

Public File Information for 2nd Quarter of 2015

As station News Director, I can certify that this group of stations runs daily newscasts from 5AM-9AM and also airs "Focus," a news and public affairs program on Sunday mornings on WLRW 94.5 FM-WIXY 100.3 FM-WREE 92.5 FM-WYXY 99.1 FM-Oldies 97.9 (WLRW 94.5 FM HD-2)-Extra 92.1 (WCFF 92.5 FM HD-2)-Hits 99.7 (WIXY 100.3 FM HD-2). "Focus" deals with the issues facing our community and our state. Here are some of the issues covered on "Focus" programs in recent weeks with attached scripts:

1. Autism Awareness and National Child Abuse Prevention Months in April
2. E-cigs not helping smokers to quit
3. Reducing the punishment for marijuana possession in Illinois
4. Job studies in Illinois
5. Christie Clinic Illinois Marathon coverage
6. Canine and Bird flu in Illinois
7. Severe weather scams
8. Conversion therapy legislation
9. Tax Day and Equal Pay Day
10. The Senate's first 100 days
11. National Crime Victims' Rights Week
12. Interview with Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White
13. Movers for Moms with Two Men and a Truck celebrating Mother's Day
14. Melanoma Monday in May
15. Donating your spring cleaning items to charity
16. Treating kids with ADHD
17. Minimum wage debate
18. Urbana's compost and rain barrel sale, and springtime with the Urbana Park District
19. Cuts to Illinois' Community Care Program
20. Why bees are disappearing in Illinois
21. Memorial Day (water illnesses and the start of boating season)
22. Champaign County Humane Society's Mutt Strut
23. Graduation rates in Illinois and preventing "summer slide"
24. Troubling trends in Illinois' child welfare system
25. Champaign's Crisis Nursery's annual basket auction
26. Uncork Urbana wine festival
27. Getting a "surprise" medical bill
28. Addressing the homeless youth population in Illinois
29. Climate change and the EPA's new Clean Water Rule and Clean Air Act
30. Organizations that provide healthy summer meals for kids while school is out
31. Finding back-up child care during the summer
32. Bobcat hunting in Illinois
33. An update on the Common Ground Food Co-op coming to Champaign
34. Illinois' budget crisis
35. Building homes with Habitat for Humanity of Champaign County

I can attest that newscasts run on a daily basis, and Focus airs weekly.



Sarah Sheppard, News Director
Illini Radio Group



FOCUS (Q2-Ep.1) 4/5/2015

It's Autism Awareness Month.

Good morning and welcome to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. Focus is a weekly show dedicated to a look at news, and public affairs. *April is Autism Awareness Month. It is also a time to remember those with autism who lost their lives after wandering. Efforts are also underway to build support for Avonte's (ah-VON-tay's) Law, a bill in the U-S Senate that would help to reduce the risk of injury and death related to wandering. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection reports.* (START AUTISM MONTH SEGMENT)

IN: "Nearly half of..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

E-cigarettes don't help smokers quit. That story is next on Focus.

PSAs

Welcome back to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. *The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has kicked off its new Tips From Former Smokers campaign, highlighting health effects beyond the heart and lungs. The series addresses colorectal cancer and vision problems associated with smoking, and also discourages the use of e-cigarettes as a smoking alternative. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection has more.* (START ECIG ALT SEGMENT)

IN: "Colon cancer, vision..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

Supporters of legislation that would reduce the punishment for marijuana possession in Illinois say it's not about the drug, but about reducing the prison population. House Bill 218 would eliminate criminal penalties for marijuana possession of up to 30 grams, replacing them with a \$100 fine. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection reports. (START POT SEGMENT)

IN: "Correctional facilities in..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

Having a college education may be more important than ever before. That story is next on Focus.

PSAs

Welcome back to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. *Illinois ranks 20th in the nation in a new report measuring how many online job postings require college degrees. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection has more.* (START GRAD JOBS SEGMENT)

IN: "Having a college..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

Illinois is among ten states sharing a \$200 million award from the US Department of Agriculture for skills-training programs to help food-assistance recipients find stable, local jobs. The money will be used to expand a current program into seven areas of the state. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection reports. (START JOBS SEGMENT)

IN: "Illinois will be..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

And that'll do it for this week's Focus. Thanks for joining us. If you have any questions or comments about this week's show, write to me, Sarah Addison – News Director. 2603 West Bradley Avenue. Champaign, IL 61821. Or email me, news@illiniradio.com. Focus will return same time next Sunday morning.

→ I'm Troy
Wilde

Illinois News Connection - PAGE 2

**MEDIA PRODUCTS ONLINE: www.newsservice.org Your Web Account ID is: INC-249
Sound Files on the Phone: (888) 600-9800, ID Code: 29**

April 1, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Remembering Those with Autism Who Come to Harm from Wandering

Springfield, IL – It's the first day of Autism Awareness Month, and also a day to remember those with autism who lost their lives after wandering. Efforts are also underway to build support for Avonte's (ah-VON-tay's) Law, a bill in the U-S Senate that would help to reduce the risk of injury and death related to wandering. Comments from Wendy Fournier (forn-YEER), president, National Autism Association. Image available: photo of a boy walking alone.

Intro: Nearly half of children on the autism spectrum are believed to engage in wandering, a behavior that can end in tragedy. The U-S Senate is considering a bill know as Avonte's Law, which would provide funding for police departments to purchase equipment that can help locate people with autism who go missing. Wendy Fournier with the National Autism Association says those with autism typically wander to something of interest, or they flee an overwhelming environment.

Cut 54249 :15 *"Noises, lights and people and hearing five different conversations at the same time. That kind of stuff can be magnified for people on the spectrum. A lot of times the only thing they can do is run away. That's the only way they can get any relief from that sensory overload."*

Tag: Fournier says due to challenges with communication and safety awareness, children or adults with autism can end up in dangerous situations when they wander. According to the C-D-C, an estimated one-in-68 children in the United States is diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder.

Second Cut: Avonte's Law is named after a 14-year-old with autism whose body was discovered in a river three months after he ran away from his New York City school. Fournier says the legislation also calls for training for law enforcement agencies to better recognize and respond to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Cut 55249 :13 *"It's really easy for a person with a communication disorder to come across as being uncooperative to the police so the police really need some training to start recognizing autism and other cognitive disorders."*

Third Cut: Fournier says parents are encouraged to implement measures that can prevent wandering, including security alerts on doors and I-D bracelets or tracking devices for their child. She says swimming lessons are also crucial.

Cut 56249 :12 *"About 90 percent of the kids who die following a wandering incident die from drowning. Our kids are very, very attracted to water. So we recommend that everybody teach their child, make sure they know how to swim."*

Tag: April is Autism Awareness Month, and today (Wednesday) is being observed as a Day of Remembrance for those with autism who lost their lives while wandering

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses soundbite(s)

LEAD: It's the first day of Autism Awareness Month, and also a day to remember those with autism who lost their lives after wandering. Mary Schuermann explains.

Cut 57249 :49 *Outcue... Mary Schuermann reporting*

Note to Editors: The bill: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/163>. Info on wandering: <http://aware.nationalautismassociation.org/>. Reach Fournier at 401-835-5828.

Illinois News Connection

A statewide news service for Illinois

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April 3, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

CDC: E-Cigs Don't Help Smokers Quit

Springfield, IL – The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has kicked off its new Tips From Former Smokers campaign, highlighting health effects beyond the heart and lungs. The series addresses colorectal cancer and vision problems associated with smoking, and also discourages the use of e-cigarettes as a smoking alternative. Comments from Dr. Tim McAfee (MAC-ah-fee), senior medical officer at the CDC's Office on Smoking and Health; and "Julia," a former smoker featured in the new campaign. Image available: Photo of e-cigarette.

Intro: Colon cancer, vision problems and myths about vaping – using e-cigarettes – are featured in the C-D-C's new Tips From Former Smokers campaign. C-D-C Senior Medical Officer Dr. Tim McAfee says smoking-related health damages beyond the heart and lungs are not well-known, although scientifically proven. He adds that vaping is being aggressively marketed as a way to help smokers quit, although the research so far shows it doesn't help. In addition, he cites research showing that reducing the amount of traditional smoking by using e-cigs doesn't help, either.

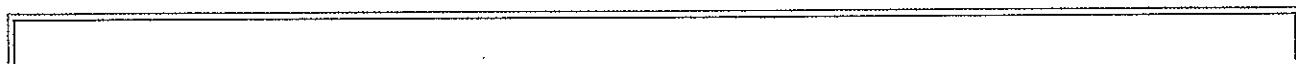
Cut 58249 :13 "The 2010 Surgeon General's Report found that fewer cigarettes per day does not reduce cardiovascular disease, and that the only way to stop the progression of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease is to quit smoking completely."

Tag: The anti-smoking campaign features television and radio spots, online images and video and print components bearing testimonials from former smokers dealing with major health problems – and directs smokers to call the QuitLine (1-800-QUIT-NOW).

Second Cut: "Julia" is one of the former smokers in this year's campaign. She details her life after colon cancer, which she connects to more than 30 years of smoking, starting as a teenager.

Cut 59249 :12 "It wasn't just about the physical pain and suffering I endured, it was also the fear and sadness I saw in my family that hurt almost more than the cancer itself."

Tag: Other former smokers sharing their stories talk about rectal cancer, lung cancer and age-related macular degeneration.



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March 19, 2015

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Decriminalizing Pot a Step toward Prison Reform in IL?

Springfield, IL – Supporters of legislation that would reduce the punishment for marijuana possession in Illinois say it's not about the drug, but about reducing the prison population. House Bill 218 would eliminate criminal penalties for marijuana possession of up to 30 grams, replacing them with a \$100 fine. Comments from Bryant Jackson Green, Criminal Justice policy analyst, Illinois Policy Institute. Image available: photo of prison cells.

Intro: Correctional facilities in Illinois are over capacity, and supporters say a bill under consideration in Springfield would help reduce the prison population. House Bill 218, introduced by Representative Kelly Cassidy of Chicago, decriminalizes possession of small amounts of marijuana. Bryant Jackson Green with the Illinois Fiscal Policy Institute says it would help to redirect criminal-justice resources to focus on crimes with more victims and public safety risks than marijuana possession.

Cut 35249 :15 *"We only incarcerated around a few thousand people in the '70s but that number has increased sevenfold to over 48 thousand people today. So this is sort of one small step to getting us back towards focusing on streamlining and reducing our prison population. It's not just about this one drug."*

Tag: If passed, H-B 218 would punish marijuana possession under 30 grams with a fine of 100 dollars, and would lower penalties for possession of over 30 grams but less than 500. Currently possession of 30 grams of marijuana is punishable by up to one year in prison. Marijuana possession already has been decriminalized in more than a dozen states and Washington D-C.

Second Cut: Jackson Green says Illinois has the fifth highest arrest rate for marijuana possession, and those arrests disproportionately falls on minority communities.

Cut 36249 :12 *"It does matter that these are the people that tend to be punished most for this crime, and it affects your ability to later on go on and find employment, get admission to college, to apply for student loans. It can have a really big impact on your future career prospects."*

Tag: Jackson Green says there are economic benefits, to locking up fewer people. Research from the Vera Institute found it cost more than 38 thousand dollars a year to imprison someone in Illinois, and Jackson Green says the state's prison system is more than 150 percent of capacity.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses soundbite(s)

LEAD: Correctional facilities in Illinois are over capacity, and supporters say a bill under consideration in Springfield would help reduce the prison population. The story from Mary Schuermann.

Cut 37249 :58 *Outcue...Mary Schuermann reporting.*

Note to Editors: Jackson Green is available at is 312-346-5700. The bill: <http://tinyurl.com/mq4wexk>.

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Two Stories Available Today

April 1, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Report: Over Half of Online Job Ads in IL Seek College Graduates

Chicago, IL – Illinois ranks 20th in the nation in a new report measuring how many online job postings require college degrees. Comments from Dr. Tony Carnevale (car-na-VOLL-ee), lead report author and center director, Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. Image available: Photo of college graduation ceremony.

Intro: Having a college education may be more important than ever before for job-seekers in Illinois and around the U-S. A new report from Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce shows that more than half (53 percent) of the online job postings in Illinois are for positions that require at least a four-year college degree. Dr. Tony Carnevale, is an economist and lead author of the report.

Cut 51249 :06 *"Illinois has lots of jobs for college graduates and is not over-producing college graduates - that's what this says, essentially."*

Tag: Carnevale says the research involved analyzing over 160-thousand online job ads in the state, and several million across the country, to see which career fields are the most promising by state. He adds that most college-level job listings are for software and application developers, and computer occupations.

Second Cut: Carnevale says the report underscores the need to go to college to get a good job, but also to get a degree that is directly related to the field of work. □□□□

Cut 52249 :15 *"The texture of what employers are looking for is changing, in the sense that they're much more focused on specialization and degree specialization. They care what you majored in college, as much as they care whether or not you went."*

Tag: And the report says jobs in engineering and health care fields figured prominently in online ads across the country.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses first soundbite(s)

LEAD: Having a college education may be more important than ever before for job-seekers in Illinois and around the U-S. Reporter Troy Wilde has the details.

Cut 53249 :45 *Outcue...Troy Wilde*

Note to Editors: See the report at <https://cew.georgetown.edu/report/rankingthelstates/>. Reach Carnevale at 202-687-4984.

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March 30, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Grant to Connect Low-Income IL Job Seekers to Employers

Springfield, IL – Illinois is among ten states sharing a \$200 million award from the United States Department of Agriculture for skills-training programs to help food-assistance recipients find stable, local jobs. The money will be used to expand a current program into seven areas of the state. Comments from Tim English, USDA Food and Nutrition Service Regional Administrator. Image available: photo of career books.

Intro: Illinois will be expanding efforts to connect low-income job seekers to resources that can help them secure employment. The state is receiving nearly 22 million dollars in grant funding from the U-S Department of Agriculture to test an employment and training program. U-S-D-A Food and Nutrition Service Regional Administrator Tim English says the program will assist participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in finding jobs with local businesses.

Cut 48249 :12 *"This effort is really about helping people develop the skills that they need to find good-paying jobs. Hopefully that can lead to self-sufficiency, which can ultimately lead to them not needing to rely on the program anymore."*

Tag: The grant was authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill, and Illinois is among the ten states receiving a total of 200 million dollars for the pilot projects. In Illinois, more than one million households currently receive SNAP benefits.

Second Cut: The funding will enable the Illinois Department of Human Service to roll out its Job Training and Economic Development program into seven areas of the state. English say it's currently a small-scale program that boosts economic development by linking businesses to prospective employees. □□□□

Cut 49249 :15 *"That was one of the reasons that it was attractive is that it was a proven model that Illinois was already using and it was a matter of just building upon that and expanding what was available. Illinois' project also looks at seven areas around the state, so it's urban and rural opportunities."*

Tag: English says SNAP recipients face various barriers to finding work, including long-term unemployment, homelessness, and physical or emotional challenges. He says the job-training program takes a holistic approach to case management by assessing the job seeker's needs and then placing the client in an accelerated adult education program, technical training or a work-based learning pathway.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses soundbite(s)

LEAD: Illinois will be expanding efforts to connect low-income job seekers to resources that can help them secure employment. Mary Schuermann explains.

Cut 50249 :47 *Outcue...Mary Schuermann, reporting.*

Note to Editors: English is available through Kathy Fiorito at 312-353-1866.

Handwritten signature/initials

FOCUS 4/12/2015

Get Up, Get Active with Busey and the Christie Clinic Illinois Marathon

Good morning and welcome to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. Focus is a weekly show dedicated to a look at news, and public affairs. (START YOUTH RUN SEGMENT)

IN: "Before you know..."

OUT: "... Thank you. Appreciate it."

Don't get fooled by severe weather home repair scams. That story is next on Focus.

PSAs

Welcome back to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. *It's a scam that has been raking in billions of dollars from unsuspecting consumers across the state and around the nation. Local consumer advocates offer some timely advice on how to protect yourself from con artists engaged in home improvement scams. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection reports.* (START SEVERE WX SCAM SEGMENT)

IN: "Spring storms can..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

Every child deserves to group happy. That story is next on Focus.

PSAs

Welcome back to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. *April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, and state organizations are raising awareness and promoting the prevention of child abuse and neglect. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection has more.* (START NCAPM SEGMENT)

IN: "Child abuse is..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

Lawmakers are considering a bill that would ban any mental health provider from engaging in efforts to change the sexual orientation of anyone under the age of 18. While opponents claim the legislation infringes upon a family's right to privacy, supporters say conversion therapy is unethical and linked to depression and suicidal behavior. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection reports. (START CONVERSION THERAPY SEGMENT.)

PSAs

And that'll do it for this week's Focus. Thanks for joining us. If you have any questions or comments about this week's show, write to me, Sarah Addison – News Director. 2603 West Bradley Avenue. Champaign, IL 61821. Or email me, news@illiniradio.com. Focus will return same time next Sunday morning.

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April 10, 2015

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Don't Get Fooled By Severe Weather Home Repair Scams

Springfield, IL — It's a scam that has been raking in billions of dollars from unsuspecting consumers in Illinois and around the nation. Local consumer advocates offer some timely advice on how to protect yourself from con artists engaged in home improvement scams. Comments from Bob Denz, former FBI Agent; and Steve Bernas (BUR-nus), president and CEO, Better Business Bureau serving Chicago and Northern Illinois. Image available: photo of a roof under repair.

Intro: Spring storms can wreak havoc on Illinois homes, and that's why local consumer watchdogs are warning to beware of scam artists offering steep discounts. Former FBI Agent Bob Denz says scam artists usually say they happened to be in the neighborhood and have a crew available right now. It's a simple operation that he says rakes in billions of dollars each year nationwide from unsuspecting consumers.

Cut 74249 :14 "Those billions of dollars are very attractive to con artists trying to sell you a repair job. They often work in pairs, and also the other thing the con artist needs is to rush you into this — a low-ball figure, but you have to tell me now."

Tag: He says the Better Business Bureau ranks this scam among the top ten that are currently preying on consumers in Illinois and the nation.

Second Cut: Steve Bernas with the B-B-B serving Chicago and Northern Illinois says there are some things to consider when choosing a contractor to repair property damage. He advises asking for proof of licensing and bonding, getting several quotes from different companies, and never paying with cash.

Cut 75249 :11 "That's usually what we call the sign of the tipoff to the ripoff, especially if you have to pay upfront. Because really you should pay in the third: third in the beginning, third in the middle, and third at the end of the contract itself when you are satisfied. But never paying cash."

Third Cut: Bernas says prices are typically higher immediately after a storm, so it's best to wait a few days to hire someone. But when a basement is flooded, trees are downed, or windows are broken, Bernas says homeowners often want to get the problem fixed as soon as possible.

Cut 76249 :14 "They bank on this information that you have really no choice and you go with the first person that comes up to your door. So, it's hard to turn those people away but you've got to do the research on those organizations otherwise you could end up losing thousands of dollars or being scammed in some way."

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April 8, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Preventing Child Abuse: Every Child Deserves to Grow Up Happy

Springfield, IL – April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, and organizations in Illinois are raising awareness and promoting the prevention of child abuse and neglect. They're urging Illinoisans to show their support by wearing blue on Friday. Comments from Roy Harley, executive director, Prevent Child Abuse Illinois. Image available: Photo of a crayon-colored pinwheel drawing.

Intro: Child abuse is preventable, but hundreds of thousands of Illinois children are victims of abuse or neglect every year. Roy Harley with Prevent Child Abuse Illinois says as a result, children can experience emotional, psychological and physical problems that last a lifetime. It's National Child Abuse Prevention Month and Harley says they use the pinwheel as a symbol to remind Illinoisans that all children deserve a happy childhood.

Cut 67249 :15 "Great childhoods mean that they grow up in healthy, nurturing, caring families and communities. And each of us has a responsibility to make that happen for kids, so that they will have a great childhood, which allows them to grow to their full potential."

Tag: Harley says child abuse can be prevented through programs and policies that support families. And he says Illinoisans can help by offering to babysit or provide a meal for a neighbor family, or volunteering at church or school, or in social service programs for families in their community. Friday is "Wear Blue Day" for child abuse prevention.

Second Cut: Harley says neglect and physical or sexual abuse is typically what comes to mind when people think about child abuse. But he points out that emotional abuse is also common and destructive.

Cut 68249 :13 "The kind of abuse that destroys a child's sense of self-esteem, a child's sense of competency – in which a child is belittled or blamed, or demeaned constantly – and that is exceptionally costly to the child's well-being."

Third Cut: It's estimated that substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect in Illinois have jumped more than 25-percent since 2006. Harley believes it correlates to decreased funding for programs that support families.

Cut 69249 :14 "We've seen cutbacks in home visiting programs, to childcare – we've even seen cutbacks in Child Protective Services, which is responsible to ameliorate the issues of child abuse"

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March 24, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Illinois Conversion Therapy Ban: Ethics vs. Privacy

Springfield, IL – Illinois lawmakers are considering a bill that would ban any mental health provider from engaging in efforts to change the sexual orientation of anyone under the age of 18. While opponents claim the legislation infringes upon a family's right to privacy, supporters say conversion therapy is unethical and linked to depression and suicidal behavior. Comments from Dr. Dennis Shelby, co-chair, advocacy relations, American Psychoanalytic Association. Image available: photo of a sad teenage girl.

Intro: Illinois could follow the lead of other states that have made a controversial practice aimed at "curing" homosexuality in adolescents illegal. The Conversion Therapy Prohibition Act (HB 217/SB 111) would specifically ban any mental health provider from engaging in efforts to change the sexual orientation of a minor. Dr. Dennis Shelby, with the American Psychoanalytic Association, says conversation therapy, or reparative therapy, can stem from a parent's misguided response to a child questioning his or her sexual orientation or gender identify.

Cut 42249 :15 *"We have parents' knee-jerk reaction and there are people out there that will say, 'Sure we can change this.' Now there's very little evidence that that is possible and the other concern is that this causes psychological harm to the child."*

Tag: The American Psychoanalytic Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Illinois Psychological Association are among the mental health organizations backing the legislation. Conversion therapy is already illegal in California, New Jersey and Washington D-C.

Second Cut: Opponents, including Illinois Family Institute -- a Christian values organization -- argue the legislation infringes on privacy rights. But Shelby says conversion therapy goes against almost every mental health organization's code of ethics and it implies there is something wrong with identifying as gay.

Cut 43249 :12 *"We're saying this is bad, this is wrong and it needs to be changed. That starts shading into this business of coercion. And we don't coerce our patients, we provide them an environment where they can explore their mind."*

Tag: Shelby adds that research from San Francisco State University found that highly-rejected L-G-B-T young people were six times more likely to report high levels of depression and eight times more likely to have contemplated suicide than those not rejected because of their gay or transgender identify.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses soundbite(s)

LEAD: Illinois could follow the lead of other states that have made a controversial practice aimed at "curing" homosexuality in adolescents illegal. Mary Schuermann explains.

Cut 44249 :54 *Outcue... Mary Schuermann reporting.*

Note to Editors: Shelby is available at at 219-406-0571. The legislation: <http://tinyurl.com/q5wnofp>; <http://tinyurl.com/py4bwev>.

FOCUS 4/19/2015

Now that you've paid your taxes, where do your tax dollars go?

Good morning and welcome to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. Focus is a weekly show dedicated to a look at news, and public affairs. *With April 15th, Tax Day, behind us, taxes might still be on your mind. With almost half of all federal revenues coming from individual income taxes, the National Priorities Project, a non-partisan research organization, examined how the government is spending those dollars. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection has more.* (START TAX DOLLARS SEGMENT)

IN: "Taxes are top..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

Women make up almost half of the nation's workforce, yet still make less money than their male counterparts. Equal Pay Day, marks how far into the year a woman must work to match the amount of money a man earned the prior year. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection reports (START EQUAL PAY SEGMENT)

IN: "Women are constantly..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

The countdown is on to the Christie Clinic Illinois Marathon. That story is next on Focus.

PSAs

Welcome back to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. *I, along with Tim Taylor from MIX 94.5, get the last minute scoop on this weekend's big event.* (START MARATHON INTERVIEW)

IN: "It's hard to..."

OUT: "... Great. Thanks guys."

PSAs

And that'll do it for this week's Focus. Thanks for joining us. If you have any questions or comments about this week's show, write to me, Sarah Addison – News Director. 2603 West Bradley Avenue. Champaign, IL 61821. Or email me, news@illiniradio.com. Focus will return same time next Sunday morning.

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April 13, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav png

Tax Day Looms: Where are Your Tax Dollars Going?

Springfield, IL – It's hard to not think about taxes with April 15th nearly upon us, and with almost half of all federal revenues coming from individual income taxes, the the National Priorities Project, a non-partisan research organization, examined how the government is spending those dollars. Comments from Lindsay Koshgarian, research director, National Priorities Project, Image available: graphic of 2014 federal income tax spending.

Intro: Taxes are top of mind for many Illinoisans, and a new analysis examines where exactly federal income tax dollars are going. The National Priorities Project crunched the numbers, and research director Lindsay Koshgarian says out of every federal income tax dollar paid in 2014, 27 cents went to the military, 26 cents went to health programs, and 15 cents went to interest on the federal debt.

Cut 78249 :14 *"What that means is that there's not a ton of money left over for everything else. That's well of more than half of every tax dollar goes to pay for those three things. So, when you get down to something like education spending - you're spending two and a half cents of each dollar on education."*

Tag: Eight cents was spent on unemployment and labor, five cents on veterans' benefits, which Koshgarian says left the remaining pennies for things like food, agriculture, transportation, housing, and programs involving energy and the environment.

Second Cut: Koshgarian says the analysis puts into perspective the priorities of government spending. She compares some numbers for Illinois, where the average federal income tax bill is just over 14 thousand dollars.

Cut 79249 :10 *"Over \$3,800 is for the military, \$52 is for the Children's Health Insurance Program, and the typical taxpayer in Illinois is paying about \$90 a year for welfare."*

Third Cut: Almost half of all federal revenue comes from individual income taxes. And Koshgarian says another piece they examined is the government's very complex system of tax breaks.

Cut 80249 :14 *"The amount that the government spends on tax breaks in giving money back to folks who pay taxes is actually bigger than what we spend in the federal budget each year on all of these programs, like the military and education, combined."*

Tag: According to the analysis, ten of the largest tax breaks in 2013 overwhelmingly benefited the top one percent of households.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses soundbite(s)

LEAD: Taxes are top of mind for many Illinoisans, and a new analysis examines where exactly federal income tax dollars are going. More from Mary Schuermann.

Cut 81249 :46 *Outcue...Mary Schuermann reporting.*

Note to Editors: Koshgarian is available at (413) 584-9556. The analysis: <https://www.nationalpriorities.org/>.

Illinois News Connection

A statewide news service for Illinois

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April 14, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Women in Illinois, Nation Still Earning Less than Men

Springfield, IL – Women make up almost half of the nation's workforce, yet still make less money than their male counterparts. Today is Equal Pay Day, which marks how far into the new year a woman must work to match the amount of money a man earned the prior year. Comments from Christianne Corbett, senior researcher, American Association of University Women. Image available: photo of a woman sitting in an office chair.

Intro: Women are constantly paid less than men in Illinois and other states, and Equal Pay Day today aims to call attention to this inequity. April 14 represents how far into the new year a woman needs to work in order to match the amount of money a man made in the previous year. Christianne Corbett with the American Association of University Women says females in Illinois earn just 79 percent of what males are paid.

Cut 82249 :12 *"The pay gap is found in every occupation, at every education level, and including women with children, women without children, every race and ethnicity. So it's really something that cuts across all these different categories."*

Tag: Corbett says Illinois women earn on average just over 40 thousand dollars a year compared to the more than 51 thousand dollars men are paid. And when it is broken down into minority status, she says it gets even worse with African American females earning 65 percent of what a male makes and Latino women about 55 percent. □□□□□□□□

Second Cut: Corbett suggests women brush up on their negotiating skills, and discuss their pay rate with their boss. But she says employers also have vital role to play.

Cut 83249 :12 *"Taking a look at their own pay within their companies is a first step that employers can do because many employers want to do the right thing, they don't want to discriminate against women and they may not just realize that there is a difference between the amount of money they are paying their male and their female employees."*

Third Cut: Corbett says the Paycheck Fairness Act, which was introduced last month in both houses of Congress, would help to narrow the gap.

Cut 84249 :11 *"The Paycheck Fairness act would really close loopholes there and strengthen incentives to prevent pay discrimination and prohibit retaliation against workers who ask about employers' wage practices or disclose their own wages."*

Tag: When the Equal Pay Act of 1963 was signed into law, women were making only 59 cents for every dollar a man made. And while the ratio is improving, the pay gap is not expected to close until 2058.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses soundbite(s)

LEAD: Women are constantly paid less than men in Illinois and other states, and Equal Pay Day today aims to call attention to this inequity. More from Mary Schuermann.

Cut 85249 :48 *Outcue...Mary Schuermann reporting.*

Note to Editors: Corbett is at 202.785.7700. The legislation: govtrack.us/congress/bills/114/s862. □□

FOCUS 4/26/2015

The canine flu is here. Be concerned, but don't panic.

Good morning and welcome to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. Focus is a weekly show dedicated to a look at news, and public affairs. *Reports of a highly contagious flu sickening hundreds of dogs throughout the Midwest have many Illinois dog owners on alert. Experts say the situation is cause for concern, but not panic. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection reports.* (START DOG FLU SEGMENT)

IN: "Fears of the..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

Moms say lawmakers are failing at protecting our health. That story is next on Focus.

PSAs

Welcome back to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. *Conservation and environmental groups are highlighting what they say is the destructive work of the Senate's first 100 days under the leadership of Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection has more.* (START CONSERVATION SEGMENT)

IN: "The Republican-led..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

A new report finds over 180 state facilities use nine dangerous chemicals that are not included in risk management reports filed with the E-P-A. According to the findings from the Center for Effective Government, because of the oversight, residents and first responders may not be getting the information they need to prepare for potential chemical disasters. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection has more. (START CHEMICALS SEGMENT)

IN: "Illinois is among..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

It's National Crime Victims' Rights Week. That story is next on Focus.

PSAs

Welcome back to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. *It's National Crime Victims' Rights Week and in Illinois, advocacy organizations are working to ensure crime victims understand their rights and protections, and can access services to help their recovery. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection reports.* (START VICTIMS REPORT)

IN: "It's National Crime..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

State legislators are considering a bill that opponents say unfairly raises rates for Exelon ratepayers in order to pad the company's profits. Consumer groups, including AARP Illinois, argue that the bill would hurt older Illinoisans living on a budget, working families and small businesses. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News connection explains. (START EXELON REPORT)

IN: "Exelon is looking..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

PSAs

And that'll do it for this week's Focus. Thanks for joining us. If you have any questions or comments about this week's show, write to me, Sarah Addison – News Director. 2603 West Bradley Avenue. Champaign, IL 61821. Or email me, news@illiniradio.com. Focus will return same time next Sunday morning.

Illinois News Connection

A statewide news service for Illinois

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April 22, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Canine Flu in Illinois: Cause for Concern, Not Panic

Springfield, IL – Reports of a highly contagious flu sickening hundreds of dogs throughout the Midwest have many Illinois dog owners on alert. Experts say the situation is cause for concern, but not panic. Comments from Thomas Mullaney, acting director, Diagnostic Center for Population and Animal Health, Michigan State University College of Veterinary Medicine. Image available: Photo of a sleeping dog.

Intro: Fears of the flu for Fido are running high among many dog owners. It's the result of a rare strain of canine influenza that has struck more than one thousand dogs in Illinois. Dr. Thomas Mullaney with Michigan State University's College of Veterinary Medicine says most dogs that catch this strain of the flu will have mild symptoms – a cough, loss of appetite, sneezing, or a runny nose – that only require supportive care. But he says it can take a more serious turn.

Cut 15249 :13 "The dogs tend to typically get higher fevers, tend to eventually develop difficulty breathing because they have signs of pneumonia, and in those situations, the possibility of secondary bacterial infections occurs."

Tag: Mullaney says any dog that develops a cough or other respiratory symptoms should be seen by a vet. He stresses that while many dogs have fallen ill, the fatality rate for this strain of canine flu is, thankfully, quite low.

Second Cut: Mullaney says it isn't a health threat to humans, but this flu is highly contagious and can pass from dog to dog, and even dog to cat, very quickly. For that reason, he says when there's an outbreak, it's best to reduce the amount of contact animals have with each other in places such as...

Cut 16249 :09 "Doggie daycares, and where you have kennel situations, and where you even have dogs congregating together in parks, where people walk their dogs."

Third Cut: As with the flu in humans, Mullaney says commonsense prevention measures will go a long way with canine influenza.

Cut 17249 :11 "When you've handled dogs and worked with dogs, washing hands with soap and water, limiting contact between dogs, will probably reduce incidence and likelihood of occurrence."

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April 21, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Moms, Conservationists say Senate Failing at Protecting Illinoisans' Health

Springfield, IL – Conservation and environmental groups are highlighting what they say is the destructive work of the Senate's first 100 days under the leadership of Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. Comments from Gretchen Dahlkemper, Illinois spokesperson, National Field Manager, Moms Clean Air Force; and Gene Karpinski, president, League of Conservation Voters. Image available: photo of the U.S. Capitol building.

Intro: The Republican-led Senate has earned a failing grade from conservation and environmental groups for their first hundred days. Gretchen Dahlkemper, is with the Moms Clean Air Force in Illinois, one of the groups tallying a report for the work done under Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. She says the lawmakers have earned a failing grade on policies that protect the environment and public health, including those that would curb the carbon pollution that fuels climate change. □ □

Cut 11249 :12 *"We've seen Senator McConnell kind of lead this effort to undermine health protections for America's children, but we know that there are solutions at hand like energy efficiency and renewables."*

Tag: Republicans in Congress say they are trying to promote growth by easing regulations. But critics have charged what they're really doing is helping the corporations that give campaign donations, April 15 marked the 100th day of the 114th Congress.

Second Cut: Gene Karpinski with the League of Conservation Voters says the E-P-A is trying to protect our public health, and the air and water. But he says McConnell and the Republicans are trying to block them despite overwhelming public support.

Cut 12249 :11 *"Sadly, the polluters and some of their allies in Congress are trying to block EPA from doing its job. But the public understands that the EPA has a job to do and they back the EPA in protecting our air and water."*

Third Cut: Karpinski says with tomorrow's 45th anniversary of Earth Day it's important to reflect on the progress made protecting the environment.

Cut 13249 :15 *"The Clean Water Act has been one of the best success stories we've seen in the last 40 years to reduce pollution in our water. The Clean Air Act has also been an incredible success to protect us from much of the damaging air pollutants. With the challenge of climate change in front of us, we have more progress to make."*

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses the first soundbite(s)

LEAD: The Republican-led Congress has earned a failing grade from conservation and environmental groups for its first hundred days. Mary Schuermann ("sherman") has more.

Cut 14249 :44 *Outcue...Mary Schuermann reporting.*

Note to Editors: Dahlkemper is at 305-606-6160; Karpinski can be reached at 202-785-8683.

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April 17, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

A Disaster Waiting to Happen?

Report Finds Illinois Emergency Responders May Be Unaware of Chemical Dangers

Springfield, IL – A new report finds over 180 Illinois facilities use nine dangerous chemicals that are not included in risk management reports filed with the E-P-A. According to the findings from the Center for Effective Government, because of the oversight, residents and first responders may not be getting the information they need to prepare for potential chemical disasters. Comments from Sean Moulton, director, Open Government Policy program, Center for Effective Government. Image available: photo of firefighters. □□

Intro: Illinois is among the top states listed in a new report identifying often unknown chemical dangers. With today's second anniversary of a deadly explosion at a fertilizer facility in West, Texas, the Center for Effective Government examined significant chemical risks that may be unknown to first responders. Sean Moulton with the center says in six Midwest states, including Illinois, more than 17 hundred facilities store more than half a billion pounds of nine of the most common hazardous chemicals.

Cut 89249 :15 *"They're very toxic, they're flammable, some of them are explosive. For Illinois, you're talking about 187 facilities that used these nine chemicals, at least one of them; 220 million pounds for these nine chemicals alone."*

Tag: The analysis found that these chemicals are not included in risk management reports filed with the E-P-A, and 85 percent of the facilities only report to state oversight agencies. Moulton says information on the chemicals used at facilities should be made public so first responders are prepared in an emergency. Fifteen people died in the explosion in Texas, including 10 voluntary firefighters.

Second Cut: Public leaders have called for stronger chemical protections in the past two years, but Moulton says policies are not where they need to be.

Cut 90249 :11 *"The research has been done. But in terms of making these programs consistent across each other in terms of what chemicals they're looking at, getting the information more readily available to everybody – there hasn't been anything."*

Tag: The report recommends all highly hazardous chemicals be added to the Risk Management program's list. And Moulton adds that state data should be combined with the federal Risk Management program and both made available online.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses soundbite(s)

LEAD: Illinois is among the top states listed in a new report identifying often unknown chemical dangers. With today's second anniversary of a deadly explosion at a fertilizer facility in West, Texas, the Center for Effective Government examined significant chemical risks that may be unknown to first responders. More from Mary Schuermann.

Cut 91249 1:01 *Outcue...Mary Schuermann reporting.*

Note to Editors: Moulton is available at 202-683-4812. The report:
foreffectivegov.org/chemical-hazards-your-backyard.

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April 24, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Illinois Legislation Could Guarantee an Equal Voice for Crime Victims

Springfield, IL – It's National Crime Victims' Rights Week and in Illinois, advocacy organizations are working to ensure crime victims understand their rights and protections, and can access services to help their recovery. Comments from Jennifer Bishop-Jenkins, Illinois director of Marsy's Law and IllinoisVictims.org.

Intro: It's National Crime Victims' Rights Week, and victims' advocates say just as the accused have rights in the criminal justice system, crime victims should as well. The Director of Illinois-Victims-dot-org, Jennifer Bishop-Jenkins says crime victim should be treated with fairness, dignity and respect, and they deserve rights pertaining to representation, protection and their role in the criminal justice process. Last year, Illinois voters approved a constitutional amendment which expands the rights of crime victims and allows those victims to enforce their rights in court.

Cut 19249 :09 "We actually were the only state in the nation that said victims have rights but they had no standing to enforce them. That's exactly what Illinois law said up until last November. "

Tag: The amendment is known as Marsy's Law, and Bishop-Jenkins says specific legislation describing how a crime victim will be able to assert their rights in court if they are violated is under consideration at the Statehouse.

Second Cut: According to the F-B-I, between 1993 and 2012, the violent crime rate fell from nearly 80 percent to 26 percent, but Bishop-Jenkins says its impact on victims is still significant and devastating. She adds it is important to ensure victims are provided the support and resources they need to rebuild their lives.

Cut 20249 :16 "National Crime Victims' Rights Week was a really profoundly important step by the United States Congress to give a time when the whole country pays attention to what crime victims suffer and how they need to have rights in the criminal justice system that are protected. "

Tag: Agencies throughout Illinois provide an array of services to help crime victims get back on their feet including financial assistance, legal services, and witness protection.

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April 20, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Consumer Groups: IL Ratepayers Would Foot Bill for Exelon Subsidy

Springfield, IL – State legislators are considering a bill that opponents say unfairly raises rates for Exelon ratepayers in order to pad the company's profits. Consumer groups, including AARP Illinois, argue that H-B 3293 would hurt older Illinoisans living on a budget, working families and small businesses. Comments from Julie Vahling, associate state director, AARP Illinois. Image available: photo of Byron Nuclear Generating Station.

Intro: Exelon is looking for a 300 million dollar subsidy for its nuclear plants, and it wants Illinois ratepayers to foot the bill. Under H-B 3293, the company would get one and a half billion dollars over five years from ratepayers that would be distributed to low-carbon energy sources. But Julie Vahling with A-A-R-P Illinois says the revenue raised would go into the company's pockets.

Cut 92249 :11 *"It doesn't produce any new jobs, it doesn't produce any more energy, it doesn't produce any cleaner energy. It just gives them a bailout."*

Tag: Opponents also argue that the legislation includes requirements that would hamper competition from solar and wind power. The company has stated that its nuclear power plants in Byron, Quad Cities and Clinton are unprofitable and suffering unsustainable losses. But Vahling says the measure would increase costs for businesses, and places an unfair burden on low-income seniors and working families.

Second Cut: Vahling says any financial difficulties Exelon is experiencing soon will be resolved. After the P-J-M Capacity Auction in May, the company will be receiving about 500 million more dollars annually.

Cut 93249 :16 *"Those monies would all go to the company paid for by ratepayers. And those finances, based on what Exelon has stated, should facilitate their financial needs. It should completely cover the issues they've raised in the past."*

Tag: Vahling adds that while capacity auctions are not something ratepayers can control, state leaders do have a choice when it comes to the rate increases consumers would see if H-B 3293 passes.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses soundbite(s)
LEAD: Exelon is looking for a 300 million dollar subsidy for its nuclear plants, and it wants Illinois ratepayers to foot the bill. Mary Schuermann explains.
Cut 94249 :49 *Outcue...Mary Schuermann reporting.*

Note to Editors: Vahling is available at 312-458-3623. Information on the bill: <http://tinyurl.com/ob3hdvb>.

FOCUS 5/3/2015

Giving the gift of life.

Good morning and welcome to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. Focus is a weekly show dedicated to a look at news, and public affairs. (START SOS JESSE WHITE INTERVIEW)

IN: "Joining me this..."

OUT: "... Enjoy your day."

Make Mom proud this Mother's Day by helping Movers For Moms. That story is next on Focus.

PSAs

Welcome back to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. *Ryan Leskis is the director of community resources here at the Illini Radio Group and hosts a podcast called "Show and Tell." His goal is to bring higher awareness of the unique and exciting events, people and places of Central Illinois. With Mother's Day later this month, Ryan found a way you can make you mother extra proud this year.* (START S&T-MOMS SEGMENT)

IN: "With me today..."

OUT: "... (laughter out.)"

PSAs

And that'll do it for this week's Focus. Thanks for joining us. If you have any questions or comments about this week's show, write to me, Sarah Addison – News Director. 2603 West Bradley Avenue. Champaign, IL 61821. Or email me, news@illiniradio.com. Focus will return same time next Sunday morning.

For Immediate Release:
April 1, 2015

For More Information Contact:
Elizabeth Kaufman-312-814-8301
Dave Druker-312-814-1506

Jesse White Unveils New Organ/Tissue Donation Campaign; Featuring Daughter who Donated Cornea to her Mother

Secretary of State Jesse White unveiled a new ad campaign featuring a dying daughter who gave her mother the gift of sight through organ donation.

“Many donate, life. The daughter

The corneal donor

April is donation.

Television will also

Thurs 9A
IL SOS Focus
intv. (?)

psacentral.adcouncil.org

from a terminal disease they will be unable to see even someone with cancer can give the gift of sight. Her mother has the ability to literally see through her

her daughter Krissy to cancer. But in Krissy’s case, her mother, Rosemarie is now able to see through her daughter’s eyes.

attend events throughout Illinois to encourage organ donation and promote donor awareness throughout the state.

will air statewide throughout the month. The spots will be shown across the state.

Currently, there are more than 5.7 million people registered to become organ/tissue donors in Illinois. However, more than 5,000 are on the waiting list and about 300 people die each year waiting for an organ transplant.

“We encourage Illinoisans to join the Secretary of State’s Organ and Tissue Donor Registry,” said White. “It takes less than a minute and one person can improve the quality of life for up to 25 people.”

Illinoisans can register with the Secretary of State Organ/Tissue Donor Program at LifeGoesOn.com, 1-800-210-2106 or by visiting their local Driver Services facility.

During this month, libraries are distributing organ/tissue donor materials and hosting donor drives. Health fairs, schools, colleges and hospitals will also be hosting donor drives and featuring displays statewide.

Donatè Life Illinois partners include the American Liver Foundation-Illinois, Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network; Saving Sight; Illinois Eye-Bank; Illinois Secretary of State Organ/Tissue Donor Program; LifeSource; Mid-America Transplant Services; Rock River Valley Blood Center; and National Kidney Foundation of Illinois.

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FOCUS 5/10/2015

Even on a cloudy day, melanoma is deadly.

Good morning and welcome to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. Focus is a weekly show dedicated to a look at news, and public affairs. *Melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, kills an estimated 300 people in Illinois each year, and preventing the disease is the goal of a national campaign called Melanoma Monday. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection has more.* (START MELANOMA SEGMENT)

IN: "Joining me this..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

Clean your closet, boost the community. That story is next on Focus.

PSAs

Welcome back to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. *After a long and snowy winter, warmer temperatures have arrived – which, for some signals the start of spring cleaning. But before throwing away any unused items found in closets and drawers, people are being encouraged to help others in their community by donating items to a local charity. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection has more.* (START CLOSETS SEGMENT)

IN: "Whether it's clothing..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

A collaborative or team approach makes a big difference when treating kids with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder or ADHD. That's the conclusion of a new study from the American Academy of Pediatrics, which echoes what many parents believe: that it takes more than medication to improve a child's behavior. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection reports. (START ADHD SEGMENT)

IN: "It's been said..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

Would a higher minimum wage have a bigger impact on men or women? That story is next on Focus.

PSAs

Welcome back to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. *As the heated minimum wage debate continues, a new analysis examines which workers would benefit the most from the bump in pay. According to the Center for American Progress, more than half of workers who would receive a raise under a minimum wage increase from \$7.25 to \$12 an hour are women. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection reports.* (START MIN WAGE WOMEN SEGMENT)

IN: "Momentum is building..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

Ryan Leskis is the director of community resources here at the Illini Radio Group and hosts a podcast called "Show and Tell." His goal is to bring higher awareness of the unique and exciting events, people and places of Central Illinois. With Mother's Day later this month, Ryan found a way you can make you mother extra proud this year. (START S&T-BINS SEGMENT)

IN: "Greetings Central Illinois..."

OUT: "... me. Take care."

And that'll do it for this week's Focus. Thanks for joining us. If you have any questions or comments about this week's show, write to me, Sarah Addison – News Director. 2603 West Bradley Avenue. Champaign, IL 61821. Or email me, news@illiniradio.com. Focus will return same time next Sunday morning.

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May 4, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Even on a Cloudy Day Melanoma is Deadly

Springfield, IL – Melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, kills an estimated 300 people in Illinois each year, and preventing the disease is the goal of a national campaign today (Monday). Comments from Kimberly Dinsdale, media relations manager, American Cancer Society. Image available: Photo of sunblock in a hand.

Intro: It's "Melanoma Monday" in Illinois and across the nation, which is centered on the early detection and prevention of a disease that kills thousands of Americans each year. Kimberly Dinsdale with the American Cancer Society says melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, affects many people.

Cut 34249 :08 *"The estimated number throughout the country is about 73,000 cases will be diagnosed this year of some form of melanoma of the skin."*

Tag: According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in a recent year, more than nine-thousand Americans died from melanoma, with about two thirds being male and the rest female. The CDC estimates that about 300 people in Illinois die from Melanoma each year.

Second Cut: Melanoma Monday kicks off the broader campaign of May being "Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month," which encourages regular medical checkups and self-examination. Dinsdale says another critical thing is avoiding ultraviolet radiation.

Cut 35249 :12 *"If you're out in the sun, wear protective clothing, slop on sunscreen and wear a hat, so that you can shield yourself from the sun, and shield yourself from those harmful UVA and UVB rays that can potentially cause skin cancer."*

Tag: Dinsdale adds that it doesn't matter if it's clear or overcast, or how long you're actually spending out in the sun, every bit of exposure can damage your skin.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses first soundbite(s)

LEAD: It's "Melanoma Monday" in Illinois and across the nation, which is centered on the early detection and prevention of a disease that kills thousands of Americans each year. More from Mary Schuermann.

Cut 36249 :33 *Outcue...Mary Schuermann, reporting.*

Note to Editors: Dinsdale is at 206-674-4150. CDC skin cancer mortality rates: <http://goo.gl/dLfB7X>. □ □

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April 27, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Closet Cleaning Can Boost Illinois Communities

Springfield, IL – After a long and snowy winter, warmer temperatures have arrived – which, for some Illinoisans, signals the start of spring cleaning. But before throwing away any unused items found in closets and drawers, people are being encouraged to help others in their community by donating items to a local charity. Comments from Evette Rios, lifestyle expert and spokesperson, Goodwill Industries. Image available: Photo of boxes of donated clothing.

Intro: Whether it's clothing, sports equipment, toys or books - many Illinois homes are brimming with items that are rarely used, and some not at all. Experts say taking the time to de-clutter during the spring can not only tidy up a home, it can also be a way to help others. Evette Rios with Goodwill Industries says instead of tossing an unwanted items into the trash, consider putting it into a box or bag and donating it.

Cut 22249 :14 *"We live in this incredible country of so much abundance; we have so much more than we actually need. It is nice to take those times throughout the year to really clean house a little bit, and know that that stuff is actually going to create some really impactful changes in someone's life."*

Tag: Rios says donating to a local charity has a positive impact on the community. For example, Goodwill works to provide employment training, job placement and other services. Sparrow House in Northern Illinois provides supportive services for homeless women and their children; and proceeds from the Salvation Army thrift stores benefit addiction recovery.

Second Cut: When it comes to donating, Rios says the sky's the limit. Goodwill accepts gently-used clothing, furniture, electronics and many other items. She adds even things that seem too tattered or broken at first glance can often be put to good use.

Cut 23249 :11 *"We've diverted millions and millions of pounds of textiles from landfills, by having these agreements with recycling companies that turn used items into new things that people can use."*

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses soundbite(s)

LEAD: Whether it's clothing, sports equipment, toys or books - many Illinois homes are brimming with items that are rarely used, and some not at all. As Mary Schuermann explains, taking the time to de-clutter during the spring can not only tidy up a home, it can also help others.

Cut 24249 :42 *Outcue...Schuermann reporting.*

Note to Editors: Rios is available through Goodwill Industries' national media office, at 240-333-5266.

Illinois News Connection

A statewide news service for Illinois

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April 29, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Experts say ADHD Treatment Goes Beyond Medication

Springfield, IL – A collaborative or team approach makes a big difference when treating kids with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). That's the conclusion of a new study from the American Academy of Pediatrics, which echoes what many parents believe: that it takes more than medication to improve a child's behavior. Comments from psychologist Carla Allan. Image available: Photo of a child.

Intro: It's been said that 'it takes a village' to raise a child, and new research suggests that is also the case when it comes to helping kids with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, or A-D-H-D. A new study from the American Academy of Pediatrics finds a team approach – involving parents, clinicians and doctors – significantly improves social skills and overall behavior and has a positive impact on a child's impulsiveness. Psychologist Carla Allan says these findings confirm what many parents say – that they want more than medication for their kids with A-D-H-D.

Cut 25249 :12 "Treatments designed to teach their children new skills – ways of managing their behavior better, ways of making and keeping friends - those are kinds of things that parents really want for their kids to have."

Tag: The study appears in the journal Pediatrics. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than seven percent of Illinois children ages four to 17 have been diagnosed with either A-D-H-D or attention deficit disorder.

Second Cut: Allan says parents' involvement in A-D-H-D treatment is critical, no matter what sort of intervention is used.

Cut 26249 :15 "Even if you're just using medication, it's dependent on the parent remembering to give the child the medicine every day, being able to get the child to take the medicine when the child maybe wants to do something else. It's dependent on parents being able to remember, 'Oh my gosh, their prescription's almost out.'"

Tag: In 2011, six-percent of U-S children and more than four percent of children in Illinois were taking medication for A-D-H-D.

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May 6, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Analysis Finds Higher Minimum Wage Would Mostly Impact Women

Springfield, IL – As the heated minimum wage debate continues, a new analysis examines which workers would benefit the most from the bump in pay. According to the Center for American Progress, more than half of workers who would receive a raise under a minimum wage increase from \$7.25 to \$12 an hour are women. Comments from Sarah Jane Glynn, director, Women's Economic Policy, Center for American Progress. Image available: photo of a woman working at a computer.

Intro: Momentum is building to raise the federal minimum wage, and a new analysis shows working women would benefit the most. Last week, the Raise the Wage Act (S.1150) was introduced in the U-S Senate. It would increase the federal minimum wage to 12 dollars per hour by 2020. The Center for American Progress crunched the numbers, and its director of Women's Economic Policy, Sarah Jane Glynn, says they found 57 percent of those who would receive a raise are working women.

Cut 40249 :12 "Women are much more likely to be concentrated in low wage work than men, and often times these are workers in industries that are heavily female-dominated, like the service industry, food service, retail, childcare, sectors like that."

Tag: Opponents of raising the minimum wage argue it would increase unemployment for lower-skilled workers but Glynn counters that past increases have raised earnings and reduced poverty without leading to job losses.

Second Cut: Glynn adds that a person working full time at the current minimum wage would earn just over 15 thousand dollars a year, below the federal poverty line for a household with any number of children.

Cut 41249 :13 "These are adults, these are parents, these are people who are still having to rely on public benefits because they are below the poverty line even though they are working full-time. That really does highlight the fact that we need to do something. This is an untenable situation."

Tag: Glynn says one-third of women workers who would be affected by the increase are mothers. Illinois' minimum wage of seven dollars-25 cents an hour is the same as the federal wage.

FOCUS 5/17/2015

From parks to pools, it's a lovely May in Urbana!

Good morning and welcome to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. Focus is a weekly show dedicated to a look at news, and public affairs. *Ryan Leskis is the director of community resources here at the Illini Radio Group and hosts a podcast called "Show and Tell." His goal is to bring higher awareness of the unique and exciting events, people and places of Central Illinois. With Mother's Day later this month, Ryan found a way you can make you mother extra proud this year.* (START S&T-URBANA SEGMENT)

IN: "I am joined..."

OUT: "... parks-dot-org."

Renters Could Save Big Bucks with Energy Efficiency. That story is next on Focus.

PSAs

Welcome back to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. *Improving the energy efficiency of multifamily housing units could save billions of dollars for building owners and low and moderate-income renters in Illinois, according to new research out this week. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection has more.* (START RENT SEGMENT)

IN: "Improving the energy..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

More than \$140 million could be cut to the Community Care Program in Illinois if Governor Bruce Rauner's current budget plans are approved. The program provides in-home services that allow older residents to age independently at home, a more economical option than a nursing care facility. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection reports. (START IN HOME CARE SEGMENT)

IN: "More than \$140 million..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

Would a ban on bee-killing pesticides be a good or a bad thing? That story is next on Focus.

PSAs

Welcome back to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. *Bees are disappearing in Illinois and around the globe, and scientists say a class of insecticides known as neonicotinoids are contributing to the decline in bee colonies. Environmental groups are urging the Environmental Protection Agency to do more to protect bees and other pollinators from toxic pesticides. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection has more.* (START BEES SEGMENT)

PSAs

And that'll do it for this week's Focus. Thanks for joining us. If you have any questions or comments about this week's show, write to me, Sarah Addison – News Director, 2603 West Bradley Avenue, Champaign, IL 61821. Or email me, news@illiniradio.com. Focus will return same time next Sunday morning.

Illinois News Connection

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May 15, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Report: Renters Could Save Big Bucks with Energy Efficiency

Springfield,IL - Improving the energy efficiency of multifamily housing units could save billions of dollars for building owners and low and moderate-income renters in Illinois, according to new research out this week. Comments from Michael Bodaken (boh-DAH-kin), executive director, National Housing Trust, and Raya (RYE-uh) Salter, senior utility advocate and study co-author, Natural Resources Defense Council. Image available: photo of a light bulb.

Intro: When it comes to helping Illinoisans save money and the environment, a new study finds that making rental units more energy efficient would go a long way. There are more than 605-thousand units of multifamily affordable housing in Illinois, and Michael Bodaken with the National Housing Trust says many of them come with inadequate insulation and inefficient windows, heating and cooling systems. As a result, he says energy expenses run on average 76 percent higher per square foot in these units than in single-family homes.

Cut 58249 :13 "We have a problem of very old, inefficient buildings, and people paying much higher utility bills. And if the population, ages, and wages for working Americans remain stagnant, there is a growing need for multifamily rental housing. "

Tag: The study from the Energy Efficiency for All initiative looked at eight states including Illinois, and found that implementing a range of energy efficiency improvements including upgrading lighting, heating and cooling systems in rental units could yield 21-billion dollars in savings, and a 32-percent reduction in electricity use by 2034.

Second Cut: While some building owners are resistant to the idea of investing the time and money to make these sorts of improvements, Raya Salter with the Natural Resources Defense Council, one of the co-authors of the study, says the potential payoff is a big one.

Cut 59249 :17 "This study estimates that the return-on-investment made on energy inefficiency would range from \$2.90 to \$3.50 for every dollar invested in improvements, so that is extremely significant. "

Tag 1: The study suggests that utility companies are in a position to drive these changes, given the rebates and programs they already have in place, as well as their relationship with consumers. (The full report is available at Energy Efficiency For All dot org.)

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May 14, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Illinois Budget Cuts Could End In-Home Care for Thousands

Springfield, IL – More than \$140 million could be cut to the Community Care Program in Illinois if Governor Bruce Rauner's current budget plans are approved. The program provides in-home services that allow older residents to age independently at home, a more economical option than a nursing care facility. Comments from Carol Aronson, (air-in-son) executive director, Shawnee Alliance for Seniors. Image available: photo of a home health worker with a client.

Intro: An estimated 39 thousand Illinoisans could be forced to turn to nursing home care due to cuts proposed in the governor's budget. The plan would slash 140 million dollars to the Community Care Program, which provides in-home care and services that allow older residents to age independently. Carol Aronson with the Shawnee Alliance for Seniors says most Illinoisans want to stay in their homes where they are connected to their loved ones and community.

Cut 55249 :15 "There is absolutely a time and a need for many people to go to the nursing home. But if what a person needs is someone to cook meals for them, someone to do their shopping, someone to manage their money: we can do that in the home, it does not require a nursing home. "

Tag: The budget proposal would raise the minimum determination of need for entry into the program, establish a maximum income for eligibility and reduce the service hours per week. Aronson says that would mean 38 percent more older adults may not qualify for services, which would result in increased emergency room visits, hospital re-admissions and pre-mature placement in nursing homes.

Second Cut: Lawmakers are trying to plug a one-point-six billion dollar budget gap, but Aronson says cuts to the Community Care Program are not the answer. When it comes down to dollars and cents, Aronson says in-home services are a cost-effective way to care for the state's increasing aging population.

Cut 56249 :13 "The Community Care Program, the average cost of care is right around \$800 a month, whereas the average cost of care in the nursing home ranges from \$3,500 to \$5,000."

Tag: The governor's proposal also changes the requirements for admission into a nursing home. Aronson says those who do not meet the criteria could end up relying on local emergency services for aid or face isolation with unknown consequences for health, safety and well-being. She adds it could also place an additional burden on loved ones. Lawmakers must approve the budget by July 1.

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May 11, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Calls in Illinois to Ban Bee-Killing Pesticide

Springfield, IL – Bees are disappearing in Illinois and around the globe, and scientists say a class of insecticides known as neonicotinoids are contributing to the decline in bee colonies. Environmental groups are urging the Environmental Protection Agency to do more to protect bees and other pollinators from toxic pesticides. Comments from Elizabeth Ouzts, communications director, Environment America. Image available: photo of a honeybee.

Intro: The sound of a buzzing bee may signal the threat of a sting, but it also means the important pollinators are doing their job as part of a balanced ecosystem. Elizabeth Ouzts with Environment America says not only do bees keep gardens beautiful; they pollinate almost 70 percent of the crops that provide the majority of the world's food. But she says bees are dying off at historic rates.

Cut 49249 :13 *"Scientists are pointing to a complex web of factors that have lead to these massive declines but one clear culprit is a certain class of insecticides that share the same chemical properties as nicotine."*

Tag: The E-P-A recently announced it will prohibit new uses of neonicotinoids (nee-oh-NIC-a-tin-oids), but Ouzts says the agency needs to go further and ban their use all together. Meanwhile, a White House task force on pollinator health is expected to soon release a draft proposal to address pollinator declines.

Second Cut: Ouzts says while government and corporations have a role to play, Illinoisans can also help by making their gardens bee-friendly.

Cut 50249 :12 *"And that's by including native wildflowers, flowering herbs and berries in their gardens and that's a very local action that Illinoisans can take just in their backyard to help protect the honeybee."*

Tag: Seattle, Minnesota and Oregon have all agreed to take some form of action against neonicotinoids, and Lowes recently announced it will phase out their use for sale and in garden plants.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses soundbite(s)

LEAD: The sound of a buzzing bee may signal the threat of a sting, but it also means the important pollinators are doing their job as part of a balanced ecosystem. More from Mary Schuermann.

Cut 51249 :45 *Outcue...Mary Schuermann reporting.*

Note to Editors: Ouzts is available 919-833-0015 ext. 101.

FOCUS 5/24/2015

Making a splash this Memorial Day weekend.

Good morning and welcome to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. Focus is a weekly show dedicated to a look at news, and public affairs. *With swimming season gearing up, state health leaders are advising you about the dangers of recreational water illnesses, and ways to prevent them. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, over the past 20 years there have been a substantial increase in the number of RWI outbreaks associated with swimming. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection has more.* (START SPLASH SEGMENT)

IN: "Pools are opening..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

Memorial Day Weekend marks the official start of the boating season in Illinois, and law enforcement officers are asking boaters to think of safety before getting out on the water. According to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), 20 people died in boating accidents in the state in 2014. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News connection reports. (START BOATS SEGMENT)

IN: "Before leaving the..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

Puppies, puppies and more puppies! That story is next on Focus.

PSAs

Welcome back to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. *Ryan Leskis is our director of community resources here at the Illini Radio Group and hosts a podcast called "Show and Tell." His goal is to bring higher awareness of the unique and exciting events, people and places of Central Illinois. And let's face it... who doesn't love puppies?!* (START MUTT SEGMENT)

IN: "Greetings Central Illinois..."

OUT: "... for having me."

PSAs

And that'll do it for this week's Focus. Thanks for joining us. If you have any questions or comments about this week's show, write to me, Sarah Addison – News Director. 2603 West Bradley Avenue. Champaign, IL 61821. Or email me, news@illiniradio.com. Focus will return same time next Sunday morning.

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May 22, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

IL Boaters Urged to Maintain Safety Mindset

Springfield, IL – Memorial Day Weekend marks the official start of the boating season in Illinois, and law enforcement officers are asking boaters to think of safety before getting out on the water. According to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), 20 people died in boating accidents in the state in 2014. Comments from Sgt. Chris Stone, Office of Law Enforcement, Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Image available: photo of a sailboat.

Intro: Before leaving the dock for Memorial Day Weekend fun, authorities are using National Safe Boating Week to encourage Illinois boaters to keep safety as a mindset. Sgt. Chris Stone with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources says whether it's a boat, canoe or kayak there are always risks when out on the water. He says dozens of people were injured in accidents last year alone.

Cut 74249 :12 "We did have 77 reported boat accidents last year, out of which 20 people died in 16 of those boat accidents. And 30 percent of those fatalities was involving alcohol."

Tag: He says 70 percent of those who died may have survived if they were using a life jacket. Stone adds that all boaters are encouraged to take the Illinois Boating Education Course so they are educated on watercraft safety, equipment and regulations, registration and titling, and state boating laws. (More information on the course is available online: dnr.illinois.gov/safety.)

Second Cut: As part of Operation Dry Water next week, Stone says law enforcement in Illinois will be out in full force ensuring boat operators are not impaired. He reminds boaters that the rules for alcohol consumption while operating a watercraft are not much different from in a vehicle.

Cut 75249 :11 "It is .08 percent to be considered under the influence. If you are going to have drinks and stuff make sure you have someone that's available to operate that watercraft for you that's not under the influence."

Tag: Stone also recommends planning ahead by checking the weather, having water on hand to avoid dehydration, and letting others know where to locate you in case of an accident.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses soundbite(s)

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May 18, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Water Illnesses: Things to Consider before Making Splash

Springfield, IL – With swimming season gearing up, state health leaders are advising Illinoisans about the dangers of recreational water illnesses, and ways to prevent them. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, over the past 20 years there have been a substantial increase in the number of RWI outbreaks associated with swimming. Comments from Justin DeWitt, chief engineer, Illinois Department of Public Health. Image available: photo of a child standing by a pool

Intro: Pools are opening up around Illinois this week, but health experts say there are some things to keep in mind before making a splash. Besides the threat of drowning, swimming can be hazardous due to diseases commonly called recreational water illnesses, or R-W-I's. Justin DeWitt with the Illinois Department of Public Health says R-W-I's are mostly associated with gastrointestinal illness and are caused by bacteria in natural bodies of water and swimming pools.

Cut 61249 :10 *"Those bacteria are shed from either animals or humans who have the bacteria in their stomach and then that gets introduced into the water and then others ingest that and then come down with the same illness."*

Tag: DeWitt says there are precautions swimmers should take to avoid the spread of R-W-I's, including showering before entering the pool, taking regular restroom breaks, avoiding swallowing water and staying away if you have been recently ill. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there has been a substantial increase in the number of outbreaks associated with swimming in the past two decades.

Second Cut: Chlorine sanitizes water and kills bacteria, but DeWitt says it's only so effective. □□

Cut 62249 :13 *"If there's a release of bacteria into the water the chlorine just doesn't immediately kill all of that, it takes a certain amount of time. If you are in the vicinity of that and happen to ingest some of that water it's likely the chlorine hasn't had time to do its job."*

Tag: The overuse of chlorine is also cause for concern because DeWitt says it can cause skin irritation or breathing difficulties. He adds if the water is not clear, or there is a strong smell of chlorine that could indicate something is not right and the pool operator should be contacted.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses first soundbite(s)

LEAD: Pools are opening up around Illinois this week, but health experts say there are some things to keep in mind before making a splash. Besides the threat of drowning, swimming can be hazardous due to diseases commonly called recreational water illnesses, or R-W-I's. More from Mary Schuermann.

Cut 63249 :44 *Outcue...Mary Schuermann reporting.*

Note to Editors: DeWitt is available at 217-782-4977. More information:
<http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/rwi/>.

FOCUS 5/31/2015

Tis the season for graduation.

Good morning and welcome to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. Focus is a weekly show dedicated to a look at news, and public affairs. *As students around the state celebrate high school graduation, a new report finds there is still about one-in-five not receiving a diploma. And according to findings from Grad Nation, graduation rates in Illinois have remained stagnant over the past several years. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection reports.* (START GRAD SEGMENT)

IN: "It's graduation season..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

A new report reveals troubling trends in the state's child welfare system. The Annie E. Casey Foundation says about 10 percent of foster children are placed in a group setting instead of with a family – although about 40 percent of those children have no documented behavioral or clinical reason for placement in such a restrictive setting. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News connection has more. (START CHILD WELFARE SEGMENT)

IN: "Experts say children..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

And on the topic of child welfare, our community resources director talks with Stephanie Record of the Crisis Nursery next on Focus.

PSAs

Welcome back to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. *Ryan Leskis is our director of community resources here at the Illini Radio Group and hosts a podcast called "Show and Tell." His goal is to bring higher awareness of the unique and exciting events, people and places of Central Illinois. And Champaign's Crisis Nursery is a community fixture and helps many children and families each year. Ryan spoke with Crisis Nursery director Stephanie Record about one of their biggest annual events, their basket auction.* (START CRISIS SEGMENT)

IN: "Wow you guys..."

OUT: "... thanks so much."

PSAs

And that'll do it for this week's Focus. Thanks for joining us. If you have any questions or comments about this week's show, write to me, Sarah Addison – News Director. 2603 West Bradley Avenue. Champaign, IL 61821. Or email me, news@illiniradio.com. Focus will return same time next Sunday morning.

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May 26, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Report: High School Grad Rate Stagnant in Illinois

Springfield, IL – As students around the Prairie State celebrate high school graduation, a recent report finds there is still about one-in-five not receiving a diploma. And according to findings from Grad Nation, graduation rates have remained stagnant over the past several years. Comments from Robert Balfanz (bahl-fanz), report co-author and co-director, Everyone Graduates Center, Johns Hopkins University School of Education. Image available: photo of a graduate.

Intro: It's graduation season, but approximately one-in-five Illinois high school seniors is not donning a cap and gown. According to the 2015 Building a Grad Nation report, while Illinois' high school graduation rate of 83 percent is slightly higher than the national average, the rate has been stagnant for several years. Co-author of the report Robert Balfanz says another concern is the opportunity gap. □□□□

Cut 77249 :12 *"That's part of why it's a challenge. In many neighborhoods in Illinois everybody graduates so it's not seen as a state issue. But in another set of neighborhoods a lot of kids don't graduate. So at somehow the state has to get together and recognize that it's important for all their kids to graduate. "*

Tag: The report found in Illinois, about 90 percent of middle and high income students graduate, compared to only 73 percent of low income youth. To increase the overall graduation rate, the report recommends states expand the use of early-warning systems that can indicate a child needs intervention and make state funding more equitable so low-income and affluent students have the same opportunities.

Second Cut: Balfanz says increasing the number of high school graduates is critical for both the students' future and the success of Illinois.

Cut 78249 :11 *"If we keep having communities where 20, 30, 40 percent of the kids aren't graduating from high school it's going to be very hard for the community to continue to succeed as a community. Because if there's no work it's hard to be a successful adult. "*

Tag: According to the report, for the third year in a row, the country remains on pace to achieve the national goal of a 90 percent on-time high school graduation rate by 2020.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses soundbite(s)

LEAD: It's graduation season, but approximately one-in-five Illinois high school seniors is not donning a cap and gown. Mary Schuermann explains.

Cut 79249 :53 *Outcue...Mary Schuermann reporting.*

Note to Editors: Balfanz is at 410.516.8315 The report: <http://tinyurl.com/meun6wf>.

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May 20, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Report Reveals Need for Child Welfare Reform in IL

Springfield, IL – A new report reveals troubling trends in Illinois' child welfare system. The Annie E. Casey Foundation says about 10 percent of foster children are placed in a group setting instead of with a family – although about 40 percent of those children have no documented behavioral or clinical reason for placement in such a restrictive setting. Comments from Larry Joseph, research director, Voices for Illinois Children. Image available: Photo of a woman holding a boy.

Intro: Experts say children removed from their homes need the support of a family to help them get through the tough times. But a new report from the Annie E. Casey Foundation finds about one in ten foster kids in Illinois spends their time in a non-family setting. Larry Joseph with Voices for Illinois Children says these 16-hundred children live in institutions or group homes, which don't provide the same stability or security of a family setting. □ □

Cut 67249 :14 *"Kids do better when they live in families; all kids need families. In addition, group placements cost considerably more than what it costs to place a child with a relative, or with a foster family."*

Tag: The report says about 40 percent of children in group care have no documented behavioral or clinical reason for placement in such restrictive settings. And while the total number of children in group homes has dropped by 28 percent in Cook County since 2008, it increased in the southern, northwestern, and east central parts of Illinois.

Second Cut: Joseph adds the state's budget woes have had an adverse effect on the child welfare system.

Cut 68249 :16 *"These problems include the lack of community-based mental health services, also inadequate monitoring of residential treatment facilities, and unstable leadership at the Department of Children and Family Services. There's been a lot of turnover in recent years."*

Tag: And news investigations have uncovered hundreds of cases of abuse and sexual assault of young people in institutional care over the past six months.

Third Cut: Joseph says a "family-first" approach is needed in the child welfare system, but he notes it cannot happen without adequate resources.

Cut 69249 :15 *"In the current fiscal year, general revenue fund support for DCFS is 22 percent below the FY09 level, and the governor's proposed budget for the next fiscal year would slash funding by another 20 percent."*

Tag: The report recommends agencies do more to provide families the skills and resources they need to minimize the need for foster care, and that there be substantial justification for more restrictive placements.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP; uses soundbite(s)

LEAD: Experts say children removed from their homes need the support of a family to help them get through the tough times. But as Mary Schuermann reports, that isn't happening as much as it should in Illinois. □ □

Cut 70249 :48 *Outcue...Schuermann reporting.*

Note to Editors: See the report at <http://www.aecf.org/resources/every-kid-needs-a-family/>. Reach Joseph at 312-516-5556. □ □

FOCUS 6/7/2015

It's time to Uncork Urbana!

Good morning and welcome to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. Focus is a weekly show dedicated to a look at news, and public affairs. *Ryan Leskis is our director of community resources here at the Illini Radio Group and hosts a podcast called "Show and Tell." His goal is to bring higher awareness of the unique and exciting events, people and places of Central Illinois.* (START WINE SEGMENT)

IN: "I'm here with..."

OUT: "... looking forward to it."

Have you ever been surprised by a medical bill? You're not alone. That story is next on Focus.

PSAs

Welcome back to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. *It can be a costly problem, and according to a new survey, nearly one in three privately insured Americans has received a "surprise" medical bill. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection has more.* (START MED BILLS SEGMENT)

IN: "Nearly on in..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

A project underway in Illinois is the first nationally to address a problem many homeless children and teens have of safely storing their belongings. The Chicago Youth Storage Initiative is working to develop storage programs that can create some stability for homeless youth. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection reports. (START HOMELESS YOUTH SEGMENT)

IN: "It's one thing..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

The hopeful side of climate change. That story is next on Focus.

PSAs

Welcome back to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. *According to a prominent climatologist, there's a hopeful side to climate change – a coming shift in how people make and use energy. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection has more.* (START CLIMATE CHANGE SEGMENT)

IN: "In a sense..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

Streams and watersheds across the state and around the nation should have greater protections in place now that the Environmental Protection Agency has released its new Clean Water Rule. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection reports. (START CLEAN WATER RULE SEGMENT)

IN: "The Environmental Protection..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

PSAs

And that'll do it for this week's Focus. Thanks for joining us. If you have any questions or comments about this week's show, write to me, Sarah Addison – News Director. 2603 West Bradley Avenue. Champaign, IL 61821. Or email me, news@illiniradio.com. Focus will return same time next Sunday morning.

Illinois News Connection

A statewide news service for Illinois

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Sound Files on the Phone: (888) 600-9800, ID Code: 29

May 29, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Survey: One-in-Three Surprised by Medical Bills

Springfield, IL – It can be a costly problem, and according to a new survey, nearly one in three privately insured Americans has received a “surprise” medical bill. Comments from Chuck Bell, programs director, Consumers Union. Image available: Photo of emergency room.

Intro: Nearly one in three Americans has experienced the pain of a “surprise” medical bill in the past two years, according to a new national survey. Chuck Bell with Consumers Union says these unexpected medical bills can range anywhere from 25 dollars to ten-thousand dollars and more.

Cut 87249 :12 *"And it's not always easy for patients to avoid these bills. Despite your best efforts to stay in-network, sometimes you are going to get an out-of-network provider and be slapped with a fee that you really didn't expect and can't really control."*

Tag: Bell says only 28 percent of those responding to their national survey were satisfied with how their issue was resolved.

Second Cut: Bell says 87 percent of people in their survey did not know which agency in state government handles complaints about health insurance.

Cut 88249 :15 *"What we are trying to do is to hook consumers up with resources that can help them, and so we created an on-line complaint tool, so consumers can easily find their state insurance departments; and also a nonprofit consumer assistance program, if their state has one."*

Tag: The survey of more than two-thousand adult U-S residents was conducted by the Consumer Reports National Research Center. (A help tool id on the web at ConsumersUnion.org/insurance-complaint-tool)

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses first soundbite(s)

LEAD: Nearly one in three Americans has experienced the pain of a “surprise” medical bill in the past two years, according to a new national survey. More from Mary Schuermann.

Cut 89249 :27 *Outcue...Mary Schuermann reporting.*

Note to Editors: Reach Bell at 914-830-0639. Survey results:
ConsumersUnion.org/Research/Surprise-Bills-Survey.□□□□

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June 3, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Storage Initiative Creating Stability for Homeless IL Youth

Springfield, IL – A project underway in Illinois is the first nationally to address a problem many homeless children and teens have of safely storing their belongings. The Chicago Youth Storage Initiative is working to develop storage programs that can create some stability for homeless youth. Tracy Baim, publisher, Windy City Times and project coordinator. Image available: photo of a pile of clothing on a street.

Intro: It's one thing to not have a place to lay your head at night, but many homeless youth in Illinois also do not have a place to keep their personal belongings. The Chicago Youth Storage Initiative was developed after the 2014 L-G-B-T-Q Youth Summit. Project coordinator Tracy Baim says teens shared stories about the daily stress caused by not having a place to keep their documents, medications, clothing and other personal belongings.

Cut 16249 :13 "It really had some of us in tears. It was one of the most emotional things when we heard these youth talk about losing their family photos, losing really their connection to their past. It's a quality of life issue but it truly is also a health issue and a safety issue."

Tag: This summer, the initiative is building lockers at a Southside overnight youth shelter as a pilot, and possibly two additional sites. Baim says the Chicago Youth Storage Initiative is also working on developing a web-based documentation project. Adult storage models exist in San Diego, Seattle, Los Angeles and New York, but Chicago is the first U-S city to coordinate an effort for young people.

Second Cut: Baim says it's critical to solve the needs of homeless youth now, because it's the number one indicator of adult homelessness.

Cut 17249 :13 "If we spend a little bit of money now it will have an amazing effect on saving money in the health care system, in the criminal justice system and in the adult homeless shelter system. This is one of those really terrific things that will have great benefits for society and for the individuals at the same time."

Tag: More than 12 thousand Chicago youth between the ages of 14 and 21 were estimated to be homeless in 2014, according to the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses soundbite(s)

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June 4, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

A Shift in Energy Use: The Hopeful Side of Climate Change?

Springfield, IL – According to a prominent climatologist, there's a hopeful side to climate change – a coming shift in how people make and use energy. Comments from Richard Alley, the Evan Pugh Professor of Geosciences at Penn State University and host of the PBS miniseries "Earth: The Operator's Manual." Image available: photo of a power station.

Intro: In a sense, climate change is an opportunity for all of us, according to an important climatologist and public science educator. Geosciences Professor Richard Alley of Penn State was the host of the PBS miniseries "Earth: The Operators' Manual." He says climate change is a serious threat to everyone, but adds that we also now have a chance to change the entire way humans make and use energy. Alley says in the past we've burned through a series of energy sources – wood, whale oil and now fossil fuels.

Cut 39249 :12 "We're the first generation that knows how to get off the treadmill – how to build an economical, sustainable energy system without changing the climate and without running out of trees or whales."

Tag: Alley says one way to help make sure the transition happens is to implement the Obama Administration's Clean Power Plan. Under the proposal, the target for Illinois would be - in the year 2030 - to have reduced carbon emissions from existing power plants by 30 percent compared with 2005 levels.

Second Cut: Some coal and oil executives say climate change is a hoax. Alley says among scientists there's no question that it's real, serious and caused by humans. But he says small-scale, decentralized energy production is starting to do for the electricity grid what the Internet did for telecommunications.

Cut 40249 :13 "You can make power on your house with your solar cells, make power with wind, you can have some batteries. You can be a buyer, you can be a seller. A lot of sources, a lot of diversity. And that is robust against fluctuation."

Third Cut: Alley says this transition can be seen as a profound step in human history. He compares it to when people stopped being hunters and gatherers and shifted to agriculture.

Cut 41249 :13 "When our ancestors switched to farming food, they learned to make the earth give a whole lot more food. We can make a while lot more energy that really can do a lot of good for a lot of people in a lot of places."

Tag 2: Engineers looking to make the grid more stable and flexible are considering some creative ideas -

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May 28, 2015

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EPA Rule Clarifies Clean Water Protections in IL

Springfield, IL - Streams and watersheds in Illinois and around the nation should have greater protections in place now that the Environmental Protection Agency has released its new Clean Water Rule. Comments from Cindy Skrukud (skrew-crude), clean water advocate, Illinois Chapter of the Sierra Club. Image available: photo of a stream.

Intro: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in partnership with the U-S Army Corps of Engineers has released a new Clean Water Rule, which supporters say will better protect rivers and streams in Illinois and across the U-S from pollution. Cindy Skrukud with the Illinois Chapter of the Sierra Club says the new rule will restore Clean Water Act protections for headwaters, some streams and wetland habitat left uncertain by two U.S. Supreme Court rulings.

Cut 84249 :15 *"It now clearly states that we're covering small tributaries that contribute water to downstream waters that people rely on for their drinking water. And in Illinois that's over 1.6 million people."*

Tag: The move is an attempt to clarify protections after two Supreme Court decisions left some 20 million wetland acres and two million miles of streams unprotected. The government agencies held hundreds of meetings with stakeholders across the nation and reviewed more than a million public comments before developing the new rule. □□

Second Cut: In addition to drinking water, Skrukud says the at-risk waters also provide essential fish and wildlife habitat that helps to support Illinois' outdoor recreation economy.

Cut 85249 :12 *"Clean water is really important to communities' economies. People love to get out and recreate in our waterways, and so we want to make sure that those areas are protected."*

Tag: Some agriculture and industry groups claim the rule will hurt economic growth and intrude on property rights. According to the E-P-A, the rule does not change the exemptions that apply to agriculture. It also does not expand on which smaller bodies of water are regulated.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses first soundbite(s)

LEAD: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has released a new Clean Water Rule, which supporters say will better protect rivers and streams in Illinois and across the U.S. More from Mary Schuermann

Cut 86249 :49 *Outcue...Mary Schuermann reporting.*

Note to Editors: Reach Skrukud at 317-3251-1680. □□

FOCUS 6/14/2015

Is the bird flu destined to happen?

Good morning and welcome to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. Focus is a weekly show dedicated to a look at news, and public affairs. *As the state remains on high alert with the outbreak of avian influenza in other parts of the country, an expert on the issue says it was just a matter of time before the spread of the disease citing problems with the production model of the commercial poultry industry. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection reports.* (START BIRD FLU SEGMENT)

IN: "The outbreak of..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

Serving up healthy summer meals. That story is next on Focus.

PSAs

Welcome back to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. *Organizations and agencies across the state are continuing to collaborate to ensure children do not go hungry while school is out. Summer meal program sites are open around Illinois to help the most vulnerable children access nutritious meals. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection has more.* (START SUMMER MEALS SEGMENT)

IN: "Efforts to ensure..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

Some good news for foster children looking for a permanent home. The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services has been selected to participate in a program that will reduce the amount of time children spend in foster care and help them find homes with families living in other states. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection has more. (START FOREVER FAMILY SEGMENT)

IN: "Illinois is the..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

Does raising the minimum wage hurt employment? That story is next on Focus.

PSAs

Welcome back to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. *Illinois' minimum wage of \$8.25 an hour is higher than the national wage, and economists say new research suggests giving low-end wage workers a raise does not hurt employment. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection reports.* (START WAGES SEGMENT)

IN: "As debate continues..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

PSAs

And that'll do it for this week's Focus. Thanks for joining us. If you have any questions or comments about this week's show, write to me, Sarah Addison – News Director, 2603 West Bradley Avenue, Champaign, IL 61821. Or email me, news@illiniradio.com. Focus will return same time next Sunday morning.

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June 12, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Expert Says Bird Flu Destined to Happen

Springfield, IL - As Illinois remains on high alert with the outbreak of avian influenza in other parts of the country, an expert on the issue says it was just a matter of time before the spread of the disease. Robert Wallace cites problems with the production model of the commercial poultry industry. Comments from Robert Wallace, former consultant for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Image available: Photo of chicks.

Intro: The outbreak of avian influenza that has decimated hundreds of turkey and chicken operations in the U-S was a surprise to many, but one expert says it was destined to happen. Robert Wallace has worked with the United Nations and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on avian influenza. He says the production model in the commercial poultry industry is a prime target for these types of outbreaks and must be changed to take into account that the birds grown are embedded into an ecology.

Cut 30249 :18 "When you organize mono-cultures of poultry, 50,000 birds in a barn, that is all just food for influenza. And if you develop diverse strains and stock of birds, that will provide the immunological diversity necessary to resist any pathogen that comes through."

Tag: Wallace says another key to preventing such outbreaks is through the restoration of wetlands, which would help keep infected wild birds from intermingling with commercial poultry flocks. The bird flu has not been detected yet in Illinois, but as a preventive measure the Illinois Department of Agriculture is banning out-of-state birds from exhibitions and fairs around the state.

Second Cut: While the number of new cases of avian influenza nationwide appears to be waning, Wallace says it is cyclical in nature so he expects to see an increase again in the fall and winter. He also notes that there is a possible danger to human health, as the C-D-C recently warned.

Cut 31249 :12 "Now I'm not saying it's going to happen because there are plenty of avian influenzas that have emerged and that have not gone to going to human to human. However, there are many examples in which that has indeed happened, even within the last ten years."

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses first soundbite(s)

LEAD: The outbreak of avian influenza that has decimated hundreds of turkey and chicken

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June 8, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Sites Serving Up Nutritious Summer Meals for Illinois Kids

Springfield, IL – Organizations and agencies in Illinois are continuing to collaborate to ensure children do not go hungry while school is out. Summer meal program sites are open around the state to help Illinois' most vulnerable children access nutritious meals. Comments from Suzy Lee, coordinator, No Kid Hungry Illinois; and Amy Bianco, coordinator, Nutrition and Wellness Programs, Illinois State Board of Education. Image available: children eating at a summer food site.

Intro: Efforts to ensure Illinois children can access nutritious meals while school is out for summer break are paying off. Summer Food Programs around the state provide food to students who eat free or reduced-price meals during the school year. Suzy Lee with the organization No Kid Hungry Illinois says the state increased its summer meals served in 2014 by more than 15 percent.

Cut 19249 :16 *"That worked out to over 600,000 additional meals served in 2014. But we still have a lot of work to do. Even with that increase, we're still reaching less than 15 out of 100 kids that are eligible for a free or reduced-price meal during the school year."*

Tag: Lee says when school is in session it's much easier to ensure children can access nutrition programs, but during the summer many families are unaware of where a food site exists or lack transportation. The U-S-D-A is working specifically with the state to increase participation in the program.

Second Cut: Nutrition and Wellness Program Coordinator for the Illinois State Board of Education Amy Bianco says more than 660-thousand children in Illinois – about one in five - are at risk of hunger and lack adequate access to the food they need to stay healthy.

Cut 20249 :09 *"Hunger is such a big issue. The Summer Food Program helps the learning capability, the hunger issue. It is very important throughout the state."*

Third Cut: No Kid Hungry Illinois, the Illinois Hunger Coalition and the Illinois State Board of Education are collaborating to promote the availability of summer meals. Lee says when the social media campaign was implemented last year there was a 300 percent increase in the use of their texting line.

Cut 21249 :10 *"Folks can text 'foodIL' to 877-877 and they'll get three text messages back with the three summer meal sites that are nearest to them that are open."*

Tag: Through social media, Lee says they were able to reach one-point-four million households with information about summer nutrition programs in 2014.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses soundbite(s)

LEAD: Efforts to ensure Illinois children can access nutritious meals while school is out for summer break are paying off. Mary Schuermann explains.

Cut 22249 :47 *Outcue...Mary Schuermann reporting.*

Note to Editors: Lee is available at 773-843-2604; Bianco at 800-545-7892.

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June 9, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

A Faster Way for Some Illinois Kids to Find a Forever Family

Springfield, IL – Some good news for foster children looking for a permanent home. The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services has been selected to participate in a program that will reduce the amount of time children spend in foster care and help them find homes with families living in other states. Comments from Andrew Flach (flock), spokesman, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

Intro: Illinois is the first state for a new program that can eliminate some of the red tape that can delay the time it takes for some foster children to find a forever family. The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) has been chosen for an interstate program that uses a web-based system to expedite adoptions for children moving across state lines. Andrew Flach with D-C-F-S says sometimes placements are hampered by out-of-date technologies and procedures.

Cut 23249 :13 *"Right now when it comes to interstate adoptions for the most part it's being done through fax machines and through traditional mail. This will allow states to be able to access a central warehouse to exchange information to help move these adoptions through much more quickly."*

Tag: Illinois is the first state to be selected for the implementation phase of the National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise, joining Florida, Indiana, Nevada, South Carolina, Wisconsin and the District of Columbia which participated in the pilot. Currently an estimated 50 thousand children are in foster care in Illinois.

Second Cut: As a child-welfare system, Flach says the first goal is to move children back with their biological parents. When that is not possible, the next step is to find an adoptive family. He says occasionally a child's permanent home will be found across state lines, but sometimes the child's final move takes a while.

Cut 24249 :14 *"This will allow us to take a process that used to take months and shorten it down into a matter of weeks so we can move that child as quickly and as appropriately as we can out of the care of the state, which even on our best days is a bad parent, into the home of a loving family."*

Tag: According to preliminary data, the pilot is improving outcomes for children and saving taxpayer dollars. □ □

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses first soundbite(s)
LEAD: Illinois is the first state for a new program that can eliminate some of the red tape that can delay the time it takes for some foster children to find a forever family. The story from Mary Schuermann.
Cut 25249 :52 *Outcue...Mary Schuermann reporting.*

Note to Editors: Flach is available at 217-524-2029.

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June 10, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Research Changing Standard Thinking on Wage Increases

Springfield, IL – Illinois' minimum wage of \$8.25 an hour is higher than the national wage, and economists say new research suggests giving low-end wage workers a raise does not hurt employment. Comments from David Cooper, senior economic analyst with the Economic Policy Institute. Image available: photo of money in a wallet.

Intro: As debate continues over raising Illinois' minimum wage, new economic research suggests a higher wage shouldn't hurt employment. Critics of increasing low-end pay say it prices some workers out of the job market. And David Cooper with the Economic Policy Institute says that used to be the standard thinking among economists, but a lot of recent studies have compared employment in one location that raises the minimum with a neighbor that doesn't. One study looked at six hundred pairs of counties along state borders. Cooper says to their surprise, economists found very little difference in job numbers.

Cut 26249 :08 "Given the research, any effect on employment that would happen from these increases that we're seeing right now, it's going to be very small, whether it's positive or negative."

Tag: Illinois' minimum wage of \$8.25 is one dollar higher than the federal wage. Governor Bruce Rauner has shown support for a gradual increase over seven years to \$10 an hour.

Second Cut: Cooper says they've found that with the higher wages, employers are getting lower turnover and higher productivity, more than enough to make up for the cost of the higher pay. And he says a lot of minimum-wage employers are in businesses that see higher consumer demand when low-income families have more money.

Cut 27249 :09 "That means there's more customers coming through the door, in the retail sector in particular and in fast food. Presumably, a lot of those workers go out and shop in retail and buy fast food."

Third Cut: Cooper says the minimum wage has fallen far behind inflation. He says in purchasing power, the current federal minimum would have to rise to about ten dollars to get back to where it was fifty years ago. And he says low-end wages in Illinois – what the bottom ten percent of workers make – are falling.

FOCUS 6/21/2015

Libraries can help you prevent "summer slide."

Good morning and welcome to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. Focus is a weekly show dedicated to a look at news, and public affairs. *Reading during summer vacation is critical for students to help maintain their academic skills and avoid what educators call the "summer slide."* Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection has more. (START SUMMER SLIDE SEGMENT)

IN: "Now that summer..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

With the arrival of the busy summer season, it can be a crunch for parents in need of back-up child care. Experts say there are many issues to consider when finding a program or person to fill in or when determining if a child is old enough and responsible enough to be home alone. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection reports. (START CHILDCARE SUMMER SEGMENT)

IN: "The busy summer..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

Gov. Bruce Rauner is in the midst of a heated debate over bobcat-hunting in Illinois. Animal welfare organizations are urging him to veto a bill (HB 352) that would allow the animals to be hunted, while supporters of the measure say it's necessary to control the bobcat population. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection reports. (START BOBCATS SEGMENT)

IN: "Animal welfare groups..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

Show And Tell with Champaign Common Ground Food Co-op. That story is next on Focus.

PSAs

Welcome back to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. *Ryan Leskis is our director of community resources here at the Illini Radio Group and hosts a podcast called "Show and Tell." His goal is to bring higher awareness of the unique and exciting events, people and places of Central Illinois.* (START COMMON GROUND SEGMENT)

IN: "And I've got..."

OUT: "... Thanks! You, too."

PSAs

And that'll do it for this week's Focus. Thanks for joining us. If you have any questions or comments about this week's show, write to me, Sarah Addison – News Director. 2603 West Bradley Avenue. Champaign, IL 61821. Or email me, news@illiniradio.com. Focus will return same time next Sunday morning.

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June 16, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Step into an IL Library to Help Kids Avoid "Summer Slide"

Springfield, IL - Reading during summer vacation is critical for students to help maintain their academic skills and avoid what educators call the "summer slide." Comments from Kelly Durov (dur-of), children's services manager, and Parry Rigney, children's librarian at the Park Ridge Public Library. Image available: Photo of a girl reading in a library. □□

Intro: Now that summer is in full swing, Illinois educators are encouraging parents to make sure their kids read during vacation to avoid the so-called "summer slide." Kelly Durov with the Park Ridge Public Library says time away from the books can cause serious loss of academic skills, and she recommends that parents find ways to keep their child engaged during the summer months.

Cut 36249 :10 *"There has been research done that when children don't practice reading over the summer they lose their skills and that's what is referred to as the "summer slide." "*

Tag: Durov adds most libraries usually provide summer reading programs, which can be hugely valuable for students. Around the state, the iREAD program (Illinois Reading Enrichment and Development) helps develop and provide high-quality, low-cost resources and products to enable local library staff to promote reading.

Second Cut: Durov says anything parents can do to encourage summer reading will be beneficial for children. And while it's good to include educational books, she adds that summer reading should include fun reading material as well. □□

Cut 37249 :15 *"That's a great time to let kids explore their passions, especially as they get older. Fourth-, fifth-, sixth-graders have passion for games and toys and things where there's wonderful books written about that and summer's a great time to give them that choice and be able to explore those things."*

Third Cut: Children's Librarian Parry Rigney suggests parents or caregivers head to their local public library, where librarians can help children find material that suits their interest and reading level. □□□□

Cut 38249 :12 *"We have personalized book lists that we create for kids. It takes a little bit more time, but if they are willing to fill out a brief survey, then we can make a personalized book list for them and give them some recommendations they may not already know about."*

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses first soundbite(s)

LEAD: Now that summer is in full swing in Ohio, educators are encouraging parents to make sure their kids read during vacation to avoid the so-called "summer slide." More from Mary Schuermann

Cut 39249 :38 *Outcue...Mary Schuermann reporting.*

Note to Editors: Reach Durov and Rigney at 847-825-4527. More information about summer reading:
<http://www.ireadprogram.org/> □□

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June 15, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

Home Alone? Options to Consider for Back-Up Summer Child Care

Springfield, IL – With the arrival of the busy summer season, it can be a crunch for Illinois parents in need of back-up child care. Experts say there are many issues to consider when finding a program or person to fill in or when determining if a child is old enough and responsible enough to be home alone. Comments from Karen Fogolin (FOH-guh-lin), associate director, Child Care Aware. Image available: photo of kids playing.

Intro: The busy summer vacation season has arrived and with nannies and babysitters among those who'll be taking some time off, parents should make plans now for lining up back-up child care. Karen Fogolin with Child Care Aware says there are some options through schools and park and recreation programs, while other parents may seek out a local teenager or college student. She says when doing so, parents should have a checklist that includes first aid skills, C-P-R training and other important items.

Cut 33249 :16 *"Certainly if they're hiring a teenager or a college student, 'Is that the only person that will be there? Will they have their friends over?' They just need to know who's around their children, how they're being supervised, what activities are happening and to check in throughout the day."*

Tag: Fogolin says with any type of care, the key is to be informed. She notes that Child Care Aware has information that can help parents in identifying guidelines for appropriate summer care.

Second Cut: Some parents may consider leaving their older children at home alone if care is not available. Fogolin says knowing when a child is ready to be alone can be tricky.

Cut 34249 :17 *"It's really knowing how responsible is your child? Do they know when to call 911? Do they know basic first aid, not to answer the door to strangers, sort of those household safety rules? And the other thing too to think about is are they comfortable with it?"*

Tag: Illinois law specifies a child must be age 14 or older before he or she may be left home alone.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses first soundbite(s)

LEAD: The busy summer vacation season has arrived, and with nannies and babysitters among those who'll be taking some time off, parents should make plans now for lining up back-up care. Mary Schuermann has more.

Cut 35249 :45 *Outcue...Mary Schuermann*

Note to Editors: Reach Fogolin at (651) 290-9704 x110 or karenf@childcareawaremn.org. Tips at <http://www.childcareawaremn.org/families/successful-child-care>

Illinois News Connection

A statewide news service for Illinois

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June 17, 2015

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Sights Set on Gov. Rauner in Bobcat-Hunting Debate

Springfield, IL – Gov. Bruce Rauner is in the midst of a heated debate over bobcat-hunting in Illinois. Animal welfare organizations are urging him to veto a bill (HB 352) that would allow the animals to be hunted, while supporters of the measure say it's necessary to control the bobcat population. Comments from Wayne Pacelle (pah-SELL-ee), president and CEO, Humane Society of the United States (HSUS). Image available: photo of a bobcat.

Intro: Animal welfare groups are pleading with Governor Bruce Rauner to veto a bill that would allow bobcat-hunting in Illinois for the first time in four decades. H-B 352 reverses the state's ban on commercial trapping and sport-hunting of bobcats, a move supporters say is needed to manage the population. But President of the Humane Society of the United States Wayne Pacelle argues the animals were already once nearly driven to extinction.

Cut 40249 :14 "The bobcats have been coming back and they're part of the Illinois ecosystem, and they should remain that way and not be killed gratuitously – and in particularly inhumane ways, with steel-jawed leg hole traps or chasing them with packs of hounds."

Tag: The measure passed the House and is sitting on the governor's desk. Others urging him to veto the bill include the Illinois Environmental Council, Sierra Club Illinois, and several newspapers.

Second Cut: Pacelle says bobcats are small, elusive creatures, yet he believes lawmakers are painting a negative view of them as menacing predators and exaggerating their size.

Cut 41249 :14 "Representative John Bradley said that he saw one walk across his backyard and he thought it looked like a saber-toothed tiger. Another said that bobcats can get to 60 pounds. The policy of the state should not be driven by this exaggeration or fabrication. "

Tag: Bobcats were on the state's threatened species list from 1977 to 1999. Last year, lawmakers attempted to overturn the ban on hunting, but then-governor Pat Quinn vetoed the bill.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses soundbite(s)

LEAD: Animal welfare groups are pleading with Governor Bruce Rauner to veto a bill that

FOCUS 6/28/2015

Show And Tell with Habitat for Humanity of Champaign County.

Good morning and welcome to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. Focus is a weekly show dedicated to a look at news, and public affairs. *Ryan Leskis is our director of community resources here at the Illini Radio Group and hosts a podcast called "Show and Tell." His goal is to bring higher awareness of the unique and exciting events, people and places of Central Illinois.* (START HABITAT SEGMENT)

IN: "I'm joined today..."

OUT: "... a good day."

Negotiations continue with state workers. That story is next on Focus.

PSAs

Welcome back to Focus. I'm station news director Sarah Addison. *They've been at the bargaining table for six months, and negotiations continue on Illinois' contract with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, which expires June 30. The union representing some 36,000 workers in the state says it's not giving up on efforts to pursue a fair resolution. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection reports.* (START STATE WORKERS SEGMENT)

IN: "With a contract..."

OUT: "... Illinois News Connection."

The Environmental Protection Agency regulates emissions from cars, trucks, buses, industry and soon from power plants - but not airplanes. The government agency wants to change that and announced recently that carbon emissions from aircraft should be regulated under the Clean Air Act, but not everyone is happy with the agency's approach. Mary Schuermann from Illinois News Connection has more. (START EPA PLANES SEGMENT)

IN: "There are more..."

OUT: "...Illinois News Connection."

PSAs

And that'll do it for this week's Focus. Thanks for joining us. If you have any questions or comments about this week's show, write to me, Sarah Addison – News Director. 2603 West Bradley Avenue. Champaign, IL 61821. Or email me, news@illiniradio.com. Focus will return same time next Sunday morning.

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June 23, 2015

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One Week to Contract Deadline: Negotiations Continue with State Workers

Springfield, IL – They've been at the bargaining table for six months, and negotiations continue on Illinois' contract with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, which expires June 30. The union representing some 36,000 workers in the state says it's not giving up on efforts to pursue a fair resolution. Comments from Anders Lindall, director of public affairs, AFSCME Council 31. Image available: photo of workers holding signs.

Intro: With a contract deadline just a week away, state workers in Illinois continue their push for a fair agreement. Members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees say they are not pleased with Governor Bruce Rauner's proposed cuts in pay and benefits, and his willingness to allow a government shutdown. Anders Lindall with A-F-S-C-M-E Council 31 says a strike is not in the public's best interest.

Cut 49249 :14 *"We have never had a governor who has made such extreme demands as to give state employees no choice but to force them out on strike for fairness. That's not what the people want and certainly not what state employees or our union wants."*

Tag: Contracts also expire on June 30 with several other smaller unions representing about five thousand nurses, police officers and others. Negotiations have been taking place for six months. The Governor has remained quiet about the contract talks, but a spokesperson recently said Rauner is committed to bargaining in good faith to reach a deal that is fair to both state employees as well as taxpayers.

Second Cut: If no agreement is reached before June 30, Lindall says the terms of the current contract should be extended while bargaining continues. He adds that state employees are committed to serving the people and providing vital services to communities. □ □

Cut 50249 :16 *"That includes protecting kids from abuse and neglect, taking care of people with profound disabilities, working in our state parks, keeping us all safe by investigating crimes and responding to emergencies. We want to keep doing that work, it's not just a job but a calling to serve."*

Tag: There is no formal agreement to extend the contract, but Lindall says bargaining dates have been scheduled for July.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses first soundbite(s)

LEAD: With a contract deadline just a week away, state workers in Illinois continue their push for a fair agreement. More from Mary Schuermann.

Cut 51249 :55 *Outcue...Mary Schuermann reporting.*

Note to Editors: Lindall is available at 312 641-6060.

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June 22, 2015

Available files: mp3 wav jpg

EPA Looks to Regulate Emissions from Aircraft

Springfield, IL - The Environmental Protection Agency regulates emissions from cars, trucks, buses, industry and soon from power plants - but not airplanes. The government agency wants to change that and announced recently that carbon emissions from aircraft should be regulated under the Clean Air Act, but not everyone is happy with the agency's approach. Comments from Vera Pardee, staff attorney for the Center for Biological Diversity. Image available: photo of an airplane.

Intro: There are more than eight-thousand airplanes in Illinois, and at this point their carbon emissions are unregulated by the federal government. Recently, the E-P-A announced that greenhouse gas emissions from airplanes should be regulated under the Clean Air Act. Vera Pardee with the Center for Biological Diversity says it's about time.

Cut 46249 :13 *"They are a very large feature of American transportation, and they're not regulated. Trucks are, buses, every car, every passenger car is currently regulated, but the airline industry has been able to just sneak under the radar screen."*

Tag: Pardee adds that while the E-P-A's proposed action is welcome, it may be too little, too late in terms of the impact airplane carbon pollution has had on the environment. According to the International Council on Clean Transportation, if commercial aviation were a country, it would rank seventh after Germany in terms of carbon emissions.

Second Cut: The E-P-A says while emissions should fall under the Clean Air Act, the agency plans to wait until the International Civil Aviation Organization sets a standard, which is likely only to apply to new aircraft that make up five-percent of the world's total aircraft. Pardee says there are some airlines in the U-S already operating airplanes with some reduced carbon emissions.

Cut 47249 :15 *"It is not that hard to get much more efficient. Even if we just got all the airlines up to the standard that's being implemented right now by the best airlines in the United States, we would cut carbon by more than 25-percent."*

Tag 1: The E-P-A has invited the public and transportation industry to comment on the issue. The agency began regulating car pollution in the 1970s and recently announced it would regulate carbon emissions from power plants.

OPTIONAL REPORTER WRAP: uses first soundbite(s)

LEAD: The EPA regulates emissions from cars, trucks, buses, industry and soon from power plants - but not airplanes. Mary Schuermann has more on why the agency and others want to change that.

Cut 48249 :45 *Outcue...Mary Schuermann reporting.*

Note to Editors: Reach Pardee through Patrick Sullivan at 415.517.9364