

First Quarter 2019 WGLT ISSUES AND PROGRAMS

January 2019 – March 2019

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, Noon-1pm, and 6-7pm, M-F. The story lengths range from one minute to 59 minutes.

Arts and Culture

Culture Maven: What's So Great About Hollywood's Greatest Year

By LAURA KENNEDY · MAR 26, 2019

Back during the Golden Era of Hollywood, one year flashed with a brilliance that earned it the title, "The Greatest Year in Hollywood History."

Poet and Activist: LGBTQI+ People Should Talk About Responsibilities Instead of Rights

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · MAR 22, 2019

An LGBTQI+ poet and scholar looks to indigenous people in North America for broader gender definitions that can help modern society as the current culture struggles over accepting multiple identities.

Violinist Performs Music Of The 'Black Mozart'

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · MAR 22, 2019

Growing up in Springfield, African-American violinist Clayton Penrose-Whitmore was one of few people of color around him playing classical music. Penrose-Whitmore has gone on to a career in music, winning prizes in the Sphinx competition and performing with noted groups such as the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra.

'Liner Notes' Uses Hip-Hop To Bridge Generational Gaps

By JON NORTON · MAR 22, 2019

Performer and educator Paige Hernandez said she created the multi-cultural/multi-generational show Liner Notes to bridge generational gaps while preserving the culture of hip-hop.

GLT Datebook: Gallery Show Rebels Against Digital Type

By LAURA KENNEDY · MAR 21, 2019

Years after we thought typewriters had become obsolete, an exhibition reveals they still have considerable charm.

GLT Datebook: Artist Explores The Power Of Language

By LAURA KENNEDY · MAR 15, 2019

All artists face criticism. And when artist Bethany Collins was confronted with ugly, racially charged critiques of her work, she took control of that criticism and shaped the words into a powerful artistic message.

GLT Datebook: 'Wedding Singer' Makes A Lively Leap To The Stage

By LAURA KENNEDY · MAR 8, 2019

[Community Players](#) cordially invites you to attend a musical that unites Hollywood and Broadway, throwing in a heavy dose of nostalgia for good measure and good times.

GLT Datebook: Romance Reigns In 'The Light In The Piazza'

By LAURA KENNEDY · MAR 1, 2019

Between romance and hope there's "The Light in the Piazza."

GLT Datebook: Filmmaker Focuses On Native American Mascots And Identity

By LAURA KENNEDY · FEB 23, 2019

Kenn Little takes aim at misrepresentation of Native Americans in the new documentary, "More Than a Word."

And The Award For Best Award Show Controversy Goes To ... Oscar!

By LAURA KENNEDY · FEB 21, 2019

What's an Oscar telecast without a little drama? Or even a lot of drama, courtesy of controversy and the ever obliging social media.

A Baby Boomer's Book Of Poems

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · FEB 19, 2019

Poetry comes out in all of us from time to time. And its subjects come from both heart and history.

A Journey From Ghana To America

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · FEB 19, 2019

It is a cruel irony that the first Christian church in what is now the country of Ghana is built in a coastal fort directly over the holding pens for the slave trade.

GLT Datebook: Artist Takes Aim At Climate Change

By LAURA KENNEDY · FEB 15, 2019

A classic of literature, Dante's "Inferno," informs the latest work by multimedia artist Tom Rice.

GLT Datebook: Heartland Theatre Primes Memory

By LAURA KENNEDY · FEB 8, 2019

[Heartland Theatre](#) explores the mysteries of human memory and identity while confronting the complexities of family relationships in their its production, "Marjorie Prime."

Psych Geeks: Are We Too Human For Artificial Intelligence?

By LAURA KENNEDY · FEB 6, 2019

Artificial intelligence scares the heck out of some people. Others are excited about the rise of the new technology.

GLT Datebook: The Intersection Of Nature And Abstraction

By LAURA KENNEDY · FEB 1, 2019

[The McLean County Arts Center](#) in Bloomington is currently showing the works of sculptor Tyler Lotz in the exhibition entitled, "Traverse." The show is currently up through Feb. 15.

GLT Datebook: Friends Of The Arts Movie Trivia Night Helps Next Gen Artists

By LAURA KENNEDY · JAN 27, 2019

You've been astonishing your friends with your knowledge of movie trivia for years. Now put that cinematic knowledge to good use to help the next generations of actors, singers, painters and more.

Netflix Show Driving Clothing Donations In Northern Illinois

By CLAIRE BUCHANAN · JAN 22, 2019

Maybe you've seen the new Netflix show *Tidying Up With Marie Kondo*. Maybe you've even been inspired to declutter your own home. Turns out, you're far from alone. Lots of people have been tidying up unwanted items this month, and secondhand stores are seeing the results.

On the show, Kondo encourages viewers to declutter their homes by getting rid of things that don't "spark joy" for them.

GLT Datebook: Listening To Native Voices

By LAURA KENNEDY · JAN 18, 2019

A new exhibit at IWU's Ames Library allows a comprehensive look into the lives of Native Americans, exploring the connections between wellness and cultural life.

GLT Datebook: MFA Biennial Show Highlights Work Of ISU Students

By LAURA KENNEDY · JAN 11, 2019

The future of art is currently on view at the [University Galleries](#) in Uptown Normal.

Remake Trend: Is Hollywood Losing The Plot?

By LAURA KENNEDY · JAN 9, 2019

Remake is a word with power in Hollywood.

A glance at what's playing at your local multiplex shows that everything old is new again as Hollywood's close, personal relationship with remakes is stronger than ever. Audiences line up to see remakes and reboots of treasured favorites, like "Mary Poppins," "Batman" and "Ocean's Eleven." Even recent failures like "Ben Hur" and "Tarzan" haven't dampened the film industry's lust for remakes.

GLT Datebook: 'Little Women' Looms Large On Stage

By LAURA KENNEDY · JAN 4, 2019

Casually drop a mention of Louis May Alcott's novel "Little Women" into a conversation and watch dreamy smiles begin to glow with nostalgia.

Business and Economy

Report: B-N Area Economy Shed 1,300 Jobs In Past Year

By RYAN DENHAM · MAR 28, 2019

The Bloomington-Normal area economy has lost 1,300 jobs in the past year, helping drive up the unemployment rate, the Illinois Department of Employment Security reported Thursday.

Low Inventory Persists In B-N Housing Market

By RYAN DENHAM · MAR 28, 2019

The Bloomington-Normal real estate market is off to a strong start in 2019, with sales and prices up even as low inventory continues to make it a seller's market.

Work Begins On Major Rivian Office Remodel In Normal

By RYAN DENHAM · MAR 27, 2019

Work is underway on the \$1.3 million first phase of a major office remodel at the Rivian plant in Normal.

State Farm Finds Buyer For Downtown Bloomington Building

By RYAN DENHAM · MAR 6, 2019

State Farm said Wednesday that it has found a buyer for its downtown Bloomington building.

Disrupting Or Helping? Insurtech CEO Sees Partnerships With Legacy Insurers

By RYAN DENHAM · MAR 5, 2019

On paper, it looks like a battle to the death: Legacy insurers like State Farm facing off against a wave of tech startups looking to disrupt their entire business model. It's Airbnb versus hotels, or Uber versus cabs, all over again.

Lower Catastrophe Losses Help State Farm's Bottom Line In 2018

By RYAN DENHAM · MAR 1, 2019

Lower catastrophe losses helped offset a rocky year for State Farm's stock portfolio in 2018, leading to the largest operating profit in years for the insurer's property-casualty business, the company announced Friday.

One Year Later, What Do B-N Taxpayers Think Of GOP Tax Cuts?

By RYAN DENHAM & MIKE MCCURDY · FEB 28, 2019

Tax time is here. Bloomington-Normal residents are sitting down to do their taxes or lugging their W-2s and other documents to their accountants, as the April 15 filing deadline looms.

Peoria Area Economy Leads To Favorable Job Market

By MARY CULLEN · FEB 26, 2019

The Peoria metropolitan area is experiencing low layoff rates and more jobs being advertised, leading to a favorable job market. That's according to Bradley University's fourth-quarter composite index.

Economics Expert: \$15 Wage Will Benefit Poor, May Decrease Employment

By MARY CULLEN · FEB 18, 2019

Illinois could soon be the fifth state on the path to a \$15 minimum wage.

Big If True: Why Would GM, Amazon Invest In Rivian?

By RYAN DENHAM · FEB 14, 2019

This week's [Reuters report](#) that GM and Amazon are considering investments in the electric startup Rivian raises all sorts of questions.

Why? How much? And what does this mean for Bloomington-Normal?

Report: Amazon, GM In Talks For Rivian Investments

By RYAN DENHAM · FEB 12, 2019

UPDATED 9 a.m. | Amazon and General Motors are considering making investments in Rivian that would give them minority stakes in the electric vehicle startup, according to a published report.

How #MeToo Is Scaring Men From Mentoring Women

By MARY CULLEN · FEB 12, 2019

Women make up [less than 5 percent](#) of CEOs at Fortune 500 companies. That leaves most women to be mentored by the men who hold positions of power.

But in the era of #MeToo, some men are growing nervous about taking on a female mentee for fear of a sexual harassment or assault claim being filed against them should the mentorship go awry.

Fiala Brothers Plan Brewery In Uptown Normal

By RYAN DENHAM · FEB 11, 2019

McLean County could soon be getting its fifth craft brewery—and its first in Uptown Normal.

McLean County Chamber Of Commerce Sees Downside To \$15 Minimum Wage

By MARY CULLEN · FEB 6, 2019

With a minimum wage increase bill awaiting a vote in the Illinois Senate, the [McLean County Chamber of Commerce](#) said they do not “outright oppose” the jump to \$15 an hour.

Programs Train Workers To Meet Demand For Solar Installers

By RYAN DENHAM · JAN 28, 2019

Two years ago, Patrick Laughlin was looking to make a career change. He was doing customer service and sales in an office, but he was itching for something skills-based. He'd always been fascinated by renewable energy, so he signed up for a solar energy installer training program in Bloomington.

Jobless Rate Rises In B-N For December

By RYAN DENHAM · JAN 25, 2019

The jobless rate rose in Bloomington-Normal and 12 other Illinois metro areas in December, the Illinois Department of Employment Security reported Friday.

Plant Finds Second Life With Rivian—And So Do Ex-Mitsubishi Workers

By RYAN DENHAM · JAN 22, 2019

Three years ago, Wade Jensen punched the clock for the last time at Mitsubishi's manufacturing plant in Normal.

2018 Good Year for Farm Equipment Sales

By HERB TRIX · JAN 16, 2019

Despite a lot of uncertainty and a weak farm economy, 2018 was a good year for sales of farm equipment. Figures from the Association of Equipment Manufacturers show tractor sales in the US rose 7 per cent, and combine sales jumped 18 per cent, compared to the previous year.

Report: Insurance Industry Faces 'Talent Crisis'

By RYAN DENHAM · JAN 15, 2019

A new report says that insurance companies will have to be more proactive—and pay more—to find and retain employees amid a “talent crisis” for the industry.

Central Illinois Farmers Start New Year With Trade Uncertainty

By RYAN DENHAM · JAN 10, 2019

All around Doug Schroeder's farm in Bellflower in southeastern McLean County, there are remnants of a more profitable time.

Education And Family

Unit 5 Incumbents Guaranteed Re-election Talk Priorities

By MARY CULLEN • MAR 20, 2019

With six of seven [Unit 5 school board](#) seats up for election this year, there are four current members guaranteed to remain seated.

How A Minimum Wage Increase May Impact Underpaid Child Care Field

By RYAN DENHAM • MAR 13, 2019

Two big things are on the horizon for Illinois' child care system.

Unit 5 School Board Candidates Fight For Two Contested Seats

By MARY CULLEN • MAR 13, 2019

Illinois schools rely on at least 68 percent of funding from property tax dollars, according to the state board of education. And the lion's share of property taxes feed into local schools.

University Officials Not High On Legalization Of Weed

By MARY CULLEN • JAN 16, 2019

Illinois' new governor JB Pritzker has said he wants to legalize, tax, and regulate the sale of recreational marijuana. That move would complicate life for University leaders around Illinois and in Bloomington-Normal.

Heartland Community College To Consider Tuition Increase

By MARY CULLEN • JAN 16, 2019

[Heartland Community College](#) is considering a possible tuition and fees increase starting next fall.

Election 2019

Early Voting Light Before Municipal Elections

By ERIC STOCK · MAR 29, 2019

Voter turnout has been light so far in McLean County, based on early and mail-in voting before Tuesday's municipal elections.

Heartland Community College Board Members Address Business Needs, Property Tax Concerns

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · MAR 28, 2019

Two candidates for a seat on the Heartland Community College Board both said they want to be careful to keep property taxes as low as possible, as did a third who is running uncontested.

Unit 5 Incumbents Guaranteed Re-election Talk Priorities

By MARY CULLEN · MAR 20, 2019

With six of seven [Unit 5 school board](#) seats up for election this year, there are four current members guaranteed to remain seated.

What To Do About Downtown: Bloomington Council Candidates Share Ideas

By BREANNA GROW · MAR 20, 2019

Empty buildings. Aging infrastructure. An arena losing money. What can the city do to revitalize Downtown Bloomington?

Candidates for city council took on the question at a GLT and League of Women Voters forum Tuesday night.

Mayor Of Normal Not Keen To Copy Possible Bloomington Gas Tax

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · MAR 19, 2019

Debate over gasoline tax increases to fund road repairs in Bloomington and Normal is more complex than the question of keeping the amount the same in both cities.

Unit 5 School Board Candidates Fight For Two Contested Seats

By MARY CULLEN · MAR 13, 2019

Illinois schools rely on at least 68 percent of funding from property tax dollars, according to the state board of education. And the lion's share of property taxes feed into local schools.

Town Council Candidates Connect The Dots On Housing, Wages And Economic Development

By BREANNA GROW · MAR 7, 2019

When it comes to financial incentives for developers, candidates for Normal Town Council say who receives incentives is just as important as how much they receive.

ISU President Focuses On Election Process

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · MAR 6, 2019

ISU President Larry Dietz said campus leaders will meet soon with McLean County Clerk Kathy Michael about improving election service for the April municipal contests.

Candidate Questionnaire: Stan Nord

By STAFF · MAR 5, 2019

These responses were submitted by Stan Nord, a candidate for Normal Town Council. The questionnaire was prepared by GLT in partnership with the League of Women Voters of McLean County. [See more candidate responses.](#)

Bloomington Video Gambling Moratorium Extended To Sept. 1

By BREANNA GROW · FEB 26, 2019

Bloomington will keep its moratorium on video gambling until after state legislators have made key decisions about sports betting and marijuana.

Candidate Questionnaire: Georgene Chissell

By STAFF · FEB 25, 2019

These responses were submitted by Georgene Chissell, a candidate for Bloomington City Council in Ward 2. The questionnaire was prepared by GLT in partnership with the League of Women Voters of McLean County. [See more candidate responses.](#)

Candidate Questionnaire: Don 'Chip' Frank

By STAFF · FEB 25, 2019

These responses were submitted by Don "Chip" Frank, a candidate for Bloomington City Council in Ward 4. The questionnaire was prepared by GLT in partnership with the League of Women Voters of McLean County. [See more candidate responses.](#)

Candidate Questionnaire: Jeff Crabill

By STAFF · FEB 25, 2019

These responses were submitted by Jeff Crabill, a candidate for Bloomington City Council in Ward 8. The questionnaire was prepared by GLT in partnership with the League of Women Voters of McLean County. [See more candidate responses.](#)

Candidate Questionnaire: Jenn Carrillo

By STAFF · FEB 25, 2019

These responses were submitted by Jenn Carrillo, a candidate for Bloomington City Council in Ward 6. The questionnaire was prepared by GLT in partnership with the League of Women Voters of McLean County. [See more candidate responses.](#)

Candidate Questionnaire: Julie Emig

By STAFF · FEB 25, 2019

These responses were submitted by Julie Emig, a candidate for Bloomington City Council in Ward 4. The questionnaire was prepared by GLT in partnership with the League of Women Voters of McLean County. [See more candidate responses.](#)

Candidate Questionnaire: R.C. McBride

By STAFF · FEB 25, 2019

These responses were submitted by R.C. McBride, an incumbent candidate for Normal Town Council. McBride is also GLT's general manager.

Candidate Questionnaire: Dave Shields

By STAFF · FEB 25, 2019

These responses were submitted by Dave Shields, a candidate for Normal Town Council. The questionnaire was prepared by GLT in partnership with the League of Women Voters of McLean County. [See more candidate responses.](#)

Candidate Questionnaire: Pat Turner

By STAFF · FEB 25, 2019

These responses were submitted by Pat Turner, a candidate for Normal Town Council. The questionnaire was prepared by GLT in partnership with the League of Women Voters of McLean County. [See more candidate responses.](#)

Candidate Questionnaire: Karyn Smith

By STAFF · FEB 25, 2019

These responses were submitted by Karyn Smith, a candidate for Normal Town Council. The questionnaire was prepared by GLT in partnership with the League of Women Voters of McLean County. [See more candidate responses.](#)

Candidate Questionnaire: Kathleen Lorenz

By STAFF · FEB 25, 2019

These responses were submitted by Kathleen Lorenz, an incumbent candidate for Normal Town Council. The questionnaire was prepared by GLT in partnership with the League of Women Voters of McLean County. [See more candidate responses.](#)

Candidate Questionnaire: Alex Campbell

By STAFF · FEB 25, 2019

These responses were submitted by Alex Campbell, a candidate for Normal Town Council. The questionnaire was prepared by GLT in partnership with the League of Women Voters of McLean County. [See more candidate responses.](#)

Candidate Questionnaire: Karen Schmidt

By STAFF · FEB 25, 2019

These responses were submitted by Karen Schmidt, a candidate for Bloomington City Council in Ward 6. The questionnaire was prepared by GLT in partnership with the League of Women Voters of McLean County. [See more candidate responses.](#)

Candidate Questionnaire: Donna Boelen

By STAFF · FEB 25, 2019

These responses were submitted by Donna Boelen, a candidate for Bloomington City Council in Ward 2. The questionnaire was prepared by GLT in partnership with the League of Women Voters of McLean County. [See more candidate responses.](#)

Alderman Candidate Frank Wants More Proactive Approach To Infrastructure

By RYAN DENHAM · JAN 18, 2019

Bloomington City Council candidate Chip Frank said he wants the city to be more proactive about rebuilding its aging sewers, water mains, and streets.

Emig Touts Bridge-Building Skills In Run For Bloomington Council

By RYAN DENHAM · JAN 7, 2019

The Ward 4 resident looking to succeed Amelia Buragas on the Bloomington City Council said she would draw on her experience in education to build bridges between aldermen—and between the public and private sectors.

Health And Medicine

Illinois Nurses, Hospital CEOs At Odds Over Patient Limits

By EDITOR · MAR 29, 2019

Illinois lawmakers are being asked to decide whether nurses are dangerously overworked — and what to do about it.

Nurses want limits on how many patients they're assigned. They argue it would improve patient outcomes and workplace safety. But opponents counter a “one size fits all” approach will not work.

Illinois Bill Aims To Help Children Get Mental Health Services

By CHRISTINE HERMAN · MAR 8, 2019

An [Illinois Senate bill](#) aims to help children who are at risk of entering state custody because of issues caused by untreated mental illness. The measure comes as states grapple with ways to help parents who face a [heartbreaking choice](#): giving up custody to obtain expensive treatment for a child.

How Racism, Trauma And Mental Health Are Linked

By CHRISTINE HERMAN · MAR 1, 2019

Research shows African-Americans are [less likely](#) to access treatment for mental illness.

Cultural norms and the stigma associated with having a mental illness are partly to blame, according to [Shardé Smith](#), assistant professor of human development and family studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Can Telepsychiatry Fill The Gap In Mental Health Care?

By MARY CULLEN · FEB 12, 2019

Fifty percent of counties in the U.S. have no mental health physician. That's according to Mennonite College of Nursing professor Cindy Kerber.

University Of Illinois At Chicago Gets \$12M For Hispanic Health Study

By AP · JAN 29, 2019

The University of Illinois at Chicago is getting \$12 million from the National Institute of Health to continue taking part in a national study of health issues facing Hispanics.

OSF HealthCare Hopeful For Action On Drug Prices Despite Divided Congress

By RYAN DENHAM · JAN 7, 2019

The chief lobbyist for OSF HealthCare says he's optimistic that a divided Washington might come together to lower prescription drug prices.

Higher Education

Heartland Community College Board Members Address Business Needs, Property Tax Concerns

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · MAR 28, 2019

Two candidates for a seat on the Heartland Community College Board both said they want to be careful to keep property taxes as low as possible, as did a third who is running uncontested.

Heartland Community College Seeks To Add Cross Country, Golf, Volleyball

By ERIC STOCK · MAR 18, 2019

Heartland Community College is looking to double the number of athletic programs it offers in hopes of attracting more students.

Unit 5's New Career Counselors Help Students Think Beyond College

By RYAN DENHAM · MAR 18, 2019

Corey Ostling and Karrin Hawkins are Unit 5's first-ever high school college and career counselors.

And after almost one full school year in their new roles, even their job titles are a work in progress.

WIU Rally: "Stand Up, Fight Back"

By EMILY BOYER · MAR 7, 2019

A large crowd gathered late Wednesday afternoon in front of Western Illinois University's main administrative building on the Macomb campus.

Faculty, students, staff, and community members huddled on the steps of Sherman Hall in the cold, chanting, and waving signs with messages such as "Faculty is committed to WIU," "Teaching makes admin jobs possible," and "Fight for our families." The group was there for a rally in support of the 132 employees who received layoff notices on March 1.

Capital Idea: Colleges Hope For Cash

By DUSTY RHODES · MAR 4, 2019

Officials from each of Illinois' public universities traveled to the statehouse this week to tell lawmakers about their leaky roofs, outdated science labs and broken air conditioners, in hopes of getting funding to fix them. It's part of a push toward a public works program, known in the

legislature as a capital bill. Gov. J.B. Pritzker has promised the state will spend billions of dollars in infrastructure improvements, and public agencies are lining up to ask for a piece of that pie.

ISU President To Talk Over Housing Plans With Landlords

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · FEB 22, 2019

Illinois State University President Larry Dietz said he's in favor of better communication with student landlords.

Dietz said he will meet next month with [apartment owners concerned](#) the university is building up to 1,200 new student beds in a pod format.

Pell Grants For Prisoners Could Save Illinois Millions

By LEE V. GAINES · FEB 5, 2019

Illinois could save millions of dollars on incarceration costs if the federal ban on Pell Grants for inmates was lifted, according to a new report from the [Vera Institute of Justice](#). Pell Grants are awarded to low-income undergraduate students to help them pay for college.

Manar Files \$50 Million Plan For SIU Building In Downtown Springfield

By SAM DUNKLAU · JAN 30, 2019

A state lawmaker has proposed a plan to use state funds to build a new higher education center in downtown Springfield.

State Senator Andy Manar (D, Bunker Hill) introduced [legislation](#) on Wednesday that calls for \$50 million to build a campus and public affairs center. The proposed building would sit within a mile of Southern Illinois University's existing medical school.

NIU Looks To Reverse Enrollment Declines With 2023 Plan

By AP · JAN 28, 2019

Northern Illinois University has a new enrollment plan that aims to have 18,000 students by fall 2023.

From Prison To College: How A Formerly Incarcerated Student Overcame The Odds To Graduate

By LEE V. GAINES · JAN 18, 2019

Like many people coming out of prison, Perry Cline never thought he'd get a college degree.

"I thought I was just going to be another bum in the streets," he said. "So I thank God that he got something else for me. And this is just the beginning."

University Officials Not High On Legalization Of Weed

By MARY CULLEN · JAN 16, 2019

Illinois' new governor JB Pritzker has said he wants to legalize, tax, and regulate the sale of recreational marijuana. That move would complicate life for University leaders around Illinois and in Bloomington-Normal.

Redbird Rising Reaches \$135M; Goal 'In Sight'

By ERIC STOCK · JAN 11, 2019

Illinois State University is 90 percent of the way toward its \$150 million fundraising goal.

Police and Courts

State Police To Launch Online Rape Evidence Tracking Tool

By AP · MAR 25, 2019

Survivors of sexual assault in Illinois will soon be able to monitor online the progress of DNA evidence related to their case.

Central Illinois Gets First Woman As Chief Federal Judge

By RYAN DENHAM · MAR 12, 2019

A former county and federal prosecutor from the Quad Cities is now the first woman to become the chief federal judge for central Illinois.

Federal Murder Charges Filed In Death Of Illinois Deputy

By RYAN DENHAM · MAR 8, 2019

An Illinois man faces federal murder charges in the [shooting death of a sheriff's deputy](#) that led to an hourslong standoff with police along Interstate 55 near Lincoln.

Suspect In Custody After Multicounty Chase, I-55 Standoff

By RYAN DENHAM & AP · MAR 7, 2019

The suspect in a string of central Illinois burglaries was arrested Thursday after allegedly killing a sheriff's deputy in Rockford and leading police on a multicounty chase that ended with a six-hour standoff near Lincoln.

Should Illinois Continue Tracking Racial Bias In Police Stops?

By DANA VOLLMER · MAR 4, 2019

An Illinois study of racial profiling in police stops is set to expire in July. State lawmakers are considering whether to keep collecting data.

McLean County Public Defender: Tough Job, But Caseloads Within Range

By RYAN DENHAM & ERIC STOCK · MAR 4, 2019

A New York Times report shed new light on [overworked and underfunded public defenders](#). It found public defenders in Louisiana assigned 200, 300, or even 400 felony cases—far more than the recommended workload for someone to mount an effective defense.

Ellsworth Man Killed In Crash Near State Park

By RYAN DENHAM · MAR 3, 2019

UPDATED 3:30 p.m. | A 65-year-old Ellsworth man was identified Monday as the driver killed in a single-vehicle crash near Moraine View State Park.

ISP Makes Second Cocaine Bust In McLean County This Week

By MARY CULLEN · MAR 1, 2019

Illinois State Police made its second substantial cocaine seizure in McLean County in one week.

Pontiac Prison Guards Charged With Injuring Inmate

By RYAN DENHAM · FEB 27, 2019

Three correctional officers at Pontiac prison face criminal charges after allegedly injuring an inmate earlier this month, authorities said Wednesday.

Man Faces Drug-Induced Homicide Charge After Bloomington Overdose

By RYAN DENHAM · FEB 27, 2019

A 35-year-old Bloomington man faces drug-induced homicide charges for his role in an overdose death last year.

Minor Injuries After Vehicle Crashes Through Moe's Restaurant

By RYAN DENHAM · FEB 26, 2019

UPDATED 4:45 p.m. | Three people suffered minor injuries Tuesday after a vehicle plowed through the front of the Moe's restaurant in north Normal.

Opioid Crisis Sparked Big Response In B-N. Why Hasn't Gun Violence?

By RYAN DENHAM & EDITH BRADY-LUNNY · FEB 24, 2019

Before Oct. 30, 2018, Dameca Kirkwood was a mother, proud of her one and only son, a young man she considered awesome, who did not live to see his 28th birthday.

Fresh Start Works To Stem Gun Violence In Champaign

By EDITH BRADY-LUNNY · FEB 24, 2019

As a funeral home owner, Seon Williams has firsthand experience of the carnage gun violence leaves in its wake. As an activist, he knows the roots of the violence run deep.

\$5 Million In Cocaine Seized In McLean County

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · FEB 22, 2019

State Police have made what is considered the third largest cocaine bust in McLean County history. Assistant State's Attorney Jeff Horve said troopers pulled over a semi on I-55 Thursday north of Bloomington Normal for inspection.

For Low-Income Defendants, Supreme Court Gives Break On Court Fees

By EDITOR · FEB 14, 2019

Low-income earners can soon apply to waive their court costs in Illinois.

Armed Robber Hits Family Dollar In West Bloomington

By RYAN DENHAM · FEB 13, 2019

Police are investigating an armed robbery Tuesday night at a Family Dollar store on Bloomington's west side. No one was injured.

DCFS Clears Normal Woman In Child Abuse Case

By RYAN DENHAM · FEB 7, 2019

The state has cleared a 33-year-old Normal woman of child abuse allegations connected to her dispute with a child care center that [spilled into public view on social media](#).

Man Injured In Shooting In Bloomington

By RYAN DENHAM · FEB 3, 2019

One man was shot early Sunday in the 800 block of North Roosevelt Street, Bloomington Police said.

Central Illinois Prosecutors Adjust To Federal Sentencing Reforms

By RYAN DENHAM · JAN 30, 2019

The new top federal prosecutor for Central Illinois says the sweeping criminal justice reforms passed by Congress are already having an impact on his office.

Peoria-Area Man Dies from Cold Exposure

By TANYA KOONCE & KRISTIN MCHUGH · JAN 30, 2019

An 82-year-old Marquette Heights man died Tuesday due to cold exposure.

Armed Robber Hits Store On Bloomington's East Side

By RYAN DENHAM · JAN 28, 2019

Police are investigating whether an armed robbery Monday morning on Bloomington's east side was the work of the [Business Bandit](#).

Ford County Men Plead Guilty To Mosque Bombing

By ERIC STOCK · JAN 24, 2019

Two Ford County men have pleaded guilty to their roles in bombing an Islamic mosque in Minnesota and trying to bomb an abortion clinic in Champaign.

Coroner: Truck Driver Not Drunk Before I-74 Bus Crash

By RYAN DENHAM · JAN 23, 2019

The driver whose truck collided head-on with a Normal West school bus last month was not drunk or on drugs at the time of the crash, the Peoria County coroner said Wednesday.

Police Link 'Business Bandit' To 7 Armed Robberies

By RYAN DENHAM · JAN 16, 2019

Bloomington Police on Wednesday reminded businesses to make sure their video surveillance systems are working properly, as investigators look for the "Business Bandit" suspected in at least seven armed robberies.

Woman Sues LaSalle County For Being Forcibly Stripped

By AP • JAN 16, 2019

A federal lawsuit has been filed by a woman who claims LaSalle County sheriff's deputies violated her civil rights when they forcibly stripped her following a 2017 arrest.

The attorney for Zandrea Askew says three female deputies stripped the ex-U.S. Marine sergeant on Jan. 20, 2017.

Texas Man Gets 35 Years In 8-State Child Pornography Scheme

By AP • JAN 16, 2019

Federal prosecutors in Illinois say a Texas man has been sentenced to 35 years in prison on child pornography charges involving more than 40 girls in eight states, including 28 in central Illinois.

Prosecutors said Tuesday 36-year-old Mark P. Barnwell of Whitehouse, Texas, was sentenced on Jan. 9.

Authorities say he used false Facebook profiles to contact girls and advertise modeling opportunities. Prosecutors say Barnwell directed the girls to send him sexually explicit photos and threatened to post the nude photos online if they failed to send more.

Rauner Reduces Prison Term For Man Who Killed Grandparents In Lincoln

By AP • JAN 15, 2019

Former Gov. Bruce Rauner has reduced the 75-year prison sentence for a 38-year-old man convicted in 1996 of fatally shooting his grandparents in Lincoln.

Decatur Men Face Murder, Robbery Charges

By RYAN DENHAM • JAN 9, 2019

Two Decatur men are being held on \$5 million bond in connection with last month's fatal shooting of a 20-year-old from Bloomington.

Normal PD: TV Dramatization Leads To Sexual Assault Victimization

By MARY CULLEN · JAN 9, 2019

Too many people are learning misconceptions about sexual assault through TV shows. That's according to members of [Normal Police](#)'s Investigative Unit.

Decatur Men Arrested In West Bloomington Fatal Shooting

By RYAN DENHAM · JAN 7, 2019

Two Decatur men were arrested Monday in connection with the fatal shooting of a 20-year-old from Bloomington over a month ago.

Senate Confirms U.S. Attorney For Central Illinois

By RYAN DENHAM · JAN 3, 2019

John Milhiser was confirmed Wednesday as U.S. attorney for central Illinois, becoming the first permanent appointee to the job since President Donald Trump took office.

Politics and Government

Durbin, Democrats Push For Complete Mueller Report

By ERIC STOCK · MAR 25, 2019

UPDATE: U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., said the summary judgment Attorney General William Barr released into the Mueller report findings in the Russia investigation creates more questions than it answers.

Gleason: Bloomington Has The Votes To Pass Gas Tax Hike

By ERIC STOCK · MAR 22, 2019

After meeting with aldermen over the last two days, Bloomington City Manager Tim Gleason said he believes there's enough city council support for a 4-cent increase in the gas tax.

Democrats Push Ban On For-Profit Detention Center in Dwight, Across Illinois

By RYAN DENHAM · MAR 22, 2019

Illinois House Democrats are pushing for a ban on for-profit immigrant detention centers [like the one that's been proposed in Dwight](#), calling them “financially and morally irresponsible.”

McLean County Set To Interview County Administrator Candidates

By ERIC STOCK · MAR 19, 2019

McLean County Board Chairman John McIntrye said a blue ribbon panel has recommended six candidates for the county to consider for its county administrator post.

Barickman Wants To Ease Ballot Access Law

By RYAN DENHAM · MAR 8, 2019

State Sen. Jason Barickman said Friday that Illinois' ballot access laws are unfair to new political parties and independent candidates and should be changed.

Q&A: Davis Defends Votes Against Gun Background Check Bills

By RYAN DENHAM · MAR 5, 2019

U.S. Rep. Rodney Davis says [two background check bills](#) that passed the House are “window dressing” and “distractions” that will burden law-abiding gun owners but won't really stop gun violence.

Davis, LaHood Vote Against Gun Background Checks Bill

By RYAN DENHAM & BRAKKTON BOOKER · FEB 27, 2019

The two Republican congressmen who represent Bloomington-Normal voted Wednesday against a bill that advocates call the [most significant gun control measure](#) in more than two decades.

Brady, House GOP Oppose Graduated Income Tax

By RYAN DENHAM & DANA VOLLMER · FEB 27, 2019

Illinois House Republicans are speaking out against Gov. JB Pritzker's proposed graduated income tax.

Pritzker Outlines First Budget; GOP Questions Revenue

By ERIC STOCK, CHARLIE SCHLENKER & MARY CULLEN & ASSOCIATED PRESS · FEB 20, 2019

Gov. J.B. Pritzker is proposing raising more than \$1 billion in state revenue by legalizing recreational marijuana and sports betting.

ISU Speaker: Bernie Sanders Still Sets Progressive Bar In 2020 Field

By RYAN DENHAM & SEAN NEWGENT · FEB 19, 2019

A journalist with expertise in progressive politics says Bernie Sanders is a welcome addition to a crowded, predominantly centrist group of candidates seeking the 2020 Democratic nomination.

Pritzker Signs \$15 Minimum Wage Into Law

By RYAN DENHAM & AP · FEB 19, 2019

Gov. J.B. Pritzker has signed a measure gradually hiking the state's minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2025, the highest in the Midwest.

One Voice Seeks Funds For 4 McLean County Projects

By ERIC STOCK · FEB 18, 2019

Economic developers in McLean County have created a wish list of four projects to seek federal funding.

Young Republican Hopes More Women Follow Her Into The GOP

By RYAN DENHAM · FEB 15, 2019

Women are underrepresented at almost all levels of elected office.

Minimum Wage Increase Headed to Pritzker; Brady, Sommer Vote No

By RYAN DENHAM & AP · FEB 14, 2019

A \$15-an-hour minimum wage is headed to Gov. J.B. Pritzker after the House approved the six-year plan Thursday.

Tyus Sees 'Perfect Fit' In Bloomington Deputy Post

By ERIC STOCK · FEB 11, 2019

Bloomington's new deputy city manager said he started looking to leave his hometown of Decatur once Tim Gleason left as city manager [to take the same job in Bloomington last July](#).

Barickman: Minimum Wage Bill First Sign Of Partisan Pritzker Administration

By MARY CULLEN · FEB 8, 2019

Despite business owner concerns, a minimum wage increase bill [passed](#) the Illinois Senate this week. If it passes the House and is signed into law, Illinois' \$8.25 minimum wage would rise to \$15 by 2025.

Illinois Senate Approves \$15 Minimum Wage; Brady and Barickman Vote No

By RYAN DENHAM & AP · FEB 7, 2019

Gov. J.B. Pritzker on Thursday hailed the state Senate's approval of an increase in the minimum wage to \$15.

Fact Check: Trump's State Of The Union Address

By NPR · FEB 5, 2019

President Trump is delivering his State of the Union address, which the White House says will outline a "policy agenda both parties can rally behind."

Durbin: Better Ways To Enhance Border Security Than Walls

By MARY CULLEN · FEB 4, 2019

The congressional committee tasked with reaching a deal on border security met for the first time last week. They have 11 days before President Trump's threat to shutdown the government is realized yet again.

Rep. Davis Talks With TSA Staff As Second Shutdown Looms

By ERIC STOCK · FEB 4, 2019

U.S. Rep. Rodney Davis talked with Transportation Security Administration officers in a visit to Central Illinois Regional Airport on Monday to assess the impact of the recent partial federal government shutdown.

McIntyre: Advisory Search Panel Modeled After Nursing Home

By ERIC STOCK · JAN 15, 2019

McLean County Board chairman John McIntyre said Tuesday his idea for [creating a blue ribbon advisory panel](#) to assist in its search for a new county administrator is modeled after a similar volunteer board [he created last year to help the county save](#) its nursing home from financial ruin.

Pritzker Orders Pay Hikes For Some State Workers

By BRIAN MACKEY · JAN 15, 2019

Gov. J.B. Pritzker spent his first full day in office taking steps aimed at setting himself apart from his predecessor.

Federal Shutdown Puts Stress On Rural Development Home Loans

By MARY CULLEN · JAN 15, 2019

The leader of the [Bloomington-Normal Association of Realtors](#) says the government shutdown has little impact on local home loan programs.

Pritzker, Democrats Celebrate 'Bright Tomorrow' For Illinois

By DAISY CONTRERAS & JACLYN DRISCOLL · JAN 14, 2019

It was a good day to be a Democrat in Illinois as Gov. J.B. Pritzker was sworn in on Monday along with a diverse group of statewide office holders.

IWU Professor: Government Shutdown Impact Depends On Workers Not Getting Paid

By ERIC STOCK · JAN 14, 2019

An Illinois Wesleyan University economics professor wonders how long federal employees will continue to work without paychecks as [the longest government shutdown in history](#) has surpassed three weeks.

McLean County Democrat: Pritzker Inauguration Set Nonpartisan Tone

By MARY CULLEN · JAN 14, 2019

Despite having a Democratic majority in state politics, recently sworn in Gov. JB Pritzker used words of inclusion and bipartisanship in his first public address.

Bloomington To Consider \$580K For Downtown Signs, Branding

By ERIC STOCK · JAN 14, 2019

Bloomington aldermen will vote Monday on a proposal to install close to three dozen wayfinding signs downtown.

County Names Advisory Panel To Assist Administrator Search

By ERIC STOCK · JAN 11, 2019

McLean County Board Chairman John McIntyre said Friday he has formed what he's calling a blue ribbon stakeholder advisory panel to assist the County Board in its search for a new administrator.

The Pritzker Agenda

By BRIAN MACKEY · JAN 11, 2019

Gov.-elect J.B. Pritzker takes office next week on the heels of the most decisive election victory in a generation. And he'll be working to pass his agenda through the biggest Democratic majorities in the General Assembly since the 1960s.

That raises a question: What precisely does that agenda consist of?

Bloomington Projects \$500,000 Surplus; Setting Capital Priorities

By ERIC STOCK · JAN 8, 2019

Bloomington City Manager Tim Gleason said he's projecting a \$500,000 budget surplus for the coming fiscal year which starts in May.

Pritzker Seeks Pay Hike To Lure Cabinet Talent

By AP · JAN 7, 2019

The House Executive Committee has approved a plan pushed by the incoming governor to increase salaries he can offer his cabinet.

Emig Touts Bridge-Building Skills In Run For Bloomington Council

By RYAN DENHAM · JAN 7, 2019

The Ward 4 resident looking to succeed Amelia Buragas on the Bloomington City Council said she would draw on her experience in education to build bridges between aldermen—and between the public and private sectors.

Davis, LaHood Vote Against Democrat Plan To Re-Open Government

By RYAN DENHAM & AP · JAN 4, 2019

House Democrats on Thursday approved a plan to re-open the government without funding President Donald Trump's promised border wall.

Town Of Normal Hires Assistant City Manager

By MARY CULLEN · JAN 3, 2019

The [Town of Normal](#) has selected a new assistant city manager.

Eric Hanson was appointed to fill the role [previously held](#) by now City Manager Pam Reece.

In a statement from the town, Reece said Normal is “extremely fortunate” to have Hanson. She said his past local government work will assist the town in achieving its goals.

McLean County Board Member Wants Consultant to Guide Administrator Search

By ERIC STOCK · JAN 2, 2019

McLean County should hire a consultant to lead its search for a new county administrator, according to a County Board member who has worked in human resources for more than 25 years.

Science And Technology

Rethinking Cybersecurity Education To Meet Growing Demand

By MARY HANSEN · JAN 25, 2019

Weasle Forsythe is an information assurance apprentice with SuprTEK - a government contracting firm in O'Fallon, Illinois, outside of St. Louis. In the quiet office of cubicles with two screens and near-silent coders, her cubicle is decked out.

"I have all my toys here and my huge fidget cube, and my Spider Gwen and my X-Force Deadpool," she said.

Amid the color and chaos of superhero posters and figurines - Forsythe pulled out a big black binder. "I mean, this isn't really sexy, but I think it's awesome. It's the NIST compliance," she said.

IWU Convocation Speaker: Why You Should Trust Science

By ERIC STOCK · JAN 11, 2019

A science historian says climate change deniers are trying to sow confusion and mistrust about science in much the same way the tobacco industry did for decades.

State Farm Earns FAA's First National Drone Waiver

By RYAN DENHAM · JAN 10, 2019

State Farm has become the first company granted a national waiver by the Federal Aviation Administration to fly drones over people and beyond the pilot's line of sight.

Civil Rights

Poet and Activist: LGBTQI+ People Should Talk About Responsibilities Instead of Rights

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · MAR 22, 2019

An LGBTQI+ poet and scholar looks to indigenous people in North America for broader gender definitions that can help modern society as the current culture struggles over accepting multiple identities

Technology

ISU Plans To Bring New Business Incubator To Bloomington-Normal

By DARNYSHA MITCHELL & RYAN DENHAM · MAR 27, 2019

ISU plans to bring a new technology-focused incubator to Bloomington-Normal.

Bloomington OKs Extension For Kroger Site Improvements, New Technology Commission

By BREANNA GROW · FEB 11, 2019

Grocery chain Kroger has another year to complete infrastructure improvements at the Bloomington site where it had previously planned to build a \$25.4 million store.

E-Scooter Pilot Project Under Review In Normal

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · JAN 31, 2019

The Town of Normal is considering an electric scooter program.

Transportation

Real ID Finally Comes To Illinois

By BRIAN MACKEY · MAR 28, 2019

Illinoisans can now get driver's licenses and state ID cards that comply with Real ID, the strict federal security requirements that will soon be needed for air travel.

E-Scooter Pilot Project Under Review In Normal

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · JAN 31, 2019

The Town of Normal is considering an electric scooter program. Listen to this interview with town Planner Mercy Davison.

CIRA, Community Help Federal Employees: Back To Work But Not Out Of Woods

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · JAN 31, 2019

With paychecks for federal workers in Bloomington-Normal still lagging, the Central Illinois Regional Airport has opened a food pantry and support center.

Connect Transit Capital Plan Includes Downtown Transfer Center

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · OCT 23, 2018

Bloomington Normal's bus system could have a downtown Bloomington transfer center in about five years.

State Gives Planning Money To Connect Transit Downtown Transfer Center

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · FEB 23, 2018

The Illinois Department of Transportation is giving Bloomington-Normal's bus system \$250,000.