

WGLT ISSUES AND PROGRAMS

January, October - December 2017

Key: The following issues were addressed during WGLT Newscasts during MORNING EDITION from 5 to 9 am M-F and during ALL THINGS CONSIDERED from 3-6PM, M-F, and during Sound Ideas, Noon-1pm, and 6-7pm, M-F. The story lengths range from one minute to 59 minutes.

Arts and Culture

[GLT Datebook: Condensed Shakespeare Is Full-Sized Fun](#)

By LAURA KENNEDY · DEC 30, 2017

[Community Players](#) in Bloomington takes 37 Shakespeare plays, adds three actors, a little audience participation and comes up with a hilarious romp for a cold, winter's night.

[GLT Datebook: Psych Geeks Put 'Supernatural' On The Couch](#)

By LAURA KENNEDY · DEC 23, 2017

The [GLT Psych Geeks](#) have contributed to a new book that delves into the psychological underpinnings of a popular TV show.

[GLT Culture Maven: 'The Last Jedi' Feels Like A Setup](#)

By LAURA KENNEDY · DEC 22, 2017

Shari Zeck, GLT's [Culture Maven](#) and Illinois State University's interim dean of Milner Library, came away from seeing the new "Star Wars" film with a strong impression. No worries, no spoilers.

[Mayor Renner Hoping For More From VenuWorks](#)

By MIKE MCCURDY & CHARLIE SCHLENKER · DEC 19, 2017

The mayor of Bloomington said Tuesday he's not satisfied with progress made by VenuWorks in improving operations at Grossinger Motors Arena.

[New Book Explores The Corrosive Impact Of Corruption](#)

By LAURA KENNEDY · DEC 19, 2017

The dark underbelly of corruption is exposed in a new book from two Illinois State University professors.

GLT Datebook: Humane Society Offers Opportunities

By LAURA KENNEDY · DEC 16, 2017

The Humane Society of Central Illinois (HCI) is fighting the pet over-population problem with a series of spay/neuter clinics. Plus its doors are open to young people who want to help out by volunteering.

GLT Datebook: Mom's Orchard Blooms In Food Desert

By LAURA KENNEDY · DEC 9, 2017

Bloomington resident Matt Erickson has planted seeds in a food desert and hopes to grow interest from the public with a special offer.

Mansion Tour Highlights Christmas Past

By LAURA KENNEDY · DEC 8, 2017

The halls of three historic homes are decked with holiday cheer for the annual Christmas at the Mansions Tour.

GLT Datebook: Sound Of Illinois Chorus Sings Of Christmas

By LAURA KENNEDY · DEC 2, 2017

The Sound of Illinois Chorus—80 men strong—not only have a new Christmas CD that's just been released, but they're holding a free Christmas concert for the community, as well.

Culture Maven: Sexual Misconduct Has A Starring Role In Hollywood

By LAURA KENNEDY · NOV 30, 2017

Kevin Spacey. Harvey Weinstein. And now, Matt Lauer and Garrison Keillor.

ISU Librarian Consults On Library In Persian Gulf

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · NOV 28, 2017

An associate dean of Illinois State University's Milner Library said his recent trip to the Gulf state of Qatar to help create that country's national library was an exciting adventure.

ISU Historian Uncovers Sympathy For The Devil

By LAURA KENNEDY · NOV 27, 2017

Attitudes toward criminals have changed a great deal in the United States, and Illinois State University historian Amy Wood is using a prestigious Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship to further her research into those remarkable changes.

[GLT Datebook: Merry Christmas To All And To All A Good Fright](#)

By LAURA KENNEDY · NOV 25, 2017

The true spirit of Christmas can have a dark side.

[What We Value Is Crucial To Understanding Poetry](#)

By LAURA KENNEDY · NOV 22, 2017

A pair of English professors have teamed up to help readers find new ways to evaluate poetry.

[GLT Datebook: Children's Home + Aid's Adopt-A-Family Makes The Season Brighter](#)

By LAURA KENNEDY · NOV 18, 2017

Children's Home and Aid hopes to make this a Merry Christmas for local families with the annual Adopt-a-Family program.

[Festival Of Trees Sparkles As It Supports Kids](#)

By LAURA KENNEDY · NOV 15, 2017

You can find some original holiday decor this weekend, plus help kids and families in central Illinois at an annual event hosted by The Baby Fold.

[GLT Datebook: Operation Santa Treats Overseas Military](#)

By LAURA KENNEDY · NOV 10, 2017

Operation Santa is hard at work making sure active service members overseas have a merry Christmas.

[Songs Of World War I Reveal Changing American Attitudes](#)

By LAURA KENNEDY · NOV 9, 2017

In 1917, when America marched off to join the fight in World War I, it did so to the rhythm of popular songs.

Animal House: A Killer Virus

By LAURA KENNEDY · NOV 7, 2017

Responsible pet parents always get their animals vaccinated when they're young. One common vaccination is for the highly contagious and deadly parvovirus.

GLT Datebook: Childhood Inspiration Still Informs Artist

By LAURA KENNEDY · NOV 4, 2017

Artist Gary Justis is showing a new collection of his work at the Ramp Arts Gallery in Bloomington.

A Davis Mansion Thanksgiving

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · NOV 2, 2017

Thanksgiving is fast approaching. Of course, Thanksgiving was not always the way it is today.

ISU's Charlie Harris Passes Away

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · NOV 1, 2017

A longtime fixture of Illinois State University has passed away.

He Hears Dead People

By LAURA KENNEDY · OCT 31, 2017

You can keep your video games, your knitting, your gardening. Eric Vogel has a hobby that's not your everyday pastime. He records the voices of the dead.

GLT Datebook: She Geeks Rise In New Production

By LAURA KENNEDY · OCT 28, 2017

Following her sister's Dungeons and Dragons map leads a young woman on an epic voyage of discovery in the play "She Kills Monsters."

GLT's Grow: To Rake Or Not To Rake

By LAURA KENNEDY · OCT 27, 2017

As your trees leave you the gift of autumn leaves, you're faced with that age old question: Should I rake or not?

GLT's Psych Geeks Know What Scares You

By LAURA KENNEDY · OCT 27, 2017

What's your fearful pleasure? Brain-eating zombies? Vampires? Giant mutant bugs? Or how about that old standby: body cavity invading spiders?

Author And Archivist Uncovers Illinois State University History

By LAURA KENNEDY · OCT 25, 2017

In 1857, when Illinois State Normal University was founded, it was none other than Abraham Lincoln who drew up the legal documents to help establish the school.

GLT Datebook: Sisters Are Doing It For Themselves

By LAURA KENNEDY · OCT 21, 2017

Community Players in Bloomington is staging the musical "Sister Act," which is based on the popular film starring Whoopi Goldberg.

Animal House: Foster Pet Parenting Helps Pets Find FURever Home

By LAURA KENNEDY · OCT 20, 2017

October is Adopt a Shelter Pet Month. But if you want to help shelter animals without going the adoption route, there's a great alternative that can have a positive impact on the lives of homeless animals.

Horseshoes Is More Than Just Ringers

By LAURA KENNEDY · OCT 17, 2017

Tuesday evenings in warm weather, the Twin Cities Horseshoe Pitchers Club meet, seeking ringers and finding fellowship.

Childhood and Nature Highlight Shows At McLean County Arts Center

By LAURA KENNEDY · OCT 17, 2017

The wild emotions of childhood and the fragile world around us figure prominently in two shows currently up at the [McLean County Arts Center](#) in Bloomington.

Sounds Of Christmas Fades To Silence

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · OCT 16, 2017

The Sounds of Christmas concert in the State Farm headquarters atrium—a 35-year Bloomington-Normal tradition—is coming to an end.

GLT Datebook: Redbirds Rise at ISU Homecoming

By LAURA KENNEDY · OCT 14, 2017

Illinois State University celebrates Homecoming week Oct. 16-22, with a variety of events to engage the whole community.

Wayne Messmer Returns To Illinois Wesleyan University

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · OCT 13, 2017

Wayne Messmer is an iconic voice in Illinois, serving as a professional speaker, broadcaster, actor, author, and of course, singer. He's also an Illinois Wesleyan University graduate.

Quilters Have Kids Covered

By LAURA KENNEDY · OCT 12, 2017

The annual [Bed Blitz](#) makes sure kids have a place to sleep by making their beds from scratch. But no bed is truly made until it's covered with something warm and comfy. That's where the quilters come in.

New Artistic Director Takes Center Stage At Illinois Shakespeare Festival

By LAURA KENNEDY · OCT 10, 2017

John Stark has deep roots at the Illinois Shakespeare Festival.

A Final Promise Lives On

By LAURA KENNEDY · OCT 9, 2017

An advocate for end-of-life options will visit Illinois State University this week to share his wife's story in an effort to help others who face death.

GLT Datebook: Prairie Fire Theater Stages Intimate Revue

By LAURA KENNEDY · OCT 7, 2017

The works of Richard Maltby and David Shire take center stage in the revue, "Starting Here, Starting Now."

Twin City Hot Dog Places Thrive Despite Portillo's Competition

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · OCT 5, 2017

The entry of Portillo's restaurant into Bloomington-Normal appears to have had an unexpected effect on the marketplace.

Killer Queens Drag Up For Pageant

By LAURA KENNEDY · OCT 5, 2017

Forget Miss America. Miss U.S.A., get out of the way!

With glitz, glam, lots of makeup and some strategically applied duct tape, Miss Gay Illinois USofA is the queen to beat.

New Civic Arts Manager Steps Up In Normal

By LAURA KENNEDY · OCT 5, 2017

Normal Theater manager Adam Fox has a new role with the Town of Normal that will allow him to help shape the cultural landscape of the community.

Business and Economy

Searching for Clues Into Rivian's Electric Vehicle Future

By RYAN DENHAM · 6 HOURS AGO

When Rivian Automotive bought the shuttered Mitsubishi Motors plant in Normal, the company's mystique was part of the excitement. Who was this MIT grad who wants to build electric vehicles here? What will the cars look like? Will it be like Tesla?

Delayed East-Side Kroger Project Now Officially 'On Hold'

By RYAN DENHAM · JAN 5, 2018

Plans are now on hold for a new Kroger Marketplace store on Bloomington's east side.

New Uptown Building Considered On Circle

By MIKE MCCURDY · JAN 4, 2018

The Normal Town Council at its next meeting may review a proposal for what's being called a "major economic development initiative" in Uptown Normal.

Hobby Lobby Moving Locations In Normal

By RYAN DENHAM · JAN 4, 2018

The Hobby Lobby store in Normal is moving to a smaller location within the same shopping center.

Illinois Farmers Plan Another Push for Industrial Hemp

By JACLYN DRISCOLL · JAN 2, 2018

Making it legal to raise industrial hemp has been a topic of discussion in Illinois for years. Wisconsin is the most recent state to allow farmers to grow it. Will Illinois be next?

Swingers Grille in West Normal Closes

By RYAN DENHAM · JAN 1, 2018

Swingers Grille in Normal has closed, the restaurant [announced Monday on its Facebook page](#).

Retail Down, Construction Up As B-N Jobless Rate Falls Again

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 29, 2017

Bloomington-Normal's unemployment rate fell again in November to 3.9 percent as the economy added 500 jobs over the past year to maintain one of the lowest jobless rates in Illinois.

Prices Up Again As Real-Estate Market Nears Winter Slowdown

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 19, 2017

Tight inventory in November again drove up average home-sale prices in Bloomington-Normal, as the market for newly built homes continued to sink.

Investor Joins Rivian As Electric Automaker Staffs Up

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 12, 2017

Electric-vehicle maker Rivian said Tuesday it has brought on a new major investor as it nears the one-year anniversary of moving into the former Mitsubishi manufacturing plant.

[Green Top Grocery Still Finding Its Way After 7 Months](#)

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 12, 2017

It took five years of community meetings, fundraising, and planning to open Bloomington's first grocery store cooperative. Seven months since opening day, the work still isn't over.

[Bloomington-Normal Economy Well Off Peak But Holding Steady](#)

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · DEC 11, 2017

There are 9,000 fewer workers in Bloomington-Normal than there were seven years ago, according to Economist Mike Doherty of the Illinois Farm Bureau.

[Renner: Prosthetics Manufacturer Exploring Move Into Bloomington-Normal](#)

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 6, 2017

Another manufacturer is considering a move into McLean County.

A company that makes prosthetic limbs met with Bloomington city officials last week about opening a manufacturing site here, said Mayor Tari Renner.

[Radio Bloomington Owner Seeks Bankruptcy Reorganization](#)

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 30, 2017

The owner of several Bloomington-Normal radio stations filed for bankruptcy Wednesday as part of a restructuring plan to reduce the company's debt.

[Construction Up, Retail Down As Local Jobless Rate Falls Again](#)

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 24, 2017

Bloomington-Normal's jobless rate sank to 3.8 percent in October, as the local economy added 900 jobs in construction, professional and business services, and other sectors.

[Realtors: 'Unique' Market Saw Prices Rise Again In October](#)

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 23, 2017

The pace of home sales in the Bloomington-Normal market slowed in October, even as the average price continued to climb due to low inventory, local real estate agents reported Wednesday.

Brandt Also Set For State's EDGE Tax Credit At New Plant

By RYAN DENHAM & CHARLIE SCHLENKER · NOV 15, 2017

Brandt Industries will be getting more than just local tax breaks if it brings a new plant to McLean County.

Unit 5 Reluctantly OKs Tax Breaks For Canadian Manufacturer Brandt

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 13, 2017

Unit 5's school board on Monday reluctantly approved around \$400,000 in property-tax breaks for a Canadian manufacturer in exchange for the promise of hundreds of new local jobs.

Brandt President: McLean Co. Chosen Over 2 Competitors; HQ Possible Too

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 13, 2017

Brandt Industries expects to bring around 500 jobs to McLean County over the next decade and might even establish its U.S. headquarters in Bloomington-Normal, the company's president said Monday.

Unit 5 First To Vote On Tax Breaks For Ag Manufacturer Brandt

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 13, 2017

A Canadian agriculture equipment manufacturer would receive at least \$600,000 in property tax breaks over the next 10 years if it brings hundreds of promised new jobs to McLean County, [according to a proposed agreement](#) facing its first vote Monday.

Hundreds Of New Jobs Possible As Canadian Company Seeks Tax Break

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 11, 2017

A Canadian agriculture equipment manufacturer is working with local taxing bodies on an incentive package that would bring at least 300 new jobs to McLean County, officials said Saturday.

New Restaurant Coming to Eastland Mall

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 3, 2017

The next step in the redevelopment of Eastland Mall will be a new restaurant.

Realtors: Tight Inventory Driving Up Home Prices in Bloomington-Normal

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 1, 2017

A low number of homes on the market is helping to drive up prices in Bloomington-Normal real estate, even as the demand for newly built homes continues to lag.

Bloomington-Normal Jobless Rate Dips As Economy Adds 1,400 Jobs

By RYAN DENHAM · OCT 26, 2017

Bloomington-Normal's jobless rate fell again in September and remains the lowest among all metro areas in the state, the Illinois Department of Employment Security reported Thursday.

Chicago Officially Submits Bid For Amazon's 2nd Headquarters

By AP · OCT 17, 2017

The city of Chicago has officially submitted its bid to be home to Amazon's second headquarters.

City: New Kroger Delayed But Still Coming To Bloomington's East Side

By RYAN DENHAM · OCT 17, 2017

A city official says a new Kroger Marketplace store is still planned for Bloomington's east side, though the project has been delayed significantly from its original timetable.

Busy September But Home Sales Still Lag In Peoria Area

By RYAN DENHAM · OCT 16, 2017

Home sales continue to lag in the Peoria area, despite a strong end to the busy summer sales season.

Shopping Center Owner Asks Normal Council For \$800K In Tax Breaks

By RYAN DENHAM · OCT 15, 2017

Should Normal give away \$800,000 in tax breaks to a shopping center owner so that the town can reap \$4.8 million in projected new tax revenue?

Active Hurricane Season Adds Up For State Farm, Country Financial

By RYAN DENHAM · OCT 13, 2017

The relentless hurricane season is keeping Bloomington-based insurers busy.

ISU Research Explores Connection Between Autism, IT Careers

By RYAN DENHAM · OCT 12, 2017

It's no secret that more and more children are being diagnosed with autism. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says about [1 in 68 children has autism spectrum disorder](#). That jumps to 1 in 42 for boys—almost five times more common than in girls.

Planet Fitness To Move Into JCPenney Spot At Eastland Mall

By NATE HEAD & RYAN DENHAM · OCT 4, 2017

State Farm IT Changes Will Include Employee Buyouts

By RYAN DENHAM · OCT 3, 2017

State Farm's plans to realign its IT operations include a voluntary buyout for some employees.

Education and Family

Photos: Eastern Illinois Foodbank Distribution Relieves Holiday Stress

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN · DEC 19, 2017

Sherri served food for nearly three decades. Now, she's on the receiving end.

Report: State's Teacher Shortage Worse In Central Illinois

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 17, 2017

A new report has labeled the state's teacher shortage a crisis—one that's particularly bad for Central Illinois districts struggling to lure candidates away from Chicago-area schools.

Unit 5 Reaches Settlement With Young America Over Property Taxes

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN & RYAN DENHAM · DEC 14, 2017

The Unit 5 school board [accepted a settlement](#) Wednesday to resolve a long-running property tax dispute with Young America.

Unit 5 High School Marching Bands To Merge Into One

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER & RYAN DENHAM · DEC 8, 2017

Unit 5's two high school marching bands will merge into one competitive group next year.

Bowman: 'Difficult Conversations' Coming For Illinois Higher Education

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 21, 2017

When Al Bowman was president of Illinois State University, he liked the freedom and flexibility that he had to run his campus. Now that tables have turned.

New U of I Degrees Combine Computer Science With Ag, Music

By AP · NOV 20, 2017

The University of Illinois plans to offer new degrees that combine computer science with music or crop sciences.

Unit 5 Property Tax Bills Expected To Stay Put

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN & RYAN DENHAM · NOV 9, 2017

Unit 5 schools plan to pursue a property tax levy that will mean almost no change for the owner of an average home in the district.

More Local Immigrants Placed In Detention: One Family's Struggle

By JUDITH VALENTE · NOV 7, 2017

The number of illegal immigrants taken from the McLean County jail and sent to immigration detention centers has more than doubled in the past year, from 15 to 39.

Unit 5 Board To Avoid 'Prescriptive' Farm-to-School Resolution

By RYAN DENHAM · OCT 31, 2017

Unit 5 may still pursue some parts of a proposed farm-to-school program, but a school board resolution driving the idea has stalled, officials said Tuesday.

State Releases New Report Cards for Schools

By DUSTY RHODES · OCT 31, 2017

Want to know how your kid's school is performing compared to others? The Illinois State Board of Education on Tuesday released graduation rates, test scores and other metrics through its online school report cards.

Unit 5 Exploring New Farm-To-School Program

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN · OCT 27, 2017

The Unit 5 school board is looking into bringing local food to its school cafeterias.

Unit 5 Teachers Call For Welcoming Environment For Immigrant Families

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN · OCT 26, 2017

Teachers from Unit 5's high schools are asking the school board to declare the district a welcoming environment for immigrant students and teachers.

NCHS Students Kneel During Anthem At Homecoming Event

By JUDITH VALENTE · OCT 13, 2017

Professional football players aren't the only ones taking a knee during the singing of "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Unit 5 Leaders Deliver State of the District Remarks

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN · OCT 12, 2017

Unit 5 leaders say the school district's mission is to help each student achieve personal excellence.

Chiddix Student To Contact International Space Station With Ham Radio

By JUDITH VALENTE · OCT 11, 2017

At the end of the month, eighth-graders at Chiddix Junior High School in Normal will get a chance of a lifetime.

ISU Professor Designs New Model To Teach Teachers

By JON NORTON · OCT 9, 2017

Illinois State University Education Professor Deborah MacPhee has designed a collaborative model of teacher education she says bridges the gap between theory and practice.

Pastors Debate What To Say About Trump From Pulpit

By JUDITH VALENTE · OCT 4, 2017

A majority of evangelical Christians threw their support to President Donald Trump in the 2016 election, as did a large number of conservative Catholics and mainline Protestants who agreed with candidate Trump's positions on abortion and the economy.

Health and Medicine

Cold and Flu Season Takes Nasty Turn In Bloomington-Normal

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 20, 2017

'Tis the season for family get-togethers and office Christmas parties—and that means lots of germs spreading around right in the middle of cold and flu season.

OSF HealthCare Settles Dispute with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 22, 2017

Those with Blue Cross and Blue Shield health insurance have something to be thankful for—not having to change where they get medical care in 2018.

With Local Opioid Deaths Rising, Summit Seeks Solutions

By JUDITH VALENTE · OCT 31, 2017

Every day, an estimated 140 people die of opioid overdoses in the U.S., according to health officials. President Donald Trump recently [declared opioid addiction a public health emergency](#).

Signing Up For Health Care This Year Could Prove More Daunting

By JUDITH VALENTE · OCT 26, 2017

The enrollment period for obtaining health insurance through the Affordable Care Act on the Illinois exchanges begins Nov. 1, but signing up might prove more daunting this year than in the past.

Planned Parenthood: Rule Change Is 'Attack' On Reproductive Rights

By JUDITH VALENTE · OCT 17, 2017

Planned Parenthood of Illinois calls a [new Trump administration rule](#) allowing additional employers to opt out of providing birth control coverage a further "attack" on reproductive rights.

A Final Promise Lives On

By LAURA KENNEDY · OCT 9, 2017

An advocate for end-of-life options will visit Illinois State University this week to share his wife's story in an effort to help others who face death.

Politics and Government

On Your Mark, Get Set, Grab Tax Credits

By DUSTY RHODES · DEC 27, 2017

Many of us enjoy a party on New Year's Eve or New Year's Day, but for a few wealthy Illinois residents, Jan. 2 will be the day to celebrate. Beginning at 8 a.m., on a first-come, first-served basis, they can reserve a [hefty tax credit](#) in return for their donation to a private school.

Normal Eyes Early 2018 For Its Own Police Board

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 21, 2017

As Bloomington's new civilian police advisory board gets to work, a similar group in the Town of Normal will also be taking shape in 2018.

Mahrt Joins Bloomington As Interim Community Development Director

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 20, 2017

Bloomington has hired an interim community development director to help out during a time of transition in city leadership.

Davis, LaHood Support Tax Bill Now Headed For Trump's Desk

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 20, 2017

Bloomington-Normal's two Republican congressmen said Wednesday that their vote in support of the GOP tax bill will help middle-income earners in Central Illinois, denying that the measure disproportionately benefits wealthier Americans and companies.

New Book Explores The Corrosive Impact Of Corruption

By LAURA KENNEDY · DEC 19, 2017

The dark underbelly of corruption is exposed in a new book from two Illinois State University professors.

Aldermen See Roadmap To Cut Deficit, But Will They Take It?

By RYAN DENHAM & MIKE MCCURDY · DEC 19, 2017

Bloomington aldermen wanted to see some concrete ideas for how the city could close next year's \$3 million budget deficit. Now they've got them.

Signs Point To Concessions, Additional Parking At Miller Park Zoo

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN · DEC 19, 2017

Residents and visitors will see some changes in the city of Bloomington's aesthetics next year.

Bloomington Council Unwilling To Advance Welcoming City Ordinance

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · DEC 18, 2017

Nearly 300 people—mostly supporters—turned out to a Bloomington City Council meeting Monday dealing with a proposed Welcoming City ordinance.

Toxic Talk Hijacks Political Discourse

By LAURA KENNEDY · DEC 14, 2017

Extreme rhetoric has turned political discussions in America ugly. But Illinois State University professor Joseph Zompetti believes there's hope for future discourse.

Durbin Fears 'Mistakes' In Rushed Republican Tax Bill

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 14, 2017

U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin criticized Republicans on Thursday for rushing to deliver a sweeping overhaul of tax laws before Christmas—a package that the senior Illinois Democrat says gives too much away to wealthy Americans and large corporations.

New Law Aimed At Combating Fraudulent Opioid Prescriptions

By AP · DEC 13, 2017

Gov. Bruce Rauner has signed legislation aimed at combating fraudulent opioid prescriptions by requiring drug prescribers to use a database containing patient prescription histories.

One Year Later, Rauner Visits Clinton Plant To Tout Nuclear Bill

By BRIAN MOLINE · DEC 13, 2017

Gov. Bruce Rauner stopped at the Exelon nuclear plant near Clinton on Tuesday to mark the one-year anniversary of legislation that kept a pair of Illinois nuclear facilities open.

[Bloomington OKs Library Tax Increase; Fire Department Short Staffed](#)

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN, MIKE MCCURDY & RYAN DENHAM • DEC 12, 2017

The Bloomington Public Library will use a small increase in property taxes for future improvements.

[Durbin, Duckworth Endorse Pritzker In Primary For Governor](#)

By BRIAN MACKEY • DEC 8, 2017

Illinois' two Democratic U.S. senators took sides in the primary for governor Friday.

[Bill Yoder To Run For Fitzgerald's Circuit Judge Vacancy](#)

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN • DEC 7, 2017

Eleventh Judicial Circuit Associate Judge Bill Yoder will seek election for the resident circuit judge spot being vacated by Chief Judge Kevin Fitzgerald.

[Meet 4 New Faces Running For McLean County Board](#)

By RYAN DENHAM • DEC 7, 2017

Voters will have more choices on the ballot in 2018 when they vote for McLean County Board. Nine of 10 races will be contested.

[Energized Democrats Put More Candidates on McLean County Ballots](#)

By RYAN DENHAM • DEC 6, 2017

For Democrats across the country, Donald Trump's surprise election is a cloud over the country, but now there's a silver lining.

[Chief Circuit Judge Fitzgerald To Retire In 2018](#)

By RYAN DENHAM • DEC 5, 2017

Eleventh Judicial Circuit Chief Judge Kevin Fitzgerald announced Tuesday he plans to retire in 2018, creating a vacancy that voters will fill in next November's general election.

GOP Chair Braces Candidates For A Fight Against Energized Democrats, Libertarians

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 5, 2017

McLean County's top Republican has a warning for local GOP candidates running in 2018: Get ready to campaign hard, or get ready to be walloped.

Normal Town Council Approves Property Tax Increase

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN & DANIA DE LA HOYA · DEC 5, 2017

About 10 residents expressed opposition Monday as the Normal Town Council voted to increase property taxes next year.

ISU Professor Questions Limit On Renner's Agenda-Setting Power

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER & NATE HEAD · DEC 4, 2017

An Illinois State University political science professor says a Bloomington alderman's proposal to reduce the mayor's agenda-setting power is a disservice to the city.

Tax Bill Could Kill Key Financing Tool For Bloomington-Normal Nonprofits

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 4, 2017

UPDATED 1:50 p.m. | The CEO of a Bloomington retirement community says a provision in the GOP tax bill would make it harder for not-for-profits like hers to finance major construction projects.

Democratic Women, Libertarians To Challenge Incumbents On 2018 Ballots

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 4, 2017

McLean County voters learned Monday they'll have more choices on their 2018 ballots, with incumbents facing several challenges from a new cadre of Democratic women candidates and an energized Libertarian Party.

More Illinoisans Buying Insurance On Exchange This Year

By AP · NOV 30, 2017

New federal data show that Illinois consumers are purchasing health insurance plans from the public Affordable Care Act exchange faster this year than they did last year.

Student Apartments Are Ground Zero For Latest Property Tax Bout

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 29, 2017

It's not just new businesses like Brandt Industries that are looking to cut their property tax bill. Related Program:

[GLT's Sound Ideas](#)

Normal's Bill Rises As Bloomington Chooses 50-50 Split For Small-Business Funding

By RYAN DENHAM & MIKE MCCURDY · NOV 28, 2017

Related Program:

[GLT's Sound Ideas](#) Bloomington aldermen say they'd rather evenly split the cost of supporting a new small-business development center at Illinois Wesleyan University rather than picking up most of the tab.

Rich Buchanan On Public Service, Mayoral Duties, And Why Twin Cities Should Merge

By BRYAN BLOODWORTH · NOV 28, 2017

For a guy who claims he's not a politician, Rich Buchanan sure made his mark in the political arena over the years in McLean County.

Aldermen OK Brick Streets Plan; Activists Push For Immigration Ordinance

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN · NOV 28, 2017

The advocacy group Illinois People's Action again lobbied the Bloomington City Council on Monday for a so-called Welcoming Cities ordinance to protect immigrants.

Council Pulls Back From Clash Over Mayor's Agenda-Setting Power

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN · NOV 21, 2017

The Bloomington City Council met for nearly three hours Monday talking about, among other things, how to use its time better.

Interim City Manager: 'Not My Business To Manage Council'

By MIKE MCCURDY · NOV 20, 2017

Despite an admonishment letter from council to the mayor and a new proposal that would remove mayoral power, Bloomington's interim City Manager Steve Rasmussen doesn't think the council is any more fractious than usual.

Like It Or Not: How Facebook Reshaped Political Campaigns In Illinois

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 20, 2017

Facebook is facing tough questions in the wake of the 2016 presidential election. Did Russians use social media to sway the election? Why is there so much fake news? Why isn't Facebook more transparent?

Tax Bill Passes House; LaHood and Davis Vote Yes

By RYAN DENHAM & AP · NOV 16, 2017

The House on Thursday passed a sweeping Republican tax bill cutting taxes for corporations and many people, putting GOP leaders closer to delivering to President Donald Trump a crucial legislative achievement after nearly a year of failures.

Illinois Grad Students Worry Over Tax Reform Changes

By RYAN DENHAM & MARK SHULTZ · NOV 15, 2017

Graduate students at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign are worried that the Republican tax reform plan could make their education more expensive.

Brady Explains Votes To Override Rauner On Debt Transparency, Student Loan Bills

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 15, 2017

State Rep. Dan Brady said the unusually high number of veto overrides this fall was the result of lobbying by other elected officials pushing the legislation, not necessarily an indication of Gov. Bruce Rauner's declining power among his fellow Republicans.

Aldermen Nix VenuWorks As BCPA Managers; Library Tax Levy To Rise

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN, RYAN DENHAM & DANIA DE LA HOYA · NOV 14, 2017

The Bloomington City Council will not allow VenuWorks to manage the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts.

Endowment Tax Proposal Worries Illinois Wesleyan University President

By RYAN DENHAM & CHARLIE SCHLENKER · NOV 10, 2017

Illinois Wesleyan University's president said Thursday that a plan to tax college endowments as part of a larger tax overhaul would unfairly harm private schools and make them less affordable.

ISU Political Scientists Give Poor Marks To President Trump

By MIKE MCCURDY · NOV 9, 2017

Based on accomplishments and temperament over the past 10 months, two faculty members from Illinois State University's Department of Politics and Government are giving President Trump a "D minus" and an "Incomplete."

Durbin and Duckworth: GOP Tax Bills Will Hurt Central Illinois

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 9, 2017

Illinois' Democratic senators on Thursday blasted dueling Republican tax reform bills, saying tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy come at the expense of middle-class taxpayers.

[Rauner Dodges Veto Override on Right-to-Work Zones](#)

By BRIAN MACKEY · NOV 7, 2017

Gov. Bruce Rauner on Tuesday narrowly escaped having one of his vetoes overridden.

[Normal Takes First Step Toward Property Tax Increase](#)

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN & DANIA DE LA HOYA · NOV 7, 2017

Homeowners in Normal will likely see an increase in their property taxes next year.

[Alderman: No 'Appetite' For Property Tax Hike In Bloomington](#)

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 6, 2017

There is no “appetite” from the Bloomington City Council to increase property taxes to help close a project \$3 million budget deficit next year, an alderman told GLT on Monday.

[Durbin Backs Former Fundraiser In 13th Congressional District](#)

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 5, 2017

Democratic congressional candidate Betsy Dirksen Londrigan on Saturday picked up the endorsement of U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, the Democrat for whom she's worked as a fundraiser in the past.

[Lawmakers Furious Over Backlog Of State Ethics Complaints](#)

By JACLYN DRISCOLL · NOV 2, 2017

An inspector general is required to consider ethical complaints at the Illinois State Capitol. But the state has failed to hire one for two years, resulting in a backlog of 27 complaints.

['Painful' Budget Decisions Loom For Bloomington Aldermen](#)

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 2, 2017

Staring at a projected \$3 million deficit next year, Bloomington aldermen will meet Saturday for a daylong retreat focused largely on right-sizing the city's budget amid flattening revenues.

After Exiting Congressional Race, Democrat Plans to Challenge Rep. Brady

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN · NOV 1, 2017

Former Democratic congressional candidate Ben Webb announced Wednesday he's now planning a run against state Rep. Dan Brady in the 105th House District in 2018.

Legislative Activist Claims Illinois Senator Harassed Her

By AP · NOV 1, 2017

A legislative activist has testified that a Chicago state senator sexually harassed her while she worked with him on a piece of legislation.

GOP Lawmaker Mounts Primary Challenge Against Rauner

By BRIAN MACKEY · OCT 30, 2017

A state representative from the Chicago suburbs says she'll challenge Gov. Bruce Rauner in next year's Republican primary.

Ex-Alderman Fazzini Considers Run For McLean County Board

By RYAN DENHAM · OCT 27, 2017

Former Bloomington alderman Rob Fazzini said Friday he's exploring a run for McLean County Board in the east side district currently represented by the county's Republican Party chair.

IL House Rejects Gun 'Bump Stock' Ban As Too Broad

By AP · OCT 26, 2017

The Illinois House has soundly rejected a ban on gun modifications known as "bump stocks" that speed firing and were used in the Las Vegas massacre.

Lawmakers Rebuke Rauner, Overriding A Dozen Vetoes

By BRIAN MACKEY · OCT 25, 2017

The Illinois House dealt a series of rebukes to Gov. Bruce Rauner on Wednesday.

Emails: Accidental 'Oversight' Related to Renner's Japan Trip

By RYAN DENHAM · OCT 24, 2017

Aldermen seeking more information about the use of city credit cards were told about an unintentional “oversight” related to the booking of Bloomington Mayor Tari Renner’s trip to Japan, newly released emails show.

Renner: 'Serious Communication Issues' To Resolve With Aldermen

By RYAN DENHAM & CHARLIE SCHLENKER · OCT 24, 2017

Mayor Tari Renner conceded Tuesday he has “serious communication issues” to work out with the [Bloomington aldermen who publicly admonished him](#), even as he called one of them a “bully” and said that some don’t understand the city’s form of government.

Aldermen Pump Brakes On Towanda Barnes, Ireland Grove Project

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN · OCT 24, 2017

The Bloomington City Council on Monday pumped the brakes on a project to expand the intersection of Towanda Barnes and Ireland Grove roads.

Aldermen: Renner's Behavior Brought 'Disgrace' To Bloomington Council

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN & RYAN DENHAM · OCT 24, 2017

Most Bloomington aldermen say they’re disappointed in Mayor Tari Renner's recent behavior. Near the end of Monday night's meeting, Ward 8 Alderman Diana Hauman read from a statement and delivered a letter admonishing Renner. The letter was signed by Hauman and Aldermen David Sage, Jamie Mathy, Mboka Mwilambwe, Joni Painter, and Karen Schmidt. Aldermen Scott Black, Amelia Buragas, and Kim Bray did not sign it.

[PDF: Read the letter from aldermen to Renner](#)

Student Loans, Guns On Agenda As Veto Session Begins In Springfield

By BRIAN MACKEY · OCT 23, 2017

Illinois state lawmakers are on their way back to Springfield.

[Video Makes It Official: Rauner Running For Re-Election](#)

By SEAN CRAWFORD & AP · OCT 23, 2017

Gov. Bruce Rauner has made his long awaited announcement that he is seeking re-election.

[Pritzker Says He'll Blend Business, Government Expertise](#)

By RYAN DENHAM & MIKE MCCURDY · OCT 19, 2017

Democratic candidate for governor JB Pritzker said Thursday he knows the difference between running a business and running government and is experienced in both, unlike the two other wealthy businessmen—Bruce Rauner and Donald Trump—who've struggled in their transition to public office.

[As Alexander-Murray Healthcare Bill Emerges, Rep. Davis 'Clamoring' For Compromise](#)

By MARK SCHULTZ · OCT 18, 2017

A congressman for central Illinois is watching the Senate carefully, as two senators introduce a new proposal to reform the Affordable Care Act.

[McLean County Board Chair Seeks Input On Election Functions](#)

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · OCT 17, 2017

McLean County Board Chairman John McIntyre said Tuesday he is polling board members whether and how they think election functions should be combined between the clerk's office and the Bloomington Election Commission.

[Bloomington's Civilian Police Board Appointees Revealed](#)

By RYAN DENHAM & CHARLIE SCHLENKER · OCT 17, 2017

Seven Bloomington residents—including several downtown and west-side leaders—have been picked for a new civilian board to advise the police chief.

[Erik Jones Leads Fundraising Among Democrats in 13th Congressional District](#)

By RYAN DENHAM · OCT 17, 2017

A lawyer from southern Illinois is leading the money race among Democrats looking to unseat U.S. Rep. Rodney Davis in the 13th Congressional District next year.

Fitch: Blame 'Government Weakness' For State's Poor Credit Rating

By BRIAN MACKEY · OCT 16, 2017

A report released Monday says Illinois' poor credit rating should be blamed on "governance weakness," not the state's economy.

New Audits Reveal Red Flags On Coliseum Oversight

By RYAN DENHAM · OCT 12, 2017

Newly released audits for the former U.S. Cellular Coliseum show the city was warned eight years ago that its finance department wasn't providing adequate oversight over the arena's records, due in part to staffing shortages.

Chicago Alderman Ameya Pawar Drops Out Of Governor's Race

By AP · OCT 12, 2017

Chicago Alderman Ameya Pawar said Thursday he's ending his bid for the Democratic nomination for Illinois governor because he doesn't have enough money.

Bloomington's Planning, Zoning Chief Leaves For Job Near Chicago

By RYAN DENHAM · OCT 11, 2017

The city of Bloomington is losing its top planning and zoning official.

Bloomington Library-Transit Joint Project Worth Exploring, Renner Says

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER & RYAN DENHAM & KAE MASON · OCT 10, 2017

Bloomington's mayor says he's convinced: A proposal to demolish an aging downtown parking garage and build a new library and transit center has some merit.

Mayor: First Coliseum Contract Was 'Death Sentence'

By RYAN DENHAM & CHARLIE SCHLENKER · OCT 10, 2017

Bloomington Mayor Tari Renner said Tuesday that the allegations against the former managers of the U.S. Cellular Coliseum were “not at all surprising” to him and that trying to extract more detailed financial information from those managers was like “dealing with a Soviet Gulag.”

Mayor Renner Decries Rancor Targeting Elected Officials

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER, DANIA DE LA HOYA & RYAN DENHAM · OCT 10, 2017

Bloomington Mayor Tari Renner said he’s troubled by what he sees as increasingly hostile conduct aimed at elected officials, blaming local media for not doing more to debunk critics who he thinks will scare off others from running for public office.

Ballot Laws Muffle As McLean County Libertarians Try to Make Some Noise

By RYAN DENHAM · OCT 10, 2017

When you’re running for elected office, you need to get people to sign your nominating petitions to get on the ballot. It can be a slog, with every waking moment pestering shoppers leaving grocery stores or asking your neighbors for their John Hancock.

City Eyes Major Overhaul On Spending By Elected Officials

By RYAN DENHAM & STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN · OCT 10, 2017

Bloomington aldermen signaled support Monday for a major overhaul to how the city’s elected officials spend taxpayer money on travel, meals, and other reimbursable expenses.

Aldermen Cautious, Open-Minded Toward BCPA Management Change

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN · OCT 10, 2017

Bloomington aldermen were curious but cautious Monday night on whether the Grossinger Motors Arena management company should also take over the city’s performing arts venue.

Blame The Auditors? Coliseum Fraud Case Isn’t Clear Cut

By RYAN DENHAM · OCT 6, 2017

There's been a lot of finger-pointing since prosecutors announced that five former managers at the U.S. Cellular Coliseum were facing 111 criminal counts of theft, fraud, and money laundering.

Davis, Kinzinger Want Review of Fully Automatic Gun Devices

By RYAN DENHAM & AP · OCT 5, 2017

There is a growing bipartisan chorus of calls to take a step in the direction of regulating guns in the wake of the Las Vegas massacre, including two lawmakers from Central Illinois.

Mayor Renner's Open Houses Now Require Appointments

By RYAN DENHAM · OCT 5, 2017

Back in office after a [five-week medical leave of absence](#), Bloomington Mayor Tari Renner is changing the format for his Friday open houses.

How Would You Rate Trump As Government's CEO?

By JUDITH VALENTE · OCT 5, 2017

Donald Trump ran for president touting his outsider status and record as the leader of a vast real estate empire. He promised to apply business expertise to government.

How A Coliseum Blind Spot Tripped Up Bloomington City Leaders

By RYAN DENHAM · OCT 4, 2017

The alleged fraud scheme at the former U.S. Cellular Coliseum took advantage of a known blind spot in the City of Bloomington's oversight of arena finances, exploiting a decade-long contract that many city leaders disliked from the very beginning, GLT has learned.

Photos: Normal Council Tours New Fire Department HQ

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN · OCT 3, 2017

The Normal Town Council toured the new fire department headquarters Monday prior to its regular meeting at City Hall.

Science and Technology

ISU Professors: Cybersecurity Push Begins With K-12 Education

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 12, 2017

America's search for more cybersecurity professionals may begin in a kindergarten classroom.

How Will Net Neutrality Vote Impact Bloomington-Normal Internet Users?

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 11, 2017

Two local experts say Bloomington-Normal Internet users shouldn't panic—at least for now—about this week's planned FCC vote to loosen regulations of cable and telecom companies.

Rep. Davis Hosts Cybersecurity Talk In Bloomington

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN · OCT 19, 2017

Facing cybersecurity issues on multiple fronts, local officials and IT experts briefed U.S. Rep. Rodney Davis on Thursday about what they're doing to keep pace with hackers and other online threats.

Environment and Sustainability

Possible Recycling Ordinances In New Solid Waste Plan

By MIKE MCCURDY · DEC 7, 2017

A top recycling request in Bloomington-Normal is to provide services at multifamily residences, such as apartment complexes.

Recycling: There's An App For That

By MIKE MCCURDY · NOV 2, 2017

Recycling isn't getting any easier. More items can be recycled now, like batteries and electronics. Packaging has gotten more complex, as well, according to Michael Brown with the [Ecology Action Center \(EAC\)](#).

'Miracle' Whooping Cranes Make A Comeback

By JUDITH VALENTE · NOV 1, 2017

Whooping cranes have long captured the imagination of poets and painters. They are the tallest birds in North America, avid dancers and can live and breed well into their fifties.

Town of Normal's Comprehensive Plan Would Change Community

By MIKE MCCURDY · OCT 30, 2017

A plan that's "very different" from any comprehensive plan the Town of Normal has adopted before would change, most noticeably, the community's layout, housing and transportation, according to two people instrumental in its development.

ISU Plans Center To Address 'Real World' Problems Of Clean Water

By JUDITH VALENTE · OCT 17, 2017

Illinois State University scholars, from biologists to sociologists, have been working for years on individual projects involving water.

Illinois EPA Collecting Data on Recycling Statewide

By IPR · OCT 13, 2017

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency is collecting data on recyclables in each county, with the goal of making recycling more accessible statewide.

Earlier Application Date Opens For College Financial Aid

By DUSTY RHODES · OCT 3, 2017

Have you filed your FAFSA already? That's the question high school seniors and college students should be asking each other these days.

Biologist Studies The Voices (And Songs) Of Trees

By JUDITH VALENTE · OCT 2, 2017

You might have heard about people who talk to trees. But can trees speak?

Transportation

Thorne To Become Permanent Head of Connect Transit

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · SEP 22, 2017

Connect Transit plans to hire its interim general manager as its next general manager.

Connect Transit Plans 50 Shelters In 5 Years

By STUDENT REPORTER ISABELLA RODRIGUEZ · AUG 23, 2017

Waiting at a bus stop in the near future could be easier with the addition of new bus shelters in Bloomington-Normal.

Connect Transit made progress at Tuesday's meeting with the plan to build 10 new shelters this fall. Community engagement sessions highlighted the public desire for shelters, benches, and additional sidewalk at bus stops in the area.

Connect Transit chose locations based on the number of riders at each bus stop location.

Connect Transit Fields Objection To Service Cut

By STUDENT REPORTER ISABELLA RODRIGUEZ · AUG 23, 2017

A Connect Transit cut in services to some people with disabilities is getting some pushback.

Connect Transit recently eliminated tripper service to some edge-of-town housing. This had the effect of reducing the area the government mandates the system serve with Connect Mobility, a service for those with physical access challenges.

Brick Streets Master Plan Compromise Could Lead To Adoption

By MIKE MCCURDY · AUG 16, 2017

The City of Bloomington's Public Works director and members of the Historic Preservation Commission have reached a compromise on a draft revision of the city's [Brick Streets Master Plan](#).

Bloomington Aldermen Unanimously Approve Washington St. Bike Lanes

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · JUL 10, 2017

After a fierce battle over bicycle lanes for Washington Street, the final chapter in the process Monday was anticlimactic.

Opponents scarcely showed up, and the Bloomington City Council gave unanimous approval, 9-0.

Connect Mobility Prepares For Increased Demand As Medivan Closes

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · JUN 29, 2017

Connect Transit expects up to a 7 percent increase in use of its Connect Mobility service next month. That's because the YWCA is shutting down its Medivan program.

The YWCA made that choice because state funding was unreliable and the program was on pace to operate at a \$120,000 per year deficit.

Bloomington Planning Commission Signs Off On Bike Lanes

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER & STUDENT REPORTER KAE MASON · JUN 15, 2017

The Bloomington Planning Commission supports bike lanes along Washington Street. Residents testified on both sides of the amendment to the Bloomington bike plan during a public hearing.

Fifty Years Of Flying: Crosswinds Club

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · JUN 13, 2017

50 years is a long time for any institution to be around, let alone one that has high expenses and requirements for sustained expertise. But, the Crosswinds Flying Club is celebrating that half century mark this weekend at the Central Illinois Regional Airport.

Unit Five Questions Proposed Low Income Housing Location

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER & STUDENT REPORTER KAE MASON · JUN 13, 2017

Unit Five Schools has helped postpone a decision on a low-income housing development in southwest Bloomington. The city council is asking for a financial impact study.

Pontiac Opens New Amtrak Station

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · JUN 5, 2017

A new Pontiac Rail Station has opened to Amtrak service. State Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn said this is the latest of several station improvements on the Chicago to Saint Louis Corridor that will improve performance on the high speed rail corridor.

“After years of construction along one of the busiest passenger rail corridors in the country, the benefits are beginning to show with beautiful new stations in our state’s great communities,” Secretary Blankenhorn said.

Police and Courts

2 Men Suspected of Breaking Into Video Gaming Terminals

By AP · JAN 4, 2018

Officials are looking for information about two men they say have been breaking into video gaming terminals in central Illinois and stealing cash.

Man Whose Gun Allegedly Misfired Indicted On Attempted Murder Charge

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · JAN 3, 2018

A McLean County grand jury indicted a Latham man Wednesday on an attempted murder charge connected to an incident in Normal.

Alleged Child Rapist Arrested In Bloomington

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · JAN 3, 2018

Bloomington Police arrested a 53-year-old man for multiple counts of predatory criminal sexual assault of a victim under the age of 13.

Misook: False Testimony Led To Conviction In Mother-In-Law's Death

By RYAN DENHAM · JAN 3, 2018

A woman convicted of luring her mother-in-law to Bloomington for an ultimately fatal confrontation says in a new court filing that a key witness lied during her 2012 trial.

Suspect Convictions Episode 10: A Letter From Misook

By WILLIS KERN & SCOTT REEDER · DEC 29, 2017

GLT is partnering with true crime podcast [Suspect Convictions](#) to explore the 1998 murder of 3-year-old Bloomington girl Christina McNeil.

City Seeks To Dismiss Ex-Arena Manager's Lawsuit

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 27, 2017

The former managers of Bloomington's downtown arena are not owed any unpaid commission money because those sponsorship deals violated their management agreement with the city, according to a new court filing.

Woman Pleads Guilty In Mother's July Murder

By AP · DEC 20, 2017

A 22-year-old Washington woman has [pleaded guilty to first-degree murder](#) in her mother's July stabbing death.

Indiana Homicide Leads To Arrest In Normal

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 18, 2017

A 23-year-old man was arrested Sunday in Normal in connection with a child-death investigation in Lake County, Indiana.

Ex-Office Manager Sentenced For Stealing From B-N Landscaping Business

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 13, 2017

A 55-year-old woman was sentenced Tuesday to more than three years in federal prison for stealing over \$1 million from the Bloomington landscaping business where she worked.

Mayor: All Chicago Patrol Officers Now Have Body Cameras

By AP · DEC 11, 2017

The Chicago Police Department says all patrol officers are now equipped with body cameras.

Police Find Teen Driver After Hit-And-Run Injures Child

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 8, 2017

Police say they have found the teenage driver who allegedly injured an 8-year-old during a hit-and-run accident Friday afternoon on Bloomington's west side.

Bill Yoder To Run For Fitzgerald's Circuit Judge Vacancy

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN · DEC 7, 2017

Eleventh Judicial Circuit Associate Judge Bill Yoder will seek election for the resident circuit judge spot being vacated by Chief Judge Kevin Fitzgerald.

Police Investigate Fatal Stabbing At Bloomington Mobile Home Park

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 2, 2017

Police are investigating the fatal stabbing of a 21-year-old man at a south Bloomington mobile home park.

Police And Race Top Concerns On ACLU Listening Tour

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · NOV 29, 2017

The head of the ACLU of Illinois says racially imbalanced police enforcement is a problem statewide.

Bloomington Police: 4 Gunfire Reports In Past Week

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 27, 2017

UPDATED 2 p.m. | Bloomington Police are investigating four reports of gunfire in just the past week.

Suspect Convictions Episode 5: How Did Misook Become A Killer?

By WILLIS KERN & SCOTT REEDER · NOV 24, 2017

GLT is partnering with the true crime podcast [Suspect Convictions](#) to explore the 1998 murder of 3-year-old Bloomington girl Christina McNeil.

Ex-County Board Chair Sorensen Reports To Prison Monday

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 24, 2017

Former McLean County Board chair Matt Sorensen is expected to report to federal prison Monday to begin serving his one-year sentence for defrauding State Farm and one of its consultants.

Sexual Harassment Lawsuit Against Rutherford Dismissed

By AP · NOV 22, 2017

A sexual harassment lawsuit that derailed the political career of former state Treasurer Dan Rutherford has been dismissed in federal court in Chicago.

Lawsuit: City Owes Indicted Coliseum Managers For Unpaid Commissions

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 21, 2017

The former manager of the U.S. Cellular Coliseum who's [accused of stealing hundreds of thousands of dollars](#) from Bloomington taxpayers has filed a lawsuit against the city, claiming that he's owed \$67,175 in unpaid commissions.

Grant To Fund DNA Testing For Illinois Innocence Project

By JACLYN DRISCOLL · NOV 17, 2017

The Illinois Innocence Project based at the University of Illinois Springfield has received a grant for DNA testing to help exonerate wrongfully convicted inmates.

Suspect Convictions Episode 4: True-Crime Experts Give Case Fresh Look

By WILLIS KERN & SCOTT REEDER · NOV 17, 2017

GLT is partnering with the true crime podcast [Suspect Convictions](#) to explore the 1998 murder of 3-year-old Bloomington girl Christina McNeil.

McLean County Could Sue Big Pharma For Opioid-Heroin Epidemic

By COLLEEN REYNOLDS · NOV 15, 2017

McLean County could join the growing list of state and local governments suing big pharmaceutical companies for distribution practices that they say contributed to the opioid crisis.

Man Killed In Overnight Crash Near Bloomington

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 4, 2017

A 19-year-old Bloomington man was killed and another injured early Saturday in a single-vehicle crash near Downs.

[Facebook Live Video Cues Normal Police To Apparent Fight](#)

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · OCT 15, 2017

Police in Normal said Sunday that a social media user alerted them to an early morning Facebook Live video broadcast of an apparent fight involving three women.

[NCHS Students Kneel During Anthem At Homecoming Event](#)

By JUDITH VALENTE · OCT 13, 2017

Professional football players aren't the only ones taking a knee during the singing of "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Election 2018

[Women Running For County Board Say More Diversity Is Needed](#)

By JUDITH VALENTE · DEC 20, 2017

Continuing a trend that began last spring with the [Normal Township election](#), a number of first-time candidates who are women are running for local office.

[One Year Later, Rauner Visits Clinton Plant To Tout Nuclear Bill](#)

By BRIAN MOLINE · DEC 13, 2017

Gov. Bruce Rauner stopped at the Exelon nuclear plant near Clinton on Tuesday to mark the one-year anniversary of legislation that kept a pair of Illinois nuclear facilities open.

[Volunteers To Ride Community Bus To Register Voters on West Side](#)

By STUDENT REPORTER ISABELLA RODRIGUEZ · DEC 11, 2017

Residents on Bloomington's west side will be among the first to benefit from a traveling voter-registration drive on Connect Transit's new Community Bus.

GLT's Top Stories: Week Of Dec. 4-Dec. 8, 2017

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN · DEC 8, 2017

Here are the top stories we covered this week (Dec. 4 to Dec. 8, 2017) on WGLT and WGLT.org.

Bill Yoder To Run For Fitzgerald's Circuit Judge Vacancy

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN · DEC 7, 2017

Eleventh Judicial Circuit Associate Judge Bill Yoder will seek election for the resident circuit judge spot being vacated by Chief Judge Kevin Fitzgerald.

Meet 4 New Faces Running For McLean County Board

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 7, 2017

Voters will have more choices on the ballot in 2018 when they vote for McLean County Board. Nine of 10 races will be contested.

Energized Democrats Put More Candidates on McLean County Ballots

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 6, 2017

For Democrats across the country, Donald Trump's surprise election is a cloud over the country, but now there's a silver lining.

Chief Circuit Judge Fitzgerald To Retire In 2018

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 5, 2017

Eleventh Judicial Circuit Chief Judge Kevin Fitzgerald announced Tuesday he plans to retire in 2018, creating a vacancy that voters will fill in next November's general election.

GOP Chair Braces Candidates For A Fight Against Energized Democrats, Libertarians

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 5, 2017

McLean County's top Republican has a warning for local GOP candidates running in 2018: Get ready to campaign hard, or get ready to be walloped.

Democratic Women, Libertarians To Challenge Incumbents On 2018 Ballots

By RYAN DENHAM · DEC 4, 2017

McLean County voters learned Monday they'll have more choices on their 2018 ballots, with incumbents facing several challenges from a new cadre of Democratic women candidates and an energized Libertarian Party.

Early Candidate Filings Set Up Contested Races For GOP Lawmakers

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 27, 2017

Candidates for next year's elections began filing their petitions Monday, setting up at least two contested races for longtime Republican state lawmakers and another one for McLean County Board.

Candidates Prep For First Day Of Filing For 2018 Elections

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 26, 2017

Voters will get their first look Monday at which candidates are planning to run in 2018 for several key races in McLean County, as the window to file nominating petitions opens.

Rep. LaHood Enthusiastic About House GOP Tax Bill

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · NOV 20, 2017

U.S. Rep. Darin LaHood is praising the House version of the [GOP tax plan he voted for last week](#).

Like It Or Not: How Facebook Reshaped Political Campaigns In Illinois

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 20, 2017

Facebook is facing tough questions in the wake of the 2016 presidential election. Did Russians use social media to sway the election? Why is there so much fake news? Why isn't Facebook more transparent?

Brady Explains Votes To Override Rauner On Debt Transparency, Student Loan Bills

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 15, 2017

State Rep. Dan Brady said the unusually high number of veto overrides this fall was the result of lobbying by other elected officials pushing the legislation, not necessarily an indication of Gov. Bruce Rauner's declining power among his fellow Republicans.

[Durbin and Duckworth: GOP Tax Bills Will Hurt Central Illinois](#)

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 9, 2017

Illinois' Democratic senators on Thursday blasted dueling Republican tax reform bills, saying tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy come at the expense of middle-class taxpayers.

[ACLU Urges Vigilance Over Quiet And Far-Reaching Trump Administration Moves](#)

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · NOV 8, 2017

The Trump administration is not just changing the civil liberties landscape in well publicized ways such as the Muslim ban and efforts to deport so-called bad hombres.

[Durbin Backs Former Fundraiser In 13th Congressional District](#)

By RYAN DENHAM · NOV 5, 2017

Democratic congressional candidate Betsy Dirksen Londrigan on Saturday picked up the endorsement of U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, the Democrat for whom she's worked as a fundraiser in the past.

[After Exiting Congressional Race, Democrat Plans to Challenge Rep. Brady](#)

By STUDENT REPORTER BAYLEE STEELMAN · NOV 1, 2017

Former Democratic congressional candidate Ben Webb announced Wednesday he's now planning a run against state Rep. Dan Brady in the 105th House District in 2018.

[GOP Lawmaker Mounts Primary Challenge Against Rauner](#)

By BRIAN MACKEY · OCT 30, 2017

A state representative from the Chicago suburbs says she'll challenge Gov. Bruce Rauner in next year's Republican primary.

[Ex-Alderman Fazzini Considers Run For McLean County Board](#)

By RYAN DENHAM · OCT 27, 2017

Former Bloomington alderman Rob Fazzini said Friday he's exploring a run for McLean County Board in the east side district currently represented by the county's Republican Party chair.

Video Makes It Official: Rauner Running For Re-Election

by SEAN CRAWFORD & AP · OCT 23, 2017

Gov. Bruce Rauner has made his long awaited announcement that he is seeking re-election.

Pritzker Says He'll Blend Business, Government Expertise

By RYAN DENHAM & MIKE MCCURDY · OCT 19, 2017

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McLean County Board Chair Seeks Input On Election Functions

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · OCT 17, 2017

McLean County Board Chairman John McIntyre said Tuesday he is polling board members whether and how they think election functions should be combined between the clerk's office and the Bloomington Election Commission.

Erik Jones Leads Fundraising Among Democrats in 13th Congressional District

By RYAN DENHAM · OCT 17, 2017

A lawyer from southern Illinois is leading the money race among Democrats looking to unseat U.S. Rep. Rodney Davis in the 13th Congressional District next year.

McLean County Clerk Candidates Scrap Over Election Duties

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · OCT 16, 2017

A Democratic candidate for McLean County clerk is arguing for a countywide election commission.

Chicago Alderman Ameya Pawar Drops Out Of Governor's Race

By AP · OCT 12, 2017

Chicago Alderman Ameya Pawar said Thursday he's ending his bid for the Democratic nomination for Illinois governor because he doesn't have enough money.

Civil Rights

Police And Race Top Concerns On ACLU Listening Tour

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · NOV 29, 2017

The head of the ACLU of Illinois says racially imbalanced police enforcement is a problem statewide.

Former Exchange Student Denied Thanksgiving In Bloomington-Normal

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · NOV 22, 2017

An Egyptian Muslim and former exchange student at Heartland Community College said he is disillusioned by mixed messages he's receiving from the United States.

ACLU Urges Vigilance Over Quiet And Far-Reaching Trump Administration Moves

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · NOV 8, 2017

The Trump administration is not just changing the civil liberties landscape in well publicized ways such as the Muslim ban and efforts to deport so-called bad hombres.

Not In Our Town Seeks To Create Light In The Darkness

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · NOV 2, 2017

Anti-immigration voices are growing stronger around the U.S., and an advocate for tolerance and education said the best way to combat that kind of speech is by introducing immigrants to their neighbors.

Hate Group Lobbies Against ERA With B-N Robocalls

By CHARLIE SCHLENKER · NOV 2, 2017

The revival of a decades dormant [campaign to pass the Equal Rights Amendment](#) is drawing an opposition campaign from what some call a hate group.