

THE GAZETTE-DEMOCRAT

The Talk And Cobden Review • Serving Union County Since 1849 & Johnson County since 1879

Thursday, June 11, 2026

Anna, Illinois

\$1.00

Volume 179, Number 27

News Notes

Items of interest from throughout the Union County area.

Be sure to attend the Annabelle Festival on Saturday in Anna. Lots of activities are planned in the downtown Anna area.

U.S. Route 51 N at Hand Lane near Cobden was closed for a while last Saturday afternoon due to a traffic accident. Law enforcement asked motorists to seek an alternate route. The highway was reported to have re-opened shortly after 4:30 p.m.

Cobden School District 17 has announced that online registration for the 2026-2027 school year is scheduled to start July 20. The district shared on social media that families will be able to complete registration online, upload important documents and pay registration fees. Additional information and instructions will be sent via email as the registration date approaches.

A community yard sale and a Delta Theta Tau plant sale are planned from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, June 13, in the parking lot at Anna-Jonesboro Community High School. Organizers noted on social media that proceeds from the plant sale will help to support a family in the community which is needing extra support during a difficult time.

A free art camp is scheduled from 10 a.m. to noon June 15-18 at the Shawnee Hills Arts Council on West Davie Street in Anna. Activities are slated to include painting, drawing, 3-D art and sculpture.

Flamm Orchards near Cobden and Rendleman Orchards near Alto Pass report that peach season has arrived.

Flamm Orchards shared on social media that they have been harvesting their first blackberry crop.

Monday night, Rendleman Orchards was to have been featured on Season 2 of "Farms of America," a documentary-style television series that highlights farm families across the United States and their efforts to preserve agriculture for future generations. The series airs on the Cowboy Channel and the Farms of America YouTube channel.

Shawnee Community College is congratulating its 2026 adult education class. Twenty-nine graduates were recognized during a recent adult education recognition ceremony. The graduates earned either their high school diploma or alternative high school diploma. Following the ceremony, graduates, family members and friends gathered to continue the celebration with cake and fellowship.

Cobden celebrates nation's 250th anniversary

The nation's 250th anniversary was celebrated last weekend in the Village of Cobden. Special activities were held Saturday and Sunday, June 6-7, at the Cobden Community Park. Ceremonies honoring the nation's flag were conducted Saturday morning.



Union County Cub Scout Pack 44 and Scout Troop 348 from Steeleville conducted a flag lowering and flag raising ceremony.



Members of the military funeral ritual team from Veterans of Foreign Wars Carroll P. Foster Post No. 3455 of Anna conducted a flag folding ceremony. The ceremony was conducted by Sherry Haddick, Mark Haddick and Diana Steele. The ceremony included an explanation of the symbolic meanings which are connected with each fold of the flag.

Shawnee College president accepts new position

Shawnee Community College has announced that its president, Dr. Timothy L. Taylor, has accepted the position of chancellor of Illinois Eastern Community Colleges, IECC.

The college shared on social media early this week that Taylor will conclude his service as president of Shawnee Community College on Aug. 14, 2026, and will begin his new role with IECC on Aug. 15, 2026.

The message posted by Shawnee Community College continued:

Dr. Taylor joined Shawnee Community College in September 2020, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. During his tenure, the College expanded educational opportunities for students, strengthened relationships with K-12 school districts throughout the region, enhanced partnerships with employers, community organizations, and public agencies, strengthened institutional governance, planning, and accountability systems, completed a successful

Higher Learning Commission reaffirmation with no findings, became eligible to participate in the Higher Learning Commission's Open Pathway accreditation process, enhanced financial stability, developed a long-term Facility Master Plan to guide future campus investments, secured significant state, federal, and philanthropic support for facilities and infrastructure improvements, and enhanced the College's regional and statewide visibility.

Board Chair Steve Heisner expressed appreciation for Dr. Taylor's service and leadership.

"Dr. Taylor assumed leadership of the College during one of the most challenging periods in higher education," said Heisner. "Throughout his tenure, he provided steady leadership that helped guide the institution through the pandemic, strengthen governance and accountability systems, achieve a successful Higher Learning Commission reaffirmation, maintain financial stability, advance student success initiatives, and position the College for

long-term success. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I want to thank Dr. Taylor for his commitment to Shawnee Community College and the communities we serve. While we are saddened to see him leave, we are proud that he has been selected to serve in this important leadership role and wish him every success."

Dr. Taylor reflected on his time at Shawnee Community College and expressed confidence in the institution's future.

"When I arrived at Shawnee in September 2020, the College – like institutions across the nation – was facing unprecedented challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic," said Taylor. "Together, our Board, employees, students, and communities met those challenges and positioned the College for a strong and sustainable future. I am incredibly proud of what we have accomplished together and deeply grateful for the opportunity to have served Shawnee Community College."

"Serving as President of

Annabelle Festival returns this weekend



Annabelles in bloom

Annabelle hydrangeas can be seen in bloom throughout Anna and the Union County area. Annabelles will be celebrated at an upcoming festival in Anna. Find a full schedule of events on page 3.

Temperatures cooler, precipitation varied

Temperatures were slightly below normal during May in the Southern Illinois, Southeast Missouri and Western Kentucky region.

The National Weather Service office in Paducah reported in a climate review for the month that precipitation varied across the region.

Temperatures

Temperatures averaged slightly below normal by 0.5 of a degree to 1.5 degrees. The first week of the month was particularly cool, with highs only reaching the 60s on five of the first seven days. Lows dipped into the 40s most of those nights and even in the 30s on the 3rd.

The second week of the month, from the 8th through 14th, was a bit warmer, but still slightly below normal. Highs in the mid 70s to around 80 were observed, but lows continued to be rather chilly in the mid 40s to low 50s most nights.

The warmest stretch of the month was from the 15th through 19th, with highs reaching the mid to upper 80s. A few locations even hit 90. Lows also were noticeably warmer during this period, remaining in the

mid 60s to low 70s.

A few record warm lows were broken on the mornings of the 16th and 18th, including Poplar Bluff, Mo., which broke its all-time warmest low temperature for the month of May of 76 degrees on the 18th. The previous warmest low was 75 degrees, set on May 24, 1896.

Another cool stretch followed from the 20th through 23rd, with highs dropping back into the mid 60s to lower 70s. The last week of the month averaged slightly above normal, with highs ranging from the upper 70s to mid 80s.

Precipitation

Precipitation varied across the region, ranging from drier than normal across much of Southeast Missouri and Southern Illinois (1.5 to 3.5 inches on average) to wetter than normal across much of Western Kentucky.

Some areas of Southeast Missouri failed to even receive 2 inches for the month, which was at least 3 inches below normal. Meanwhile, much of Western Kentucky received 4 to 6 inches, along with localized higher amounts. The highest observed amount in Paducah office's forecast area was 8.66 inches at the Kentucky mesonet station in Graves County.

Drought continued to be an issue, with moderate to severe drought covering the southern half of the region at the end of the month. Numerous days of rain from May 18-26 helped some though, as 24 percent of the region was in extreme drought before receiving 2-plus inches during this time. As the month closed, only a few counties in Southeast Missouri remained in extreme drought.

The seven-month period from November through May officially ranks as the driest on record in Cape Girardeau, which received 16.83 inches on precipitation. The previous driest was from November 1986 through May 1987, with 18.01 inches.

Carbondale also had its driest November through May period, with 13.93 inches. The previous driest period was from November 1935 through May 1936, with 14.05 inches.

Paducah had its third driest November through May period on record, with 18.16 inches. Amounts were generally 10 to 15 inches below normal during the seven-month period.



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Geoff Ritter, news@annanews.com..... Editor

Jodee Duty, jduty@localsouthernnews.com..... Advertising

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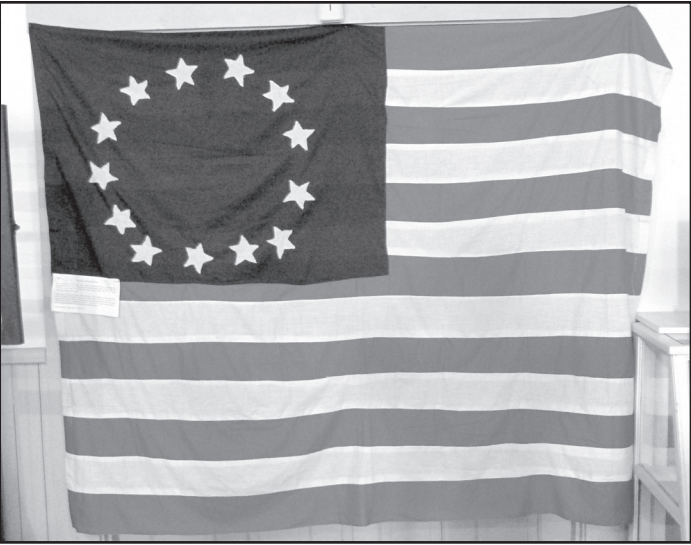
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Fiddler, vocalist, educator performs
Dennis Stroughmatt of Albion shared music and stories Saturday afternoon, June 6, during a celebration of the nation's 250th birthday held in Cobden. Stroughmatt is an award-winning Creole French-speaking fiddler, vocalist and educator who carries on the French cultural traditions that have existed in "Old Upper Louisiana" for more than 300 years. The program at the Cobden Community Park featured fiddle and accordion music, ballads, folktales and some history. Stroughmatt has performed at the Kennedy Center, the Smithsonian, the Library of Congress and has been featured on NPR's "All Things Considered." His presentation was sponsored by the Illinois Humanities Council Road Scholar Speakers Bureau and the Union County Historical and Genealogy Society.



250th anniversary exhibits continue
The Union County Museum in downtown Cobden is continuing several of its exhibits for the 250th anniversary of the United States. Items in the exhibits include quilt blocks from 1876, early handmade cotton stockings, early homespun in various colors and an antique bench that folds out to be a bed. A variety of vintage flags will be on display that includes a 35, 45, 46 and 49 star flag. A highlight of the exhibit is a 13 star flag that was handmade in 1976 to celebrate the nation's bicentennial. The flag was made by 5th to 8th grade students of social studies teacher Peggy Kirby Carroll at Lick Creek Grade School. Former students who were involved in the project are being encouraged to visit the display. The exhibits are scheduled be on display through early August. The museum's hours are scheduled from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

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Junefest
The city of Jonesboro held their annual Junefest celebration on Saturday, June 6. The event featured a full day of activities, including kids games, a reptile show, a cornhole tournament, live music and a silent auction. Pictured here are the contestants in the Little Miss Junefest pageant. Willow Chapman of Tamms was the winner of the event.

Weather Service reviews spring climate in region

Spring season temperatures were well above normal in the Southern Illinois, Southeast Missouri and Western Kentucky region.

The National Weather Service office in Paducah reported in a climate summary for the season that precipitation was drier than normal for the spring. The office also reviewed severe weather warnings which were issued this spring.

Temperatures
Temperatures averaged well above normal by 4.5 to 5.5 degrees. It was the second warmest spring season on record at all five of the Paducah office's official climate stations, finishing about about degree cooler than 2012 at all of them.

March was one of the office's top five warmest on record. This was followed by many locations experiencing their warmest April on record. A pattern switch occurred in May, which led to temperatures about 0.5 of a degree to 1.5 degrees cooler than normal.

Precipitation
Precipitation was drier than normal across the vast majority of the region, with amounts generally ranging from 9 to 14 inches, which was roughly 1 to 6 inches below normal.

The conditions were most pronounced across Southeast Missouri, where widespread deficits of over 5 inches were observed and localized departures up to 7 or 8 inches were realized in Ripley and Carter counties.

The highest observed

amount in the office's forecast area was at the Kentucky mesonet station in Graves County, which received 16.11 inches.

The spring season began with moderate to severe drought in place across much of the region, mainly the western two thirds of the area. The season ended with moderate to severe drought continuing across the southern two thirds of the region.

Some improvement occurred across much of Southern Illinois and the northern few counties in Southeast Missouri, while deterioration occurred across Western Kentucky.

Severe Weather
The Paducah office issued a combined total of 180 severe thunderstorm, tornado and flash flood warnings, which was very close to an average spring season (185 warnings). This spring was certainly much quieter than the past two years though, and most of the region's events were in March and April.

May was extremely quiet until there were some severe storms on the 31st. The Paducah office ended up with only 27 warnings issued in May, which was its fourth fewest since 1995.

Several events occurred in March and April which produced a few tornadoes, some really large hail (golf ball to baseball sized) and scattered instances of wind damage. These events occurred on March 7, March 15, April 16 and April 27-28.

Summer heat, humidity make early arrival

Summer weather arrived ahead of schedule this week. The first day of summer is Sunday, June 21.

The forecast for the Southern Illinois, Southeast Missouri and Western Kentucky region was calling for hot and humid conditions this week.

The National Weather Service office in Paducah reported early this week on its website that "the hottest conditions so far this year" were in the forecast.

The office advised that the most uncomfortable days were expected to begin on Tuesday and continue through Thursday. Heat index readings in the range of 98 degrees to near 105 degrees were in the forecast. Air temperatures each of those days were expected to be in the

low 90s.

A heat advisory was in effect Tuesday for all of Southeast Missouri, far Western Kentucky and extreme Southern Illinois, including Union County. Heat index readings near 105 degrees were in the forecast.

Ahead of the arrival of the summer-like heat and humidity, the Weather Service was calling for the possibility of a few strong to severe storms Monday. Numerous showers and thunderstorms were in the forecast from Monday into Tuesday.

Repetitive heavy thunderstorm rains may have led to flash flooding. Parts of Southern Illinois and Western Kentucky were under a flash flood watch from Monday through Tuesday morning.

Grant funds support emergency services

The Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal, OSFM, on June 4 announced recipients of the 2026 Small Equipment Grant Program. A total of \$6 million was awarded to 260 fire departments/districts and EMS providers across the state, including in Union County and surrounding counties. The program was established to provide grants of up to \$26,000 each for the purchase of small firefighting and ambulance equipment.

OSFM said in a news release that the program is an innovative approach to a problem that has long caused difficulties for fire departments and not-for profit ambulance services in Illinois, particularly those that have hardships in generating the necessary revenue for small equipment.

The purpose of the program is to allow eligible applicants the opportunity to purchase small equipment that they may otherwise not be able to purchase. The OSFM received 355 applications, requesting around \$8.1 million in funding for this grant period.

"The Small Equipment Grant Program is a vital resource that helps fire departments and EMS providers acquire essential tools and equipment they might otherwise be unable to afford," Illinois State Fire Marshal Michele Pankow said. "As we travel throughout Illinois, we consistently hear about the challenges departments face and the critical needs that exist in their communities. The OSFM remains committed to supporting our first responders by investing in programs like this that strengthen their capabilities, enhance public safety and ensure they have the resources needed to serve and protect the people of Illinois."

Most Illinois fire departments, fire protections districts, township fire departments and stand-alone, nonprofit ambulance service providers were eligible to apply. All fire departments, fire protections districts and township fire department applicants were required to participate in the National Fire Incident Reporting System, NFIRS, and National Emergency Response Information System, NERIS, for a minimum of two years prior to applying.

Grant recipients and awards to Union County and area counties follow, as provided by OSFM:

Union County: Village of Alto Pass \$19,315.90. City of Jonesboro \$26,000.

Jackson County: Mankanda Township Fire Department \$26,000. Village of Elkhart \$26,000. Village of Dowell \$26,000. Village of Gorham Fire Department \$17,669.75.

Johnson County: Cypress Fire Department \$26,000. Goreville Fire Department \$26,000.

Massac County: Joppa Fire Department \$26,000. Metropolis Fire Department \$17,355.24.

Saline County: City of Harisburg \$26,000.

Williamson County: City of Herrin \$26,000. Energy Volunteer Fire Department \$6,000. Hurst Fire Department \$26,000. Marion Fire Department \$26,000. Lake Egypt Fire Protection District \$26,000.

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Questions call Alliance of Churches (618)-614-2974

Saturday,
June 13,
2026



9:00 AM
to
7:00 PM

Annabelle FESTIVAL

DOWNTOWN ANNA, IL

Annabelle Festival celebration set for Saturday in Anna

The City of Anna and Union County Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development encourage everyone to attend the upcoming Annabelle Festival. The festival is scheduled Saturday, June 13, in the downtown Anna area, with activities planned from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

The festival celebrates the story of the Annabelle hydrangea plant. The chamber shared on its website that it is said Harriet Kirkpatrick of the famous Anna Pottery family discovered Annabelle hydrangeas in 1910 while riding her horse in the woods near Anna. She and Amy Kirkpatrick went back, dug up some of the plants and took them home to put in the family's yard.

The Kirkpatrick family shared the plants with friends and neighbors. About 50 years later, Bon Hartline of Anna, who was probably best known for his collection of 100 genera of American

hybrid holly shrubs and trees, became interested in the Annabelle. He invited his former University of Illinois professor, Dr. J.C. McDaniel, to visit Anna to study the plant.

McDaniel classified and registered it as hydrangea arborescence in 1960. It is said that he originally gave it the common name of Ballerina because of the flower's very round shape. However, it is thought the name Annabelle was chosen for the two belles from Anna who discovered the plant over 100 years ago.

Here's a look at the schedule of events which are planned at the Annabelle Festival, as shared on the chamber's website:

9 a.m. Vendor shopping, East Davie Street.

9 a.m. Pet Carnival, Shawnee Hills Arts Council (formerly known as the Anna Arts Center), West Davie Street.

9 a.m. Kids Fest, East Davie Street.

9 a.m. Art exhibit, Shawnee Hills Arts Council.

10 a.m. Local fruit pie baking contest.

10 a.m. Biggest Annabelle and Annabelle arrangement flower show, sponsored by Anna-Jo Garden Club.

10 a.m. Tug of war, volunteers needed, sponsored by Rise Performance.

10:30 a.m. Pie judging.

11 a.m. Strong man Jeep pull, sponsored by Rise Performance.

11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Bungee trampoline.

11 a.m. to 3 p.m. 26-foot rock wall climb.

11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Make and take crafts, sponsored by Anna-Jo Garden Club, at Shawnee Hills Arts Council.

11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Annabelle coloring contest, sponsored by Anna-Jo

Garden Club.

11:30 a.m. Fruit pie live auction, Anna-Jo Garden Club, Alex Belcher auctioneer.

Noon to 3 p.m. Foam party.

Noon to 3 p.m. Putt putt golf.

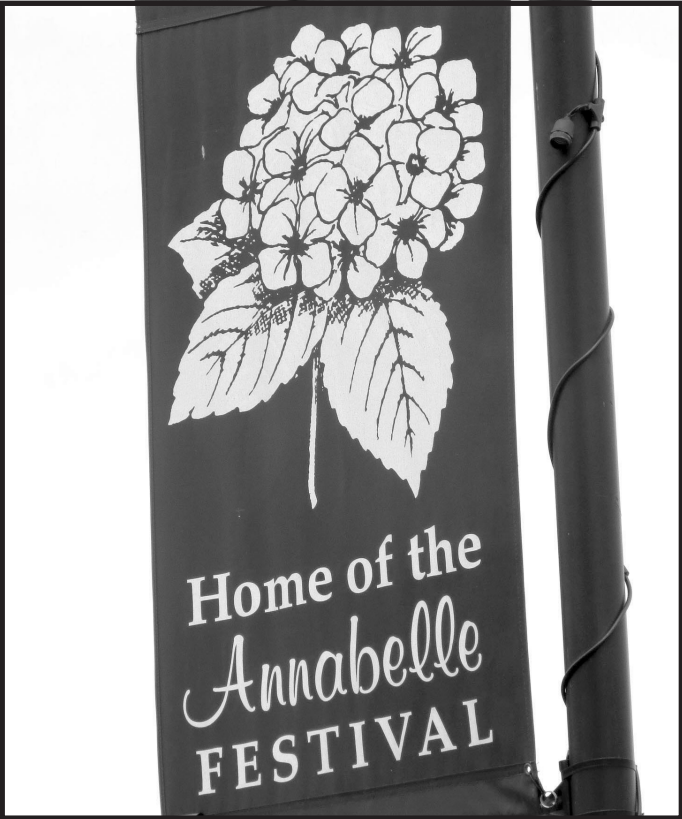
1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Free swim, Anna City Pool.

3:15 p.m. Puppet show, presented by the United Methodist Church in Anna.

4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Music performed by Six: 32 on the festival stage.

An Annabelle Trail, with locations throughout Anna and the surrounding area, also will be part of the festival.

Flowers and plants at the festival will be sponsored by the Anna-Jo Garden Club McNitt Growers



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NEWS FROM VIENNA, ILLINOIS

King and Pitts selected as volleyball coaches at Vienna



Suzy King has been selected to serve as the head volleyball coach for the upcoming school year at Vienna High School. Kirsten Pitts will assist King as the junior varsity volleyball coach. Photo provided

Suzy King has been selected to serve as the head volleyball coach for the upcoming school year at Vienna High School. Kirsten Pitts will assist King as the junior varsity volleyball coach.

King spent last season as the junior varsity volleyball coach. She has served the last nine years as the 8th grade volleyball coach at New Simpson Hill Grade School.

Pitts has been the 8th grade volleyball coach at Cypress Grade School for the last two seasons. Both have numerous years of experience with

the Johnson County Youth League (JCYL) Volleyball program. Both King and Pitts work in grade schools within the Vienna system with King being a teacher at New Simpson Hill and Pitts serving in the school office at Cypress.

King shared, “I have learned a great deal as assistant coach under Coach Jones last year and I am excited to lead the Lady Eagles Volleyball program moving forward.”

“Volleyball has always been a huge part of my life, and I enjoy helping athletes grow both on and off the

court. I am excited to work with the players and be part of this team! This will be my first year coaching at the high school level, so I am looking forward to learning and growing as a coach. I also look forward to working with Coach King,” shared Pitts.

David Hill, athletic director, shared, “Coach King and Coach Pitts will both be tremendous assets to the Vienna Athletics program, keeping the hires within the school system is important to build consistency program-wide.”



Cory Waters has been selected to serve as the girls varsity basketball coach for the upcoming school year at Vienna High School. Aerial Ford will assist Waters as the girls junior varsity basketball coach. Photo provided

Waters and Ford named girls basketball coaches at Vienna

Cory Waters has been selected to serve as the girls varsity basketball coach for the upcoming school year at Vienna High School. Aerial Ford will assist Waters as the girls junior varsity basketball coach.

Waters is a Class of 2000 Vienna High School graduate. He spent fourteen years in the Vienna High School boys basketball program and has spent the last five years as the girls freshmen coach and varsity assistant coach.

Ford is a Vienna Class of 2008 graduate. She has spent the last fourteen years in the New Simpson Hill basketball programs (13 with the girls). Ford is familiar with Vienna athletics, as she was on the softball coaching staff in the late 2010s. Ford serves as a teacher at New Sipson

Hill Grade School, which is a school within the Vienna system.

Waters shared, “I love the game of basketball and what the game can teach kids. Vienna Girls Basketball has a rich history of success and my goal is to continue that tradition of excellence.”

“I became interested in coaching here because this program had a major impact on my life. It gives me the opportunity to give back to a program that gave so much to me. Coaching at this level has always been a personal goal

of mine and I feel from my past coaching experiences that I’m prepared for this opportunity. I’m excited to work with Coach Waters and learn from his coaching style and years of experience.” shared Ford.

David Hill, athletic director, shared, “Vienna is very fortunate to have landed both Coach Waters and Coach Ford, together they bring over 30 years of coaching experience, and are well known and well respected in Southern Illinois basketball circles.”

Dairy market dynamics shift as protein demand soars

By RHIANNON BRANCH FarmWeek

Despite historically large milk supplies, dairy markets have improved, supported by export strength and a major shift in demand toward dairy proteins.

Growth in products like ultra-filtered milk, high-protein yogurt, whey ingredients and ready-to-drink protein beverages has fundamentally changed the value mix within dairy markets, according to American Farm Bureau Federation economist Danny Munch.

“Consumers are increasingly looking for protein-rich foods, and dairy is exceptionally well positioned to meet that demand,” he told FarmWeek. “U.S. sales of ready-to-drink dairy protein shakes and nutritionals alone have climbed roughly 71% in four years.”

Exports continue to play a major role in balancing the market. U.S. butter and cheese prices remain well below many global competitors, keeping American dairy products highly competitive abroad.

“That pricing advantage helped push U.S. dairy exports to record first-quarter volumes in 2026, with especially strong growth into markets like Mexico, South Korea and Southeast Asia,” Munch said.

Strong cattle prices and high beef calf values have created an important secondary revenue stream for many dairy farms implementing beef-on-dairy breeding.

“In some cases, those calf revenues have helped offset weaker margins on the

milk side of the operation and provided much-needed financial flexibility during a volatile period,” Munch said.

But as more dairies shift breeding decisions toward beef genetics, replacement dairy heifer supplies continue to tighten.

“We now have replacement heifer inventories near the lowest levels seen since the late 1970s even while milk cow numbers remain historically elevated,” Munch said. “That combination supports production today but could make future milk supplies more vulnerable and volatile if herd rebuilding becomes more difficult.”

These changes show dairy markets are becoming more complex and less tied to traditional supply signals alone.

“(All of these factors) have helped create a more resilient pricing environment than many anticipated heading into 2026, even in the face of substantial milk production growth,” Munch said.

Still, weather and forage conditions remain a major risk factor moving through the market. Continued drought pressure in the Western Plains could quickly raise feed costs, tighten forage supplies and slow broader herd rebuilding efforts across the cattle sector.

“Dairy farmers today are navigating a much more complex revenue environment

than they were even a decade ago,” Munch said. “Strong exports, protein demand growth and beef-on-dairy revenues are helping stabilize farm income. But weather risk, volatile feed markets and structurally higher operating costs continue to keep risk management and policy modernization front and center for the industry.”

Munch said the rollout of the Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act and recent updates to Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) have been meaningful steps forward, but there is growing conversation about whether dairy risk management tools need modernization beyond DMC enrollment changes.

“Participation in both Dairy Margin Coverage and Dairy Revenue Protection is overwhelmingly concentrated at the highest available coverage levels, which strongly suggests farmers are running into program ceilings rather than naturally selecting those levels,” Munch said. “That’s become especially relevant as production costs and revenue volatility have changed significantly over the last several years.”

• This story was distributed through a cooperative project between Illinois Farm Bureau and the Illinois Press Association. For more food and farming news, visit FarmWeekNow.com.



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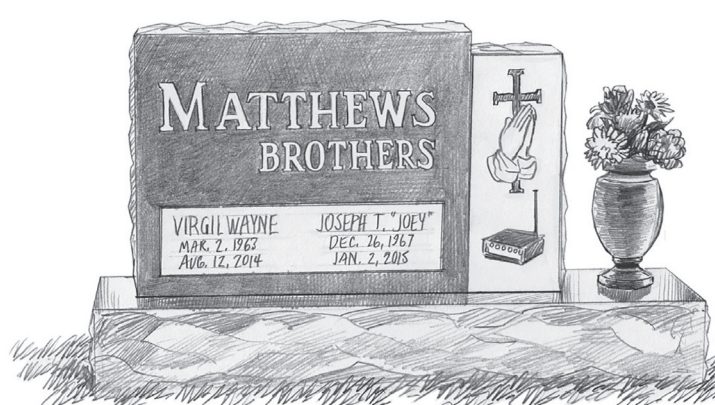




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NEWS FROM VIENNA, ILLINOIS

Obituaries



Kimberly Ellen “Kim” (Faulkner) Goines

Kimberly Ellen “Kim” (Faulkner) Goines, age 56 years, a resident of rural Vienna, passed away Tuesday morning, June 2, 2026, at 12:01 a.m. at the Ray and Kay Eckstein Hospice Care Center in Paducah, Ky.

Kim was born March 6, 1970 in Harrisburg. She was the daughter of Charles Ray and Marjorie Faulkner.

On Aug. 18, 1988, Kim was united in marriage to Gerald Goines in Johnson County. He survives.

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Memorials may be made to Mercy Health Hospice, 225 Medical Center Drive, Suite 203, Paducah, KY 42003 or to the Manna Café Ministries, 1960-J Madison St., Suite # 312, Clarksville, TN 37043.

Looking Back: 25 & 50 Years Ago

By Jesse Hartig
Contributing Writer
Looking Back: 25 Years Ago

The front page of the Vienna Times featured SIDEZ funding creating momentum in Johnson County, including a \$10,000 grant for the installation of bike racks, signs and other improvements along the Tunnel Hill State Trail.

The Luminaria Committee met at the Vienna United Methodist Church to prepare for the fourth annual Relay for Life, a countywide fundraiser for the American Cancer Society.

John Higgins of Ozark was scheduled to be ordained as a Roman Catholic priest at St. Peter Cathedral in Belleville.

Randy and Teresa Stapleton of Simpson announced the graduation of their daughter, Jessica Stapleton, from the Bel-Rea Institute of Veterinary Technology in Denver, Colorado.

Construction was underway on a Casey’s General Store across from Randy’s Auto Repair and All Pro Auto Parts.

Ralph and Ella Ford of Vienna celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

Jerry R. Boaz of Simpson announced his retirement after nearly 32 years with the State of Illinois, where he served as an engineering technician in the Bureau of Program Development.

The Johnson County Genealogical and Historical Society held its annual picnic at Vienna City Park.

Carl Varner, Veterans Service Officer with the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs, was available at the sheriff’s office to answer questions regarding federal and state veterans benefits.

County Line Missionary Baptist Church in the Flatwoods community held its annual homecoming, featuring special music by The Joy Trio of Metropolis.

Vienna High School Principal Faye Mize announced that the school’s North Central Association accreditation had been extended.

The Pond Ladies Club met for a luncheon at the home of Marilyn Carter, with the next meeting scheduled at the home of Virginia Street.

Living Hope Fellowship hosted an evangelistic meeting near Karnak featuring area pastors.

Owl Creek Vineyard hosted a grape stomp with bluegrass music provided for attendees.

The Daniel Chapman Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution met at Martha and Mary’s in Murphysboro.

Descendants of Joseph Richard Hooker and Thomas O. Phelps gathered for a reunion at Dixon Springs State Park.

Looking Back: 50 Years Ago
The front page featured a plaque dedication ceremony in Goreville honoring local veterans, with Congressman Paul Simon serving as the principal speaker.

Khoury League baseball in the Vienna Division was getting underway, according to Division Manager Doug Aly.

The Illinois Heart Association conducted a free public screening program for Johnson County residents, with 165 people participating.

The Southern Five Health Council elected officers, with Roger Hannan of Grand Chain being re-elected chairman of the council.

At the Vienna High School athletic banquet, Neil Martin was named the school’s Most Valuable Athlete.

Shawnee College President Dr. Loren E. Klaus addressed the Vienna High School graduating class and emphasized the importance of the family unit.

Five new outdoor basketball goals were installed for public

use in Vienna as a Fall Festival Committee project, with Rick Reichert and others assisting in the effort.

Monroe Sichling, spokesman for the Metropolis congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses, announced completion of plans for a four-day district convention.

William and Beulah Glass of Grantsburg celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary with an open house.

Simpson Baptist Church held a homecoming service under the leadership of Rev. Henry White. Rev. T.D. Tucker was the guest speaker, and special music was provided by the Harmony Singers of Metropolis.

Dr. Charles Dickinson, a veterinarian from Galva, Illinois, participated in the Beef Bull Evaluation Workshop at the Dixon Springs Agricultural Center.

Bethany Baptist Church hosted Vacation Bible School on the Cypress-Dongola blacktop.

A homecoming service was held at Mt. Zion Church east of Buncombe, with Rev. Whitnel Hogg serving as speaker and special music provided by the Wolford Brothers of Tammis.

A search was underway for heirs of Frederick D. Bohnhardt in Missouri, Arkansas and Southern Illinois in connection with an estate settlement.

The decorating committee for the Vienna eighth-grade class thanked Debbie & Diane’s Flower Shop, VFW Post 5222, C.L.’s Dollar Store, Mount Shelter Care Home residents and Ned Shed for their assistance.

Mr. and Mrs. Donald Brown announced the upcoming marriage of their daughter, Risa, to Kenneth Hartline.

Dr. Thomas E. Porter announced the opening of a general medicine office in Goreville.



Courthouse memories: Two stories about the old millstone

The old millstone that sits as a museum piece on the south lawn of the Old Johnson County Courthouse has been seen by countless citizens and visitors as they drive around the court square in Vienna. A small percentage of people have taken the time to look closely at it. There are two stories that seem to conflict on who donated it, but the discovery is not disputed.

The plaque, placed there not many years ago, says: “Millstones found in 1938 on the banks of Dutchman Creek at Forman, Illinois by Mr. R.M. ‘Nubby’ Trexler and donated by him to the people of Johnson County, Illinois.”

The second story comes from the Vienna Times of Nov 14, 1940. Quoting from that article:

“Old Mill Stones Found South of Vienna Recently – A few years ago, while digging a drainage ditch in the southeastern part of the county there were some very perfect mill stones uncovered several feet below the surface, on these stones were the date of 1774, they were found about 200 feet south of the center of the northwest corner of Section 29 Vienna township about 500 feet east of the old Vienna and Belknap road and less than one-fourth mile southeast of the old Cardwell homestead.

"This residence was a little more than a quarter of a mile south of Wildcat cemetery at the foot of the hill, known years ago as the Cardwell Hill. There was no masonry or decayed wood found near them. There is no record of any settlement in this county as early as 1774.

The land on which these stones were discovered belonged to Mr. James C. Main of Karnak. He took them to his home and placed them in his yard as a historical relic. The Daniel Chapman Chapter thought it would be appropriate to have them in our court yard since they were discovered in our county. Mr. Main was kind enough to give them to the Chapter, they brought them here and mounted them on a cement base where they have graced our court lawn since 1938.

"Where they were made; who brought them here; what color of men ate the bread ground by them, is as much a mystery as who build the mounds of Southern Illinois.

"The Chapter is indebted to Mr. Main for the stones, Mr. Chas. Hook for their location and Mr. Oattie Verhines for mounting them."

• *This is part of a series of features by Ed Annable about the former Johnson County Courthouse.*

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Submit events to The Vienna Times office in writing, by mail, email or by dropping off at The Vienna Times office. Deadline for submission is **Monday at 3 P.M.** for Thursday paper.

A maximum of two weeks per event will be permitted. Be certain to include the location and time of the event. No rummage, garage or yard sales. **ALL activities must be open to the general public.** If not, you are welcome to place an advertisement.

AA MEETING

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Community Room
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Obituaries

Rose Johnson Nasser

Rose Johnson Nasser, 101, passed away on Tuesday, June 2, 2026, at her home in Cairo, surrounded by her loving family.

Rose was born July 24, 1924, in Cairo, daughter of the late Alex and Mary Farah Johnson.

She and her husband owned and operated Hi-Way Handy Grocery Store for many years in Cairo until his death in 1964. She continued to run the grocery store until 1975, at which time she went to work for the State of Illinois at the Department of Public Aid Office in Cairo.

Rose was affectionately known to all her nieces, nephews and friends of her children for many years as the loving, sweet and fun "Aunt Rosie."

She loved reading, cooking and baking for her family and she will long be remembered for the pies she made for holidays and special occasions.

Rose loved her family deeply and dedicated her life to her children.

She was an active member of the Cairo Historical Association and the Ladies American Legion Auxiliary for many years.

Rose was a very active and faithful longtime member of the First Presbyterian Church of Cairo where she served in many capacities throughout the years.

In February 1953, she married Charles Nasser, Jr. who preceded her in death.

Survivors include: two daughters and one son-in law, Carla Bell of Sikeston, Mo. and Pam (Darrell) Hoppe and one son, George Nasser all of Cairo; one brother and sister-in-



law George (Kay) Johnson of Cairo and one grandchild, Derek Hoppe of Louisville, Ky. Nieces, Mary Kay Kroskus of Largo, Fla. and Julie Mason of Tamm, Ill.; Nephews John Guetterman of Cape Girardeau, Mo., Jack Guetterman, Jr. of Cairo and George Johnson, Jr. of Simpson, Ill., Dr. Johnny Johnson, Jr. and Dr. Alex Johnson of Florida. In addition, several great nieces and great nephews survive.

In addition to her parents and husband, she was preceded in death by one son, Charles Nasser III and one daughter, Deborah Rose; three sisters, Alice Johnson, Sara Guetterman, Dorothy Johnson and two brothers, Johnny Johnson, Sr. and Alex Johnson, Jr., sister-in law Rachel Johnson and brother-in-law Jack Guetterman.

A Private Graveside service will be held with Rev. Larry Potts officiating.

In lieu of flowers, the family request memorials be made to: St. Jude Children's Hospital (501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN. 38105) or Cairo Magnolia Manor (2700 Washington Avenue, Cairo, IL. 62914).

Crain Funeral Home in Cairo is in charge of arrangements.

George Cotilla

George Cotilla, age 77, of Tamm, passed away on Sunday, May 31, 2026 at his Home in Tamm.

He was born on Sept. 13, 1948 to George Cotilla and Ora Mae (Munsell) Cotilla in Cairo, Ill. He was married to Linda (Wilmoth) Poole.

George was a proud veteran of the United States Marines. He was a self-employed house painter for many years.

George enjoyed the outdoors spent many years as a goose hunting guide.

Survivors include his daughter, Tish Dowdy; son, John Ryan Cotilla; grandchildren, Austin Bigham and Samuel Dowdy, along with four other grandchildren; and great-grandchildren, Leo Hurd and Odin Bigham.

Along with his parents and wife, he is preceded in death by his brother, Johnny Ray Cotilla.

A Graveside Service with Military Honors was held on Thursday, June 4, 2026 at the Mound City National Cemetery.



In lieu of flowers, the family requests with gratitude that memorial contributions may be made to Crain Funeral Home.

Crain Funeral Home in Tamm is in charge of arrangements

Janet Anderson

Janet Anderson, age 85, of Cobden, passed away on Tuesday, May 26, 2026 at deaconess Heartland Medical Center in Marion, Ill.

She was born on June 14, 1940 to Omer Jordan and Avis (Watkins) Jordan in Elco, Ill.

Janet had worked at New Lenox State Bank for 29 years and later worked at Walmart and loved her job. She enjoyed riding her motorcycle.

Survivors include her husband, Jon Anderson; daughter, Charlene Smith; sister, Nadine Sadler; and sister-in-law, Minnie Jordan; along with many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Along with her parents, she is preceded in death by her brothers, Gerald Jordan, Charles Jordan, and Larry Jordan; and sister, Opal Pullen.



Funeral Services were held on Friday, June 5 with Rev. Bobbi Shultz officiating at Crain Funeral Home in Anna.

The cremation of Janet Anderson will be personally handled by the staff of Crain Funeral Home.

Crain Funeral Home in Anna, Illinois is in charge of arrangements.

Sandra Jean Johnson

Sandra Jean Johnson, age 72 of Anna, passed peacefully Wednesday, June 3, 2026. She was born Nov. 19, 1953 in Du Quoin, the daughter of Ray and Dollie (Barber) Williamson.

Sandra is survived by her three daughters, Erin Siebert and husband Michael Grant, Elizabeth Johnson, and Christy Johnson; five grandchildren, Chace (Flicity), Faith (Jack), Sam (Abby), Grace (Draven), and Molly; five great-grandchildren, Tori, Lilith, Ventus, Greyson, and Otis; siblings, Linda Gifford, John Williamson, Laura (Dave) Savage, Tom (Andrea) Williamson, Tim (Salena) Williamson, Paul (Heather) Williamson; sister in law, Ofelia Williamson; nieces and nephews; other relatives and friends.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Charles Otis Johnson; father, Ray Williamson; mother, Dollie Cox; and brother, Robert Williamson.

Her family and her church family at the First Baptist Church in Alto Pass meant the world to Sandra. She enjoyed cooking large meals for her family to gather.

Sandra was retired from Choate Mental Health Center where she worked as an RN for over twenty years. She was a passionate nurse to her patients.

Some of her happiest times were coaching girls Khory league softball during the summer. She picked up anyone who needed a ride to practice or a game, provided equipment and was a mentor to many of the girls she coached. She was an avid Saluki Softball and basketball fan.

Sandra volunteered with Hospice and was the recipient of the Butterfly Award; this award is given as a special honor to someone for their commitment to palliative and end of life care and outstanding volunteerism.

Funeral services for Sandra Johnson were on June 6, 2026 at the Rendleman & Hileman Funeral Home in Anna with Pastor Carroll Toler officiating.

Memorial contributions may be made to Hospice of Southern Illinois, the First Baptist Church in Alto Pass, or His Legacy Ministry. Envelopes will be available at the funeral home.

To view the obituary and leave online condolences for the family, visit www.rendlemanhilemanfh.com.

Rendleman and Hileman Funeral Home in Anna in charge of arrangements.



Kimberly Ellen “Kim” (Faulkner) Goines

Kimberly Ellen “Kim” (Faulkner) Goines, age 56 years, a resident of rural Vienna, passed away Tuesday morning, June 2, 2026, at 12:01 a.m. at the Ray and Kay Eckstein Hospice Care Center in Paducah, Ky.

Kim was born March 6, 1970 in Harrisburg. She was the daughter of Charles Ray and Marjorie Faulkner.

On Aug. 18, 1988, Kim was united in marriage to Gerald Goines in Johnson County. He survives.

Kim is also survived by two children, Alisa (Jacob) Sowers and Brent (Kaylah) Goines, all of Vienna; four grandchildren, Sadie, Tate, Emma and Oakley; her siblings, David (Karen) Faulkner of Vienna, Greg Faulkner of Vienna, Terry (Tammy) Faulkner of Marion, Diane (Darren) Deskin of Lockport, Denise (Garry) Tanner of Tunnel Hill and Gayla (Tony) Sanders of Vienna; as well as a host of nieces, nephews and cousins.

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Kim was of the Baptist faith. She had volunteered on a number of mission trips including the Dream Center Foundation in Los Angeles, Calif., as well as a mission to Lynch, Ky. Kim also had volunteered at Manna Café Ministries in Clarksville, Tenn.

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Burial was in the Wise-Robinson Cemetery, north of Ozark.

Visitation was held Tuesday morning, June 9, 2026, from 10 a.m. until the service hour at 11 a.m. at the church.

Memorials may be made to Mercy Health Hospice, 225 Medical Center Drive, Suite 203, Paducah, KY 42003 or to the Manna Café Ministries, 1960-J Madison St., Suite # 312, Clarksville, TN 37043.



Georgetta Meggs Norris

Georgetta Meggs Norris, age 91, of Thebes, passed away on Friday, June 5, 2026 at Life Care Center in Cape Girardeau, Mo.

She was born on July 6, 1934 to Edgar A. White and Susie Elizabeth (Light) White in Chicago, Ill.

She was married to James Meggs until his passing in 1973 and later married Monroe Norris until his passing in 2002.

Georgetta before her family, she was a secretary at the Alexander County Courthouse, and was a secretary on the Air Force Base in Bangor, Maine. This was when she became a full-time wife and mother.

She enjoyed canning, crocheting, and playing piano with her grandchildren. She was a member of the former First Free Will Baptist Church in Olive Branch and played piano at Rock Springs Church.

Survivors include her children, Danetta (Jeff) Durham, Susan (Larry) Stevens, Robyn Walden, and Travis (Gail) Meggs; grandchildren, Tina (Philip) Harrison, C. Raymond Taylor, April (John) Anderson, Gary Allen (Sher) Dunlap, Monroe Bradshaw, Dottie Bradshaw, Corina (Johnny) Wright, Miranda Groves, Amanda Meggs,



and Christopher Meggs; great-grandchildren, Sarah Philip, Rachel, Stacey, Loralee, Karlie, Natalie, Flynn, Renea, Bam, Ashley, Karma, Kegan, Kyla, Ashlynn, Rylee, and Kora; great great-grandchildren, Audrey, Charlie, Bonnie, Jayden, and Isaiah.

Along with her parents, Edgar White and Susie and Clay Myers; and two husbands, she is preceded in death by her son, James Allen Meggs in 1984.

Funeral services were held on Tuesday, June 9 with Rev. Curt Alderson officiating at Crain Funeral Home in Tamm.

Interment followed the funeral service at Olive Branch Cemetery in Olive Branch, Ill.

Crain Funeral Home in Tamm is in charge of arrangements.

VFW Announces June Events

Veterans of Foreign Wars Carroll P. Foster Post No. 3455 of Anna has scheduled several events in June and invites both members and the public to participate.

The post will host a community blood drive from 12:30 to 5:30 p.m. Thursday, June 11. Organizers encourage area residents to donate and help provide the "Gift of Life" to those in need.

On Friday, June 12, Mystify Music will present a Speakeasy Night from 7 to 11 p.m. The event is open to the public.

The post will celebrate Flag Day on Sunday, June 14, and encourages residents to display the American flag proudly. In conjunction with the observance, the VFW will host a celebration of the U.S. Army's birthday from 4 to 6 p.m. Attendees will be served cold-cut sandwiches, chips and birthday cake. Guests are asked to bring a side dish to share. The event is open to the public.

The VFW Post and Auxiliary will hold their monthly joint meeting at 5 p.m. Monday, June 15. The Auxiliary's monthly business meeting will follow at 6 p.m., with the Post's monthly meeting scheduled for 7 p.m.

The post will also host Taco Tuesday on June 16 from 5 to 7 p.m. Fresh tacos will be available for \$4 each or two for \$7. The public is welcome to attend.

For additional information about any of the events, contact the Anna VFW Post.

Alto Pass Veterans to Host Flag Retirement Ceremony

The Alto Pass Area Veterans Memorial Organization will host a flag retirement ceremony at 11 a.m. June 13 at Alto Pass Cemetery.

Community members who have worn, torn or otherwise damaged American flags are invited to bring them to the ceremony for proper retirement in accordance with established flag etiquette.

The Alto Pass Area Veterans Memorial Organization is a nonprofit group dedicated to creating and maintaining the Alto Pass Veterans Memorial, which honors deceased U.S. military veterans from the Alto Pass area.

Weather High 89, low 49; 0.19 of an inch of rain

Temperatures for the period of June 2-8 in the Union County area ranged from a high of 89 degrees to a low of 49. Precipitation totaled 0.19 of an inch of rain.

Following are highlights for the period as recorded by local weather observer Dana Cross near Jonesboro:

Tuesday, June 2: high 81, low 56.

Wednesday, June 3: high 83, low 49.

Thursday, June 4: high 85, low 55.

Friday, June 5: high 87, low 59.

Saturday, June 6: high 84, low 66.

Sunday, June 7: high 87, low 66. 0.05 of an inch of rain.

Monday, June 8: high 89, low 70. 0.14 of an inch of rain.

Pet of the Week

from the PAWS Adoption Center, Anna



Athena 2, a female chocolate point Siamese kitten, is available for adoption at the PAWS Adoption Center in Anna.

Other animals which are available for adoption include a male cream point Siamese kitten, a 1 to 3-year-old female calico, a 1 to 3-year-old male domestic short-hair gray/white, a 1 to 3-year old female domestic shorthair tabby; and many other companion animals, including dogs and puppies in all ages and sizes.

If you are interested in Athena 2 or any of the other companion animals you must complete the application at pawspaws.org. PAWS will only set up meet and greets with an approved application. Athena 2's adoption fee is \$175.

News from

First Baptist Church, Jonesboro

On June 7, Bro. Perry Williams spoke in the morning service. Bro. Perry's message addressed the wonder, joy and beauty of all the Lord has created. How could we not praise Him for all He has done? The key is having a spirit of gratitude. He related the story of the healing of The Ten Lepers. There was only one leper who returned to express thankfulness. His text was from the 41st Psalm found in the Old Testament, and also from Luke 17, in the New Testament.

Dee Rose led in worship accompanied by Debbie York on the piano, and the praise team: Chris Rose, David Pedigo, Angie Smith, Kim Benefield. John Turner sang the song, "Worthy of Worship," as a solo.

Our service was sent via transmitter station 87.9 FM for those who want to listen via the radio. The service was also live streamed on Facebook, so if you missed it, you still have an opportunity to view it. Please check our Facebook page, Jonesboro FBC, for the latest videos and info on church events.

This week's activities include Men's & Ladies' Bible study on Monday, June 8. Men, meet at the church at 6 p.m.; Ladies, meet at the home of Sheila Aldridge at 6 p.m.

Recent birthdays: Sheila Aldridge, June 9; and Meghan Smith, June 13. Happy birthday to all!

Congratulations to Larry and Melody Keller, married 53 years on June 8; and to Chris and Dee Rose, married 31 years on June 10; Bro. Perry and Denna Williams, married 41 years on June 14. Happy Anniversary to all!

Currently, our regular schedule for worship at Jonesboro First Baptist includes Sunday School classes on Sundays at 9 a.m.; Sunday morning worship at 10 a.m.; Sunday evening worship at 6 p.m. Youth for 6th to 12th grades meet also on Sundays at 6 p.m. and Wednesdays from 6 to 8 p.m. Our Adult Prayer Meeting and Bible Study also meets on Wednesdays at 6 p.m. All are invited to attend

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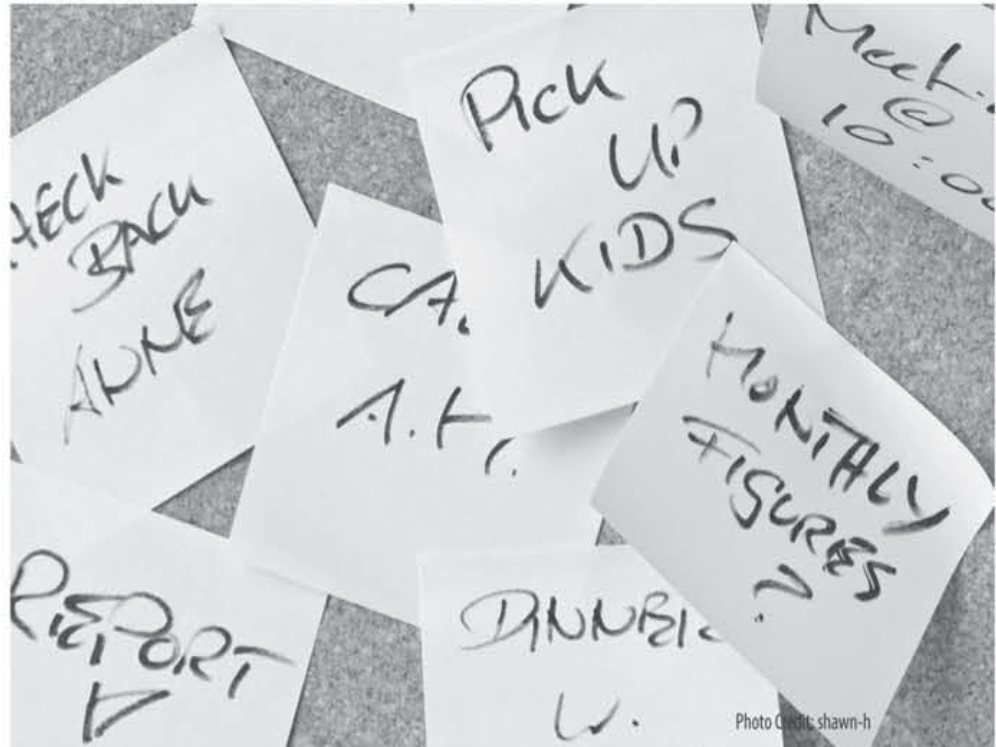


Photo Credit: shawn-h

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Daily Bible Reading						
Luke	Luke	Luke	Psalm	Psalm	1 Cor.	1 Cor.
12:41-59	13:1-17	13:18-35	15	37	1:1-17	1:18-31

Scriptures Selected by the American Bible Society X *Daily Devotional at DailyBible.AmericanBible.org*

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Art Sisters Exhibit Opens at Shawnee Hills



Opening reception
The Six Art Sisters Art Exhibit Opening reception is Friday, June 12 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at 123 West Davie Street in Anna. The exhibit consists of 30 sculptures and 60 paintings.

The Shawnee Hills Arts Council will host the Art Sisters Art Exhibit beginning June 12 at its gallery at 123 W. Davie St. in Anna.

An opening reception will be held Friday, June 12, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. The event is free and open to the public, and refreshments will be served.

The exhibit features approximately 90 works, including 30 sculptures and 60 paintings, created by six Illinois artists known collectively as the Art Sisters: Linda Sickmon, Mary

Schuytema, Lori Reed, Chris Dokolasa, Rae Standard and Janis Wunderlich.

The group has met monthly since 2012 to collaborate, share ideas and critique one another's work. The artists live in western Illinois in the Monmouth and Galesburg area and work in a variety of mediums, including ceramics, mixed media and painting.

Each artist brings a unique perspective to the exhibit. Their work reflects personal experiences, artistic exploration and a shared commitment

ment to creativity. Featured pieces range from functional and sculptural ceramics to mixed-media landscapes and visual narratives inspired by nature, memory and human connection.

The exhibit will remain on display through July 26. Gallery hours are Thursdays and Fridays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays from 1 to 3 p.m.

Admission is free, and the public is invited to attend the opening reception and visit the exhibit throughout its run.

Anna-Jonesboro Women’s Club holds meeting



Meeting
GFWC Anna Jonesboro Women's Club meeting and Education Program attendees on June 1, 2026 included, seated, guest speaker Dr. Tim Simpson, DVM; guest Norm Bauer, Lillian Milam. Standing, Barbara Bauer; guest speaker Dr. Patty Simpson, PhD Education; Martha Schwegman; Jane Bauer.

The General Federation of Women’s Clubs’ Anna-Jonesboro Women’s Club met Monday, June 1, 2026 at Pizza Hut in Anna. The luncheon, program and meeting marked the finish-up of the club’s program year.

President Jane Bauer mentioned the 250th Anniversary of the USA and led the Pledge of Allegiance and the Women’s Club Creed. After a few devotional thoughts, she called attention to local current events.

The AJ Club theme for the month was Education. Club president Jane Bauer introduced special guests, Dr. Tim Simpson, DVM (retired) and Dr. Patty Simpson, PhD Education (retired). Together they informed and entertained with stories of their educational odysseys that led them to more than one career...not always in a straight line, or as they had expected!

They spoke on how they supported one another and stepped up from working in a restaurant and in a coal mine to becoming a College Professor and a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine.

Concluding remarks by Dr. Tim included the importance of setting goals, but not to be dismayed or derailed by challenges and changes to your plans. He encourages students to be adaptable and prepared to make

changes along the way.

Dr. Patty Simpson, who mentored both high school and college students, said that the most important learning has to do with how to find information, how to organize and manage, and how to work with others.

Another guest, Norm Bauer, told how and why his career path changed from agriculture studies to becoming a professional pilot. Barb Bauer used her home economics degree and leadership training to manage her family and serve as a community volunteer.

Martha Schwegmann’s teaching degree and experience led her to fascinating work with blind and deaf students. She first learned to do sign language and then braille.

Jane Bauer told how her accounting skill developed through on-the-job training and by taking advantage of junior college courses for her certification.

Lillian Milam was one of those many parents who managed to get her teaching degree after she had children of her own. Milam is Education Program chairperson for the AJWC. She shared plans for the club to provide educational supplies to a local school in the fall. This on-going project focuses on a different area school each



Donation
Anna Jonesboro Women's Club President, Jane Bauer, right, presents a gift to Sharon Craig of Stinson Memorial Library in support of the Children's Summer Reading Program.

year. Next fall, the recipient is Jonesboro Elementary.

Action was taken to provide a monetary gift to the Stinson Memorial Library Summer Reading Program. A donation was recently made to the Anna Veterans Home in honor of area veterans.

Appreciation was expressed for the service of two faithful members, Suzie Kessler and Martha Webb, whose health issues prevent their attendance.

For membership or other information about GFWCAJWC, call 618-527-2046.

Community library box installed at Cobden park



New community resource available
Jessica and Christopher Hines installed a new community library box in Cobden Friday morning, June 5. The resource is located at the Cobden Community Park. Visitors can pick up a donated book at the little library to take home and read. Donations of books also are welcomed.

The Village of Cobden is the home of a new community library box. The little library was installed Friday morning, June 5, at the Cobden Community Park. The library box is a fully funded Illinois Coalition for Community Services, ICCS, project and was installed by Jessica and Christopher Hines. The husband and wife team are youth advocates with ICCS, which has an office in Herrin.

The community library box is designed to help promote reading, particularly for young people 11 to 24 years of age. However, those of all ages are invited to use the library box. The resource will operate on a

take one, leave one system – readers can pick up a book and donors are welcome to leave one. The library box is located close to a walking path and not far from a shelter at the park in Cobden.

The coalition is in the process of installing the library boxes in communities throughout the region, with Cobden picked as the first location. Plans call for the boxes to also be installed in Anna, Cairo, Herrin, Benton, Steeleville, Pinckneyville and Charleston.

In addition to books, printed resources about such topics as creating attainable goals, peer pressure and anger manage-

ment also will be available in the library box.

ICCS is a nonprofit organization that takes a grassroots approach to providing free social services in rural and metropolitan Illinois. The coalition provides a variety of programming throughout the state, including 24/7 crisis intervention and counseling for neglected or runaway youth, anti-delinquency and violence prevention services, as well as safe, productive after-school care for young people. The coalition is licensed through the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

Jessica Hines hopes to find young people who can help to support the community library boxes project. Volunteers, book donors and those who just might to help with the work done by the coalition are welcomed. Information is available by contacting Jessica Hines at the coalition’s Herrin office, phone 618-727-5623.

County Line News

By Suzan Harvel

We’ve finally received a bit of rain to help the garden grow...along with the grass. While it’s been a relatively moist spring, we are still part of a drought area. I fear once summer goes into full swing that “dome” that comes with it will shut off additional rain and make the drought worse. Seems to happen every summer.

A daughter, who lives in western Canada, is ready to go back where they have much cooler weather. Her husband reported it’s still in the 60’s up there. She says it only gets in the 90’s maybe one week out of the year. Chris Vellella, a neighbor, just returned from a trip to Canada, though on the eastern side, and his wife told me that during his trip they actually had snow. Of course, western Montana had snow yesterday (Sunday), also. I guess if you don’t like the heat...there are plenty of places to go to avoid it.

This past weekend was certainly a warm one. So much was going on around us. Several folks are sporting sunburns too. Cobden got a jump on celebrating America’s 250th anniversary by hosting a Revolutionary and Civil War Encampment; the Union County museum was open with exhibits; live music and entertainment was available with period demonstrations of ballads and dancing. Further upstate, Ft. de Chartres had their 56th annual Rendezvous, which both my daughters attended with friends, one of whom performs with the musicians. They reported a great time.

Jonesboro had JuneFest, which I participated in, along with many others from P.A.S.T. of Union County, in conducting Cemetery Talks at the Jonesboro Cemetery. I met several new faces during the event and learned a lot about Union County’s historical families. JuneFest also had many other events such as music, a bakeoff, a Little Miss JuneFest pageant (Congratulations to Willow Chapman), cornhole tournament, kid activities, a reptile show, and other activities.

With the pool opening in Anna, swim meets are now going on. The Anna Arts Council also hosted a program led by Mark Motsinger, which examined the development of Illinois through Revolutionary War grants that led to migration patterns from eastern & south-east states into this area. Johnson County had folks out and about at the Barkhausen-Cache River Wetlands Center this weekend

to learn about “Planting Herbs for Pollinators”. Also scattered around were yard sales, flea markets, farmer’s markets, weddings, anniversary celebrations, and much more.

Join in more fun this coming weekend in Anna for the Annabelle Festival on Saturday, June 13. There will be a lot going on, so get out and join in. The Shawnee Hills Arts Council will be hosting a drama camp from June 8 to 28, if your child might be interested. You might also want to head out to the Wetlands Center on June 13 for a discussion, led by John Schwegman, on flowering plants native to our region. There is so much going on this time of year, just pick an area of interest, look up what’s going on, and join in.

Members of the Daniel Chapman Chapter NSDAR will meet on Sunday, June 14 at 2 p.m. at the Johnson County Historical Society, 120 N. 4th Street, in Vienna, to celebrate Flag Day. They will also hold a memorial service for members who have passed this chapter year. The regular meeting will follow.

Part of that “more” mentioned earlier was celebrated at Mill Creek Baptist Church on Sunday, June 7. Baby dedications of Kaylee Cobb and Nasyiah Dukes were held with many of their family and friends on hand to witness this blessing. The next blessing came with the baptism of Dianna Robertson. What a wonderful way to celebrate the Lord’s Day! Brother Bobby Richardson’s sermon from Proverbs 22:6 and Psalm 127:3 spoke to the responsibility we all have in the training of our children. Training is different from teaching. Training is when the lessons learned become instinctive behavior. It does take a village to raise a child properly and we all share the responsibility of not just guiding these lives (not just babies, but those new in Christ too), but also of showing how a Christian is supposed to live, as an good example. Afterwards, a pizza party fellowship dinner was held to celebrate with all in attendance.

Those added to the prayer list are: Gary Potter, car accident; Kevin Reynolds, health; Gary Meyer, surgery; Deon Davis, health; Jimmy Poole, health; and Trinity Poole, health. Also remember the families of Michael David Smith and Matthew Roberts who have both passed away.

Drought update

The latest update from the U.S. Drought Monitor showed that as of Thursday, June 4, all of Union County was continuing to experience moderate drought conditions.

Moderate drought conditions also were reported in all of Alexander and Pulaski counties, most of Massac and Johnson counties, southeastern Jackson County and western Williamson County.

Abnormally dry conditions were reported in most of Jackson County, eastern Williamson County, northeastern Johnson County and eastern Massac County.

Union County

Fixin’s

Bacon-Chicken Club Pizza by Debbie Reid, in Florida

1 pre-baked 12-inch pizza crust

4 oz cream cheese, softened

1/2 of 1 small onion, minced

2 cups shredded rotisserie chicken

1 1/2 cups shredded Monterey Jack cheese

1 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese

8 slices cooked bacon, cut into small pieces

1/2 cup sour cream

3 Tablespoons milk

2 teaspoons ranch salad dressing mix

1 cup shredded lettuce

1 plum tomato, seeded and chopped

Place pizza crust on an ungreased pizza pan. Combine cream cheese and onion; spread over crust. Top with chicken, cheeses, and bacon.

Bake at 425 until edges are lightly browned and cheese is melted, 12-15 minutes.

While pizza is baking, mix sour cream, milk, and dressing mix. Once pizza is done, sprinkle the lettuce and tomatoes over pizza, and drizzle with dressing.

Opinion and Commentary

Illinois 4-H prepares teens for college, careers, life, new survey shows

URBANA, Ill. – Illinois 4-H is equipping young people with the skills and experiences needed for success beyond high school, according to new data from the 2026 Illinois 4-H Senior Survey.

The survey of 334 graduating 4-H members found that youth who participated in the program for an average of nearly 12 years are leaving with strong workforce readiness, leadership experience, and clear postsecondary plans.

Nearly 9 in 10 respondents said their 4-H experience helped them feel ready for the workplace and adulthood, while 83 percent reported feeling prepared for college. In addition, 98 percent said they gained skills they can use in a future job.

“4-H provides young people with hands-on experiences that build confidence, leadership, and real-world skills,” said Kevin Carey, University of Illinois Extension 4-H assistant dean and program leader. “These findings reinforce that youth are not only prepared for what comes next, they are beyond ready,” Carey shared in a story which has been posted online by University of Illinois Extension.

Participation in 4-H opportunities played a significant role in shaping future plans. Eighty-four percent of respondents plan to attend a two- or four-year college, while others plan to enter the workforce, start businesses or pursue trade programs. Among those attending college, 85 percent have already selected a major, with top fields including agriculture, education, health sciences, engineering and business.

Youth also reported that 4-H experiences helped influence their career decisions. Forty-two percent of participants in state-level events said those opportunities directly shaped their college and career plans by exposing them to new fields and helping them refine their goals.

Leadership development remains a cornerstone of the program. Seventy-three percent of respondents served as club officers, and many took on additional leadership roles at the county and state levels. Through these experiences, youth reported gaining communication skills, responsibility and the ability to lead and collaborate effectively.

Beyond leadership, Illinois 4-H continues to support career exploration and workforce development through hands-on learning. Eighty percent of respondents held part-time jobs during high school, and 14 percent started their own businesses, often building on skills developed through 4-H projects and experiences.

Participants also earned valuable certifications, including food safety, CPR and first aid, further strengthening their readiness for employment and community leadership.

Survey responses highlight that 4-H’s impact extends beyond academics and career preparation. Ninety-four percent of respondents said 4-H is an important part of who they are, and 93 percent reported feeling supported by their peers in the program.

Overall, youth credited 4-H with helping them explore career interests, develop leadership skills and build confidence through hands-on learning and meaningful relationships.

Illinois 4-H is part of University of Illinois Extension and serves youth across the state through programs focused on leadership, STEM, agriculture, and healthy living.

For more information about Illinois 4-H programs, visit <https://4h.extension.illinois.edu/>.

The Cat's Meow

by the Cobden Spay and Neuter Coalition

Because our community generously and kindly continues to support us, we have been able to set up 15 more subsidized spay/neuter appointments over the next few weeks. We also continue our TNR program in the community to address the cat overpopulation issue. These efforts greatly enhance the lives of the many kitties we fix, as well as the kind caretakers that watch over them.

Kittens are also a major focus at this time, as we try to assist owners/caretakers in finding rescue or placement for them. They are so precious and innocent and new to the world. They deserve the best we have to offer.

We will have raffle tickets for sale for our fabulous Union County Wine & Dine package, so you must stop by and see us at the Annabelle Festival this Saturday. We will be there to share information, accept donations and just visit with you.

Please visit our website, cobdenspayneutercoalition.org, or our facebook page to see what we’re up to. You may drop off, call in, or send donations to our account at Meller-James & Associates, send your gift online through givebutter.com, or mail them to CSNC, P.O. Box 542, Cobden, IL 62920. If more convenient, you may also drop off donations for us at Kiki’s in downtown Anna. CSNC is a 501c3 nonprofit organization, and donations are tax-deductible.

Spay/Neuter/Adopt companion animals. Meanwhile, if you see a companion animal in need, in trouble, or suffering, please, please call someone before it’s too late for them. Call your local animal control office, the police, or the Sheriff’s Dept. It IS your business if an innocent being who cannot speak for himself needs your help!

Anna District 37 offers summer grocery pickup

Anna School District 37 has announced a summer grocery pickup program. The school district announced in a message on social media that the program is being offered thanks to churches in the community and a local grocery store.

The program is open to all District 37 families. Bags of groceries, milk and loaves of bread will be available on a first come, first served basis.

The program was scheduled to start June 4. Future pickup dates on the calendar include June 11, June 18, June 25, July 2, July 9, July 16, July 23 and Aug. 6. Pickup times are from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. each week.

Pickups will be at under the awning at door number 1 at Davie/Anna Junior High School.

In the posting on social media, the school offered special thanks to New Beginnings Church, First Evangelical Presbyterian Church, St. Mary’s Church, Mt. Moriah Lutheran Church and Kroger.

Please read this...

Talking to a catbird, a bluebird and a squirrel...

Were you ready for our first official heat advisory? Nah. Neither were we. Of course, it is June in Southern Illinois... and the ditch lilies have been blooming...so it was about time for some good ol’ heat, humidity and air like pea soup.

When I started crafting this gem early Monday evening, I saw online that the National Weather Service office in Paducah has issued a flash flood warning for southwestern Union County, northwestern Alexander County, both in Southern Illinois, and central Cape Girardeau County and northwestern Scott County, both in Southeast Missouri.

The warning advised that “At 529 PM CDT, trained weather spotters reported thunderstorms producing heavy rain across the warned area. Flash flooding is already occurring.” Never a dull moment with the weather in our little corner of the world. Given how dark it is outside as I look outside, it looks we might getting some rain...at any moment...

Turned out that we didn’t see much in terms of rain at our humble abode. However, the simultaneous appearance of rain and sunshine did combine for a nice rainbow in the eastern sky. Meanwhile...

Bob and I have been spending evenings recently out on the porch swing. Bob, as an official cat, is a fiercely independent creature. As an independent creature, he has routines which cannot be disrupted. If a routine is disrupted, Bob might show his displeasure by hacking up a great big hairball which one of the people he tolerates will step on in the middle of the night.

One of Bob’s routines, at least during warm weather, includes spending time on the porch swing, which is a must. Spending that time out on the front porch did allow me to hear the loud buzzing of a cicada for the first time this year...I think was Saturday evening...and then again on Sunday.

Saturday evening, I was kind of glad that Bob was the only one around. I would not have wanted anyone else to hear as I chatted with a rather noisy catbird, a male bluebird which makes frequent visits to utility wires in front of our house and a squirrel which perched itself in a branch in the big sweet gum tree in our front yard. People might start to say things if they heard me talking with the Critters.

Recent evenings also have included opportunities to watch fireflies put on quite a show as they light up the dark. Sunday evening, I had the good fortune of watching a firefly land on me. I got to wondering if such an occurrence might have meant something that matters in terms of The Journey Through Life. Turns out, it did. Once again, thanks to the wonders of 21st century technology, I learned with some help from my new good AI friend “Search Assist” that “Yes, it is considered a very special blessing and a sign of good luck if a firefly lands on you. It symbolizes encouragement and that you are on the right path.”

Meanwhile...

That path on The Journey Through Life has included a special person who has been mentioned many times over the years in this space. The Other Half has held my hand and encouraged me to choose the right path for many years. And, my goodness, how those years have passed...in a flash.

We reached a special milestone on our journey last Friday. To celebrate the occasion (our wedding anniversary), we decided to spend some time together and take a bit of a road trip through this place in Southern Illinois that we call home. While we were out and about enjoying the day, we engaged in some “retail therapy” at a local businesses, where we saw Bigfoot. Did not expect such a Critter Sighting. But there he/she was, in all his/her glory. Bigfoot was not as tall as I was expecting... and was quiet and still as a statue.

The Other Half found a nice piece of blue glassware. She been collecting such treasures for a few years to add some special colors to our humble home. My treasure was a book which seemed quite appropriate, given how I have spent my time on The Journey Through Life. The book was titled “The Gazette Girls of Grundy County.” “The Gazette Girls” were two sisters who decided to buy the Grundy County Gazette, a country newspaper in a small town in rural Missouri, during the Great Depression. The book turned out to be a little gem and I finished reading it in a couple of days. The challenge of two young women trying to run a newspaper at a time when most women simply did not do such a thing made for a great story.

Our anniversary journey on Friday also included some travels on Berryville Road in suburban Jonesboro, the Refuge Road not far from metropolitan Ware and the Trail of Tears State Forest. During our stop at the state forest, The Other Half took it easy in the car while yours truly wandered through a mostly dry creek bed, where I saw one tiny frog.



Turtles were doing whatever turtles do on a sunny afternoon in late spring. The Critters were seen last Friday at the Union County State Fish and Wildlife Area near Ware.



Got to have a picture of a squirrel this week. Just can’t have too many of them...50 would be a nice round number.

On Saturday, we went on a date to hear fiddle and accordion music at the Cobden Community Park. The music, and the stories which accompanied the tunes, were great. Can’t beat fiddle music...unless a banjo might be involved.

Meanwhile...

Speaking of books...I am going to keep with tradition and make another shameless plug...

The Friends of Stinson Library are planning to have an Annabelle Festival book sale. Sale dates are Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 12-14. The sale will be at Stinson Memorial Public Library, which is located at 409 S. Main St. in Anna. A Friends appreciation sale is planned from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Friday, June 12. Memberships will be available at the time. The sale will be open to the public from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, June 13. A bag sale is set for 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, June 14. The sale will generate funds for the Friends of Stinson Library, which helps to support Stinson Memorial Public Library District.

Meanwhile...

We’ll close this week with a message The Other Half shared with yours truly on the day of our anniversary. I believe she found these special words of wisdom online: “The older I get, the more I understand why people live in the woods and talk to squirrels.” Wiser words, perhaps, have never been spoken...



Play ball... Summer season Southern Illinois Baseball and Softball Association games are being played on new fields at the Anna City Park. The new fields have been created as part of a major improvement project at the park. The photo was taken Tuesday evening, June 2.

From the Veterans of Foreign Wars website

Displaying the Flag

On Same Staff - U.S. flag at peak, above any other flag.

All persons present in uniform should render the military salute. Members of the armed forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may render the military salute. All other persons present should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart, or if applicable, remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart.

- Do not let the flag touch the ground. Do not fly flag upside down unless there is an emergency.
- Do not carry the flag flat, or carry things in it. Do not use the flag as clothing.
- Do not store the flag where it can get dirty. Do not use it as a cover.
- Do not fasten it or tie it back. Always allow it to fall free. Do not draw on, or otherwise mark the flag.

Per Federal Flag Code, Section 2, paragraph (a), it is the universal custom to display the flag only from sunrise to sunset on buildings and on stationary flagstaffs in the open. However, when a patriotic effect is desired, the flag may be displayed twenty-four hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness.

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Flag Day is Sunday, June 14

How Flag Day got its start

Flag Day is commemorated each year in the United States on June 14. Though Flag Day is not an official federal holiday, the day remains significant nonetheless, as it traces its origins all the way back to 1777.

The Second Continental Congress formally adopted the flag of the United States on June 14, 1777. That resolution noted certain characteristics of the new flag, including the alternating red and white stripes that remain part of the flag that is celebrated each June 14.

Flag Day is one of various notable events and holidays commemorated in June, a list that includes Father's Day, Juneteenth and the summer solstice. That can make it easy for Flag Day to get lost in the proverbial

shuffle, but the Farmer's Almanac notes it is customary for the sitting president of the United States to encourage Americans to display the flag outside of their homes and businesses each June 14. The flag is flown from all public buildings on Flag Day, which the Farmer's Almanac reports is another rich tradition that dates back 1877 and the centennial of the flag's adoption.

President Woodrow Wilson issued a presidential proclamation on June 14, 1916, that designated the day as Flag Day going forward. Thirty-three years after President Wilson's proclamation, the U.S. Congress officially established June 14 as National Flag Day.

One notable tidbit Americans can consider this Flag Day is the connection between the flag and seamstress Betsy Ross. Many American schoolchildren were taught that Ms. Ross designed and sewed the first American flag, but historians have since discredited that legend. The Farmer's Almanac notes that many historians now believe George Washington already had a design for a flag with 13 red and white alternating stripes and 13 six-pointed stars set in a circle when he visited Ms. Ross in Philadelphia. And while historians do not doubt that Ms. Ross sewed a flag reflecting the design George Washington brought with him when visiting the seamstress, it's hard to confirm if she in fact sewed the first flag.

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