



Villa Grove News

Serving Villa Grove, Camargo and the surrounding areas!

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Pages 8

Side Tracks

your express route to upcoming VG events

Villa Grove PTO Literacy night 2/28 @ 6:00 pm

Community Easter Cantata First Rehearsal 3/3 from 3:00 -5:00 pm @ First Christian Church

Villa Grove Schools Community Forum 3/4 @ 7:00 pm in the Cafeteria

VG Lions Club Pork Chop Dinner and Cash Giveaway 3/6 from 5-7 @ School Cafeteria Contact Lions Club Member for Info or Tickets

Ash Wednesday Services 3/6 -7pm @ CUMC

VG Schools Early Dismissal 3/7 @ 1:30 pm

VG Schools Parent/Teacher conferences 3/7 from 3:00-7:00 pm

VG Schools Parent/Teacher conferences 3/8 from 8:00 am- 11:30 am

Sacred Heart Catholic Church Fish Fry 3/8 @ 4:30

VGH Girl's Track @ EIU invite 3/9 at 8:00 am

VGSB @ ALAH 3/11 at 4:30 pm

VG City Council 3/11 @ 6:00 pm

VG PTO mtg 3/11 @ 6:30 pm

VGH BB vs SJO 3/11 @ 4:30 pm

VGSB @ Mahomet 3/12 at 4:00 pm

VGH BB @ Marshall 3/12 at 4:30 pm

VGSB @ Salt Fork 3/13 at 4:30 pm

Pritzker: 'Time to Celebrate' Signing of \$15 Minimum Wage Bill

SPRINGFIELD – Gov. J.B. Pritzker signed a bill to raise Illinois' minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2025 Tuesday in the Governor's Mansion, declaring his first major legislative victory "a time to celebrate."

"For nine years there were many forces that were arrayed against giving a raise to the people who work so hard to provide home care for seniors, childcare for toddlers, who wash dishes at the diner, and who farm our fields," Pritzker said. "Today is a victory for the cause of economic justice."

The signing represents a delivery on one of Pritzker's major campaign promises a little more than one month into his tenure as governor – albeit without any support from Republican lawmakers.

Illinois Senate Majority Leader Kimberly Lightford, a Maywood Democrat who ushered Senate Bill 1's passage through the Senate, said Pritzker "got done in 30 days" what she has been trying to accomplish for 10 years.

"I'm so grateful that I've been able to just stay the course," she said.

Lightford has sponsored several minimum wage increases since 2010, when Illinois' minimum wage last saw an increase of 25 cents to the current rate of \$8.25. If any of those bills had passed, the current minimum wage would be more than \$10 hourly today.

A bill she sent to former Republican Gov. Bruce Rauner in 2017 would have made the minimum wage \$15 by 2022, but he vetoed the proposal.

Pritzker, Lightford and Illinois Restaurant Association President Sam Toia called the bill a compromise between business and labor interests, but Republicans blasted the effort in a news release shortly after the signing.

"This is only the beginning of J.B. Pritzker's war on taxpay-



Gov. J.B. Pritzker addresses a crowd of supporters Tuesday at a bill signing event for Senate Bill 1, which will increase the state's minimum wage to \$15 per hour over a six-year period. He is joined by advocates for the wage increase and Sen. Kim Lightford (D-Maywood) and Rep. Will Guzzardi (D-Chicago) the bill's Senate and House sponsors. (Capitol News Illinois photo by Jerry Nowicki)

ers and small business," Illinois Republican Party Chairman Tim Schneider said in a statement. "Nearly doubling the minimum wage will destroy entry-level jobs, raise prices for consumers, and bust budgets at every level of government."

The Illinois Retail Merchants Association and the Illinois Manufacturers' Association have openly criticized the fast-tracked passage of the bill as well.

But Toia, whose restaurant association members employ more than 577,000 people in the state, said he was thankful for being at the table for negotiations.

"The legislation signed by the governor today is a reasonable, balanced approach that takes into account many of the concerns of the restaurant industry," he said. "This was a compromise. I rebut anyone that says this wasn't a compromise."

The rollout of the increase will begin in January 2020, when the wage goes from \$8.25

to \$9.25 before hitting \$10 on July 1. From 2021 to 2025, the wage will see a \$1 bump every January until it levels off at \$15.

Toia praised the bill for maintaining a tip credit which allows employers to pay tipped workers 60 percent of the minimum wage if tips make up the other 40 percent.

A training wage for teen workers is also included in the bill, allowing employers to pay 50 cents to \$2 less than the regular minimum wage over the six-year rollout to workers under 18 years of age who work fewer than 650 hours for an employer in a calendar year.

Small businesses with less than 50 full-time equivalent employees will also be able to take advantage of an income tax credit which allows employers to keep 25 percent of the increased money paid to minimum-wage workers from the previous year.

The 25 percent credit will decrease by 4 percent each year, leveling off at 5 percent for two years and extending an extra

year for businesses with five or fewer full-time equivalent employees.

Lightford said an added benefit for business is the infusion of more money into the economy for those most likely to spend it.

"I want to put a little shout out to all the little boys and girls whose parents get up when they're still sleeping... so they can have a roof over their head and make them happy," she said. "I'm just hoping that they're able to take their little children to catch a movie or do something fun, because now the economic engine will be turning."

Iesha Townsend, a minimum-wage worker at a Chicago McDonald's location, gifted a "Fight for \$15" T-shirt to Pritzker after the signing and said the organization will continue to fight for worker rights, including unionization efforts. She said her \$12 minimum earned is not enough to provide for her two sons.

"With the hours I work, I

should be able to stand on my two feet and provide for my children without food stamps or Medicaid," she said.

But Republicans and business owners said Democrats are overlooking possible repercussions of the bill, including a potential loss of 93,000 to 96,000 jobs in the state, according to the conservative Employment Policies Institute and the National Federation of Independent Business, a small business advocacy group.

Democrats have rebutted the job loss numbers, and Pritzker touted his own business background and pointed to his Wednesday budget address as containing business-growing measures, although he did not offer specifics.

"There are so many other things we need to do, like create jobs in the state, like allow small businesses the opportunity to access capital so they can grow those businesses, like helping us innovate and create new businesses in the state," Pritzker said. "I understand very acutely the importance of growing the economy."

That's why the proposals that I've made and the budget that I will present tomorrow is as it is now."

He also said he "continues to work with" Republicans about issues facing the state, although the Illinois GOP chairman remained critical Tuesday.

"Pritzker pledged to govern differently and listen to all parties and stakeholders, but those turned out to be meaningless words," Schneider said.

With Democratic supermajorities in the House and Senate, Pritzker might not need Republican support for his progressive agenda, which he rededicated himself to implementing Tuesday.

"We make no little plans, so stay tuned," he said.

Keeping Things Cracking in VG For Over 28 Years

By Tony Hooker Staff Writer

Sometimes, taking advice from a relative can get you into trouble.

Fortunately for Dr. Franklin Dowler, there are other times where family recommendations are spot on.

Without the encouragement of his cousin Charlie, Dr. Dowler very likely would have never pursued his Doctor of Chiropractic degree at Palmer College of Chiropractic in Iowa.

Fortunately for the citizens of Villa Grove and central Illinois, Dr. Dowler had the brains and determination to graduate with honors and a desire to return to his home town to practice.

I recently caught up with the VGHS graduate, who, along with his fellow class members will be celebrating his 50th reunion this May, to see how all of this came about.

How long have you been a chiropractor?

I got my license in June of 1988.

You've been practicing in Villa Grove for 30 years?

No, 28.

Where were you for the other two years?

I practiced in Champaign, near Springfield and Prospect.

So then an opportunity arose for you to come home. You're a VGHS grad, correct?

Yes.

What year?

1969.

So this is the big five oh. Your fiftieth reunion year?

<smiling> Yes, it is! <laughs>

Did you always have an interest in medicine?

No, it was probably around 1982 when my cousin, Charlie Cutzinger, thought it would be a good idea for me to go back to college. I went to Parkland for about four years before I transferred to Palmer College, in Davenport, IA. Charlie, who's a chiropractor too, handed me my diploma when I graduated!

What did you do in the thirteen years between graduating from VG and starting college?

I worked for the railroad for almost a year and then I got drafted into the Army. I stayed in for 8 years. When I got out, I worked for Allerton Supply as a welder for about 2 and a half or 3 years before I decided to go back to college.

Did you serve in Viet Nam? No, I'm grateful for those who did, but I'm glad I didn't.

Were you married when you decided to go back to school?

Yes, we've been married since 1970.

Do you have children?

We have one deceased daughter, in 1999, and our son Shawn, who lives in Ridge Farm, IL.

Going to chiropractic school while raising a family must have presented challenges?

Challenges, to say the least! <laughs> I wasn't a very good student in high school, but when I decided to go back, it was rewarding and I worked hard.

Mrs. Dowler was keeping the home fires burning, taking care of the day to day at this time?

She was. She wasn't really all for me going to school, because we had already moved several times while I was in the Army. Having to pick up and move again was her worst opposition.

Are there advantages and disadvantages to practicing in your home town?

I believe that there are more advantages than disadvan-



Dr. Franklin Dowler, inside his Villa Grove office.

tages. People know me. I've got a history here, with a good family reputation. I can't think of too many disadvantages.

<vgnews> I would think that people might want the "hometown" discount since you know everyone.

<FD> The only real disadvantage is that it's a small town. When I started here in 90-91, Villa Grove was a larger town. We had more businesses, and people had more reasons to come to town. Villa Grove has suffered over the years, and that can make the practice difficult.

What does the future hold?

Well, I don't plan on retiring. I've scaled back my office hours to 3 or 4 days a week, and my wife and I travel on weekends, for her work enjoyment. so I'll practice as long as I can, for at least another 10 years. I don't feel my age!

Let's talk about that travel a bit. You and your wife have an outside business? Is that right?

Yes. My wife dabbles in jewelry making. We have name rings, stainless steel rings that we can stamp a name, a date or a quotation on. They're very beautiful, durable rings. We also cut metal

Cont. pg. 3



Arthur Home & Garden Expo

at the Otto Center - Arthur, IL

March 8-9, 2019

Friday 10 - 8 / Saturday 9-4

Are you looking to remodel, repair, build or beautify your home? Let us help you make your next project a success. For more information please visit: www.arthurillinois.us