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## Chatter BOX

### Blood drives

There will be a blood drive from 9 a.m. till 1 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 24, at the Tuscola United Methodist Church, 901 N. Prairie St. Reservations are required. Call 800-747-5401 or visit online: [boodcenter.org/group](http://boodcenter.org/group). The group number is 71203.

ImpactLife is holding a community blood drive from 9 a.m. till 1 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 19, in Atwood. The donor bus will be in the Kirby Clinic parking lot, 108 S. Main St. Appointments are required. Call 800-747-5401 or visit online: [boodcenter.org/group](http://boodcenter.org/group). The group number is 71038.

### Citizen of the Year nominations sought

The Arcola Rotary is sponsoring the 15th Annual Arcola Citizen of the Year Award for 2023. The intent of the award is to honor an outstanding Arcola citizen who has effectively combined the ideals of moral character, honesty, dependability, and integrity with a strong commitment to family and community. A dedication to volunteerism will also receive strong consideration when nominees are being considered.

When Citizen of the Year nominations are reviewed by Arcola Rotarians, the ideals practiced on a daily basis by Rotarians — commonly known as the “4-Way Test” will be part of the consideration process. The Rotary 4-Way Test is 1 — Is it the truth? 2 — Is it fair to all concerned? 3 — Will it build goodwill and better friendships? 4 — Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

They are seeking nominations from citizens of the community. Nomination forms can be found on the club’s Facebook page @arcolarotary. Send nominations to Arcola Sunrise Rotary, PO Box 282, Arcola, IL 61910, or by email to Kris Graves at [kes1477@gmail.com](mailto:kes1477@gmail.com). The deadline to submit nominations is Aug. 16. Rotarians are not eligible for this award.

### Quilters meet

Quilters are invited to gather Friday afternoons at 1 p.m. in the Arcola Center to share their time and mutual interests with other quilters. For information contact 217-417-1388.



## Making a Splash

**THE SPLASH PAD** at Moore Park is back up and running. Above, Isaac Wagner plays with a flower sprinkler July 25. At right, Raheem Parker removes an epoxy layer from the splash pad. The splash pad was temporarily closed after several kids slipped and fell during the grand opening. After several attempts to fix the problem, Parker applied a new layer of epoxy, which should be more slip-resistant than before. Photos by Dominik Stallings.



## Cash bail to be eliminated in Illinois after Supreme Court rules controversial SAFE-T Act provisions constitutional

**Partisan 5-2 ruling says state’s constitution does not guarantee right to monetary bail**

By JERRY NOWICKI  
Capitol News Illinois  
[jnowicki@capitolnewsillinois.com](mailto:jnowicki@capitolnewsillinois.com)

SPRINGFIELD — A landmark criminal justice reform that eliminates cash bail in Illinois is constitutional, the state’s Supreme Court ruled Tuesday, paving the way for the change to take effect Sept. 18.

The 5-2 decision — handed down on partisan lines — means that an individual’s wealth will no longer play a role in whether they are incarcerated while awaiting trial. Judges can still order someone to be detained as they await trial, but the new system will be based on an offender’s level of risk of reoffending or fleeing prosecution, rather than their ability to afford bail.

The list of offenses for which a judge can revoke pretrial release became a point of controversy in the two years following the law’s 2021 passage until it was amended

in late 2022. Ultimately, lawmakers settled on a system that aims to divert lower-level nonviolent offenders from pretrial incarceration while giving judges greater authority to detain individuals they deem dangerous or at risk of fleeing prosecution.

A group of state’s attorneys and sheriffs challenged the law’s constitutionality based on the fact that the Illinois Constitution directly references “bail” in two sections, including one that states, “all persons” accused of crimes “shall be bailable by sufficient sureties.”

“The Illinois Constitution of 1970 does not mandate that monetary bail is the only means to ensure criminal defendants appear for trials or the only means to protect the public,” the majority wrote in their opinion. “Our constitution creates a balance between the individual rights of defendants and the

individual rights of crime victims. The Act’s pretrial release provisions set forth procedures commensurate with that balance.”

The high court’s two Republican justices dissented. Justice David Overstreet, of the 5th District in southern Illinois, wrote in his dissent that he believed the General Assembly’s elimination of cash bail was “in direct violation” of the constitution’s bill of rights and another section of the document pertaining to crime victims’ rights.

“Therefore, this court has an absolute obligation to declare the pretrial release provisions of the Act to be invalid and unenforceable no matter how beneficial the abolishment of monetary bail may be,” Overstreet wrote, joined by Justice Lisa Holder White.

The law was scheduled to take effect on Jan. 1 of this year, but on Dec. 31 the justices issued an or-

der postponing its implementation until they had time to rule on the case. Their Tuesday ruling noted that their stay will be lifted in 60 days, on Sept. 18.

State Senator Chapin Rose (R-Mahomet) said, “The Democrats have endangered the citizens of Illinois. In fact, their original draft was so terrible it has been through multiple amendments so far. But no amount of amendments will fix the SAFE-T Act, it needs to be repealed.”

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**DARE TO BE DIFFERENT.** A lone corn stalk rises above the other plants in a corn field north of Arcola. Photo by David Porter.

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