

## BRIEFS

### Joe and Sue Summerville Scholarship

Applications are now being accepted for the 2023 Joe and Sue Summerville Agricultural Scholarship. Wishing to preserve and grow the agricultural community, the Summerville Agricultural Scholarship will help a student pursue their education in an agricultural related field of study.

Having grown up on a family farm, Sue is offering this scholarship in memory of her mother and father, Lois and Myron Riddle of Tuscola. The deadline for application is Friday, Feb. 17.

To be considered for the 2023 Joe and Sue Summerville \$1,500 Agricultural Scholarship, successful applicants must meet the following requirements:

- They reside in Douglas County, Illinois and are a graduating senior from high school.
- Include a copy of high school transcripts.
- Plan on attending a 2 or 4-year college/university or trade school (fulltime) majoring in agriculture or an agricultural related field of study.
- Successfully meets and is accepted to their college or trade school choice. Please include a copy of letter of acceptance.
- Write a short one-page essay, single spaced, indicating their interest in agriculture, why they would be deserving of the scholarship, and demonstrate need if applicable.
- Successful applicant will be awarded \$1,500 in two installments upon proof of registration to their institution. Installment will be mailed directly to the applicant's institution he or she is attending.

Applications should be submitted to the Douglas County Farm Bureau office, 105 N. Main Street, Tuscola IL, 61953 no later than Feb. 17. For more information about the Joe and Sue Summerville Agricultural Scholarship, contact Tyler Harvey at (217) 253-4442 or douglasmgr@douglasfcfb.com

### Farm Bureau Foundation scholarships

The Douglas County Farm Bureau Foundation is a private foundation dedicated to the youth of Douglas County. Up to \$3,000 in scholarships are available to assist students pursuing a college degree in Agriculture. Interested students may apply each year for consideration. Applicants can receive up to one award per year of school; however, the applicant must re-apply every year.

Applications are now being accepted at the Douglas County Farm Bureau for consideration and are due by Friday, February 17, 2023. Applications are available at the Douglas County Farm Bureau office or on their website, www.douglasfcfb.com under the Foundation tab.

Successful applicants will meet the following requirements:

- Enrolled in an Agriculture related field of study.
- Completed one semester of college course work.
- Submit a copy of college transcript
- Submit a letter of application telling about yourself (500 word maximum)

Parent or applicant must be a member of the Douglas County Farm Bureau

For more information about Douglas County Farm Bureau Foundation Scholarships, contact the Douglas County Farm Bureau office at 217-253-4442 or douglasmgr@douglasfcfb.com.

### Recovery-oriented education

Darlene Smith, Recover-Oriented System of Care (ROSC) recovery neighbor hosts an education series from 1:30-2:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 25, at the Camargo Township District Library, 14 N. Main St., Villa Grove. It is open to the public. For information, call Smith at 217-549-7481 or email ceadloretras@ceadouncil.com.

Smith will host Keeping Your Recovery First at several locations in February: 10:30-11:30 a.m. Feb. 8 at the Arthur Public Library District, 225 S. Walnut St., Arthur; 1:30-2:30 p.m. Feb. 8 at the Arcola Carnegie Public Library, 407 E. Main St., Arcola; and 1:30-2:30 p.m. Feb. 22 at the Camargo Township District Library, 14 N. Main St., Villa Grove.

### Learn to preserve food safely

Home gardening and food preservation have become more popular during the past few years. People are taking advantage of preserving food at home to enjoy the fruits of their labor throughout the year. Learn how to water-bath and pressure can with University of Illinois Extension's afternoon class sponsored by the Arthur Public Library District.

Yes! You Can: Preserving Safely will be from 1 to 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 4, at the Arthur Public Library District, 225 S. Walnut in Arthur. Nutrition and Wellness Educator Caitlin Mellendorf will share up-to-date information to increase confidence in safely preserving at home and explain the steps to get started or refresh current skills. Participants may also bring their dial-gauge pressure canner lids to be tested.

"While fresh tomatoes will eventually decompose, preserving methods like canning give them a longer shelf life," says Mellendorf. "Maybe those tomatoes are canned into a salsa for a taste of summer in the fall."

The event is free, but participants should contact the library by Feb. 1 at 217-543-2037 or email admin@arthurlibrary.org to register. For more information, contact Caitlin at chuth2@illinois.edu or 217-877-6042.

## Illinois Capitol news —

# House advances assault weapon ban, Senate giving it 'extensive review'

## Pritzker expresses support, watches debate from House chamber

By PETER HANCOCK  
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SPRINGFIELD — A bill that would ban the sale and manufacture of assault weapons in Illinois advanced out of the state House on Thursday and now awaits action in the Senate.

The bill was prompted in large part by the July 4 mass shooting in Highland Park during an Independence Day parade which left seven people dead and dozens more injured or traumatized.

Among those who traveled directly from Highland Park was Ashbey Beasley, who told a House committee Thursday that her 6-year-old son was traumatized by witnessing the parade shooting and is now undergoing therapy.

"I don't believe in stripping things away from people," Beasley said, noting that she holds a Firearm Owner Identification card. "But I do know what it feels like to run away from an AR-15. I do know what it's like to run into a crowd of people running from an AR-15."

The bill was the subject of extensive committee hearings in December and negotiations over details of the measure continued until right before its passage in the House. It will still need approval in the Senate and from Gov. JB Pritzker to become law.

Senate President Don Harmon, D-Oak Park, issued a statement Friday morning saying senators are giving both the assault weapons ban and another House-approved abortion-related bill "extensive review and careful evaluation" over the weekend, as the Senate leaves Springfield until Sunday evening.

While changes to the legislation are possible, under the version passed by the House it would become illegal for anyone other than certain law enforcement officers, members of the U.S. military or the Illinois National Guard to knowingly manufacture, deliver, sell or purchase an assault weapon, assault weapon attachment, .50 caliber rifle or .50 caliber cartridge beginning 300 days after Pritzker's signature on the measure.

However, firearms used for hunting that are explicitly allowed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources would not fall under the ban.

The bill provides a long list of specific weapons that would qualify as assault weapons, based largely on the federal assault weapons ban that was in effect from 1994 until 2014.

"These are weapons that belong on a battlefield, not at parades, or parks, or schools or churches," House Speaker Emanuel "Chris" Welch, a chief sponsor of the bill, told his colleagues during a hearing Thursday.

The bill would also ban

large-capacity magazines capable of holding more than 12 rounds of ammunition. And it would ban assault weapon attachments, or devices that make other guns resemble assault weapons, as well as "switches" — devices that increase a semi-automatic weapon's rate of fire, effectively turning them into fully automatic weapons.

People who already own a weapon that would be banned under the bill would be allowed to keep them, but they would be required to file an affidavit with the Illinois State Police within 180 days after the bill becomes law, providing the weapon's serial number in order to receive a special endorsement on their Firearm Owner's Identification card.

Also beginning 300 days after becoming law, it would be illegal for anyone who owns such a weapon to sell or transfer it to anyone other than an heir, an out-of-state resident or a federally licensed firearms dealer. They would also be required to notify state police within 10 days of that sale or gift.

One of the last-minute changes made to the bill was a provision that would allow Illinois gun manufacturers to continue producing the weapons but would limit their sales to only law enforcement or out-of-state purchasers in jurisdictions where the weapons are still permitted.

The final version of the measure was stripped of provisions that would have prohibited individuals between

ages 18 and 21 from purchasing a firearm, even with a parent's consent. The latest version also removed a provision requiring hunters younger than 21 to be under the supervision of someone over 21 with a valid FOID card. That means if the bill becomes law, those individuals will have the same rights and protections they have under current law.

"We talked a lot about that within our caucus, with negotiations," Rep. Bob Morgan, D-Deerfield, the bill's chief sponsor in the House, told reporters Thursday. "We heard a lot of feedback about the under-21 (issue). And what we heard most commonly was a lot of concerns with regards to hunting. That was a really important element."

Even those changes, however, were not enough to satisfy ardent gun rights advocates who argued that the measure would still violate the Second Amendment's guarantee of the right to keep and bear arms.

"Part of me wants you to pass this bill," Illinois State Rifle Association lobbyist Ed Sullivan told the committee. "From what I read, it's less constitutional than it was before. Takes away more rights than it did before. Makes it easier to strike down."

Sullivan argued that many of the weapons listed in the bill as assault weapons are commonly used by hunters and sportsmen, a fact that he said would make the ban vulnerable to being overturned under recent U.S. Supreme Court standards.

Still, the bill passed out of the committee on a 9-4 vote, sending it to the House floor for a debate that lasted nearly two hours, with supporters arguing it would reduce gun-related deaths in Illinois and opponents arguing it would have little or no effect and would likely be ruled unconstitutional.

The final vote in the House, taken shortly after midnight Friday morning, was 64-43. Only one Republican, outgoing Minority Leader Jim Durkin, of Western Springs, voted in favor of the bill. Four Democrats voted no and four more were listed as absent or not voting.

In an unusual move, Pritzker sat in the House chamber throughout the debate, at a House member's desk next to Welch. After the vote, he issued a statement saying he looked forward to working with the Senate to pass the bill.

The language of the bill was inserted as an amendment to a bill, Senate Bill 2226, that had already passed the Senate, one dealing with amusement ride safety. That means the Senate only needs to vote on whether to concur with the changes made by the House.

Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service covering state government. It is distributed to more than 400 newspapers statewide, as well as hundreds of radio and TV stations. It is funded primarily by the Illinois Press Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation.

## Mercury rising in the morning

The elusive planet Mercury passed between the Sun and Earth the first week of January and then entered the morning sky. For the early-risers out there, this is one of only two favorable Mercury sightings for 2023, the other being in mid-September.

Greatest separation from the Sun occurs at the end of next week, but the Moon can help you this week. Tomorrow morning, a thin crescent Moon rises near 6 a.m. with the red star Antares to the upper right of the Moon. Near 6:15 a.m., Mercury rises to the lower left of this pair. Just a few minutes

### In the night sky

By David Leake



later, the planet Mercury will rise to the left of the Moon.

Though the Moon will move toward the Sun (New Moon is the 21st), Mercury will still be visible in the east-southeast until mid-February. Set an

alarm and check it out!

David Leake is retired Planetary Director of Staer-tel Planetarium at Parkland College and co-founder of the Champaign-Urbana Astronomical Society, Inc.



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