham](#), September 14, 2022

Dr. Craig Wilson's job is to use the USDA's quest for knowledge – about pests or drones or whatever else – to get the next generation of scientists excited to go into the field too.

Rejecting teacher resignations, Unit 5 tests how Illinois might respond to staffing shortage

[Michele Steinbacher](#), September 8, 2022

The McLean County school district denied four resignations, submitted by special education teachers weeks before the first day of school.

ISU enrollment rises on strength of big incoming class

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 8, 2022

Illinois State University has its biggest incoming class in 35 years this fall. Jana Albrecht, the university's associate vice president for enrollment management, said the 3,983 freshmen bring total enrollment to 20,683 students.

Normal OKs plan to build out, rename, section off Wintergreen subdivision

[Michele Steinbacher](#), September 7, 2022

The Normal Town Council on Tuesday OK'd a slightly revised proposal to develop a north Normal subdivision.

Enrollment rises at Heartland Community College

[Charlie Schlenker](#), September 6, 2022

Heartland Community College enrollment rose slightly this fall term, up 2% compared to last year. Enrollment by new students grew more than the overall number, at 6% growth.

Schools settle into annual rhythm with new social, emotional component

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 29, 2022

Teachers in Bloomington-Normal hope they will make more progress this school year on how kids interact with each other. Last year, many kids weren't used to being in a classroom, doing things together, or taking teacher direction. That resulted in increased conflict and tempers, and sometimes emotional withdrawal.

Children's Discovery Museum awarded more than \$250,000 in grants to expand early childhood STEAM programming

[Jack Podlesnik](#), August 24, 2022

The Children's Discovery Museum in Uptown Normal will get a significant boost to its early childhood STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) programming thanks to two new grants.

[As Evidence Based Funding formula turns 5, lawmakers reflect on historic legislation](#)

[Peter Hancock](#), August 23, 2022

Five years later, huge disparities still exist among districts, both in funding and academic performance, but lawmakers from both parties who were part of negotiating the new law say it has provided huge benefits, especially to those schools that were most underfunded.

[President Kinzy: ISU starts new term with renewed energy](#)

August 23, 2022

Illinois State University President Terri Goss Kinzy says people on campus can feel the difference in energy from the last two years that were dominated by COVID-19. She takes the high spirits among students on the first day of class, and among faculty during an opening reception, as positive signs.

[Q&A: The Unit 5 referendum unpacked](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 18, 2022

Unit 5 is asking voters for more taxing authority while promising the total tax rate would fall. The Unit 5 school board has decided to ask voters for \$20.5 million more property tax dollars for its education fund. Superintendent Kristen Weikle and district business manager Marty Hickman said Unit 5 would not apply the 88-cent rate increase all at once.

[Heartland Community College approves new facility for EV manufacturing programs](#)

[Eric Stock](#), August 18, 2022

Heartland Community College has approved construction of a \$17.5 million building for manufacturing classes. President Keith Cornille says the new

Advanced Manufacturing and Training Center on campus will house HCC's electric vehicle and energy storage programs.

District 87 projects a \$3.4M deficit due to higher transportation and personnel costs

[Eric Stock](#), August 18, 2022

Bloomington public schools project a budget deficit of nearly \$3.4 million this school year. District 87 chief financial officer Mike Cornale says the district faces higher transportation and personnel costs, but notes the district projected a similar deficit last year but ended with a surplus.

Unit 5 voters will see tax referendum on the November ballot

[Michele Steinbacher](#), August 18, 2022

Unit 5 leaders are asking voters to expand the district's taxing authority for one fund, but promising the overall tax rate will go down.

ISU President Terri Goss Kinzy tests positive for COVID, has mild symptoms

[Eric Stock](#), August 17, 2022

The Illinois State University president plans to work remotely at her university residence while she is in isolation.

Heartland to consider borrowing \$12 million for maintenance and IT needs

[Eric Stock](#), August 16, 2022

Heartland Community College's board of trustees is expected to issue more than \$12 million in bonds to pay for various projects. President Keith Cornille says Heartland borrows money every few years to cover a mix of building and IT maintenance needs.

ISU trustees vote to purchase sites on Raab Road in Normal, expand nursing program to Springfield

[Lyndsay Jones](#), August 15, 2022

As Illinois State University prepares for the 2025 launch of a new College of Engineering, trustees on Monday approved the purchase of a former Lincoln College building and the site of a beauty school to house non-engineering administrative workers.

Pritzker names criminal justice official and instructor to ISU Board of Trustees

[Eric Stock](#), August 8, 2022

Anthony Byrd, an ISU alum, serves as a special offender specialist in the U.S. Pretrial Service and is an adjunct criminal justice instructor for Lindenwood University in St. Charles, Mo.

Nearly 200 attend Secret Service research presentation at Normal West

[Lyndsay Jones](#), August 4, 2022

Sponsors of the school safety presentation included the U.S. Attorney's Office Central District of Illinois, McLean County Unit 5 and Regional Office of Education #17.

Heartland Community College selected to receive study abroad grant

[Jack Podlesnik](#), August 4, 2022

Heartland Community College students will soon be able to travel abroad easier, thanks to funding from the Increase and Diversify Education Abroad for U.S. Students (IDEAS) Program.

Illinois Wesleyan professor discovers new lizard species in Peru

[Matt Cherry](#), August 3, 2022

Edgar Lehr spent two weeks camping in a Peruvian park at 10,000 feet and found the lizard with a black belly on the second day of the expedition. Lehr was given the honor of selecting a name for the new lizard species, though it has not yet been revealed.

First fruit ripens from Heartland Community College partnership with Rivian

[Charlie Schlenker](#), August 2, 2022

The first cohort of people representing a partnership between Rivian and Heartland Community College has graduated with skills in electric vehicle maintenance. Eight graduates might not seem like a lot, but Heartland provost Rick Pearce said more will assuredly come.

Ineligible student trustee leaves the ISU board 3 members short

[Eric Stock](#), July 29, 2022

The Illinois State University Board of Trustees currently has five members, the minimum required to meet and vote on university matters.

'Build on this momentum:' ISU has a plan to be more sustainable

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 28, 2022

Illinois State University already recycles, tries to reduce food waste, and is swapping out lighting fixtures for lower energy LED fixtures. Elisabeth Reed, the director of ISU's Office of Sustainability and member of the Presidential Sustainability Council, said ISU's first Sustainability Strategic Plan plan offers a road map to do more.

Redbird donors gave \$32.2 million to ISU last fiscal year

[Charlie Schlenker](#), July 28, 2022

Illinois State University raised \$32.2 million last fiscal year. That's the third highest total ever and the first time the university topped \$30 million without an individual gift of more than \$10 million.

B-N high school students showcase diversity with a cultural arts night

[Matt Cherry](#), July 23, 2022

A student group that aims to foster diversity brought artists of all types and from various backgrounds to Uptown Normal for a cultural arts event on Friday night.

Unit 5 poised to ask voters for tax rate hike in November

[Michele Steinbacher](#), July 21, 2022

Unit 5 appears ready to put a referendum question on the November ballot, seeking an annual tax revenue increase of roughly \$14.5 million.

Back 2 School Alliance giving more school supplies to students than ever before

[Jack Podlesnik](#), July 8, 2022

Grants and donations are allowing the group to give more supplies to pre-K and high school students than in previous years.

New Vidette advisor preps aspiring journalists for career in shifting media landscape

[Eric Stock](#), July 7, 2022

Illinois State University's student newspaper, the Vidette, plans to use video as part of its storytelling next year to better prepare its students for multimedia careers.

Three new Illinois laws aim to improve equity in higher education

[Zach Zoller](#), July 6, 2022

Gov. JB Pritzker recently signed three bills into law designed to close equity gaps and expand access to higher education for underrepresented students.

Referendum 101: The long and winding road to Unit 5's financial crunch

[Charlie Schlenker](#), June 30, 2022

Unit 5 is facing a deficit — a big one that has been growing for years. The district is deep into a public engagement process, gathering opinions on how to deal with the structural budget problem and building public awareness of a potential referendum to address the issue.

HEALTH AND MEDICINE

3 more COVID deaths in McLean County; transmission remains low

[Eric Stock](#), September 30, 2022

The McLean County Health Department (MCHD) said Friday the three deaths include a woman in her 80s, a man in his 80s and a man in his 90s. That brings the county's COVID death toll to 398 since the start of the pandemic.

New dental clinic in west Bloomington aims to reduce health disparities

[Eric Stock](#), September 27, 2022

Chestnut Health Systems has announced a \$430,000 federal grant to open a dental clinic on Bloomington's west side.

McLean County reports 2 more COVID deaths; vaccinations increase

Eric Stock, September 16, 2022

McLean County could start billing for mental health treatments and outsource triage center operations

September 14, 2022

McLean County falls back to low COVID transmission; new boosters are available

September 9, 2022

McLean County rises to medium-level COVID as new omicron boosters await

[Eric Stock](#), September 2, 2022

A rise in COVID hospitalizations has put McLean County back into medium-level transmission, according to federal health guidelines. High-risk people in medium-level communities are encouraged to wear a mask in indoor public places.

Bloomington Fire Department paramedics bring the ER to you with portable ultrasound

[Eric Stock](#), August 24, 2022

The Bloomington Fire Department says its new portable heart monitor enables paramedics to bring the hospital emergency department to your side, wherever you are.

ISU President Terri Goss Kinzy tests positive for COVID, has mild symptoms

[Eric Stock](#), August 17, 2022

The Illinois State University president plans to work remotely at her university residence while she is in isolation.

McLean County's COVID numbers improve as CDC loosens protocols

[Eric Stock](#), August 12, 2022

New coronavirus cases and hospitalizations continue to fall in McLean County as the Centers for Disease Control continues to relax its COVID-19 guidelines. McLean County remains at medium COVID-19 community level.

McLean County stays at medium COVID level as hospitalizations are steady

[Eric Stock](#), August 5, 2022

McLean County stayed at the medium level for COVID-19 this week, while new COVID hospitalizations are steady, based on data from the McLean County Health Department (MCHD).

McLean County falls to medium level for COVID-19 as hospitalizations drop

[Eric Stock](#), July 29, 2022

McLean County has fallen back to medium level of COVID-19. New confirmed cases are up, but hospitalizations have dropped.

Chestnut explores other options after dropping 24-hour detox nursing care

[Eric Stock](#), July 22, 2022

Chestnut Health Systems in Bloomington is exploring other ways to provide medically-monitored detox treatment without the need for 24-hour nursing care.

Report: OSF HealthCare won't cover fertility treatments for LGBTQ employees

[Tim Shelley](#), July 19, 2022

OSF HealthCare will only cover fertility treatments for married, opposite-sex workers. That's according to a new report from Bloomberg Law. Reporter Shira Stein says sexual orientation falls under federal anti-discrimination laws, but OSF's status as a religious employer adds some legal uncertainty.

McLean County returns to a high level of COVID community spread

[Eric Stock](#), July 8, 2022

The Centers for Disease Control now considers 28 Illinois counties, including McLean, at a high community level for COVID-19.

ISU is ending SHIELD testing for COVID-19; McLean County remains at medium level

[Eric Stock](#), July 1, 2022

McLean County remains under a medium level of coronavirus spread, according to data from the CDC. New cases dropped this week, but hospitalizations increased.