

Statement from Interim Douglas County Sheriff Nathan Chaplin

To the Residents of Douglas County:
Effective July 1, Sheriff Josh Blackwell and Chief Deputy Steve Pollum stepped down from their positions in the Sheriff's Office. I expressed interest in assuming command in the event I would be needed, and as a result of these

retirements, that need has been created. I thank both Sheriff Blackwell and Chief Deputy Pollum for believing in my ability to lead this department in light of their absences, and wish them all the best in their future endeavors.
My appointment as Interim Sheriff on July 1 was

immediate, however, it is the duty of the Republican Committee to determine who will complete the term that Sheriff Blackwell was elected to serve. The Committee will make a recommendation to the Douglas County Board on a permanent replacement, and the County Board will decide

who will finish the term. It is my intention to seek out the remainder of this term so that I may address further reaching issues beyond the scope of this interim appointment.
In one of my first actions as Sheriff, I have hired Adam Weinstock as my Chief Deputy. I met Adam

through the Douglas County Tactical Patrol Unit, and through interactions with him as the Chief of Hindsboro. Chief Deputy Weinstock has an extensive history in law enforcement as well as operating his own business. Chief Deputy Weinstock is very motivated, and I believe he will be

an asset for the department moving forward.
For those of you who convinced me to put my name forward, I thank you for your support, and hope I make you proud. This is not an appointment I take lightly.
Sheriff Nathan Chaplin
See photos page 6.

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We sing several songs, read books daily, ask a lot of questions, and wave to tractors and horses and buggies that drive by, all while learning so many things!"
CLC is part of the Illinois Farm To School community. They follow a Harvest of the Month program and target a couple different garden grown food items by learning about them, preparing them for our daily snack, as well as discussing the nutritional value and meals to make at home as a family. Ingram explained that "Farm to School is a national community; I've become a part of the Illinois group. They strive to build awareness of farms, learn about the importance of where food comes from, and do hands-on activities with garden foods. We will target a garden item every month. The children will be involved with our school garden and in a couple years our apple and pear trees should be blooming. We will learn how to clean the foods for snacks as well as send home recipes to make with their families. We hope to take field trips to different types of farms near us. We also have school chickens and cows. We will get new calves every summer so the students will get to



name their cow for the year every August. The students will be involved in the dai-

ly care for the animals." Ingram noted that at the school, they will "start

our day outside in the play yard while we wait for all our friends to arrive. Then

we will collect chicken eggs and feed and water the cows. The feeding and watering is adapted to a preschool sized child so they can do it independently. We will also check on the garden. Next is inside for our morning meeting and weekly concepts. My favorite part is small group, this is where I work with five students while the other five visit our different centers around the room, then we switch. Depending on the weather, we may go back outside for the student's favorite time, snack. Followed by storytime and the weekly topic activity. On Fridays, the four-year-old class will have 'Faith Learning Time' with a guest teacher. We will end our day outside for free play."
Ingram is joined by Faith Learning Time Leader Gwenna Pelz. Pelz currently serves as the Family Director at Stone Creek Church in Urbana. Before that, she enjoyed teaching preschool for nine years and also taught at the elementary level for four years. She has three children of her own and says that, "she believes that children truly are a gift and her favorite people to spend time with and looks forward to their weekly Faith Learning Time together."
Ingram says that she is currently still enrolling new students for the

fall. She said that, "I have a morning four-year-olds class and an afternoon four-year-olds class on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. I have a morning three-year-olds class on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. The three-year-olds must be three before Sept 1 and the four year olds must be four before Sept 1. All must be fully potty trained. Their own transportation must be provided for drop off and pick up. I do have several carpool parents. Everyone is welcome to visit our website www.countrylearningcenter.com and there is a green 'enroll now' button at the top. They complete the online form and pay the enrollment fee, then I will contact them via email if I still have a spot in the class."
Country Learning Center is located at 700 E CR 700 N in Tuscola and can be contacted by emailing countrylearningcenter@gmail.com. CLC follows the public school calendars and will be a licensed facility and equipped with building locks and camera for secured safety. Mrs. Ingram held a preschool open house at the Country Learning Center Preschool (700 E CR 750 N) on Saturday, July 10 from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

How consumers can show their support for their local businesses

The road back to normalcy after the COVID-19 pandemic figures to have some twists and turns. Even after the rollout of vaccines began in late 2020, public health agencies like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization emphasized the importance of people keeping their collective guard up, as previously unseen variants of the virus were still being discovered.
A slow march toward recovery has begun, but the uphill nature of that march

underscores how important it is that communities continue to come together to support each other as well as the locally owned businesses that make towns and cities so unique. Consumers who want to help the local businesses in their community rebound and thrive in the months and years ahead can show their support in various ways.
Take charge of your to-go order. Convenience became the name of the game when ordering food during the pandemic. Curbside

pickup service was offered as a safety measure, and many restaurants that never previously offered delivery or takeout started to do so to generate revenue at a time when in-person dining was limited if not disallowed. Some restaurants began offering delivery through apps like Grubhub or UberEats, and though that may be convenient for diners, restaurants must pay a fee to utilize those apps. In lieu of ordering through a third party delivery service, consumers can take charge of their

to-go orders and pick up the food themselves. That saves restaurants the delivery app surcharge, allowing them to increase net profits on the meals they sell.
Continue to be loyal. A recent study from researchers at the Harvard Business School found that a customer's eighth purchase was an average of 80 percent higher than his or her first purchase. That highlights just how valuable repeat customers are to small businesses. Consumers who have had positive experiences with small

businesses in their communities in the past can continue to support those companies by looking to them first when they need new products or services. Doing so not only helps small businesses retain more customers, but it increases the likelihood that consumers will again have positive buying experiences.
Share experiences via social media. Small businesses recognize the value of social media. A 2021 survey from Visual Objects found that 74 percent of small busi-

nesses in the United States are active on their social media accounts at least once each week. Social media can become even more valuable to small businesses when their customers utilize such platforms to share positive experiences and encourage their friends and neighbors to patronize local businesses.
Consumers can take various steps to support small businesses in their communities as such establishments look to regroup and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Jasper, Richland, Lawrence and Crawford call Maicie @ 618-783-3987 x584
Coles (split with Jodi), Douglas and Edgar call Sandy @ 217-923-3113 x229

Illinois Rental Payment Program

The Illinois Rental Payment Program (ILRPP) can provide up to \$25,000 in emergency rental assistance.

Eligibility Requirements

- Household must have experienced a financial hardship directly — or indirectly — due to the pandemic.
- Household is behind on rent and/ or is at risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability.
- 2020 household income was below 80% of the Area Median Income, adjusted for household size.
- Proof of citizenship is not required. Rental assistance is not a "public-charge" benefit.

Rental Payment Program

- Eligible households may receive up to 15 months of assistance from June 2020 through August 2021.
- Priority will be given to:
 - households with a member who is currently unemployed.
 - households below 50% of the Area Median Income, adjusted for household size.
- The grant is paid directly to housing provider.
- For program information, visit IHDA.org.
- Tenants can submit an application starting Monday, June 28 at ILRPP.IHDA.org.

Illinois Rental Payment Program
Preserving Housing Stability during the COVID-19 Pandemic
Applications available Monday, June 28. Tenants have until 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, July 18 to apply.
Apply at ILRPP.IHDA.org.

Questions? Contact us:
QUESTIONS.ILRPP@IHDA.ORG
Toll Free: 866-454-3571

ILLINOIS HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

ILLINOIS RENTAL PAYMENT PROGRAM

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