

WGLT ISSUES AND PROGRAMS

October, November, December 2011

Key: The following issues were addressed during WGLT Newscasts at 6:33 and 8:33 AM (during *MORNING EDITION*) AND 4:30 PM (during *ALL THINGS CONSIDERED*.)

Date Length Summary

ARTS & CULTURE

10/10 5:00 Louisa May Alcott wrote some of the most beloved young adult books in American History. But, she is more than the author of "Little Women." WGLT's Charlie Schlenker helps us peer behind the mask of Alcott...

10/20 3:00 Distinguished Illinois Wesleyan University Alum Bill Damaschke (duh-MASH-kee) says Three-D now has an enduring place in movie-making in spite of some skeptical reviews. The Creative Chief of DreamWorks Animation which produced Shrek, How to Train Your Dragon, and the about to premier Puss in Boots says Three D is a tool that when used well can move audiences...

10/24 3:30 Is there such a thing as racism when it comes to animals? Black cats have a notorious reputation as bearers of bad luck. They're one of the enduring symbols of Halloween and are often unlucky themselves, as the color of their fur can prevent them from being adopted.

10/31 6:30 Halloween and candy naturally go hand-in-hand. Now a contest takes that relationship to a new, and artistic, level.

11/14 2:00 Most kids learning to read now won't be using television as their primary mode of entertainment, according to emmy-winning actor and producer LeVar Burton. So the star of Roots, Star Trek: The Next Generation and Reading Rainbow says he's working to adapt his long-running children's reading show on PBS to personal formats.

11/16 2:00 Bloomington's Police Union will take over GE Park on the east side of town. The GE Employees Club which had owned the park for decades has suffered revenue declines in recent years which makes maintenance of the 24 acre park bordering a section of the Constitution Trail more difficult. Police and Benevolent and Protection Association President Todd Keil says the private park will continue to be available to GE club members and retirees. Police will hold their own activities and the summer swim team will remain active. After the gift from the GE club, the union hopes to make improvements while keeping it un-developed.

11/21 3:00 The town of Normal is poised to make major improvements for bike riders in the uptown business district. At tonight's meeting, council members will consider spending 20-thousand dollars for a covered shelter that holds 6 hanging bikes, and a cycle stall, which provides on-street parking for 14 bicycles. Normal's town planner Mercy Davison says the so-called pocket shelter would be located just west of Constitution Trail near Uptown Circle.

12/06 6:00 Religion is NOT at the heart of current friction between two of the world's great monotheistic cultures. That's the opinion of this year's speaker at Eureka College's "Humbert Lecture on Religion and Culture."

12/08 5:00 The effort to canonize a central Illinois priest has reached a critical point. The late Bishop Fulton J. Sheen was born in El Paso, raised in Peoria, and became an influential theologian and early TV preacher. Monsignor Stanley Deptula ('dep-too-luh) says the Catholic Diocese of Peoria will hold a Mass Sunday for the closure of a tribunal investigating an alleged miracle performed at the intercession of Sheen....

12/27 6:00 The longer the tepid economy lasts in central Illinois the more it invites comparisons to past periods of doldrums and disaster. WGLT's Charlie Schlenker speaks with an area historian about life during the Great Depression and a significant parallel between then and now....social protest...

12/28 7:00 At the close of the year, it's customary to glance back at the old before getting on with the new. Uptown Normal altered its landscape this past year by saying good-bye to an old building and laying the groundwork for a new addition to take its place. Even though the old building is gone, a little savage savvy has seen to it that parts of it will live on.

BUSINESS, ECONOMY & LABOR

10/03 6:00 The new General Manager of the Bloomington Normal Public Transit System says one of the first tasks for him is to secure a stable source of funding. WGLT's Jim Browne talks about what's ahead for twin city buses with the new head of the system...

10/11 6:30 There's an irony unfolding this fall in central Illinois. While this is one of the richest agricultural regions in the world, there's concern some who live here lack access to food needed for a healthy diet.

10/13 4:30 Bloomington Normal has had significant economic advantages for a long long time compared to most Illinois cities. Bloomington Mayor Steve Stockton says the recession suggests the twin cities should not get complacent...

10/25 5:00 Since adjourning in the Spring, state legislators have been on standby while Governor Pat Quinn took his turn.

10/27 5:00 Lincoln area residents alternately begged lawmakers and state officials to spare the Logan Correctional Center and protested statements from corrections and budget officials during a hearing on Governor Pat Quinn's proposal to close the facility and save state money. WGLT's Charlie Schlenker has more on the sometimes raucous session...

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12/07 6:00 Out of all the many communities that would love to have the planned new Caterpillar plant and the thousand job boost it would bring, a development leader says Bloomington-Normal is not in a position to vie for the facility soon to be announced by the Peoria-based company. WGLT's Charlie Schlenker has more on why and about the larger development and incentive game.

12/15 6:00 Staff at the Central Illinois Regional Airport are trying very hard to fill the gap in service that will come from the departure of Airtran Airways from the Bloomington facility next June. WGLT's Charlie Schlenker has more on how that might happen....

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12/26 5:30 On the heels of the tax cut packages that cleared the General Assembly and were signed into law the Governor Pat Quinn, Illinois House Republicans are pushing for a rollback of the corporate tax hike passed in a lameduck session nearly a year ago. WGLT's Willis Kern has more with one of the driving forces behind the effort, Bloomington Republican Dan Brady.

CHILDREN & FAMILY/EDUCATION

10/04 6:00 The birth control pill became widely available fifty-one years ago, at about the same time the women's movement took giant leaps. But the relationship between the two is more complex than you might think. WGLT's Willis Kern has more with a history professor who visited ISU as part of the university's fall speaker series.

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10/13 2:00 The Occupy Wall Street Movement in Bloomington Normal is trying to move off the college campuses and into the community. They'll be marching to Downtown Bloomington for a rally on the old courthouse square. Kelby Cumpston of Occupy Blo-No says they even hope to attract members of the Tea Party....

11/23 3:00 Career counselor Larry Butts has spent years helping people find jobs. But after being downsized from his job at CareerLink a few weeks back, Butts finds himself among those searching for work. He will join several human resource officers in presenting a free "Speed Career Coaching" session Tuesday night in Normal. Butts says many people currently hunting for a job don't understand the importance of preparation and being able to market themselves.

11/30 5:00 Despite Illinois' recent passage of a civil union law, society still has a long way to go when it comes to dealing with people shunned for one reason or other by members in the community. Those people carry a stigma, or sign with them. That can include people who're overweight, or suffering from misunderstood diseases like HIV, mental illness, or even leprosy.

12/19 6:00 The Superintendent of Bloomington's District 87 schools sees tough times ahead. Barry Reilly's been superintendent of the Bloomington school district for about a year and a half. He says fifteen years ago, when Unit Five voters rejected a merger with their neighbors by about a 2-to-1 margin, dire predictions for the land-locked district were issued.

12/23 5:30 The Illinois Supreme Court in the new year will take up a case over a law that has been on the books since 1995 but never enforced. It's a provision to require a girl under the age of 17 who is considering an abortion to notify her parents 48 hours before the procedure. The case has gone through eleven years of legal challenges before the state Supreme Court developed policies to implement it. Now, it's up for a hearing again. WGLT's Charlie Schlenker has more with one of the sides in that argument....

12/27 6:00 The longer the tepid economy lasts in central Illinois the more it invites comparisons to past periods of doldrums and disaster. WGLT's Charlie Schlenker speaks with an area historian about life during the Great Depression and a significant parallel between then and now....social protest...

ENVIRONMENT

10/03 3:00 The Town of Normal has tweaked its ordinance allowing so called neighborhood electric vehicles on some streets. City Manager Mark Peterson says the low speed vehicles can only go on certain roads with relatively low speed limits. He says they are similar to enclosed golf carts....

10/03 6:00 The new General Manager of the Bloomington Normal Public Transit System says one of the first tasks for him is to secure a stable source of funding.

10/11 6:30 There's an irony unfolding this fall in central Illinois. While this is one of the richest agricultural regions in the world, there's concern some who live here lack access to food needed for a healthy diet.

10/12 3:00 Caterpillar is giving five million dollars to the Nature Conservancy to continue preservation of the world's great rivers. Diane Rudin (ROO-dihn) the Deputy Director of the Great Rivers Project says previous gifts from the Caterpillar Foundation have allowed flood plain preservation and restoration and this will expand them....

11/07 3:00 United Airlines has used a biofuel to move passengers from Houston to Chicago on its subsidiary Continental Airlines. It's the first U-S Airline to do that. ISU Health Sciences Professor Tom Bierma (bearma) studies bio-fuels. He says usually soybeans are used to make the oil used in biofuels. But, Bierma says to really reduce the amount of petroleum in fuel, some less expensive substance must be found...

11/17 3:00 Federal grants for hybrid diesel-electric busses in Peoria and Champaign announced earlier this week are not the end of the story. Peter Rogoff, the Director of the Federal Transit Authority says viable all-electric busses will eventually happen....

12/02 2:30 After repeated failures, a Nebraska-based company finally got a nod from the state Senate. But Tenaska's plans for a high tech coal-fired power plant in Illinois are still far from firm.

12/16 3:00 Today marks 200 years since the first in a series of large earthquakes rocked the New Madrid seismic zone, a fault system that runs through parts of Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas, Kentucky and Tennessee.

12/19 3:00 Ameren's decision to pull out of the FutureGen project at Meredosia doesn't surprise one central Illinois Congressman. Tim Johnson says he became convinced the effort to develop the carbon

sequestration facility was doomed when organizers changed their minds about locating the facility in his district near Mattoon. With FutureGen looking for a business partner, Johnson says he's even more skeptical.

HEALTH & MEDICINE

10/06 2:30 The U-S Supreme Court began hearing cases this week in its fall term. One of the ones to be heard considers the constitutionality of Health Care Reform. And ISU Political Scientist Bob Bradley says whatever decision the justices make likely next summer will have profound consequences on next year's elections.

10/14 2:30 Legislators will have tough budget decisions to make when they return to Springfield at the end of the month. As IPR's Amanda Vinicky reports, hospitals are one of the many groups with a funding request:

10/27 2:00 A bill to make it easier for families to get medical records after a loved one's death is on its way to the Governor's desk. Chief House Sponsor Dan Brady of Bloomington says if you are not a surviving spouse, it's burdensome to get those records now...

11/07 3:00 Legislation introduced in the Illinois House lays out a framework for how the state will make health insurance available to nearly one and a half million people currently without it. But the proposal doesn't specify how the program should be funded.

11/08 4:00 The Illinois Sheriff's Association is rolling out a new program in Peoria and nationwide targeting teens with a message of the dangers of meth-amphetamines. Bob Howlett is the Deputy Director of the Illinois Sheriff's Association. He says it's web-based at meth-project-dot-org and includes a social networking component...

11/11 3:00 Emergency services leaders in central Illinois want help from Springfield. They say extra money for training would be nice. They believe the state paying its bills would be an even better way to help cash strapped ambulance services and fire departments stay afloat.

11/14 5:00 Emergency Service Providers from Central Illinois are pleading for relief from government rules in a legislative hearing held at Heartland Community College. WGLT's Charlie Schlenker reports the bi-partisan fact gathering exercise is supposed to generate new laws and solutions to problems...

12/02 3:00 A state-wide surge in the number of parents who don't get their school age children immunized is not reflected in central Illinois districts. An associated Press survey finds about 5-percent of children in eight states, including Illinois, are not getting some shots.

12/29 3:00 A researcher on poverty says even though McLean and Peoria county poverty rates are down slightly in the last year, that does not reflect the economic pain people are feeling. Amy Terpstra with the Heartland Alliance's Social Impact Research Center says the social safety net is frayed. She says emergency support programs are ending and the state continues to have budget problems even though the General Assembly recently restored some human service money...

12/23 5:30 The Illinois Supreme Court in the new year will take up a case over a law that has been on the books since 1995 but never enforced. It's a provision to require a girl under the age of 17 who is considering an abortion to notify her parents 48 hours before the procedure. The case has gone through eleven years of legal challenges before the state Supreme Court developed policies to implement it. Now, it's up for a hearing again.

12/30 3:00 A recent survey by the University of Michigan on teen drug use shows some shifts that could spell trouble down the road. That's what a spokesman for Bloomington-based Chestnut Health Systems says. Dean McCollough with the addiction treatment center says the findings show a reduction in alcohol use, but a rise in marijuana, including synthetic pot:

LAW ENFORCEMENT & COURTS

10/04 3:00 McLean County Courts will receive a one-point-two-million-dollar federal grant to integrate the mental health and drug court programs the County is already running.

10/05 3:00 A new way of analyzing crime scene evidence is being developed on the ISU campus. The Department of Justice Forensic Science Program's giving the University a \$400,000 grant for the project.

10/05 5:30 The new frontier for forensic crime scene investigation is on the campus of Illinois State University.

10/11 2:30 The President of Illinois State University says he thinks it was a good call to hire private security guards on top of ISU's police force. It has been nearly a year since trustees approved the one point three million dollar contract with Wackenhut over three years. And Al Bowman says it has made a difference...

11/01 3:00 The fight between Catholic Charities in Illinois and State Government over the foster care agency's refusal to place children with gay and lesbian foster parents is a common one. That's according to Jeanne Howard of the Center for Adoption Studies at Illinois State University. Howard says in every state those who want to exclude gays and lesbians are losing and she says in 20 years the issue will be moot...

11/08 3:00 A spokesman for Illinois State University says the child molestation scandal that is threatening to take down legendary Penn State Football Coach Joe Paterno is a failure of common sense.

11/23 4:00 Prosecutors hope Tony Rezko's 10 and a half year prison sentence convinces criminals to cooperate with investigators as soon as they're caught.

12/02 3:00 GOP candidate Mark Messman has withdrawn from the race for McLean County State's Attorney. Messman has announced he's supporting Jason Chambers over First Assistant State's Attorney Jane Foster in the March primary because he agrees with Chambers on most issues and doesn't want to split the anti incumbency vote, even though Foster is not the top prosecutor....

12/14 3:00 Republican State's Attorney Candidate Jason Chambers says he wants to see better coordination among McLean County prosecutors on gang cases that involve multiple incidents and charges against the same defendant. Chambers proposes what he calls an overlay unit composed of prosecutors in different divisions to consult on gang connected offenses...

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POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

10/07 4:30 Right or wrong, there's a perception that Illinois politics is a game played best by a well-connected few. This story won't improve that image. Some of the state's political insiders make big money by lobbying the politicians they help elect. And because of vague disclosure rules, these relationships are not always reported.

10/13 4:30 Bloomington Normal has had significant economic advantages for a long long time compared to most Illinois cities. Bloomington Mayor Steve Stockton says the recession suggests the twin cities should not get complacent...

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11/15 5:30 The office of McLean County States' Attorney is a very powerful one. And the stakes are high in who gets even a temporary appointment. WGLT's Charlie Schlenker has more about the rough and tumble debate over who will replace Bill Yoder....

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RACE, EQUALITY & RIGHTS

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10/19 3:00 Hillary Clinton is still busy selling herself to America. That's what a University of Michigan Professor of Women's Studies who's visiting ISU says.

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11/30 5:30 Despite Illinois' recent passage of a civil union law, society still has a long way to go when it comes to dealing with people shunned for one reason or other by members in the community. Those people carry a stigma, or sign with them. That can include people who're overweight, or suffering from misunderstood diseases like HIV, mental illness, or even leprosy.

12/06 6:00 Religion is NOT at the heart of current friction between two of the world's great monotheistic cultures. That's the opinion of this year's speaker at Eureka College's "Humbert Lecture on Religion and Culture."

12/09 3:00 A gay rights advocacy group says Illinois' civil unions law has been popular in its first six months.

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SOCIAL SERVICE & PROGRAMS

10/04 3:00 McLean County Courts will receive a one-point-two-million-dollar federal grant to integrate the mental health and drug court programs the County is already running. Chief Circuit Judge Elizabeth Robb says the money coming over three years will also let the county expand the number of people in the programs because it will pay for an additional court services officer to supervise them and more training in trauma for supervisors....

10/26 3:00 The McLean County United Way campaign is off to a fast start. About 26-percent of the 4-point-3 million dollar goal has been raised. Campaign chair Aaron Quick says the early total is driven by the summer Pacesetter campaign and some direct mail responses. Quick says he's not quite as guarded about making goal as he was when the effort started at the end of August.

10/26 3:30 Is there such a thing as racism when it comes to animals? Black cats have a notorious reputation as bearers of bad luck. They're one of the enduring symbols of Halloween and are often unlucky themselves, as the color of their fur can prevent them from being adopted.

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TECHNOLOGY

10/05 5:30 The new frontier for forensic crime scene investigation is on the campus of Illinois State University. ISU's getting a \$400,000 national grant to develop (MX) new technology for processing crime scene evidence.

10/10 3:00 Illinois State University backs up its computer data, but not as many corporations do with a secondary data center. Building such a center is one of the goals in the University's new strategic plan for I-T. Other goals might also seem obvious, but ISU President Al Bowman says the developments in I-T over the last decade have come one after the other....

10/10 3:00 The TV spots for the Mitsubishi i are now being shown by major networks and cable companies. In addition, YouTube versions are going viral with many Bloomington-Normal residents sharing them in social media outlets. Nearly all of the field production for the spots was done in Normal last month. The internet-only version runs more than two and a half minutes and features Normal residents, workers, talking about the community's EV Town initiative.

10/13 3:00 ISU's President is taking heat from the faculty for ordering thousands of books taken off shelves at Milner Library and sent to storage. Some professors resent the loss of scholarship available to students and say relying only on current electronic holdings is a flawed approach. But, President Al Bowman says major changes need to be made at Milner Library...

10/18 3:00 A pair of federal grants is helping the Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System become more user friendly. Andrew Johnson, the system's General Manager, says the nearly half-million dollars will be used to put GPS devices on the buses:

10/24 2:00 Illinois Lieutenant Governor Sheila Simon is holding a hearing at Heartland Community College on efficiencies in education this afternoon...

11/17 3:00 Federal grants for hybrid diesel-electric busses in Peoria and Champaign announced earlier this week are not the end of the story. Peter Rogoff, the Director of the Federal Transit Authority says viable all-electric busses will eventually happen....

12/01 3:00 An organization of bricks and mortar shops is pushing hard for a universal online sales tax. David Vite with the Illinois Retail Merchants Association says the state's failure to collect billions in sales taxes from online stores with no physical presence in Illinois creates an unlevel playing field that's contributing to empty strip malls.

TRANSPORTATION

10/03 6:00 The new General Manager of the Bloomington Normal Public Transit System says one of the first tasks for him is to secure a stable source of funding.

10/17 2:30 McLean County has replaced its last timber piling bridge. Matt Sorenson is the County Board Chairman....

10/28 3:00 State and federal officials are studying route alternatives for expansion of the Joliet to Alton high speed rail upgrade through Bloomington-Normal. Work done this year allows three daily high speed passenger routes, but hoped for expansion to 8 high speed trips requires another set of tracks. Mike Garcia, passenger and high speed rail bureau chief for the Illinois Department of Transportation, said during a

public information session in Bloomington new funds will be needed to get the additional track and routes.

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12/28 3:00 A vote against funding for high speed rail by Urbana Congressman Tim Johnson does NOT run counter to his philosophical support of the concept. So says the 15th district Republican, who explains his vote earlier this year by saying the rail funds were mixed in with several other expenditures he doesn't support.