

QUARTERLY ISSUES/PROGRAMS LIST

Station WJBC-AM

Location: Studio: 236 Greenwood Avenue, Bloomington, Il. 61704

 Office: 236 Greenwood Avenue, Bloomington, Il. 61704

For quarter beginning:

_____ January 1, 2020

_____ April 1, 2020

_____ July 1, 2020

 X _____ October 1, 2020

Attached hereto are descriptions of local issues addressed by the station and descriptions of how each issue was treated through the stations most significant issues-responsive programming or announcements during the report period.

Quarterly Issues/Programs List

Issue: Festival Of Trees

How Issue Was Treated: WJBC-AM ran Recorded PSA's with Live Mentions on air to promote this yearly event

Title: The Baby Fold Festival of Trees

Date: November 17, 2020 – November 21, 2020

Time: Midnight to Midnight

Description:

The Baby Fold is a nonprofit organization that has been dedicated to the well-being of children and families since 1902. They've successfully impacted over 1,200 people a year with a wide array of programs all designed to wrap services around children and strengthen families.

The Festival of Trees is a yearly event to raise funds for The Baby Fold and WJBC-AM ran 25-recorded PSA's from November 17th – November 21st and Live Mentions on the Air from November 17th – November 21st.

WideOrbit Traffic Order Number 622213 "Festival of Trees 2020"

Quarterly Issues/Programs List

Issue: Food Drive

How Issue Was Treated: WJBC-AM Scheduled Recorded PSA's and Live Liners for this event

Title: State Farm Holiday Classic Can Food Drive

Date: December 19, 2020 – December 29, 2020

Time: Midnight - Midnight

Description:

Due to COVID-19 and no High School Basketball in the state of Illinois. The 42nd Annual State Farm Holiday Classic was cancelled. The committee created the Classic Can Food Drive to replace this event to help benefit Midwest Food Bank.

WJBC-AM scheduled 55-Recorded PSA's and had live mentions to help promote this first time event.

*WideOrbit Traffic Order: 639674 - State Farm Classic Can Drive

Quarterly Issues/Programs List

Issue: Local Community Events

How Issue Was Treated: WJBC-AM Scheduled a total of 403 Recorded PSA's to promote local events for nonprofits

Title: WJBC-AM Public Service Announcements

Date: October 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020

Time: Midnight - Midnight

Description:

WJBC-AM scheduled a total of 403 Recorded Public Service Announcements to help promote our local nonprofit events. These also had live mentions on the air to help promote their events.

Local Charity events promoted in these promos include:

- Shriners Hospital for Children - Snyder/Shriner 5k
- Normal Parks & Recreation - Candy Corn Lane
- Normal Rotary - Oktoberfest 5k
- Carle BroMenn Behavioral Health Unit - Chase for Champions
- Operation Santa
- McLean County Museum of History - Evergreen Cemetery Walk
- St Jude Childrens Research Hospital - generic PSA
- Homes of Hope - Drawdown
- Toys for Tots - Toy collection
- Child Protection Network - Day of Giving
- Miller Park Zoo - Wild Lights
- American Red Cross - Give the Gift of Life Blood Drive
- Special Olympics of Illinois - Polar Plunge
- Midwest Food Bank - State Farm Holiday Classic Can Drive
- American Cancer Society - generic PSA

*WideOrbit Traffic Order: 335492 WJBC-AM PSA Rotator

Quarterly Issues/Programs List

Issue: Breast Cancer Awareness

How Issue Was Treated: WJBC-AM Scheduled Recorded PSA's

Title: Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Date: 10/01/ 2020 – 10/31/ 2020

Time: Midnight - Midnight

Description:

WJBC-AM scheduled 83-Recorded PSA's and had live mentions to help promote this first time event.

*WideOrbit Traffic Order: 587784 - State Farm Classic Car Drive

QUARTERLY REPORT October 2020- December 2020

ISSUE: Crime

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Gambling Machines Vandalized

DATE: 10/01/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Bloomington Police are asking for the public's help to identify a person who allegedly damaged a gambling machine.

The incident happened Sunday at a business in the 500 block of Truckers Lane, which is on the city's west side. Authorities say a large white man in his 50's damaged a gambling machine and left in a white Ford SUV.

A video of the incident is on our website WJBC.com. Anyone who can identify this person is asked to contact Bloomington Police or McLean County Crime Stoppers.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Community,, Business

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Housing Boom During Pandemic

DATE: 10/03/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Amid the coronavirus pandemic, the housing market has been red hot, according to a local financial advisor.

Sean Craig, with Investment Planners in Bloomington, says more people are moving to the suburbs, with the anticipation of working from home longer because of COVID. He told WJBC's Marc Strauss the housing market is maintaining some jobs.

Craig says pending home sales were up 8.8% in August, now four straight months with increases.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Education

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Pandemic Break

DATE: 10/03/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

Illinois State University administrators are considering canceling spring break next semester to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

COVID-19 cases in McLean County soared when ISU students came back to campus this fall, but only 11 new cases were reported at the school the past seven days. There have been a total of 1,355 positive cases among the estimated 10,000 tests. All but 21 people have recovered, according to latest data.

Spring break is currently scheduled for March 6-16, which campus leaders acknowledge is a mid-semester stress reducer. However, they said the break also enables students, faculty, and staff to travel and interact with large numbers of people, which heightens the risk of contracting the virus and spreading the infections to others when they return to campus.

If spring break is canceled, the university might end the semester a week early. News partner Heart of Illinois ABC adds there might also be "micro-breaks" scheduled on days that would have the least impact on classes and labs.

The university is seeking input from students and others about the possible changes prior to next Wednesday's Academic Senate meeting.

ISSUE: Business, COVID-19, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Bloomington Farmers Market Flourishes

DATE: 10/05/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Local farmers and vendors have tried their best to keep the fall tradition at the Downtown Bloomington Farmers' Market.

The ongoing pandemic has made it a lot different with social distancing, mask requirements, and limited interaction between customers and vendors.

Larry Fink, from Destiny Meats told our news partner Heart of Illinois ABC it has also impacted some of the atmosphere.

The market will be open Saturday mornings through October before going indoors once a month during winter time.

ISSUE: Crime

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Downtown Stabbing

DATE: 10/05/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

A Bloomington man was arrested over the weekend for allegedly stabbing another man outside a tavern.

Bloomington Police were called early Saturday to the 400 block of North Main Street. Police found a 29-year-old man who was struck with a hatchet outside the tavern. It was reported a confrontation started inside the establishment and continued outside. BPD says the victim was transported to a local hospital with serious, but non-life-threatening injuries.

Authorities say the suspect fled the scene, and shortly after the stabbing, they arrested 48-year-old Kwame Weathers at his residence in the 500 block of East Douglas Street.

Weathers was transported to the McLean County jail and faces several charges including aggravated battery, use of a deadly weapon, and criminal damage to government property.

Anyone with further information about this incident is asked to contact Bloomington Police.

ISSUE: Business, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Stimulus Second Round Possible

DATE: 10/07/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Wall Street stocks are on the rise after President Trump announced he would like to provide aid to airlines along with individual stimulus checks to Americans in the hope that lawmakers could pass a smaller aid stimulus package.

With just 26 days left until the election, Kevin Kingston, a wealth advisor with Savant Wealth Management, said President Trump wants a focused stimulus plan.

On Tuesday, the president announced that he was instructing his negotiation representatives to stop negotiating until after the election, which forced a sell-off on Wall Street.

As of Wednesday afternoon, The Dow Jones Industrial Average was trading 456 points higher.

ISSUE: Gouvernement

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Graduated Tax Discussion

DATE: 10/13/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

Many are weighing in on the constitutional amendment to change Illinois' income tax from flat to graduated, including the McLean County Chamber of Commerce.

According to CEO Charlie Moore, the chamber's board opposes a change to a progressive income tax. Moore spoke with WJBC's Marc Strauss.

The constitutional amendment needs sixty percent of the vote to pass.

ISSUE: Government, COVID-19, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Library will Open Doors

DATE: 10/14/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

The Normal Public Library is officially reopening Wednesday, with some changes to what visitors can expect.

The doors will open at noon for a "Grab and Go" setup, to allow for the completion of a few final construction tasks.

Visitors are allowed to stay for an hour maximum, with each visit made by one member of a household at a time. Patrons will be able to walk around and browse as they please.

Desktop and laptop computers will be available by appointment, to make sure there's time for proper cleaning and disinfecting between users.

News partner Heart of Illinois ABC reports other spaces, like meeting rooms and most seating areas, are off-limits for the time being.

Going forward, the library will require all visitors to wear a face covering when in the building, plus keep a six-foot distance from others while using hand sanitizers placed throughout the building.

ISSUE: Health, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Chestnut Vaccine Offering

DATE: 10/15/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Across the globe there are currently hundreds of COVID-19 vaccination studies underway.

Some of them, most recently the Johnson and Johnson study, have been put on pause, making a set timeline uncertain.

Lori Laughlin with Chestnut Health Systems told our news partner, Heart of Illinois ABC they want to be ready

Chestnut Health Systems is designated by the McLean County Health Department as a "closed point of dispensing."

This is in an effort to alleviate the strain on the healthcare system.

While Chestnut Health Systems said they would not require employees to get a vaccine when one becomes available, it is about providing the best level of health for them and the community.

ISSUE: Crime

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Meth Bust

DATE: 10/16/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

A McLean County meth bust resulted in two men arrested, and thousands of dollars in suspected drug money located.

Authorities executed the search warrant of two homes on Wednesday on West South Street in Bellflower, said McLean County State's Attorney Jeff Horve.

News partner Heart of Illinois ABC reports during the search, police located meth, a handgun and \$12,477 in suspected drug money.

55 year old Paul Gilligan, of Mahomet, was charged with possession of meth with intent to deliver, a Class X felony and punishable by up to 40 years in prison. Police located 1.5 pounds of meth with a street value worth \$70,000, said Horve.

Gilligan was also charged with unlawful possession of a firearm and ammunition and three counts of delivery of meth. His bond was set at \$50,000, Horve said.

33 year old Justin Abbott, of Bellflower, was arrested for possession of meth and intent to deliver. His bond was set at \$20,000, said Horve.

Both are scheduled to be arraigned in court on Oct. 30.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Business, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Outdoor Dining in Normal Expanding

DATE: 10/21/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

The town of Normal announced Tuesday it will be extending outdoor dining options on private property until further notice.

The announcement comes as the number of cases continues to rise throughout the state.

Town officials also announced it will be permitting portable heaters, as long as it is in accordance with temporary outdoor eating guidelines.

Businesses that have already applied for outdoor dining are not required to reapply.

News partner Heart of Illinois ABC reports owners who are looking to apply for an outdoor dining operation can email the Town Clerk.

The regulations put in place in May still apply including no smoking and a closing time of 10 pm

These changes remain in effect until further notice. Restaurants are responsible for enforcing these rules. The Town reminds patrons to follow social distancing and hand washing protocols.

Outdoor dining within the parking spaces in Uptown Normal continues through Nov. 1, as planned. Beginning Nov. 2, all outdoor dining amenities in the on-street locations of Uptown will be removed to allow for increased on-street-parking for patrons of Uptown businesses.

ISSUE: Crime, Cyber-Crime

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: HCC Hack under criminal investigation

DATE: 10/21/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

An active criminal investigation is continuing at Heartland Community College to determine who launched what a spokesperson described as a "malicious" cyber attack against the school.

College administrators updated college trustees about the situation Tuesday night.

Hackers infiltrated the system October 5, and it took a week for students, faculty, and staff to regain access to the college's portal. That portal links the campus community and to online courses. There are other ways to access online classes, including an app.

Steve Fast, Heartland's Director of Public Information told our news partner, Heart of Illinois ABC, Heartland officials first contacted Normal Police.

The FBI is now involved in the criminal probe.

No personal information was compromised, said Fast.

Heartland hired a forensic consulting firm to check various systems. A dollar estimate of the damage caused by the cyber attack is not available, but Fast said Heartland has insurance to cover the cost.

ISSUE: Government

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Renner won't Run

DATE: 10/21/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Bloomington Mayor Tari Renner announced he won't be running for a third term this spring.

Renner says this was not an easy decision, but he's confident that new leadership will step forward to continue the progress that has been made.

Renner has been mayor of Bloomington since 2013. During his time, the city has focused on infrastructure, economic development, and revitalization of downtown Bloomington.

Municipal elections for the office of the mayor and odd numbered wards will be on April 6th.

ISSUE: Government

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Candidate Throws Hat in to Mayoral Ring

DATE: 10/22/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

A day after Bloomington Mayor Tari Renner announced he won't seek a third term, a candidate for the city council has changed course and will now run for mayor.

Bloomington entrepreneur Mike Straza released a video Thursday on Facebook and said he's suspending his campaign for the Ward 5 council seat.

According to an official media release, Straza is a Bloomington resident of 37 years. He graduated from Illinois State University and has held various positions including business consultant, mentor, and entrepreneur. Straza currently serves on Bloomington's Zoning Board of Appeals, which is an appointed position.

The office of the mayor and odd numbered council seats are up for election on April 6.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Education

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Cases slow at ISU

DATE: 10/27/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

After a large number of COVID-19 cases back in August, new cases have slowed down at Illinois State University.

Many of the cases were linked to large off-campus parties, and as a result, the town of Normal issued an ordinance that limits gatherings near campus.

Those who don't follow the ordinance can be issued a ticket. Officer Brad Park with the Normal Police Department spoke with WJBC's Marc Strauss.

Over the last week, ISU has reported 35 new COVID cases and the school's rolling positivity rate is 2.8%.

ISSUE: Crime

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Shots fired Friday Night

DATE: 11/02/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Bloomington police say a man was shot in the foot Friday night on the city's east side.

Officers were called around 9 o'clock to the 700 block of East Monroe Street for an armed subject. When officers arrived, they located a 30-year-old man who had an injury consistent with a gunshot wound. It was reported the shooting happened outside and the circumstances around the incident are still under investigation.

BPD says the victim was transported to Carle BroMenn Medical Center and was reported to be in stable condition. No other injuries were reported.

No suspect information is available and no arrests have been made. Anyone with information is asked to contact Bloomington Police or McLean County Crime Stoppers.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Government

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Restaurants and Bars threaten to ignore mitigations

DATE: 11/04/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

Governor Pritzker says communities need to follow state issued covid-19 safety rules.

Some bars and restaurants are vowing to stay fully open, regardless of mitigations not allowing indoor dining. Governor Pritzker explains why local leaders and law enforcement must take this seriously.

Covid-19 hospitalizations have been on the rise in illinois...And the latest daily death toll is 68 lives lost to the virus.

ISSUE: Government, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:City on resurgence and mitigations

DATE: 11/04/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Restaurants and bars across the Twin-Cities are under the state's resurgence mitigations because of a rise in the COVID-19 positivity rate across Region 2.

Bloomington Mayor Tari Renner and Normal Mayor Chris Koos think the measures are unfair, which include no indoor dining or bar service. Renner sent a letter to Gov. Pritzker and says overall, the city has done better than many other communities in Illinois in terms of infection rates and other factors.

Renner says the city will continue to refer all complaints to the McLean County Health Department, as local health officials are requesting voluntary compliance.

Bloomington City Manager Tim Gleason says there is some help for businesses through the Bloomington-Normal Economic Development Council and they're pushing state and federal lawmakers.

Business Interruption Grants are also available through the state's Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

According to state health officials, the mitigations can be lifted once the region's positivity rate drops to 6.5% or less for three consecutive days.

ISSUE: Government, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Downtown Centerpiece to Receive New Roof

DATE: 11/06/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Downtown Bloomington's centerpiece, the old courthouse, will likely get a new roof and McLean County government leaders acknowledge it won't be cheap.

The county board's property committee Thursday voted unanimously to approve the low bid of \$598,000 from Peoria's Western Specialty Contractors to replace a roof that's falling apart on the century-old building

The former courthouse at 200 North Main Street is now home to the McLean County Museum and it is badly in need of a new roof as soon as possible, local architect Paul Scharnett told the committee.

For the iconic structure, Scharnett told our new partner Heart of Illinois ABC, he recommends the county install the "Cadillac of roofing systems" that would last 30 to 40 years.

The cost for just using a crane to lift materials to the roof would cost about \$100,000, which is cheaper than building scaffolding to get the materials up there, said Scharnett.

Committee member Jacob Beard says "Paying a little more now in material cost is worth it,".

The plan now goes to the executive committee and then the full county board for final approval.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Government

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Governor Talks Vaccine

DATE: 11/11/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

The new vaccine you've heard about - with a great deal of success reported in trials by Pfizer - sounds good to Gov. JB Pritzker - with a caveat or two.

“It’s only good news,” Pritzker said at Tuesday’s coronavirus briefing, “but it’s still going to take some time here before it’s proved to be efficacious. It’s preliminary data. There’s going to be another set of data, and I think they’ll get that in late November.”

Pritzker added that vaccine has to be stored at 100 degrees below zero, and good luck with that.

And even without a pandemic, a college campus can be a petri dish. When asked Tuesday whether college students should just stay on campus Thanksgiving weekend, Illinois Department of Public Health director Dr. Ngozi Ezike said, “Nothing is ever that simple. There are some college campuses where they have really gotten the infection rates so low because of aggressive testing once or twice a week; you actually have a populace that has a much lower positivity rate than a campus where there is no testing.”

The Tuesday numbers are 12,623 new cases and 79 more deaths.

ISSUE: Government, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Normal Taxes Stay Steady

DATE: 11/16/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

Like Bloomington, the Town of Normal's share of homeowners' property tax bills is expected to remain the same next year.

Heading into an election season in which Mayor Chris Koos is running for re-election and three council seats are up for grabs next April, Normal town staffers recommend elected leaders approve a levy in which the government will collect a little less than \$13.1 million dollars, which is the same as this year's tax collection.

News partner, Heart of Illinois ABC reports the proposed tax rate is about \$1.47 per \$100 of assessed valuation, which is also unchanged.

Town staffers said they expect no growth in taxable land values after nearly a 1% gain the previous year.

While the two municipal governments in the Twin-Cities plan no property tax hike, many homeowners can still expect a hefty tax increase from Unit 5 schools. The school board is

considering a nearly 7.9% increase in the levy and a 27.5 cent boost in the tax rate because the district is selling working cash bonds to close a structural budget deficit.

Also, the town council voted in September to double the local gasoline tax to eight cents per gallon to pay for various transportation projects, although town staff contends the tax increase is not resulting in higher prices at the pump.

ISSUE: Education, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Unit 5 Returns to E-Learn

DATE: 11/16/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

All students in McLean County's largest school district will return to all remote learning starting this week because of what the district said is an "alarming rise" in local COVID-19 cases.

All Unit 5 students will have the day off Wednesday so teachers and staff can transition again to e-learning, which will start on Thursday. Remote instruction will remain in place until Monday, December 7, the district said.

In a Facebook post, the district said the decision is the result of new guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health recommending people to stay at home as much as possible. Also, the statement said the McLean County Health Department reached out to Unit 5 "to share the urgency of the local COVID situation and suggested we re-think whether we should be in-person."

The county's health department reported Friday that there were 120 new COVID-19 cases, bringing the total of probable and confirmed cases to 6,216.

Nine people are hospitalized and 1,353 people are isolating at home, the health department said. The rolling seven-day positivity rate through Thursday was at 10.6%, according to the health department.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Government, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Liquor Commission Hears Complaints

DATE: 11/18/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Bloomington Mayor Tari Renner has issued a summons for 12 bars to appear before the Liquor Commission on Friday, November 20.

These twelve establishments were named in liquor commission complaints Tuesday afternoon signed by Mayor Renner: Windjammer, Cadillac Jack's, Killarney's, Fat Jack's, Daddio's, Drifters, Maguire's, Chasers, Six Strings, Elroy's, Mulligan's, and Reality Bites.

Each of the dozen establishments is accused of two counts: (1) Violation of Required 11:00 PM Closing Hour, and (2) Violation of Prohibition on indoor, on-premise consumption.

Mayor Renner also acts as the Liquor Commissioner in the City of Bloomington. He warned Monday that consequences were coming "swiftly" after video surfaced from Bloomington bars over the weekend showing zero adherence to COVID guidelines including social distancing, mask wearing, indoor consumption, and the 11:00 closing time.

News partner, Heart of Illinois ABC reports the 11:00 PM rule and prohibition on indoor dining/consumption were put into place during COVID mitigation as cases rise throughout the state.

In the complaint and summons, Mayor Renner is asking all 12 establishments to appear at 4:00 PM Friday at City Hall Council Chambers. They are being asked to "show cause why your license should not be suspended or revoked, or why you should not be fined or reprimanded."

ISSUE: Business, COVID-19, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Local Pub Shuttters Doors

DATE: 11/20/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

The typical Irish good-bye means no one knows you've left, but in the case of Maggie Miley's, they want everyone to know they don't want to leave, but they might have to.

After 16 years in Uptown Normal the Irish Pub posted on Facebook this week that the pandemic has finally taken its toll and they will be shutting the Pub doors on Wednesday the 25th for the time being.

Curbside pickup, merchandise sales and outdoor dining just hasn't been enough to keep the restaurant in business.

Hoping for good weather Maggie's says the outdoor tent will be open for business and they are holding out hope for a 17th year in business.

ISSUE: Education, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: ISU President Announces Retirement

DATE: 11/20/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Illinois State University President Larry Dietz today (Friday) announced he will retire at the end of June as the university's 19th president.

Dietz came to ISU in June 2011 as vice president for student affairs and was appointed president in March 2014.

During his tenure, ISU has been ranked among the top universities in the U.S. for high graduation and retention rates. Dan Brady, State Representative for the 105th District, which represents Bloomington-Normal, said Dietz will leave a legacy at ISU.

Dietz is currently the longest serving of all Illinois public university presidents.

ISU Board of Trustees Chair Julie Jones says the search process for the university's 20th president will begin immediately.

ISSUE: Government

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Mayor's Race Grows in Candidates

DATE: 11/24/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Three people including the city's longest serving alderman are on the ballot next April to become Bloomington's next mayor, while the field of candidates is so crowded in one city council race that there might have to be a February primary.

Monday was the final day for candidates to file their nominating petitions for the April 6 municipal election.

Two mayoral candidates filed Monday, including Mboka Mwilambwe, who has represented Ward 3 since 2011. The other candidate filing required paperwork Monday was Jackie Gunderson, who earlier this month, lost a close race for a seat on the McLean County Board.

Mwilambwe and Gunderson will face Mike Straza, a local entrepreneur and appointed member of the Bloomington Zoning Board of Appeals.

Incumbent Mayor Tari Renner has decided not to seek a third term.

Five council seats are also up for election next year. In Ward 1, incumbent Jamie Mathy is running opposed on the April ballot. Three candidates are vying for Mwilambwe's seat in Ward 3. They are Derek Mead, Sheila Montney, and Willie Holton Halbert.

In Ward 5, Joni Painter is not running for re-election. The candidates filing nominating petitions before Monday's deadline was Nick Becker and Patrick Lawler.

There are five candidates running to represent Ward 7, formerly held by Scott Black until he decided not to seek another term, then move out of the district before his term expired.

Ward 7 candidates are Daniel Freburg, incumbent Mollie Ward, Kelby Cumpston, June Peterson-Middlebrooks, and Correta L. Jackson. The top two candidates in the February 23 primary will square off on April 6. A primary must be held when there are more than four candidates, but election petitions can be challenged to possibly reduce the field and avoid a primary.

In Ward 9, incumbent Kimberly Bray is not seeking another term. Vying to replace her are former council member Jim Fruin and Tom Crumpler.

ISSUE: Government

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Normal Council Candidates

DATE: 11/24/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Some familiar names will be on the ballot for mayor and town council seats next April.

Monday was the last day candidates could file their nominating petitions.

There will be a rematch for mayor between long-time incumbent Chris Koos and his opponent from four years ago, Marc Tiritilli. Koos won last time by only 11 votes.

Nine candidates are seeking the three seats up for election on the town council, including incumbents, Kevin McCarthy, Scott Preston, and Chemberly (KIMBERLY) Cummings.

Their challengers include David Paul Blumenshine, AJ Zimmerman, Steve Harsh, Brad McMillan, Karl Sila, and Donna Toney.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Education, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Local Museum Upgrades with Covid Grants

DATE: 11/25/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

The Children's Discovery Museum will be replacing and updating its Luckey Climber exhibit after receiving a grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

The museum's foundation was awarded over 568-thousand-dollars for the design, fabrication and installation of a new Luckey Climber. The foundation will add \$10,000 in private funds to help cover demolition costs.

Children's Discovery Museum executive director Beth Whisman says the updated design will use different materials to introduce a new look to the space, enhance the sensory experience, and improve exhibit sanitation due to COVID-19.

Construction is anticipated to begin within the next two years.

ISSUE: Crime

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Road Rage Shooting

DATE: 11/27/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

A man was wounded just west of Bloomington Wednesday night in a shooting that's being investigated as an act of road rage, news partner Heart of Illinois ABC reports.

In a news release, McLean County Sheriff Jon Sandage said his department was called about 10:05 p.m. to Carle BroMenn Medical Center where a 23-year old man was being treated for a gunshot wound.

According to the release, the man told police he was shot during a road rage incident that happened on Alexander Road, near Oakland Avenue.

Sandage said the man's injuries are not believed to be life threatening. Investigators are compiling information about the suspect and vehicle. Police are not releasing other information.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Local Nurse Heads South to Help

DATE: 11/30/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

One Twin-Cities nurse did not spend Thanksgiving at home --instead she's helping to fight the COVID-19 pandemic on the front lines.

Abbi Sorrells has been a traveling nurse for the past six years. She usually stays in Illinois -- but last week she was called down to Texas to assist with a COVID crisis.

Sorrells told our news partner Heart of Illinois ABC she won't see her family for somewhere between two and four weeks.

Sorrells says she has friends in Illinois working in the emergency department taking care of five or more patients at a time. She says when the pandemic ends, many of those healthcare workers will be looking for a new profession.

ISSUE: Government, Courts, BLM

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE:Former Employee Sues County

DATE: 12/02/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

A former McLean County spokesperson has filed a federal lawsuit against the county alleging racial discrimination.

The lawsuit was filed on Nov. 29 by Dion McNeal, a former communications specialist with the county. It stems from an incident over the summer when McNeal claimed he had his job responsibilities reduced following the delivery of a press release on behalf of the county.

McNeal made a public statement on June 19 surrounding that release and about what he allegedly encountered at the county.

The lawsuit states McNeal was terminated from his position on June 23.

The press release was focused on taking precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 at protests and mass gatherings that were taking place following the death of George Floyd, a Black man who died while in police custody in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Following the delivery of the press release, McNeal said he had his job responsibilities reduced.

McNeal is seeking compensation in the lawsuit, including back pay and damages for emotional distress.

The lawsuit lists the McLean County Board and the county's health department, as well as several county officials, as defendants.

McLean County Administrator Camille Rodriguez told our news partner, Heart of Illinois ABC, Tuesday night she does not comment on pending litigation.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Government, Business

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Rep. Brady on Covid Restrictions

DATE: 12/02/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

As COVID-19 mitigations set forth by Gov. Pritzker continue to clamp down on bars and restaurants, it's turning into "survival of the fittest," according to one State Representative.

Speaking with WJBC's Scott Miller, State Rep. Dan Brady said with COVID-19 cases on the rise, businesses have to be safe but have to do what they can to stay afloat.

In early November, several videos circulated on social media that featured large crowds in public places in Bloomington. As a result, Bloomington Mayor Tari Renner called a hearing for a dozen establishments to come before the Liquor Commission for possible license revocation.

Renner, who serves as the Liquor Commissioner, issued Daddios, a downtown Bloomington bar, a fine, while the other establishments were not issued fines.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Government, Crime

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Covid Stops Jury Trials

DATE: 12/03/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

Jury trials have been called off in McLean County Court this month, according to court officials, to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Jury trials were postponed in criminal and civil cases, but news partner Heart of Illinois ABC reports bench trials will go on as scheduled because a judge instead of a jury decides those cases.

The decision to call off jury trials comes as the chief judge in the 10th Judicial Circuit, which includes Peoria and Tazewell Counties, ordered that jury trials won't be held until January 8 and perhaps longer. The 10th Circuit also includes Marshall, Putnam, and Stark Counties.

McLean County is part of the 11th Circuit, which includes Woodford, Logan, Livingston, and Ford counties. Only McLean County had jury trials scheduled this month.

No decision has been made for for January jury trials in the 11th Circuit. That decision will be made the first week of January, court officials said.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Education

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Students Return to Campus

DATE: 12/07/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

COVID-19 testing is required of all Illinois State University students living on campus when they return after the holidays to start the spring semester.

The university announced in its weekly coronavirus update that the goal of mandatory entry testing is to "provide information necessary to control outbreaks and inform public health action."

Classes start January 11 and news partner Heart of Illinois ABC reports University Housing Services will provide more information before students move back into on-campus housing.

In the weekly update, university staff announced that on-campus COVID-19 testing is free to Illinois State students. Students must bring their Redbird ID to on-campus testing sites in order to be tested. On-campus COVID-19 testing is not available to faculty and staff at this time.

More information is available on ISU's Coronavirus Websitecorona virus dot illinois state dot E-D-U.

ISSUE: Non-Profit, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Salvation Army Halfway to Goal

DATE: 12/08/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

The Salvation Army of Bloomington reports it's more than halfway to its fundraising goal of \$500,000 for the annual Make A Difference campaign.

As of Monday, this year's campaign is at 51% of its goal. Over 73-thousand dollars has been donated to the iconic red kettles, while other sources have produced almost 184-thousand dollars.

Salvation Army executive director Angie Bubon says COVID has made this year's campaign a bit different.

Bubon says donations can also be made online, as money raised during the campaign helps fund programs like the food pantry, the Comprehensive Emergency Assistance Program, Safe Harbor Homeless Shelter, and youth programs.

To volunteer or donate you can visit sabloomington.org.

ISSUE: Crime, Education

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Accused School Teacher Fired

DATE: 12/10/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

A long-time Unit 5 school teacher has been fired even though prosecutors earlier this year dismissed all child molestation charges against him.

Without discussion, the Unit 5 School Board Wednesday night voted unanimously to terminate Jonathon Hovey's employment. However, Hovey does have the right to a

formal dismissal hearing, and if he chooses that option, Hovey will be suspended without pay.

In September, the McLean County State's Attorney's office dropped all charges alleging he sexually molested two first-graders in his class when he taught at Glenn Elementary School in Normal.

News partner, Heart of Illinois ABC reports, prosecutors said they dismissed the charges because of "unavailable witnesses."

48-year-old Hovey, from Forsyth, was charged in August 2019 with two counts of predatory criminal sexual assault and six counts of aggravated criminal sexual abuse alleging he inappropriately touched one of the children in 2004 and the other in 2017.

Prosecutors can file the criminal charges again.

ISSUE: Crime, Government

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Illinois Lawmaker on Election Fraud

DATE: 12/11/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Amid election uncertainty and several Illinois lawmakers joining in a Texas lawsuit challenging the election, one Central Illinois lawmaker says the recent election was full of fraud, and those who committed crimes need to be prosecuted.

Joining a list of 106 Republicans are Illinois Congressman Darin LaHood and Mike Bost in a lawsuit arguing election fraud in favor of President Trump.

However, Central Illinois Republican, Rodney Davis, is not on the lawsuit despite calling the election a fraud. He spoke with WJBC's Scott Miller.

The Taylorville Republican said there are instances of fraud in every election, such as double votes and ballot harvesting.

ISSUE: Government

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Sparks Fly in Council Fracas

DATE: 12/15/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

The Bloomington City Council voted 7-2 to back further consideration of the 'Welcoming America' ordinance, but it didn't go without drama.

The two council members voting against the ordinance were Jennifer Carrillo and Jeff Crabill. Carrillo spoke with news partner Heart of Illinois-ABC before the meeting and clarified that she is all for supporting a more welcoming city for undocumented people of all races, creeds, religions, etc., but she disagrees with the way it is being presented.

Carrillo clarified that a 'Welcoming City' ordinance is what she and others have been asking for. This legislation she is pursuing would protect undocumented immigrants from deportation or separation in the event they need help from the police by not allowing BPD to work directly with ICE.

During the meeting sparks flew during discussion when Carrillo was interrupted by council member Kim Bray.

The council majority directed staff to prepare a 'Welcoming America' ordinance for final action.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Government, Business,Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Covid Business Grants Awarded

DATE: 12/17/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

Seven McLean County businesses are the first to receive what amounts to free money from local government to help them survive the COVID-19 pandemic.

A couple of months ago, the McLean County Board approved the Targeted Development Loan program, offering small businesses hundreds of thousands of dollars in forgivable loans that don't have to be paid back.

The money can be used to boost businesses' online sales, which has become especially important because customers worried about COVID's spread might be reluctant to make in-person purchases.

The Bloomington-Normal Economic Development Council is administering the program. Wednesday, the EDC's president and CEO Patrick Hoban announced the first seven recipients to receive the public money.

News partner Heart of Illinois ABC reports the county board previously set up a program offering each business up to \$5,000 to be paid back with a 1% interest rate, but it generated little enthusiasm.

Hoban said small businesses were much more interested in receiving larger dollar amounts with no interest.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Education

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Campus Offers Free COVID Testing for Faculty

DATE: 12/18/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

Illinois State University is offering free COVID-19 testing for its employees starting January 11.

The university revealed in its weekly update that testing will be available for asymptomatic workers and students in the parking lot between Watterson Towers and Stevenson Hall, and at the former fire station at 604 North Adelaide Street in Normal.

News partner, Heart of Illinois ABC reports - ISU is requiring all students living on campus to be tested when they return for the spring semester.

Starting January 4, ISU will use antigen tests as the primary COVID-19 asymptomatic testing method to speed-up obtaining test results.

In an update, the university said "This type of test allows for increased testing capacity, quick test results, the ability to quickly move positive students into isolation and begin contact tracing, is affordable, and can be processed on campus,".

ISU staffers said they continue to plan for saliva-based testing provided by the University of Illinois-SHIELD Illinois program; however it has yet to receive emergency use authorization from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

ISSUE: Crime, Health

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Phone Scam Uses Hospital Caller ID

DATE: 12/20/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

OSF HealthCare has been made aware of potential phone scam activity making use of its caller ID.

OSF spokeswoman Libby Allison says if you receive such a call, particularly if you've had no interaction with a department at an OSF HealthCare facility, hang up.

People are encouraged to report the potential scam call to local police.

ISSUE: Government, Business, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Liquor License Fees Waived

DATE: 12/21/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

The Normal Town Council is expected to take final action tonight to spare local bars and restaurants from paying liquor license renewal fees for the coming year.

Staff prepared a resolution at the council's urging because of financial hardships facing those businesses, which are not allowed to serve customers inside their establishments to prevent further spread of COVID-19.

Waiving the renewal fees will cost the town government \$95,400 in expected revenue in February and March, when most businesses pay those fees.

News partner Heart of Illinois ABC explains the staff's report to the council said The proposed waiver of 2021 liquor license fees for certain license holders recognizes the unprecedented challenges restaurants, caterers, theaters, hotels and brew pups have faced during the pandemic due to operational restrictions associated with Restore Illinois regulations.

The resolution calls for businesses defying state COVID guidelines to pay the license renewal fees within 30 days after they're found to have violated the rules.

The council meets virtually Monday at 7 p.m. The meeting can be seen on the town government's YouTube channel.

ISSUE: COVID-19, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: COVID Test Site Relocates

DATE: 12/22/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

The CampusTown Urgent Care COVID-19 testing site in Bloomington is moving to a new location.

Starting Monday, the drive-up testing site will be located at the Central Illinois Regional Airport's long-term parking lot at 3201 CIRA Drive, and will be open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

News partner, Heart of Illinois ABC reports those looking to get tested at this site will need to pre-register online.

Entrance to the new site will be through CIRA Drive West, following the directional signage to enter the long-term parking area from the north circulation road. The mobile testing site will be on the west end of the long-term parking area.

ISSUE: Government, COVID-19

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: City Manager Defends Officials

DATE: 12/23/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 6am and Noon

Normal's city manager is defending the town council and hired staff from accusations that the government is bribing bars and restaurants to comply with Gov. JB Pritzker's COVID-19 regulations.

The debate became heated Monday night just before the council voted 6-1 to waive renewal fees for liquor license holders who follow state rules including one that forbids them from serving customers indoors.

Council member Stan Nord voted no, saying staff should not be playing partisan politics by pushing the governor's positions.

City Manager Pam Reece took the unusual step of publicly criticizing an elected official.

Mayor Chris Koos said the town has home rule authority to adopt an ordinance requiring liquor license holders to follow the governor's executive order.

News partner, Heart of Illinois ABC previously reported waiving the renewal fees is expected to cost the town government \$95,400 in revenue early next year.

ISSUE: Crime, Community

HOW ISSUE WAS TREATED: News Story

TITLE: Police Ask For Public's Help in Burglary

DATE: 12/29/2020

DURATION: 30 second story, ran between 3pm and Midnight

Bloomington Police on Monday requested the public to provide information that might help solve a burglary in mid-December in which thousands of dollars worth of sporting goods were stolen from a local business.

Police don't have any suspect information to release following the break-in that happened sometime between closing time on Sunday, December 13 and early the next morning at Read's Sporting Goods in the 800 block of I-A-A Drive.

Total losses to the business were estimated at up to \$10,000, most of which came from the theft of high-end baseball and softball gloves.

According to our news partner Heart of Illinois ABC, the Bloomington-Normal Baseball Association urged its members to buy baseball gear or gift cards from Read's to help it overcome this year's hardships.

Anyone with information about the burglary is asked to contact Bloomington Police.