

First Quarter 2022 WGLT ISSUES AND PROGRAMS

January 2022 – March 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, 5-5:30pm, M-F. The story lengths range from one minute to 30 minutes. Other examples of WGLT addressing community issues can be found at www.wglt.org

Politics and Government

[Rising interest rates to affect Bloomington bond issue](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#) March 29, 2022

As the Federal Reserve increases interest rates in its effort to curb inflation, the City of Bloomington will have to pay more for the \$20 million in bonds the city council approved Monday night.

[Stories of Ukraine shared at Normal West high school](#)

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

Speaking to students Friday at Normal West High School, a veteran soldier and a Peace Corps volunteer both described Ukraine as a lovely country with a

[Former Afghan soldiers settle into their central Illinois relocation](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), March 16, 2022

Several evacuees from Afghanistan are settling into life in Bloomington-Normal. They are former soldiers who fought the Taliban, serving in the

Khost Protection Force, a special unit in the Afghan army stationed in an eastern province bordering Pakistan.

Explosion blows roof off Town of Normal wellhouse

[Charlie Schlenker](#), March 15, 2022

Fire investigators for the Town of Normal said they are puzzling over why an explosion blew the roof off a well house early Tuesday on East Cherry Street.

Retired farmer in the running for House seat in the new 91st District

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

The new 91st Illinois House district is an open seat without an incumbent. That makes it attractive to candidates — and there will be primaries this summer in both major parties.

Coates is lone applicant for McLean County Board's vacant District 4 seat

[Charlie Schlenker](#), March 4, 2022

The likely new Mclean County Board member for District 4 in Normal is Matt Coates, who would replace Ben Webb until the November election if appointed later this month.

Budget passage on deck for Normal Town Council

[Charlie Schlenker](#), March 4, 2022

The Normal Town Council will take up a proposed \$158 million budget next week. It's slightly larger than the preliminary budget that came out in January with the \$251,000 increase coming from the addition of a

third town attorney and an increase in sewer equipment and vehicle money.

Lawmakers raise concerns about inmate transfers from prisons in Pontiac and Vandalia

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

State lawmakers are going public with concerns about the future of the prison in Pontiac and another in Vandalia in southern Illinois.

McLean County Board election dynamics are more fluid than usual

[Charlie Schlenker](#), February 10, 2022

Democratic Party turnover on the McLean County Board is complicating a years-long effort by the party to boost its representation as both major parties position themselves for the next election cycle. It's unlike the traditional pattern of board members, who often are incumbents term after term.

Mental health service providers see light at end of tunnel in Pritzker proposal

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

The head of Bloomington-based Chestnut Health Systems said Gov. JB Pritzker's proposed boost in mental health funding comes at a critical time. The \$140 million in additional money was part of Pritzker's budget speech last week.

Normal council to decide funding mix for new fire station

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

The Town of Normal may borrow about half the money to build a new fire station. The town council will consider a \$2.5 million loan agreement with Busey Bank next week.

Democrat Sharon Chung to run for state representative in new 91st District

[Charlie Schlenker](#), February 4, 2022

A second Democratic candidate says she's running for state representative in the new 91st District.

5th GOP candidate announces for 105th Illinois House District

[Charlie Schlenker](#), January 31, 2022

The Republican primary in the new and vacant 105th Illinois House district is getting crowded.

Remembering those who died in Bloomington-Normal gunfire in 2021

[Jack Graue](#), January 30, 2022

Another mother's son died in gunfire a week ago in Bloomington-Normal, and a gun safety group is repeating its call for sensible safety measures to prevent gun violence.

Datebook: Peace Corps documentary lauds storied history and looks to the future

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

A former Peace Corps volunteer says the organization remains relevant 60 years after its founding during the Kennedy administration. Dane Myers is now the assistant director of the Stevenson Center for Community and Economic Development.

Ex-Afghan soldiers arrive in Bloomington after escaping Taliban

[Charlie Schlenker](#), January 26, 2022

Former soldiers in the army of Afghanistan are resettling in Bloomington after escaping the Taliban when the country fell. Three moved into apartments on Wednesday, and there is potential for more, according to the Afghan Welcome Home Project of Central Illinois, based in Decatur.

Public art initiative in Normal wants to avoid cultural time traps

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

The Town of Normal hopes to use a revised public art plan, among other things, to avoid future controversies over public art. Art expresses a sense of community in a given cultural moment. It is a snapshot in time.

Proposed Normal budget adds people and projects

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

The proposed 2022-23 budget for the Town of Normal is more than 16% higher than the estimated current year budget. That's an increase of \$27.3 million from the current spending plan.

Public art process goes before Normal City Council

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

The Town of Normal has formulated a new way to choose whether, which, and how to place art in public spaces. The town has supported public art for decades, but recently, a controversy over a mural in uptown prompted staff to re-examine the process to make it more intentional.

License plate ID cameras questioned in Bloomington

[Charlie Schlenker](#), January 10, 2022

The Central Illinois Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union said Monday it has reservations about a proposed new traffic camera system that can record license plate numbers of vehicles.

[Anniversary of attacks on Capitol brings reflection and resolve in central Illinois](#)

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

One year after the attack on the U.S. Capitol, elected officials and central Illinois residents said they remember the events of that day vividly.

[Surging COVID cases push Bloomington city meetings online](#)

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

The record surge in COVID cases is prompting the City of Bloomington to move council and other meetings mostly online for the month of January.

[A look behind the legislative curtain with Sen. Barickman](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), January 5, 2022

Even though this is an election year and big controversial issues are unlikely to reach passage in Springfield, there are opportunities to get things done in the state legislature. Bloomington-Normal Republican State Sen. Jason Barickman said those tend to be measures on smaller things affecting people in his district.

Education and Schools

['I'm so close to being done': Lincoln College students are left to figure out what comes next](#)

[Sarah Nardi](#), March 31, 2022

News that Lincoln Collge will close in May has left students scrambling for answers

[Lincoln College to close permanently on May 13](#)

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

Lincoln College President David Gerlach cited the COVID-19 pandemic and a cyberattack as the reasons for the closure.

[ISU employee union says it will vote to authorize a strike on Friday](#)

[Lyndsay Jones](#), March 24, 2022

A spokesperson for American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 1110 said Friday's vote doesn't mean a strike is imminent, but it should send a message.

[Black History essay contest winners write of resilience of people to break down barriers](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), March 22, 2022

The winners of the City of Bloomington Black History Essay Contest speak to the resilience of a people who used some of their most valuable assets to break through societal barriers.

[Timetable not set to deal with rest of Unit 5's budget deficit](#)

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

Unit 5 schools have talked about a tax referendum for at least a couple of months, according to January school board finance committee minutes.

Engineering business groups enthusiastic about equity direction of ISU engineering program

[Charlie Schlenker](#), March 17, 2022

A group that represents 250 engineering firms in the state says it's excited about Illinois State University's decision to start a College of Engineering.

Indians in B-N: Language schools in Bloomington-Normal pass along culture, tradition and skill

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

The missions of both schools that teach Telugu and Tamil boil down to universal themes that go beyond language. They're there to pass along tradition, culture and history and to build kinship and community among those who attend.

ISU College of Engineering gets thumbs-up from state's higher ed board

[Charlie Schlenker](#), March 15, 2022

The Illinois Board of Higher Education approved a new College of Engineering at Illinois State University on Tuesday.

Indians in B-N: Parents help their kids navigate a world they're still learning too

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

Krishna and Uma Balakrishnan are among the many Asian Indians in Bloomington-Normal who are navigating life as both parents and first-generation immigrants. No parent has it easy, but it takes a special blend of courage and resilience to raise kids to thrive in a culture you yourself as learning too.

Unit 5 school board approves \$2.2 million in cuts, but opts against music changes

Michele Steinbacher, March 10, 2022

Unit 5 is charging ahead with a plan to cut \$2.1 million in teaching jobs and educational programs next year – but the show will go on for the district’s fifth-grade band and orchestra program.

Should the 16-year-old who allegedly brought a gun to BHS be charged as an adult?

Sarah Nardi, March 8, 2022

Advocates argue that children who commit crimes should always be prosecuted in the juvenile justice system. State's Attorney Don Knapp disagrees.

Unit 5 board members say cuts will get the public’s attention, and a tax referendum may be next

Lyndsay Jones, March 7, 2022

WGLT sat down with Unit 5 school board members Amy Roser and Barry Hitchins to discuss how they are attempting to manage a budget with a multimillion-dollar gap in education expenses.

ISU students seek common ground with Russian counterparts as the war in Ukraine intensifies

Eric Stock, March 3, 2022

Illinois State University students say they have a lot more in common with their counterparts in Russia than they realized.

Unit 5 proposes cutting staff and programs to chip away at growing multimillion-dollar deficit

[Michele Steinbacher](#), March 3, 2022

Unit 5 leaders are looking at cutting three dozen full-time teaching positions and two administrator roles for next school year, as well as eliminating two programs — fifth-grade band/orchestra and eighth-grade foreign language — to address a multi-million dollar deficit.

[Major IWU building project on pace to join 'innovation corridor'](#)

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

The president of Illinois Wesleyan University says the design phase of a new \$20-30 million campus building is finishing up. Georgia Nugent said the Petrick Idea Center is on pace to open in the summer of 2025 on the southwest corner of the campus quad.

[Stock market is kind to colleges and universities](#)

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

Last year was a very good year for college endowment funds. A strong stock market yielded healthy returns for many Illinois institutions of higher education.

[ISU will loosen its mask mandate next week, while its lab schools drop the requirement immediately](#)

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

Illinois State University officials have announced some locations on campus will no longer require masks, starting next week.

[Researcher: Minority STEM students shoulder burden in racialized learning structure](#)

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

Minority students in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields face an unfair expectation to shoulder institutionalized racism, according to one researcher specializing in those areas.

A new fellowship program from ISU's Center for Civic Engagement is aimed at fighting 'truth decay'

Lyndsay Jones, February 18, 2022

According to a release from ISU's School of Communication, Joseph Zompetti was chosen "because of his long commitment to civic engagement and his recently scholarly pursuits involving fake news and Russian disinformation tactics across the globe."

Appellate court won't overturn Springfield judge's order on school mask mandate

Peter Hancock / Capitol News Illinois, February 18, 2022

A state appellate court says it won't be reversing the decision of a Springfield judge that essentially ended Illinois' school mask mandate.

Unit 5's continued mask mandate draws ire of crowd at school board meeting

Michele Steinbacher, February 10, 2022

Nearly two dozen speakers aired frustrations during public comments at the Unit 5 school board's meeting Wednesday night, while a sign-waving crowd applauded from their seats in the Normal Community West High School auditorium.

Staff outages ease in Bloomington schools

Jack Graue, February 9, 2022

The head of Bloomington District 87 told school board members Wednesday evening staff shortages caused by the omicron variant of the coronavirus have begun to ease.

At School Street Food Pantry, college students find more than food on the shelves

Lyndsay Jones, February 9, 2022

Addressing food insecurity is one of the primary purposes of School Street Food Pantry, in existence since September 2018. But its organizers say its services extend beyond just that of a food pantry: It's an opportunity to connect with people, too.

Yes, masks are a big deal. 2 Bloomington-Normal parents explain why

Sarah Nardi, February 9, 2022

Two Bloomington-Normal parents explain the very personal reality beneath the politics of masks.

Image of Research competition challenges ISU students to think creatively about research

Jordan Mead, February 7, 2022

The Office of Student Research asked Illinois State University students to capture one compelling image that would creatively reveal research topics they've explored, and these students will present their work at the upcoming Image of Research competition on Wednesday, Feb. 9.

School mask ruling sets off weekend scramble in school districts

Charlie Schlenker, February 6, 2022

The Unit 5 and District 87 school districts plan to keep mask rules in place following Friday's order. But several smaller districts around McLean County are making masks optional, effective immediately.

District 87 asks for patience as it reviews judge's order voiding school mask mandate

[Ryan Denham](#), February 5, 2022

Bloomington's District 87 said Saturday it's reviewing a judge's order that would lift rules on both masking in schools and mandated COVID-19 vaccines or regular testing for school staff.

Unit 5 will do e-learning on Friday; District 87 schools closed entirely

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

District 87 schools will be closed for a third consecutive day Friday as Bloomington-Normal starts to dig out of this week's major snowstorm.

Bloomington-Normal schools adjust for approaching winter storm

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

Unit 5 and District 87 schools in Bloomington-Normal are keeping kids at home for at least the next two days as a severe winter storm moves into Illinois.

McLean County's largest school district opts to not offer test-to-stay program

[Lyndsay Jones](#), January 31, 2022

About 1,300 students and 350 staff members have signed up to participate in Unit 5's voluntary SHIELD COVID-19 testing program.

During ongoing educator shortage, some student teachers are stepping up as classroom subs

Lyndsay Jones, January 31, 2022

In a recent survey published by the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents, 96% of responding school districts said "they have a substitute teacher shortage problem" and 90% said that shortage "continues to get worse."

\$18,000 grant will add 4 more undergrad workers to a District 87 summer program

Lyndsay Jones, January 27, 2022

A PNC Bank grant will be split to pay four Illinois Wesleyan University students to join District 87's Summer Programming ranks. It's the second year for the program that joins D87 with other community partners, including the Children's Discovery Museum and the Boys & Girls Club of Bloomington-Normal.

Pritzker vetoes paid COVID leave for school, university employees

Peter Hancock / Capitol News Illinois, January 25, 2022

Gov. JB Pritzker on Monday vetoed a bill that would have provided paid administrative leave for public school and university employees who miss work due to COVID-19-related issues and instead negotiated "compromise" legislation that would provide such leave to only those who are fully vaccinated.

Students reflect on the impact of remote learning in ISU professor's new book, 'There is No College in COVID'

Jordan Mead, January 20, 2022

Nearly two years into the pandemic, students are still confronting uncertainties. That's especially true on college campuses where COVID has fundamentally changed the university experience.

Students reflect on the impact of remote learning in ISU professor's new book, 'There is No College in COVID'

[Jordan Mead](#), January 20, 2022

Nearly two years into the pandemic, students are still confronting uncertainties. That's especially true on college campuses where COVID has fundamentally changed the university experience.

Unit 5 may drop late-start dates for half-day learning model

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

Unit 5 families may be saying goodbye to late-start Wednesdays.

District 87's cybersecurity insurance cost to jump 334%

[Jack Graue](#), January 19, 2022

The District 87 school board voted Wednesday night to pay over \$22,000 for cybersecurity insurance, as part of the Suburban School Cooperative Insurance Program.

Heartland Community College trustees vote to establish in-house public safety department

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

Heartland Community College has typically used contract workers to provide security on its campuses. The establishment of a new public safety department means that the college will employ its security staff directly, although structural details are still being finalized.

Survey: Illinois schools face worsening educator shortage

Peter Hancock / Capitol News Illinois, January 18, 2022

School officials across Illinois say a shortage of teachers and substitutes is forcing them to cancel course offerings, move them online or fill open positions with people who are not fully qualified.

District 87 moves older students to shorter school days until Jan. 21, hoping to avoid full remote learning

Charlie Schlenker, January 11, 2022

District 87 said Tuesday that it's extending remote learning in some cases and changing class schedules in others to get past a predicted peak period for transmission of the omicron variant of the coronavirus.

When B-N schools close, options exist for families

Sarah Nardi, January 7, 2022

The YWCA McLean County and Iron Coyote Challenge Park offer programs for kids during school closures.

In-person learning returns to Bloomington-Normal schools amid COVID surge

Lyndsay Jones, January 3, 2022

Unit 5 and District 87 leaders say they're hopeful that in-person learning can resume uninterrupted, but both say they're concerned that a surge in COVID cases will exacerbate staff shortages.

Environment and nature

Meet feathered friends without bracing the cold at local Audubon's first-ever art exhibit

[Lauren Warnecke](#), January 6, 2022

While many birds have flown South for the winter, a new photography exhibit at Normal Public Library gives Twin City residents a chance to enjoy nature — out of the bitter cold.

Sometimes it's better to be a city bird than a country bird

[Charlie Schlenker](#), January 5, 2022

Bloomington-Normal is not a bad place to be if you are a bird. That's according to a study done by Illinois Wesleyan University biologist Given Harper.

Bloomington council signals early support for Green Infrastructure Commission

[Jack Podlesnik](#), February 21, 2022

The Bloomington City Council on Monday discussed the creation of multiple commissions to address issues in the community – including one focused on the environment and city infrastructure.

More farmers and land access: How to unleash local food systems

[Tory Dahlhoff](#), February 10, 2022

Getting more people on farms is no easy feat with conventional agriculture continuing to position less and less farmers on larger swaths of land.

More farmers and land access: How to unleash local food systems

[Tory Dahlhoff](#), February 10, 2022

Getting more people on farms is no easy feat with conventional agriculture continuing to position less and less farmers on larger swaths of land.

Why a local food system has yet to take hold in central Illinois

[Tory Dahlhoff](#), January 27, 2022

Today on Food Trek, host Tory Dahlhoff gives us the first of a two-part episode that dives into the potential of building a local food system in Central Illinois and reviews a bit of the history of why, in a place with such great soil, a strong local food system has yet to take hold.

Why a local food system has yet to take hold in central Illinois

[Tory Dahlhoff](#), January 27, 2022

Today on Food Trek, host Tory Dahlhoff gives us the first of a two-part episode that dives into the potential of building a local food system in Central Illinois and reviews a bit of the history of why, in a place with such great soil, a strong local food system has yet to take hold.

How the natural history of central Illinois could bring farms into the future

[Tory Dahlhoff](#), January 12, 2022

Today on Food Trek, host Tory Dahlhoff explores how a diverse tallgrass prairie was transformed into a landscape now dominated by monoculture crops. How did a biodiverse prairie that excelled at storing carbon turn into farmland that contributes to climate change?

Science and technology

State Farm sues Tesla over alleged battery fire

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

State Farm is suing Tesla, claiming the electric car company has a faulty electrical system design that can't regulate battery cells. The federal suit filed in Indiana on Feb. 16 claims the defects caused a Tesla Model S to catch fire while parked and charging in a family garage.

[Sometimes it's better to be a city bird than a country bird](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), January 5, 2022

Bloomington-Normal is not a bad place to be if you are a bird. That's according to a study done by Illinois Wesleyan University biologist Given Harper.

Arts and Culture

[Remembrance of Holocaust resonates in Ukraine invasion](#)

March 30, 2022

[Datebook: The 'wonderful mindset' of children's art on display at BPL](#)

March 25, 2022

[Another high-level exit at BCPA: JongHun Kim is out as artistic director](#)

March 25, 2022

[Knowing me, knowing you ... and going to see 'Mamma Mia!'](#)

[Ariele Jones](#), March 20, 2022

"Mamma Mia!" at Community Players Theatre in Bloomington is running the weekends of March 18-20 and again March 25-27.

Indians in B-N: Families blend history with new customs in games and activities

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

Games are as much a part of Indian culture as they are in American culture. And within both of those cultures, how those games are played, and who plays them, have changed over time.

Former Afghan soldiers settle into their central Illinois relocation

[Charlie Schlenker](#), March 16, 2022

Several evacuees from Afghanistan are settling into life in Bloomington-Normal. They are former soldiers who fought the Taliban, serving in the Khost Protection Force, a special unit in the Afghan army stationed in an eastern province bordering Pakistan.

Indians in B-N: Twin Cities are seen as inclusive, with room for better understanding

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

The Asian Indian population has grown dramatically over the last decade in Bloomington-Normal, but they are still a minority. Many Indians say the community is welcoming, but not everyone has the same experiences.

Indians in B-N: Why the community grew — and what happened when it shrunk

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

This is the first part of a WGLT series looking at the Asian Indian community in Bloomington-Normal. It's a rich tapestry of people with all the nuance and complexity you would expect of a culture thousands of years old.

Twin City debut brings music by nuns that has rarely, if ever, been heard here

Lauren Warnecke, March 14, 2022

The early music group Schola Antiqua makes its Twin City debut March 19 with a special Women's History Month program. Not just any women, though: "Music in Secret: Sounds from the Early Modern Convent" is dedicated to music written almost exclusively by nuns.

Leah Marlene won an 'American Idol' Golden Ticket, but don't forget about her new album

Jon Norton, March 8, 2022

Normal West grad Leah Marlene's busy week included winning a Golden Ticket to appear on "American Idol," and her first new album in two years.

Omicron delivered a 1-2 punch to the struggling arts sector. At this rate, will it be OK?

Lauren Warnecke, March 7, 2022

Illinois arts organizations lost, on average, 31% of their revenue to the pandemic in 2021, according to recent data from Arts Alliance Illinois, and they are on pace to match those losses over the first six months of 2022. WGLT surveyed area arts leaders with one main question: Are the arts doing OK?

Twin City artist Tom Kirk's concrete lady is just the start of his future sculpture park

[Lauren Warnecke](#), March 4, 2022

Tom Kirk doesn't view his day job as co-owner of Henson Disposal as related to his visual art, apart from the inside look he gets at how much people throw away. Kirk has spent the past several years building large-scale art pieces from discarded metal, gears and machinery, and he recently expanded to a spot in downtown Bloomington where a concrete lady now sits beneath the Main Street bridge.

[‘Helping our friends’: Bloomington-Normal sister cities group will keep its partnership with Vladimir, Russia](#)

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

Bloomington-Normal's sister cities program has no plans to cut ties with Vladimir, Russia following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

[Brandon Cattle with the Branding Irons drop a lo-fi cowpunk album](#)

[Jon Norton](#), March 2, 2022

Brandon Cattle with the Branding Irons lo-fi cowpunk release “I Love Living in the Country” is available on most streaming services and can be purchased on Bandcamp.

[Psych Geeks: How 'The Batman' can ride cultural cynicism about hero billionaires](#)

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

WGLT's Psych Geeks — aka Illinois State University psychology professors Scott Jordan and Eric Wesselmann — are back to help dissect Wayne, the rich boy whose childhood trauma led him to become the vengeance-seeking Batman.

[City plans new start for Grossinger Motors Arena](#)

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

Bloomington's city manager says the city will change tactics in managing Grossinger Motors Arena. Before the pandemic, city leaders had talked about selling the arena, but City Manager Tim Gleason said Tuesday that's no longer the case.

[Celebrating Blackness and exploring practical Afro-futurism at IWU art exhibits](#)

[Ariele Jones](#), February 28, 2022

Two art exhibits at the Wakeley and Merwin Galleries on the Illinois Wesleyan University campus are celebrating the fullness of Blackness and exploring the theme of Afro-futurism.

[When being you is illegal: Heartland's McCauley Gallery features art by Iranian women](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), February 24, 2022

Through March 4, the Joe McCauley Gallery at Heartland Community College is showing more than 50 works by Iranian artists. Titled “Being A Woman: Iranian Artists’ Reflection,” the exhibit shows a slice of what normal life is like for Iranian women.

[deFrance ups their game with new vocalist and deeper dive into a classic rock sound](#)

[Jon Norton](#), February 22, 2022

The Camden, Arkansas-based rock outfit deFrance returns to Bloomington-Normal on Thursday night with an even deeper classic rock sound than they’re already known for.

[Bessie, Billie and Nina: Pioneering women in jazz are coming to the BCPA](#)

[Ariele Jones](#), February 18, 2022

Bessie. Billie. And Nina. As dynamic vocalists, these women were pioneers on several fronts, and their legacies are taking center stage in the show "Bessie, Billie, & Nina - Pioneering Women in Jazz," which will be coming to the Bloomington Center for Performing on Wednesday night.

McHistory: Multitalented suffrage leader promoted women's health and the vote

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

Ellen Ferguson was a champion of women and women's suffrage. She made Bloomington-Normal her home in the 1870s.

Chicago musicians bringing history with 'powerful sonic experiences' to upcoming concert at history museum

[Lauren Warnecke](#), February 17, 2022

Pt.fwd kicks off a new concert season on Feb. 26 with Chicago musicians Macie Stewart and Lia Kohl at the McLean Country Museum of History. Pt.fwd and the museum began their partnership in 2019, but the pandemic has held back their ability to host live, in-person concerts — until now.

The Unemployed Architects founder searching for new identity; new EP is a search for meaning during the pandemic

[Jon Norton](#), February 15, 2022

Bloomington's Tyler Sweitzer talks with WGLT about the new EP from the The Unemployed Architects.

Decades together: Valentine's Day stories from Westminster Village

[Ariele Jones](#), February 14, 2022

What's the secret to long-lasting love? WGLT's Ariele Jones visits some love experts for Valentine's Day.

'Something positive': Central Illinois artist showcases celebrity portraits at Bloomington Public Library

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

Bloomington Public Library's latest art exhibit, "Face Reality," features black and white realism by central Illinois artist Jake Reagan. On view through Feb.18, "Face Reality" is one of Reagan's first exhibitions since being released from prison nearly a year ago.

Saxophonist Adam Larson's new album is a love letter to Chicago

[Jon Norton](#), February 9, 2022

Normal native Adam Larson's "With Love, From Chicago" is a nod to the city that embraced him after he moved to New York City.

Datebook: 'Life Sucks' but in a good way

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

Heartland Theatre's current project is to make the most Russian of Russian plays accessible to a Bloomington-Normal audience.

Red Raccoon Games partners with Prairie Pride Coalition for a LGBTQ+ friendly game night

[Maritza Navar-Lopez](#), January 28, 2022

The "Gaymer's Night" Saturday night will feature a number of tabletop board games, food courtesy of the Prairie Pride Coalition, and information on local LGTBQ+ resources in the area.

Visiting Bloomington's Selfie Express Museum from Walking Visions Photography

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

Meet the multifaceted Ashley and LaVance Walker. They are graduate students, newlyweds and the owners of Walking Visions Photography Inc. in Bloomington and the minds behind the Selfie Express Museum.

New album from Bloomington psych-rockers Great Value Jesus tackles mental health

[Jon Norton](#), January 27, 2022

Bloomington's Noah Renken-Kapatos coined his psych-rock trio Great Value Jesus after friends said his long hair and beard gave him a passing resemblance to the mainstream depiction of Jesus.

Hidden treasures tell tales of people's lives

[Charlie Schlenker](#), January 26, 2022

You can learn about people from the things they leave behind. But the owner of a Bloomington-Normal estate sale company says it's the relatives who are the real treasures.

Public art initiative in Normal wants to avoid cultural time traps

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

The Town of Normal hopes to use a revised public art plan, among other things, to avoid future controversies over public art. Art expresses a sense of community in a given cultural moment. It is a snapshot in time.

Illinois Symphony's top priority this season? Play music everyone loves

[Lauren Warnecke](#), January 20, 2022

The Illinois Symphony returns to the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts on Jan. 28 with its latest concert, “Incredibly Italian.” The program features works by Mendelssohn, Mozart and Schumann, three composers who weren’t exactly Italian but drew inspiration from the bel paese.

[Cheap Trick's Rick Nielsen making up for lost family time in The Nielsen Trust](#)

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

Rick Nielsen is making up for family time lost during while touring with Cheap Trick back in the day with the band he, his sons Daxx and Miles, and Miles’ wife Kelly Steward formed called The Nielsen Trust.

[Finding comedy in dark times: 'Daily Show' writers to perform in Bloomington](#)

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

Four comedy writers will perform Jan. 29 at the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts, as part of “The Daily Show Writers Comedy Tour.”

[McHistory: A Bloomington huckster's best-selling 'medicine' was Blackberry Balsam](#)

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

Bloomington-Normal has a long and distinguished history of business entrepreneurship. One less than distinguished, but very successful, business, had a continent-wide spread in the late 1800s.

[A landscape ethicist answers the call of the wild](#)

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

Rick Darke is an author and horticulturalist who advocates for incorporating more native plants into our lawns and gardens.

Higher Education

Lincoln mayor: Community will survive the 'devastating blow' of college closure

[Charlie Schlenker](#), March 31, 2022

The mayor of Lincoln said Thursday the loss of Lincoln College is a "devastating blow" to the Logan County community. After 157 years, the college will close in May at the end of the school, while Lincoln Christian University is reducing its footprint by going mostly virtual, said Mayor Tracy Welch.

'I'm so close to being done': Lincoln College students are left to figure out what comes next

[Sarah Nardi](#), March 31, 2022

News that Lincoln College will close in May has left students scrambling for answers

Lincoln College to close permanently on May 13

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

Lincoln College President David Gerlach cited the COVID-19 pandemic and a cyberattack as the reasons for the closure.

ISU College of Engineering gets thumbs-up from state's higher ed board

[Charlie Schlenker](#), March 15, 2022

The Illinois Board of Higher Education approved a new College of Engineering at Illinois State University on Tuesday.

Ohio State assistant chosen as ISU basketball coach

[Charlie Schlenker](#), March 4, 2022

Illinois State University on Friday named its new men's basketball coach. Ryan Pedon has spent the last five seasons as an assistant at Ohio State. Before that, Pedon was at Butler and was an assistant coach at the University of Illinois.

Another credit agency upgrades ISU's outlook, citing stable enrollment in competitive times

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

For the second time in three months, a credit ratings agency has upgraded Illinois State University's outlook — a move that could lead to lower borrowing costs down the road.

Major IWU building project on pace to join 'innovation corridor'

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

The president of Illinois Wesleyan University says the design phase of a new \$20-30 million campus building is finishing up. Georgia Nugent said the Petrick Idea Center is on pace to open in the summer of 2025 on the southwest corner of the campus quad.

Stock market is kind to colleges and universities

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

Last year was a very good year for college endowment funds. A strong stock market yielded healthy returns for many Illinois institutions of higher education.

Heartland Community College trustees vote to establish in-house public safety department

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

Heartland Community College has typically used contract workers to provide security on its campuses. The establishment of a new public safety department means that the college will employ its security staff directly, although structural details are still being finalized.

ISU College of Engineering plans are still developing

[Charlie Schlenker](#), January 5, 2022

It had been hoped last month that the Illinois Board of Higher Education would approve a new College of Engineering proposal by Illinois State University. It didn't happen. But it's still very much on ISU's to-do list.