

Area Obituaries

Ralph Hughes

Ralph R. "Red" Hughes, 87, of Arcola, died at 11:42 p.m. Wednesday, June 15, 2022, at Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center, Mattoon.

Funeral services were held Tuesday morning, June 21, at Shrader Funeral Home, Arcola. Burial will follow in the Branch Side Cemetery in Gays. Visitation was held Monday at the funeral home.

Mr. Hughes was born June 1, 1935, in Windsor, the son of Ted R. and Martha J. Dewar Hughes, one of 8 children all of whom either enlisted in the military or their spouses did. He was married twice, lastly to Mary Ann Twitty who preceded him in death on October 27, 2009.

Survivors include his daughters, Gina (Randy) White of Mattoon, Monica Jo (Dwayne) Davis of Burney, Calif.; sons, Kevin (Tammy) Huckstep of Arcola, Keith (Desi) Huckstep of Tuscola; brother, Stephen (Nellie) Hughes of Neoga; sister, Virginia Miller of Fairview

Heights; eight grandchildren, Travis (Linda) Labrador, Brad (Mandy) Davis, Tysa (Ben) Payment, Joshua (Casey) White, Melissa (Chad) Petrie, Matthew (Brooke) Huckstep, Jennifer (Jaron) Frichtl, Caleb (Chelsea) White; 17 great grandchildren, Ralph, Jos' Lynn, and Everly Labrador, Lexy and Mady Davis, Hunter and Bensen Payment, Bradley White, Kolten and Maycie Petrie, Carson and Grace Huckstep, Emma and Sophia Frichtl, Kade, Hudson, and Brantley White; and special friend, Ruth Ann Edwards of Arcola.

He was preceded in death by a daughter, Peggy Hearon; three brothers, Eugene, Robert, and Dean Hughes; two sisters, Betty Rule, Catherine Risting; one granddaughter; and one great granddaughter.

Mr. Hughes enlisted in the Army in 1954 where he was stationed in Germany during the Korean conflict. He was a cannonier on a 280 millimeter Atomic Cannon, honorably discharged in 1962.

Mr. Hughes worked for 40



Hughes

years in the telephone service; 15 years for General Telephone and 25 years for Illinois Consolidated Telephone and Richard Lumpkin, as a trouble shooter, installer and line man.

He was a proud 64-year member of the IBEW Locals 51 & 702; Disabled American Veterans, VFW, American Legion Post, Honor Guard and was 2017 Arcola Broomcorn Grand Marshal.

Mr. Hughes amassed large collections of railroad memorabilia, as it was his lifelong

dream of being a train engineer, all different kinds of telephones from the eras, including a literal telephone pole in his backyard, old farm equipment and gas pumps and general whatnots displayed all over his house, in the front and back yards.

Mr. Hughes was known for driving around in his van with his other brother Ralph in the passenger seat and bore a sticker that read "Git in, sit down, shut up and hold on." If you asked Ralph he'd tell you, if he was any better he couldn't stand it, he had enough money to get to Galton, more love than all the gold in China, and he was full cuz he just had a bar of soap and a soup sandwich.

He was a kind and generous soul, always willing to lend a hand. He was loved by all who knew him and will be sorely missed. Memorials are suggested to the Arcola American Legion Post or Mattoon VFW.

Online condolences to the family and stories of Ralph's exploits may be shared at www.hilligossshaderfh.com.

Tuscola Review

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State audit finds billions in unemployment fraud Agency blames lack of controls on Trump administration

By **BETH HUNSDORFER**

Capitol News Illinois

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SPRINGFIELD - A state audit released Thursday found nearly \$2 billion in federal money intended to help unemployed Illinoisans during the pandemic was lost to fraudulent claims in Illinois.

The Illinois Department of Employment Security blamed "insufficient and flawed federal guidance" and a lack of controls on a hastily constructed program put together by the Trump administration.

The federally-funded Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program provided up to 39 weeks of benefits for unem-

ployed individuals who ran out of regular unemployment benefits and for self-employed individuals, gig workers and others not eligible for regular unemployment.

The report released Thursday by Auditor General Frank Mautino covered much of the life of the program, July 2020 through June 2021.

In the early days of the pandemic, amid business shutdowns and high unemployment, states struggled under a crush of claims from those laid off during those shutdowns. Amid this volume of claims, IDES was forced to try to weed out the fraudulent claims while under

pressure to get money into the hands of the recently unemployed.

The Pritzker administration has said the PUA program was designed hastily and does not give employers an opportunity to challenge fraudulent claims because the type of workers applying for benefits do not technically have employers. The PUA program also eliminated existing controls, including income and employment verification, according to a statement by IDES.

Much of the fraud, up to \$163 billion estimated nationwide, involved identity theft.

Scammers filed unemployment claims using false identi-

ties and then had the payment method switched from the debit cards that people receive when they qualify for benefits to direct deposit into an account accessible by them.

The audit found that, of the \$3.6 billion in PUA paid out from July 2020 through June 2021, nearly \$1.9 billion was found to be fraudulent, mostly due to identity theft.

"Overpayments associated with identity theft and traditional fraud within the PUA program was unprecedented and resulted in fraudsters using highly sophisticated techniques to take advantage of the current economic condition created by the COVID-19 pandemic," the audit stated.

The audit found IDES:

- Failed to implement general information technology controls over the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance.

- Failed to maintain accurate and complete pandemic unemployment assistance claimant data.

- Failed to perform timely cash reconciliations.


IDES responded that the system used to manage the PUA program is independent of the system used to manage regular unemployment benefits. From the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020 through the end of 2021, IDES stopped \$40 billion in fraudulent payments from both state and federal programs, according to the agency's statement.

Republicans are calling for hearings related to IDES' handling of the programs and, specifically, whether the agency failed to follow federal recommendations for fraud prevention tools made available before the pandemic.


"The Pritzker administra-


tion and IDES have refused to disclose the extent to which fraud affected our unemployment system and this audit makes abundantly clear why," said Rep. Tim Butler, R-Springfield, said in a statement. "The loss of nearly \$2 billion, more than half the funds for the PUA program, displays an unprecedented level of negligence by the administration and IDES management. Blaming the previous president's administration is an unacceptable excuse and we need immediate hearings to get to the bottom of this failure."

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Church Directory



<p>Bourbon Baptist Church 626 CR 475 E, Tuscola Church Sunday 10 a.m., Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Youth Group Sunday evenings 6-7:30 p.m. Email bourbon.baptistchurch@yahoo.com</p> <p>Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints 1100 E. Northline Road Tuscola 253-3896 Sunday Morning Sacrament Meeting 9:30 and 10:40 a.m., Wednesday Youth Night 7 p.m.</p> <p>Church of the Nazarene 1001 Egyptian Trail Tuscola 253-3541 Song & Praise Worship 8:30 a.m. Traditional/Hymnal Service 10:30 a.m., Sunday Evening Worship 6 p.m. Wednesday Bible Study 7 p.m.</p> <p>Eagle Mountain Assembly of God 401 E. Sale Tuscola 253-4444 Sunday Services 10 a.m.</p> <p>Faith Baptist Church 300 Northline Road Tuscola 253-4231 Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Sunday Morning Service 10:30 a.m. Sunday Evening Service 6 p.m. Wednesday Adult Bible Study, Real Teens, King's Kids 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>First Baptist Church 300 E. Daggy Tuscola 253-4231 Sunday School 9 a.m., Worship Service 10 a.m.</p> <p>First Christian Church 100 E. Church Street Tuscola 253-2394 Worship Services 8 and 10:30 a.m. Sunday School 9:15 a.m., Sunday Youth Group (Grades 7-12) 6:30 p.m. Wed. After School Program (Grades 5-6)</p>	<p>First Church of God 821 E. Barker Tuscola 253-2180 Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Morning Worship 10:30 a.m. Prayer Time 1:30-2:30 p.m., Wednesday Night 6 p.m. Missionary Women meet 2nd Tuesday of each month 6 p.m.</p> <p>Forty Martyrs Catholic Church 210 E. Van Allen Tuscola 253-4412 Pastor: Rev. Angel Sierra Sacrament of Confession: Saturdays 5 p.m. Or by appointment by calling the church office. Weekday Mass Times: 8 a.m. Monday, Thursday, and Friday Weekend Masses: 5:30 p.m. Saturday, 8 a.m. Sunday</p> <p>Immanuel Lutheran Church 600 E. Northline Tuscola 253-4341 Saturday Evening Service 5:30 p.m. Sunday Worship Service 9 a.m.</p> <p>Tuscola United Methodist Church 901 N. Prairie Tuscola 253-4232 Sunday Morning Worship Services 8:45 a.m. and 11 a.m., Sunday School 10 a.m.</p> <p>United Church of Christ 114 E. Pembroke St, Tuscola 253-2532 Sunday Morning Worship: 10:30 A.M. Sunday School: 9:30 A.M. Email: dealralph5@aol.com</p> 
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Sports Physicals / \$20



**8:30 am to noon
Friday, July 8**

SBL Tuscola Clinic

1100 Tuscola Blvd. • 217 253-4765

Appointments required. Please call to schedule.



Each \$20 fee will be donated to the Tuscola Athletic Booster Club.

Immunizations will not be given.

Cash or check only will be accepted. Insurance will not be billed, nor will insurance co-pays be collected.

Parent must sign medical history form or be in attendance.

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