

Fourth Quarter 2023 WGLT ISSUES AND PROGRAMS  
October 2023 – December 2023

The following issues were addressed during WGLT Newscasts during MORNING EDITION from 5 to 9 am M-F and during ALL THINGS CONSIDERED from 3-7PM, M-F, and during WGLT's local news magazine show Sound Ideas, 5-5:30pm, M-F. The story lengths range from one minute to 22 minutes. Other examples of WGLT addressing community issues can be found at [www.wglt.org](http://www.wglt.org).

Politics and Government

**[Unit 5 board adopts property tax levy, projects tax rate decrease](#)**

[Michele Steinbacher](#), December 20, 2023

With this levy, Unit 5 property owners should see the tax rate decrease about 22 cents, to about \$5.30 per \$100 of equalized assessed valuation [EAV].

**[McLean County Board denies special-use permit for CO2 wells proposed for Saybrook area](#)**

[Michele Steinbacher](#), December 14, 2023

The McLean County Board has unanimously rejected a company's request to capture and store carbon in a trio of wells near Saybrook, citing its lack of a safety plan for the proposal. But the board left the possibility open for the company to resubmit a proposal.

**[Bloomington council narrowly rejects tax levy hike, instead adopts a flat levy of \\$22.3M](#)**

[Michele Steinbacher](#), December 11, 2023

The Bloomington City Council narrowly voted down a proposed tax levy increase at its meeting on Monday, meaning taxpayers will see the property tax rate go down more than anticipated.

**[New law spurs anticipation more teens will pursue honors, other advanced courses](#)**

[Michele Steinbacher](#), December 11, 2023

Starting this fall, students who meet or exceed state testing standards will be automatically enrolled in the next most rigorous course. Think honors, and college-credit options such as AP and dual credit.

**[Normal council adopts increased tax levy, drops tax rate slightly](#)**

[Michele Steinbacher](#), December 4, 2023

The Normal Town Council on Monday adopted a nearly \$14.3 million levy for the upcoming fiscal year — about 7% higher than the year before. Normal leaders say significant growth in the town's tax base means the property tax rate will go down slightly, offering taxpayers some relief.

### **[Bloomington council OKs doubling water rates over next 3 years to update aging system](#)**

[Michele Steinbacher](#), November 28, 2023

Bloomington water rates will go up 33% this May — and again in 2025 and 2026 — after Monday's city council vote, paving the way for an overhaul of the city's aging water supply system. The 7-2 vote also means the city's water utility tax will be lowered, and the city will adjust how rates are determined for trash, sewer and stormwater.

### **[Normal council gets peek at Uptown parking study, future of EV charging stations](#)**

[Michele Steinbacher](#), November 20, 2023

A 2021 study completed for Normal to address parking available in Uptown finds the town should consider raising parking deck rates, and charge for street parking.

### **[McLean County Board OKs nearly \\$147M budget, \\$46M levy and flat tax rate](#)**

[Michele Steinbacher](#), November 17, 2023

The fiscal 2024 budget is nearly 16% higher than last year's plan, and is built around the county's 2023 levy bringing in about 13% more money than the 2022 figure.

### **[Unit 5 proposes \\$151M tax levy, but plans to lower property tax rate](#)**

[Michele Steinbacher](#), November 16, 2023

Unit 5 is proposing a nearly \$151 million property tax levy for 2023, about 10% more than last year. But the district plans to lower its overall tax rate.

### **[Alumni from Black fraternities and sororities unite, and mobilize volunteers for food pantry](#)**

[Michele Steinbacher](#), November 8, 2023

A partnership between Unit 5 and Eastern Illinois Foodbank brings a monthly food pantry to Normal West. Now, a local chapter of the National Pan-Hellenic Council has made volunteering at the events a core part of its community outreach.

### **[12-hour advance notice will be required before landlords can enter Normal apartments](#)**

[Michele Steinbacher](#), November 7, 2023

Normal will require landlords to give tenants advance notice before entering their residences, with an ordinance the Normal Town Council approved Monday.

### **[Bloomington council eases fire department hiring rules, updates license/permit policies](#)**

[Michele Steinbacher](#), October 24, 2023

The Bloomington Fire Department still expects its first responders to be paramedics. But under the new policy, if a new firefighter doesn't have the paramedic certification, BFD staff will train them.

### **[Unit 5 school board hears update on district's strategic planning, proposal expected in March](#)**

[Michele Steinbacher](#), October 18, 2023

Unit 5's strategic planning initiative is gaining momentum, with a draft expected by March, the school board heard during its meeting on Wednesday.

### **[Hoping to gain a competitive edge, Normal expands some staff benefits](#)**

[Michele Steinbacher](#), October 16, 2023

The new policies, for employees not covered through collective bargaining agreements, are expected to cost the town about \$250,000 annually.

### **[McLean County Board names Knapp as new District 5 representative](#)**

[Michele Steinbacher](#), October 12, 2023

Randall Knapp replaces longtime board member John McIntyre, who until September served as board chair.

### **[Big crowd shares ideas for downtown Bloomington streetscape during open house](#)**

[Michele Steinbacher](#), October 11, 2023

A steady stream of city leaders, business owners and residents walked a circuit of posters depicting possible changes, while members of the city's design team were at each station to field questions.

### **[Bloomington OKs spending more than \\$18M on final phases of Locust/Colton sewer project](#)**

[Michele Steinbacher](#), October 9, 2023

The city will borrow the money from public loan programs, and pay Champaign-based Clark Dietz up to \$2 million for engineering designs.

### **[Construction could begin soon on Weldon Reserve homes after Normal council action](#)**

[Michele Steinbacher](#), October 2, 2023

The Normal Town Council's unanimous vote approves the final plat for about half of Weldon Reserve's 26-acre development, making way for 40 single-family lots, and four attached-home lots.

### **[Crumpler defines Bloomington council dynamic as practical, not philosophical](#)**

[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 21, 2023

At the last Bloomington City Council meeting, Mayor Mboka Mwilambwe tried to push the council to keep a \$1.1 million increase in the property tax levy as the staff had presented. He called it a good compromise that would still result in a tax rate reduction. The attempt failed. The vote was to keep the levy flat.

### **[Rep. LaHood talks Biden impeachment, an immigration deal, and why the farm bill was backburnered](#)**

[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 21, 2023

U.S. Rep. Darin LaHood voted to move ahead with an investigation of potential impeachable offenses by President Biden. All House Republicans did so.

### **[Normal Township appoints new assessor](#)**

[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 21, 2023

The Normal Township Board has picked a new township assessor. Kent DePew, who has 30 years of experience in assessor offices, has been deputy assessor in Normal for 21 years and has been a deputy assessor in Bloomington.

### **[Appeals court rules on test of pretrial release law](#)**

[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 13, 2023

An appeals court said a Livingston County judge abused her discretion in refusing to grant pretrial release to a man accused of soliciting a child for sexual activity online.

### **[Town of Normal shuffles staff to cover assistant city manager vacancy](#)**

[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 8, 2023

The Town of Normal is making interim appointments to adjust for a vacancy in the assistant city manager's post. City Manager Pam Reece has temporarily appointed corporation counsel Brian Day to that role.

[Illinois awarded more than \\$95 million to improve passenger rail service](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 8, 2023

The Federal Railroad Administration is giving Illinois \$95.1 million for passenger train service. Some of that will go toward the Chicago-to-St. Louis corridor that includes Bloomington-Normal, Pontiac and Lincoln in central Illinois.

[Pritzker's rail comments foreshadow transit debate in spring legislative session](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 5, 2023

Gov. JB Pritzker recently voiced support for the Chicago Hub Improvement Program (CHIP), a plan that also holds promise for Amtrak service through Bloomington-Normal. The investment in transportation infrastructure would fix several problems at Union Station and connect it to two potential passenger-focused main lines.

[Normal mayor urges less strident rhetoric over housing proposals](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 5, 2023

Normal Mayor Chris Koos said the town bears some responsibility for the problems in the Savannah Green subdivision that will be costly to fix, including the town council approving nearly \$4 million to repair crumbling streets and alleys.

[LaHood predicts congressional reapproval of surveillance program](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 4, 2023

Central Illinois congressman Darin LaHood thinks Congress will reauthorize a surveillance program by its expiration date at the end of the year.

[Bloomington to seek conversation with diocese once Holy Trinity closure decision is made](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 4, 2023

The City of Bloomington is paying attention to the potential closure of Holy Trinity Catholic Church at the north end of downtown, after the Catholic Diocese of Peoria recently released a proposal to shutter the landmark building and merge the Holy Trinity parish with another.

[New Bloomington fire chief takes over a healthy department](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 4, 2023

The Bloomington Fire Department has new leadership with Cory Matheny taking over from retiring Fire Chief Eric West. Matheny said West was a mentor, who left the fire department in excellent shape.

[Normal Township assessor vacancy to be filled](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), November 28, 2023

Normal Township needs a new assessor. Longtime Assessor Rob Cranston died recently after a long illness, and the elected office is temporarily vacant.

[Illinois candidates begin 2024 election cycle with petition filings](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), November 27, 2023

A variety of local, state, and federal candidates filed nominating petitions Monday on the opening day of the filing period.

[Outgoing Normal town official: New approach needed to spark housing construction](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), November 21, 2023

Bloomington-Normal may need a different approach to stimulate housing construction. The community first quantified the need for housing in a study a year ago and updated it in June to an estimated 7,500 units.

[Heartland Community College levy to rise; tax rate to hold steady](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), November 20, 2023

The property tax levy for the Heartland Community College district will likely go up 12.6% next year. That's only slightly more than the expected increase in property values for the district.

[Durbin says Supreme Court ethics code falls short](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), November 14, 2023

The senior senator from Illinois said he has concerns about enforcement of the new code of conduct for Supreme Court justices.

[Mayor says apartment complex recycling program needs review in Normal](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), November 13, 2023

The Town of Normal should revisit the recycling program for apartment complexes and multi-unit developments, according to Mayor Chris Koos.

[Parents struggle to navigate confusing, complicated child support system](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), November 2, 2023

A McLean County woman's struggle to get overdue child support illustrates a complicated, and sometimes bewildering and frustrating system.

[Bloomington Police gun buyback collects 217 weapons](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), October 30, 2023

Bloomington Police brought in 217 weapons in a gun buyback program on Sunday. The tally for the no-questions-asked cash event included 66 handguns, 66 rifles, 56 shotguns, 25 assault-style

weapons, and four so-called ghost guns that are assembled from parts and do not have a traceable serial number.

[Gun violence commission roster pleases Bloomington's mayor](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), October 30, 2023

Mayor Mboka Mwilambwe is pleased with the diversity of stakeholders represented on the city's gun violence commission. In a WGLT interview, he said he wants a lot of views represented.

[Urbana wins \\$2.9 million award against Stark Excavating of Bloomington over roadwork issues](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), October 27, 2023

A Champaign County jury has ruled in favor of the City of Urbana and against the Bloomington-based firm of Stark Excavating over faulty road construction. The award of nearly \$2.9 million is a rarity. Stark is widely used in central Illinois for many municipal construction projects.

[Climate change planning and tree planting grant goes to Ecology Action Center](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), October 25, 2023

The Ecology Action Center in Normal will get nearly \$500,000 in federal grant money to grow more trees and study climate change vulnerabilities in the Bloomington-Normal community.

[ACLU of Illinois suggests sharing benefits of immigration to ease fears of change](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), October 24, 2023

Illinois has been historically strong in immigration. For decades, its numbers were right up there with the four border states near Mexico. That has ebbed in recent years, starting with the overall decline following the Great Recession and then during the Trump administration that imposed additional restrictions.

[Normal to explore placing solar arrays atop parking decks](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), October 18, 2023

There are several reasons why the Town of Normal will pay for a study of how sturdy its three parking decks are. One of them is to see whether solar arrays can go on the roofs to see if the decks will bear the weight.

[53rd Senate District GOP primary gets crowded, as farmer and ag teacher Jesse Faber enters the race](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#) , October 13, 2023

There are now four announced Republican candidates for State Senate in the 53rd district. Jesse Faber is the latest. He farms and teaches high school agriculture in Pontiac.

[ISU proposes \\$561 million budget, up 8% over FY2023](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#) , October 11, 2023

Illinois State University's proposed budget for next year totals more than \$561 million. That's an 8% increase in revenues, or a \$41 million jump, over the fiscal year 2023 budget that began in July.

['Generational': Bloomington streetscape planning ramps up for public reaction, input](#)  
[Charlie Schlenker](#), October 6, 2023

For more than a year, the City of Bloomington has been looking into a new streetscape plan. It's a potential \$30 million "generational" project that would replace aging under-and-above-ground infrastructure. Staff have said the effort is about far more than beautification.

[McLean County state's attorney: County limited in regulating carbon capture wells](#)  
[Charlie Schlenker](#), October 4, 2023

The McLean County State's Attorney's office has issued a legal opinion saying the county has only limited authority to regulate carbon sequestration wells.

[Former congressman Davis reflects on government 'chaos' sowed by Gaetz](#)  
[Charlie Schlenker](#), October 4, 2023

A former central Illinois congressman is calling Florida congressman Matt Gaetz a narcissist who sowed chaos after Gaetz led the effort to unseat House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, and warns the nation could face a government shutdown even after McCarthy sacrificed his speakership to avoid one.

## **Environment and Nature**

[Normal Mayor Koos questions potential impact of carbon capture pipeline](#)  
[Charlie Schlenker](#), October 3, 2023

So-called "carbon sequestration" takes carbon dioxide produced by industrial processes like ethanol plants, compresses it to a liquid form, pipes it across the Midwest, and injects it deep under bedrock layers in places like Decatur, and potentially McLean County.

Environment and Nature

[Zoning board delays decision on permit for CO2 storage in McLean County, again](#)

[Lyndsay Jones](#) , November 22, 2023The ZBA adjourned Tuesday night with no decision. The board will meet again on Tuesday, Dec. 5, but will not take any further testimony. Permit applicant One Earth Energy will be allowed to offer rebuttal and anyone who provided testimony can give a closing statement.

[In Illinois, young, conservation-minded farmers race against climate change to save their soil](#)

[Zachary Nauth](#) , November 20, 2023

Drought, dust storms and sediment piles the size of skyscrapers are wreaking havoc on central Illinois farms. Can the next generation innovate fast enough?

[McLean County to vote on CO2 well zoning amendment at December meeting](#)

[Lyndsay Jones](#), November 15, 2023

McLean County's Zoning Board of Appeals voted Tuesday night to recommend a new amendment be added to the county's zoning code to allow the government body to regulate where carbon sequestration wells are placed.

[Rivian's wind turbine is now operational in west Normal](#)

[Ryan Denham](#) , October 30, 2023

The turbine, located just east of Rivian's sprawling manufacturing plant, became operational Friday. It's designed for a capacity of at least 2.8 megawatts and is capable of generating nearly 10 million kilowatt-hours of electricity a year.

[Upgrading Bloomington-Normal's water treatment infrastructure will result in some fee increases](#)

[Lyndsay Jones](#), October 25, 2023

A series of loans, bond issuances and some user fee increases will fund 14 projects aimed at upgrading infrastructure that was originally built between 75-100 years ago.

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[Schroeder wildlife preserve off the table in updated grid transformation proposal](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), October 10, 2023

Original proposed routes for Ameren's \$1.6 billion grid upgrade included two possibilities that crossed through a south Bloomington nature preserve. The proposal now relies on existing corridors north of the Schroeder Wildlife Preserve.

['It's a palette': Colene Hoose natural playground now open to the public](#)

[Melissa Ellin](#), October 7, 2023

There are traditional structures at the play park, like the swings, but even those have a wooden frame. Then there's the mystical notes and designs, like the wooden mushroom pockets, the carved animals, and the interactive spaces like the sand pit.

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**Health and medicine**

## [State gives OSF St. Joseph the green light for expansion project](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 20, 2023

The state of Illinois has approved a \$17.77 million expansion of OSF St. Joseph Medical Center in Bloomington. The hospital will add 25 beds to the current 152-bed total; 10 will be medical-surgical care beds and 15 will be for intensive care patients.

## [Lynn Fulton to leave OSF St. Joseph Medical Center](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), October 13, 2023

OSF HealthCare St. Joseph Medical Center in Bloomington needs a new president. Current president Lynn Fulton is leaving in December to become CEO of the Maui Health System in Hawaii.

## [McLean County school districts on track with state mental health screening requirements](#)

[Melissa Ellin](#), December 19, 2023

Illinois State Board of Education released a report Friday detailing where counties fall in meeting state requirements for youth mental health screening in schools. McLean County seems to be doing well.

## [Encampment near Home Sweet Home in Bloomington can remain indefinitely](#)

[Melissa Ellin](#), December 18, 2023

After being told they needed to leave by Friday, those dwelling at the encampment near Home Sweet Home Ministries and Eastview Christian Church are being permitted to stay indefinitely.

## [ISU students spearhead statewide mental health initiative](#)

[Melissa Ellin](#), December 18, 2023

Illinois State University's student government is working with the state to advance a bill to allow students to have mental health days to be used at the student's discretion.

## [Bloomington-Normal agencies overcome obstacles between homelessness and mental health services](#)

[Melissa Ellin](#), December 11, 2023

The odds seem stacked against people experiencing homelessness who want mental health treatment, but providers in Bloomington-Normal are working to make that change.

## [Q&A: McLean County Center for Human Services strengthens behavioral health network](#)

[Melissa Ellin](#), December 6, 2023

The center recently was awarded \$1 million to become a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic, responsible for 24/7 crisis outreach and care coordination.

[Q&A: How Census data can address health disparities in Illinois](#)  
[Melissa Ellin](#), December 4, 2023

The head of the U.S. Census Bureau spoke at ISU on Monday for a health conference. He shares how data can make health more equitable.

[Health care professionals grapple with a burnout crisis](#)  
[Melissa Ellin](#), November 29, 2023

The CDC recently announced a first-ever national campaign to combat health professional burnout. Bloomington-Normal hospitals are making efforts to support their workers.

[Q&A: New grants will help Project Oz provide housing and divert youth from justice system](#)  
[Melissa Ellin](#), November 27, 2023

The Bloomington-based nonprofit Project Oz will introduce a new program to divert youth from the justice system. It will also expand current services to house more area adolescents.

[McLean County still plotting Opioid Settlement Fund spending and Narcan access](#)  
[Melissa Ellin](#), November 16, 2023

McLean County wanted to pay for Narcan. Now they plan to get it for free, leaving more funds available for other opioid prevention measures.

[How to access opioid overdose reversal medication in McLean County](#)  
[Melissa Ellin](#), November 15, 2023

Experts say it's no longer any one group that needs to have Narcan on hand. Everyone should.

[How 'System of Care' will address the mental health needs of McLean County youth](#)  
[Melissa Ellin](#), November 3, 2023

Major projects include creating a universal screening tool for mental health in schools across districts, introducing an additional youth psychiatrist in the community, and starting at-home care visits.

[Bloomington therapists talk trends post-pandemic](#)  
[Melissa Ellin](#), October 31, 2023

Teletherapy is here to stay, though maybe not as the primary form of counseling, and anxiety disorders are more prevalent in clients.

[Center for Human Services opens new peer-support recovery center, called A New Horizon](#)  
[Melissa Ellin](#), October 25, 2023

A New Horizon is a peer recovery community center open to people with substance use disorders, as well as their friends and family. It opened Wednesday.

[Q&A: Scott Block, inaugural statewide behavioral health administrator](#)  
[Melissa Ellin](#), October 24, 2023

More than 70% of prisoners suffer from either a mental health condition or a substance use disorder, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

[Trauma, recovery, community all themes at 6th Community Behavioral Health Forum](#)  
[Melissa Ellin](#), October 20, 2023

Tallies are still being made, but this might be the biggest behavioral health forum McLean County has held to date.

['Crazy fast' housing market persists in Bloomington-Normal. It's still too fast for many](#)  
[Melissa Ellin](#), October 19, 2023

Bloomington-Normal has a housing shortage. It's a recurring issue, and there are hosts of people waiting in the wings for their shot at making the community their home.

[Bloomington-Normal nonprofits maintain workforce and funding despite the odds](#)  
[Melissa Ellin](#), October 16, 2023

While McLean County nonprofits have struggled, they don't seem to be seeing the critical decreases in funding and workforce volatility that is crippling nonprofits elsewhere.

[Community members dedicated to expanding, improving restorative practices for McLean County](#)  
[Melissa Ellin](#), October 12, 2023

McLean County schools have been using restorative practices for years. A local expert wants to increase their use countywide.

['It's a palette': Colene Hoose natural playground now open to the public](#)  
[Melissa Ellin](#), October 7, 2023

There are traditional structures at the play park, like the swings, but even those have a wooden frame. Then there's the mystical notes and designs, like the wooden mushroom pockets, the carved animals, and the interactive spaces like the sand pit.

[Bilingual counselors are hard to find, McLean County has a handful](#)  
[Melissa Ellin](#), October 4, 2023

There aren't enough multilingual counselors in the area to meet the need of the non-English speaker population, but finding these counselors isn't easy.

[McLean County is expanding its youth mental health services](#)  
[Melissa Ellin](#), October 4, 2023

McLean County received a grant to expand and improve youth and adolescent mental health services, which it's been lacking in for years.

[‘Behind the scenes’: McLean County works to create mental health database](#)  
[Melissa Ellin](#), October 2, 2023

McLean County is hoping to create a mental health database that will combine client information from medical providers, shelters and the criminal justice system to better coordinate care. Health care officials in the area have concerns.

## **Higher Education and Education and Schools**

[Recent NCHS grad wins national 4-H award for work addressing food insecurity and healthy habits](#)

[Michele Steinbacher](#), October 2, 2023

Avani Rai, 18, from Bloomington, is a longtime advocate of fighting hunger. Rai is one of four U.S. teens being honored with the 4-H group's 2024 Youth in Action Award.

[Unions look to state for solutions after year of higher ed labor action](#)  
[Andrew Adams](#), December 27, 2023

Report finds public university employees paid 21% less than state agency workers in similar jobs.

[Heartland Community College names new finance VP](#)  
[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 12, 2023

Heartland Community College has a new vice president for finance and administration. Noah Lamb comes to Bloomington-Normal from Wittenberg University in Ohio.

[Heartland Community College levy to rise; tax rate to hold steady](#)  
[Charlie Schlenker](#), November 20, 2023

The property tax levy for the Heartland Community College district will likely go up 12.6% next year. That's only slightly more than the expected increase in property values for the district.

[Bradley University Senate votes no confidence in President Standifird, Provost Zakahi](#)  
[Tim Shelley](#), November 16, 2023

The Bradley University Senate has passed a no confidence vote in President Stephen Standifird and Provost Walter Zakahi.

[Bradley University faculty warn of 'irreversible' damage to institution if academic cuts proceed](#)  
[Tim Shelley](#), October 31, 2023

Bradley University faculty fear a tight deadline for spending cuts will irrevocably alter educational quality on the Hilltop for the worse.

[ISU promises 'open' search for new president](#)  
[Lyndsay Jones](#), October 13, 2023

Finalists for ISU's top job will be announced publicly, and surveys and opportunities to meet the candidates will be completed before the board chooses who to hire, according to Board of Trustees chair Kathy Bohn.

['A lot of causes': Lincoln Christian University to close at school year's end](#)  
[Lyndsay Jones](#), October 13, 2023

Lincoln Christian University will turn over its seminary degree programs to a Missouri-based Christian college that it has maintained ties with for years.

[ISU proposes \\$561 million budget, up 8% over FY2023](#)  
[Charlie Schlenker](#), October 11, 2023

Illinois State University's proposed budget for next year totals more than \$561 million. That's an 8% increase in revenues, or a \$41 million jump, over the fiscal year 2023 budget that began in July.

[Millikin University reset drops tuition 36% beginning fall 2024](#)  
[Lauren Warnecke](#), October 3, 2023

Along with a revised tuition cost, Millikin launches a new full-tuition grant program for Illinois residents with financial need the private university.

[Unit 5 board adopts property tax levy, projects tax rate decrease](#)

[Michele Steinbacher](#) , December 20, 2023

With this levy, Unit 5 property owners should see the tax rate decrease about 22 cents, to about \$5.30 per \$100 of equalized assessed valuation [EAV].

[McLean County school districts on track with state mental health screening requirements](#)

December 19, 2023

[Nobody sits on the bench in band: Advocacy for music funding in Bloomington-Normal](#)

[Emily Bollinger](#), December 15, 2023

Two members of The Music Shoppe went to Washington, D.C., to advocate for music education funding in Bloomington-Normal.

[Unit 5 expands its esports lab; Normal West alum wins a national championship](#)

[Megan Spoerlein](#), December 12, 2023

In partnership with the national competitive gaming league Generation Esports, students from Unit 5 esports were given the opportunity to have hands-on experience building gaming computers for their team in the district's esports computer lab at Normal West High School.

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[ISU's interim president will not fill new role at IU-Indianapolis campus](#)

[Lyndsay Jones](#), December 11, 2023

A news release from the Indiana University system on Monday reported current executive vice chancellor and provost at the University of Missouri Latha Ramchand will become chancellor of IU-Indianapolis next summer.

[Interim ISU president Tarhule is a finalist for vice presidency at a university in Indiana](#)

[Lyndsay Jones](#), November 28, 2023

An Illinois State University spokesperson said former provost and current interim president Aondover Tarhule is weighing other options as his June 30 tenure date comes to a close. Tarhule has been interim president of ISU since February.

[New Extension director offers hope for new direction after local funding dispute, personnel shakeup](#)

[Tim Alexander](#), November 27, 2023

The new director for the University of Illinois Extension in McLean, Livingston and Woodford counties says she wants to offer agriculture and consumer education in more rural communities.

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[State kicks off National Apprenticeship Week at Heartland Community College](#)  
[Charlie Schlenker](#), November 14, 2023

Heartland Community College is celebrating national apprenticeship week with a signing ceremony for new career training enrollees.

[B-N private schools seek other scholarship options with Invest in Kids program set to expire](#)  
[Braden Fogerson](#), November 13, 2023

Illinois lawmakers have allowed the Invest in Kids program to expire. It enables donors to get tax credits for funding private school scholarships.

[2 Heartland professors get grants to study AI, burnout in education](#)  
[Erik Dedo](#), November 10, 2023

Two professors at Heartland Community College have received grants from online learning platform Course Hero to study educational technology.

[Give Something Back visits ISU to celebrate 20 years of sending students to college](#)  
[Jack Podlesnik](#)

, November 5, 2023

It's been two decades since Robert Carr founded Give Something Back. Since then, more than \$40 million worth of scholarships has been given to more than 2,000 students.

[Unit 5's Normal Marching Band invited to ring in 2025 at London parade](#)  
[Jim Stahly Jr.](#), November 3, 2023

London will be the band's first international destination since the Normal Community and Normal West bands combined in 2018.

[Public hearings set as District 87 plans to purchase State Farm building on Oakland Avenue](#)  
[Lyndsay Jones](#), November 3, 2023

The Bloomington school district said it's working on an agreement with the insurance giant to acquire the company's building at 2309 E. Oakland Ave.

['You cannot create what you cannot see': Ex-White House aide, now millionaire CEO, advises ISU students](#), [Jack Podlesnik](#), November 3, 2023

Seeking counseling and academic advising, networking and envisioning your success were a few nuggets of advice given by ISU alum and millionaire CEO Lola Tomorrow at Thursday night's event.

['Room to grow' at 2 District 87 schools based on latest state report card](#)  
[Lyndsay Jones](#), November 2, 2023

Bloomington Junior High School and Sheridan Elementary School both received a "comprehensive" designation from the Illinois State Board of Education, based on data from the 2022-2023 school year.

[ISU formalizes 29-member committee to help find next president](#)  
[Lyndsay Jones](#), October 31, 2023

The 29-member committee that will aid ISU's search for a new president met for the first time Tuesday morning.

[Bloomington teacher named tops in ag education](#)  
[Tim Alexander](#), October 31, 2023

Amanda Stanko of Corpus Christi Catholic Elementary has been named 2023 Agriculture in the Classroom Teacher of the Year.

[Non-credible 'swatting' threats lead to increased security status at Bloomington-Normal schools](#)  
[Charlie Schlenker](#), October 25, 2023

Some District 87 and Unit 5 schools and other community organizations were disrupted Wednesday by a swatting incident.

[Unit 5 school board hears update on district's strategic planning, proposal expected in March](#)  
[Michele Steinbacher](#), October 18, 2023

Unit 5's strategic planning initiative is gaining momentum, with a draft expected by March, the school board heard during its meeting on Wednesday.

[ISU promises 'open' search for new president](#)  
[Lyndsay Jones](#), October 13, 2023

Finalists for ISU's top job will be announced publicly, and surveys and opportunities to meet the candidates will be completed before the board chooses who to hire, according to Board of Trustees chair Kathy Bohn.

['A lot of causes': Lincoln Christian University to close at school year's end](#)  
[Lyndsay Jones](#), October 13, 2023

Lincoln Christian University will turn over its seminary degree programs to a Missouri-based Christian college that it has maintained ties with for years.

[Community members dedicated to expanding, improving restorative practices for McLean County](#), [Melissa Ellin](#), October 12, 2023

McLean County schools have been using restorative practices for years. A local expert wants to increase their use countywide.

[ISU proposes \\$561 million budget, up 8% over FY2023](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#) , October 11, 2023

Illinois State University's proposed budget for next year totals more than \$561 million. That's an 8% increase in revenues, or a \$41 million jump, over the fiscal year 2023 budget that began in July.

[Heartland Community College gets state grant for bike trail](#)

[Eric Stock](#), October 9, 2023

Heartland Community College plans to build a bike trail with money it's getting from the state. Gov. JB Pritzker has announced funding for 13 bike path projects across the state, including Heartland.

['It's a palette': Colene Hoose natural playground now open to the public](#)

[Melissa Ellin](#), October 7, 2023

There are traditional structures at the play park, like the swings, but even those have a wooden frame. Then there's the mystical notes and designs, like the wooden mushroom pockets, the carved animals, and the interactive spaces like the sand pit.

[ISU finance vice president Dan Stephens to retire Jan. 1](#)

[Lyndsay Jones](#), October 6, 2023

Dan Stephens has been the vice president of finance and planning for Illinois State University since then-president Larry Dietz appointed him to the position in 2017.

[Unit 5 strategic plan to set goals for services and where they go](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), October 5, 2023

Unit 5 Superintendent Kristen Weikle said it's high time for a refresh of the school district's strategic plan. The current plan came out in 2016, and Unit 5 is in the middle of updating the guide.

[Illinois State University faculty file for union membership](#)

[Eric Stock](#), October 4, 2023

United Faculty of Illinois State University says it has an "unstoppable majority of faculty" that wants union representation.

[Decades after first Banned Books Week, more books are being challenged](#)

[Lyndsay Jones](#), October 3, 2023

Banned Books Week is an annual event that usually occurs in the last week of September to highlight books that have been the subject of censorship attempts. This year's observance runs from Oct. 1-7.

[Millikin University reset drops tuition 36% beginning fall 2024](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), October 3, 2023

Along with a revised tuition cost, Millikin launches a new full-tuition grant program for Illinois residents with financial need the private university.

## **Business and Economy**

[Rep. LaHood talks Biden impeachment, an immigration deal, and why the farm bill was backburnered](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 21, 2023

U.S. Rep. Darin LaHood voted to move ahead with an investigation of potential impeachable offenses by President Biden. All House Republicans did so.

[State gives OSF St. Joseph the green light for expansion project](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 20, 2023

The state of Illinois has approved a \$17.77 million expansion of OSF St. Joseph Medical Center in Bloomington. The hospital will add 25 beds to the current 152-bed total; 10 will be medical-surgical care beds and 15 will be for intensive care patients.

[Board of Review hears property tax appeal of 'dead' Eastland Mall](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 19, 2023

A dispute over the tax value of Eastland Mall in Bloomington suggests school district and local governments are frustrated with inaction by mall owners and with the retail center's decline. That came through in arguments made before the McLean County Board of Review in an appeal of the 36-acre mall's assessed value.

[AT&T to buy Rivian vans and trucks for fleet use](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 14, 2023

Rivian and AT&T have announced Rivian's first sale of electric vans to a company other than Amazon. Rivian announced earlier this year it would end its exclusive agreement with Amazon and begin selling to other businesses.

[Illinois awarded more than \\$95 million to improve passenger rail service](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 8, 2023

The Federal Railroad Administration is giving Illinois \$95.1 million for passenger train service. Some of that will go toward the Chicago-to-St. Louis corridor that includes Bloomington-Normal, Pontiac and Lincoln in central Illinois.

[Outgoing Normal town official: New approach needed to spark housing construction](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), November 21, 2023

Bloomington-Normal may need a different approach to stimulate housing construction. The community first quantified the need for housing in a study a year ago and updated it in June to an estimated 7,500 units.

[The history of agriculture in McLean County is a lot more than corn and beans](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), November 21, 2023

Agriculture is big business in McLean County. But it wasn't always that way. And those new to the area probably don't know how the county got where it is. As part of our ongoing Welcome Home series, WGLT dives into the history of agriculture in McLean County.

[State kicks off National Apprenticeship Week at Heartland Community College](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), November 14, 2023

Heartland Community College is celebrating national apprenticeship week with a signing ceremony for new career training enrollees.

[State Farm reports decline in catalytic converter thefts](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), November 6, 2023

After several years of sharply rising catalytic converter thefts State Farm said this year may break the trend. Through the first half of the year, the Bloomington-based insurance giant said thefts are down 37% nationwide and in Illinois.

[Memo to B-N employers: Be ready to compete for workers](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), October 17, 2023

Bloomington-Normal and the rest of McLean County have a worker shortage. So does much of the rest of the nation. Policymakers and educators are grappling with a multiyear challenge to increase the supply of workers who can keep the area financially strong and vital.

[Rivian production ramps to 16,000 vehicles for third quarter](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), October 2, 2023

Rivian said its third quarter production numbers leave the electric vehicle maker on pace to meet its annual goal. Rivian said in a news release it produced 16,304 from July to September.

## **Arts and Culture**

[3 things to do this weekend: New Year's Eve, Noon Year's Eve and a Hairbanger's Ball](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), December 29, 2023

Options for keeping things mellow—or going full party-mode this New Year's Eve

[McLean County Museum of History will restore the Livingston's Santas — just in time for \(next\) Christmas](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), December 24, 2023

The beloved, blushing Santas that once adorned a downtown Bloomington department store have been in storage for more than a decade — and are scheduled to be back on the town for the 2024 holiday season.

[3 things to do this weekend: Sweet Nothings, holiday market and a nice night at Nightshop](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), December 22, 2023

Local musicians offer respite from holiday preparations at Nightshop and Jazz Up Front.

[Inside Art video: Come together with printmaker Lisa Lofgren](#)

[Emily Bollinger](#), December 21, 2023

Episode two of WGLT's video series Inside Art, featuring Bloomington-Normal printmaker Lisa Lofgren.

[The music we loved in 2023: Rustbelt soul, Robert Cray and a Guy Clark lesbian](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), December 19, 2023

A summary of some of our favorite stories, conversations and songs that hit WGLT's airwaves this year.

[Arts and culture roundup 2023: Circus, the Smithsonian and a landmark play's last curtain call](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), December 19, 2023

As the year comes to a close, WGLT looks back at some of our favorite arts and entertainment stories from 2023.

[Four holiday light displays you don't want to miss in Bloomington-Normal](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), December 18, 2023

A local Facebook group created a map with more than 40 suggestions for holiday light viewing in Bloomington-Normal. The map makes it easier than ever to create a DIY driving tour of some over-the-top displays.

[3 things to do this weekend: Way Down Wanderers, a '90s throwback and an out-of-this-world interfaith holiday show](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), December 15, 2023

Celebrating 10 years, Peoria band the Way Down Wanderers chose to mark the occasion in Bloomington-Normal at a venue that's special to them.

[Nobody sits on the bench in band: Advocacy for music funding in Bloomington-Normal](#)  
[Emily Bollinger](#), December 15, 2023

Two members of The Music Shoppe went to Washington, D.C., to advocate for music education funding in Bloomington-Normal.

[McHistory: Intrepid Twin City explorer offered 'proof' that Santa exists](#)  
[Charlie Schlenker](#)  
, December 13, 2023

Most people know about the letter a little girl wrote to the New York Sun newspaper in 1897 asking whether Santa Claus is real. It prompted the famous response, "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus." Bloomington-Normal children encountered their own slightly more intrepid version of that idea a couple decades later.

[Deanne Bryant's final piece on the podium at Illinois Symphony's Holiday Pops is a glorious tribute to friendship](#)  
[Lauren Warnecke](#), December 13, 2023

Bryant pioneered string programs in Unit 5 schools and led the Bloomington-Normal Youth Symphony for three decades. She recently stepped down and will conduct her final piece with BYNS Saturday at the Illinois Symphony's Holiday Pops in the Heartland.

[Santa makes a special stop at Rader Family Farms' first annual Christmas on the Farm](#)  
[Lauren Warnecke](#), December 13, 2023

After a busy harvest season, Rader Family Farms isn't slowing down yet. This weekend marks the 80-acre farm and recreation area's first annual "Christmas on the Farm." Santa will be there, plus seasonal crafts, performances and lots of Rader's legendary pumpkin donuts.

[McHistory: Newly donated World War II diary shares POW experience of Normal resident](#)  
[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 12, 2023

The words of a World War II prisoner of war from Normal show a grim situation filled with privation, guard brutality, and occasional diversions. This comes from Robert S. Hall's wartime journal, recently donated to the McLean County Museum of History.

[Bloomington's The Something Brothers tighten their songwriting on the new album 'Sharpen Up the Dynamite'](#)  
[Jon Norton](#), December 10, 2023

Bloomington-based The Something Brothers, who disbanded in the early 90s after relentlessly touring the country and flirting with major record labels, just released a new 14-song CD that follows a COVID-era 60-song triple album titled "Flak."

[Way Down Wanderers find their way to Castle Theatre to celebrate their first decade](#)  
[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 8, 2023

The Peoria-based roots pop band Way Down Wanderers brings its 10th anniversary tour to Bloomington's Castle Theatre on Dec. 16. In the last decade, the group has put out three albums and a couple EPs, hit nearly every state in the U.S. and played in Canada and the U.K.

[3 things to do this weekend: Fancy mansions, Curry plays ZZ Top and holiday fun at Community Players](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), December 8, 2023

Bloomington native Matthew Curry makes his annual pilgrimage to the Castle. Plus more holiday magic all around town.

['Classic works': Growmark selling its art collection to private buyers](#)

[Charlie Schlenker](#), December 4, 2023

Art collectors in central Illinois have a rare opportunity. The agriculture business Growmark is selling off its art collection. Appraisers valued the more than 60 works at more than \$90,000.

[3 things to do this weekend: FOLEPI, a festive First Friday and Holiday 'Spec'](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), November 30, 2023

The holiday season is officially here! We've got a few recommendations for family-friendly ways to celebrate.

[Inside Art: Behind the scenes with a maestro](#)

[Emily Bollinger](#), November 30, 2023

Inside Art is WGLT's new video series, featuring central Illinois artists and their craft. The first episode showcases Bloomington musician Nick "Maestro" Jones.

[Alejandro Gómez Guillén conducts Illinois Symphony at Second Presbyterian, filling in for director finalist Naomi Woo](#)

[Lauren Warnecke](#), November 30, 2023

Woo was unable to visit due to a family emergency. Guillén leads the orchestra in her first of two programs, with works by Mozart, Beethoven and Caroline Shaw.

[Smoking Popes at the Castle Theatre is more than just '90s nostalgia — they're a band on top of their game](#), [Lauren Warnecke](#), November 29, 2023

Drummer Mike Felumlee of the Chicago rock band Smoking Popes moved to Bloomington three years ago. The band recently met at a West Bloomington recording studio to lay down tracks for a new album. Smoking Popes plays the Castle Sunday — the band's first Twin City show since 2019.

### **[Tenor Justin Vickers brings queer love to the front in new album of art songs](#)**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), November 20, 2023

Illinois State University music professor Justin Vickers' new CD includes world premiere recordings of Benjamin Britten's "Epilogue," and the English translation of "The Poet's Echo," transposed by tenor Peter Pears — Britten's muse and life partner.

### **[Shuckin' Awesome: Over 30 artists featured at Shirley art market](#)**

[Emily Bollinger](#), November 20, 2023

The Shuckin' Awesome Holiday Art Market was held Saturday and Sunday at Funk Farms Premium Beef, featuring works by more than 30 artists.

### **[Peoria's Tracey Frugoli debuts a 'radical shift' in her painting at McLean County Arts Center's Holiday Treasures](#)**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), November 17, 2023

Painter Tracey Frugoli spent decades honing her technique in landscapes and portraiture. Feeling stuck by the pandemic, she leaned on her art therapy training to go a whole new direction. She'll be featured at McLean County Arts Center's Holiday Treasures.

### **[3 things to do this weekend: Funky art mart, Cantus Novus and a quadruple bill at the Castle](#)**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), November 17, 2023

Shirley, Atlanta and McLean, IL teamed up to present a weekend of fun along the Mother Road, anchored by an art fair in Funks Grove.

### **[Seasons of life underscore Swim Ignorant Fire's latest album, 'Glow'](#)**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), November 16, 2023

Experimental musician Stephen Holliger embraces a blossoming collaboration with Stefen Robinson and Nate Hahn, blending piano, electronics, bass clarinet and pedal steel guitar to create a sound he calls "sad cosmic country."

### **Festival of Trees marks 30 years of holiday delights**

[Erik Dedo](#), November 16, 2023

One of the area's largest Christmas-themed fundraisers is marking 30 years. The Baby Fold is hosting its annual Festival of Trees through Saturday at the Interstate Center in Bloomington.

### **Composer Omar Thomas returns to ISU for 5th anniversary of 'Come Sunday'**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), November 14, 2023

Omar Thomas wrote a gospel suite for band because he had yet to see it done. The piece premiered at Illinois State University in 2018.

### **3 things to do this weekend: Handel holiday kick-off, Mackinaw murder mystery and a classic pair at Jazz UpFront**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), November 10, 2023

Regional jazz and blues artists convene at Jazz UpFront, while a Mackinaw Valley Vineyards dinner dresses up in a Knights of the Round Table theme.

### **'Bloomsday' at Heartland Theatre: Unapologetic romance inspired by James Joyce — and easier to follow**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), November 7, 2023

This time-bending love story at Heartland Theatre Company follows two star-crossed 20-somethings who spent a single day in Dublin together — and the regret they carried for decades.

### **3 things to do this weekend: Art walk, Cody Jinks and three (yes, three!) theater shows**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), November 3, 2023

The 23rd annual Art Walk is paired with a "shop small"-themed First Friday in downtown Bloomington

### **Pointing forward: Music nonprofit goes big with latest eclectic act at history museum**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), November 2, 2023

Claire Rousay, the Canadian electronic musician now based in Los Angeles, recently signed with the Thrill Jockey label.

### **[Next ISO candidate Yaniv Dinur conducts American composers and a virtuosic Prokofiev concerto](#)**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), November 1, 2023

Saturday's concert begins and ends with two of America's most prolific classical composers.

### **[History museum's Merwin Gallery reopens with slices of McLean County life](#)**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), November 1, 2023

The new gallery doubles the percentage of objects on display, chosen from McLean County Museum of History's 18,000 items.

### **[Bloomington-Normal screenwriters win award for film about a Black, male nurse during COVID-19](#)**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), November 1, 2023

ISU professor John McHale and registered nurse Xavier Jackson wrote a feature-length film inspired by Jackson's experiences in rural health care from 2020-2021.

### **[Illinois Art Station helps expand access to art in Fulton County](#)**

[Camryn Cutinello](#), October 31, 2023

The volunteer-run Fulton County Arts hosts art fairs, which give artists from all mediums a place to showcase and sell their work.

### **[MIOpera pulls remainder of 2023-24 season, leaves the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts](#)**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), October 30, 2023

The professional opera company said it's moving in a new direction.

### **[IWU professor wins Quarry Farm Fellowship linking American authors Twain and Updike](#)**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), October 30, 2023

English professor James Plath has studied and written extensively about novelist John Updike. He will explore the author's connection to Mark Twain during a retreat at Twain's summer home in upstate New York.

### **[3 things to do this weekend: Halloween cinema, new Ewing exhibit and a 10-acre corn maze](#)**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), October 27, 2023

Saturday is the final day for Rader Family Farms' B.Y.O.Flashlight night maze.

### **[An 'urge and a tension' for tradition: 'Fiddler' comes to Community Players](#)**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), October 25, 2023

Dramaturg Morgan Rondinelli says themes coursing through "Fiddler on the Roof" apply to contemporary Jewish Americans.

### **[New exhibits at Peoria Riverfront Museum celebrate central Illinois innovators](#)**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), October 24, 2023

Included in the trio of now open shows is a show by world-renowned visual artist Nicolas Africano, who lives and works in Normal.

### **[3 things to do this weekend: Haunted Trail, intergenerational country voices and Latin jazz royalty](#)**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), October 20, 2023

This weekend's Haunted Trail is a "Not-So-Scary" version—thrill seekers might wait for next week, when ghouls and goblins hid in the bushes.

### **[First of four director candidates conducts Illinois Symphony in fiery season opener](#)**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), October 19, 2023

Fort Worth Symphony assistant conductor Taichi Fukumura declined a new contract, looking for the next big thing in his career — a possible directorship with Illinois Symphony Orchestra.

### **[McHistory: Baseball ban a dark day for some in Bloomington](#)**

[Charlie Schlenker](#), October 13, 2023

The Major League Baseball playoffs are once again making October a special time. But baseball was not always here to root for and entertain us.

### **[Can the Twin Cities support a professional theater? Local theater pros say nope](#)**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), October 13, 2023

Local theater companies aren't suffering as badly as the nationwide trends, but without more financial support, they can't afford to go pro.

### **[3 things to do this weekend: Country Western, Christian rock and the final fall bird walk](#)**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), October 13, 2023

Just as fall colors are about to pop and wildlife heads south, JWP Audubon hosts its final bird walk of the season.

### **[Tomes of Terror will bring horror authors to Bloomington for convention and book signings](#)**

[Ryan Denham](#), October 12, 2023

Bobzbay and Red Raccoon Games in downtown Bloomington will host Tomes of Terror on Saturday. It's their first-ever horror fiction convention and multi-author book signing. WGLT spoke with Sue Rovens, an indie writer from Normal who is one of 11 authors being featured at the event.

### **['Appreciate cultural differences': 2 women start travel club for Bloomington-Normal teen girls](#)**

[Megan Spoerlein](#), October 9, 2023

A recently formed club, the Blo/No Teen Girls Travel Club, is taking its first trip next June to Italy.

### **['Redbirds Reign': ISU aims to build stronger connections with homecoming changes](#)**

[Megan Spoerlein](#), October 8, 2023

Grammy award-winning alum J. Ivy is returning for a night of celebration at Illinois State University's homecoming. Ivy has written and performed poetry for Michael Jordan and for Beyonce's Black is King film promo.

### **[Love Letters Tour brings blues luminary and roots rocker Samantha Fish back to Bloomington](#)**

[Lauren Warnecke](#), October 6, 2023

The tour is a retrospective capturing greatest hits from her 15-year career.

### **[Bloomington-based band Kadync works on original music while performing at open mics](#)**

[Emily Bollinger](#), October 2, 2023

Bloomington-based singer-songwriter and guitarist Noah Hutton and his bass player Marco Freeman perform at The Station Saloon open mics every other Tuesday night, while Hutton runs sound and sometimes hosts.