

Marshall County Board Conducts Routine Business At January Meeting

by MJ Langner

The Marshall County Board received regular reports from various departments at a brief regular board meeting held last Thursday, January 8th.

Reports were given by the county's engineer Catherine Terando regarding the regular operations of the highway department, as well as Hector Gomez representing the Health Department and Ryan Giacometti, Zoning Administrator. All reported everything was mostly routine, with Gomez noting there is an increase in influenza this year with the spread of the H3N2 variant throughout the state.

Giacometti did bring a resolution for a special use permit to the board for approval. This resolution will extend the use of MET towers on the eastern part of the county through the end of 2027. They are used for research that will help assess how many wind towers will be installed in the future.

The existing MET (Metoro-

logical Evaluation Towers) towers will be used by a new company, Scout Energy, who acquired the Prairie Violet Wind Project from Transalta late summer of last year. The project is the very early stages and it is unknown at this time how many towers would be installed as more data is set to be collected.

The ZBA (Zoning Board of Appeals) unanimously approved the recommendation for the board to approve the resolution. The county board did approve the resolution with Jamie Duran casting the lone vote in opposition. Marty McLaughlin and Bill Fecht were absent from this meeting.

In other business, the board approved the appointment of Craig Doyle to replace Charles Mooberry on the Marshall-Putnam River Conservancy Board through April 30, 2030. The board also re-appointed Kimberly Sasso, Greg Shirley and Mason Shirley, each for a six year term on the Bell Plain Cemetery Board.

Fieldcrest Knights Roll Over Fisher, Lose Tough One To I.V.C.

The Fieldcrest Knights split a pair of games this week, rolling 56-27 over Fisher at home on Tuesday night, then dropping a tough 58-53 decision on the road to the IVC Grey Ghosts on Friday.

On Tuesday, Layten Gerdes had 8 of his game-high 24 points in the first quarter, staking the Knights to a 16-4 first quarter lead. The lead was 27-16 at the half and a comfortable 47-24 lead heading into the final quarter.

Besides Layten's 24 points, Kash Klendworth added 9 while Kaydon Eilts had 8 points.

On Friday, the Knights dropped a close 58-53 decision to the IVC Grey Ghosts. The Knights held a 27-24 lead at the half but IVC used a 19-10 advantage in the third quarter to take a 43-27 lead into the final quarter. The Knights converted 9 of 9 free throws in the final quarter while the Grey Ghosts converted just 2 of 8, but they still came up short.

The Knights got balanced scoring led by the 16 points from Kash Klendworth. Eli Gerdes and Layden Gerdes added double figure scoring with 15 and 11 points respectively.

After a Monday game at Ro-

anoke-Benson, the Knights will return home on Tuesday to host Prairie Central. They will take to the road on Friday for a conference matchup with El Paso-Gridley. They begin play in the HOI Conference Tournament on Saturday, January 17.

FIELDCREST 56, FISHER 27

	FG	FT	PTS
Bryden Lohr.....	0	0-0	0
Braden Hahn.....	1	0-0	2
Lucas Anson.....	0	0-0	0
Kash Klendworth.....	4	0-0	9
Layten Gerdes.....	9	2-4	24
Ethan Vallazza.....	0	0-0	0
Aiden Alexander.....	1	0-0	2
Eli Gerdes.....	1	0-0	3
Lucas Schmillen.....	0	0-0	0
Drew Overocker.....	2	1-2	5
Lucas Schmillen.....	0	0-0	0
Kayden Eilts.....	4	0-0	8
TOTALS.....	23 (7)	3-6	56

FISHER (4-8)	4	12	8	3	27
FIELDCREST (9-4)	16	11	20	9	56

I.V.C. 58, FIELDCREST 53

	FG	FT	PTS
Braden Hahn.....	0	0-0	0
Lucas Anson.....	0	0-0	0
Kash Klendworth.....	5	4-4	16
Eli Gerdes.....	5	2-2	15
Drew Overocker.....	1	5-5	7
Kayden Eilts.....	2	0-0	4
TOTALS.....	17 (8)	11-11	53

FIELDCREST (9-5)	12	15	10	16	53
I.V.C. (9-9)	12	12	19	15	58

Marshall County Court News

FINES LEVIED

Michael L. Heinold 11/8/25 by State Conservation "deer hunting permit violation" 1/7/26 fine \$195.

LAND TRANSFERS

Grantor: Mary Russell Ind. Exec. Grantee: Helene Caruso, Mary Russell. Monte Cassino Estates Lot 63, Lot 64. Executor's Deed.

Grantor: Brandon C. Long. Grantee: F11 Properties LLC. Wenona (Original Town) Block 10, Lot 14, Notes S 1/2. Warranty Deed.

Grantor: Barbara J. Faw, Jerome M. Faw. Grantee: Barbara J. Faw Co. Tr., Jerome M. Faw Co. Tr. Santa Fe the 1st Add Block 32, Lot 1; Lot 2; Lot 3. Wudtkes Sub. Lot 19, Lot 20, Lot 21. Deed Trust.

Grantor: Jerome M. Faw. Grantee: Barbara J. Faw, Co. Tr. Jerome M. Faw Co. Tr. Section 27, Township 29N, Range 1W, Govt Lot --NE, Notes E 1/2, W 1/2.

Subj to Ease. Section 26, 29N, 1W, --NW, Notes S 1/2 of N 220A of N 1/2. Deed Trust.

Grantor: Daniel Shield, Michelle Shield. Grantee: David Collins, Jane Collins. Lake Wildwood Development Lot 1382, Lot 1383. Warranty Deed.

Grantor: Lake Wildwood Assoc. Inc. Grantee: Timothy O'Brien Martin, Victoria O'Brien Martin. Lake Wildwood Development Lot 817. Quit Claim Deed.

Grantor John Dennis Donahoe. Grantee: John Dennis Donahoe, Joyce Ellen Donahoe. Varna (Original Town) Block 27, Lot 11. Block 27, Lot 12, Block 27, Lot 13. Warranty Deed.

Grantor: John Dennis Donahoe, Joyce Ellen Donahoe. Grantee: Andrea Ellen Sandoval, Jose Antonio Sandoval. Varna (Original Town) Block 27, Lot 11. Block 27, Lot 12, Block 27, Lot 13. Warranty Deed.

Illinois Is 2026's 9th Best State To Raise A Family

Some states provide a more supportive environment for raising a family than others. The best states combine affordability with safety, strong job opportunities, and access to quality education, healthcare, and entertainment.

To identify which states offer the most family-friendly conditions, WalletHub evaluated all 50 states using 50 key indicators. Our data set includes factors such as median annual family income, housing affordability, healthcare quality, crime rates, and school performance.

"Raising a family has become significantly more expensive in recent years as the cost of living has risen quickly. In fact, it can cost a family as much as \$320,000 to raise a child to age 18, according to statistics from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In light of the expensive nature of being a parent and the responsibility it entails, it's important to live in a city that is affordable while still providing quality health care, education, safety and opportunities for enrichment."

Chip Lupo, Wallethub Analyst

Best States To Raise A Family

State	Score
1. Massachusetts.....	67.60
2. Minnesota.....	63.10
3. North Dakota.....	61.60
4. Wisconsin.....	60.58
5. Nebraska.....	60.41
6. New York.....	59.71
7. Connecticut.....	59.19
8. New Hampshire.....	58.12
9. Illinois.....	58.09
10. Maine.....	58.07
11. South Dakota.....	58.02
12. Pennsylvania.....	57.91
13. Washington.....	57.66
14. New Jersey.....	57.44
15. Colorado.....	57.37

Worst States To Raise A Family

36. North Carolina.....	46.70
37. Alaska.....	45.73
38. Kentucky.....	44.67
39. Arizona.....	44.24
40. Florida.....	44.19

41. Georgia.....	42.86
42. South Carolina.....	41.73
43. Oklahoma.....	41.51
44. Arkansas.....	38.82
45. Louisiana.....	38.71
46. Alabama.....	38.50
47. Nevada.....	36.78
48. Mississippi.....	35.99
49. West Virginia.....	35.84
50. New Mexico.....	32.69

Raising a Family in Illinois

(1=Best; 25=Avg.):
Overall rank - 9th

- ♦ 22nd: % of Families with Young Children
- ♦ 30th: Infant-Mortality Rate
- ♦ 3rd: Median Annual Family Income (Adjusted for Cost of Living)
- ♦ 22nd: Violent Crimes per Capita
- ♦ 28th: % of Families in Poverty
- ♦ 18th: Housing Affordability
- ♦ 13th: Separation & Divorce Rate

Four Republicans Certified For Primary To Take On Pritzker

By Greg Bishop | The Center Square

The Republican primary election for who will take on Gov. J.B. Pritzker in November is set.

Democrats and Republicans will go to the polls March 17 to select who they want to be their party's nominee for offices up and down the ballot.

In the governor's race, Pritzker is unchallenged in the Democratic primary. Opponent Patricia Tillman is listed on the Illinois State Board of Elections website as "Active," but a board spokesperson said she withdrew.

Republicans have four candidates to choose from. Former GOP gubernatorial candidate Darren Bailey looking for a rematch.

"We've got our own unique problems and situations, and it's time that we stop this political divisiveness," Bailey said during a recent news conference. "And I want to show people what a Republican leader can truly do to get Illinois back on track. And I know Chicago is ready for that."

Pritzker beat Bailey in 2022, 55% to 43%.

"You know what? People may not like the brand and they may not like the name, but I guaran-

tee you they're going to love the results," said Aaron Del Mar, Bailey's running mate.

Also on the March ballot is former Wirepoints President Ted Dabrowski. He said Pritzker has failed.

"We still continue to have deficits. We've had more and more tax hikes. We've had more and more population shrinkage," Dabrowski said during a separate news conference. "All those things that are going wrong for Illinois have happened in those seven years."

Also on the ballot for Republicans is DuPage County Sheriff James Mendrick. His campaign website focuses on public safety issues.

"For too long, crime has surged, budgets have spiraled out of control, businesses have fled, and our children's education has suffered," Mendrick's website said. "Springfield politicians have prioritized political ambition over the well-being of the people they serve."

Rick Heidner is also on the ballot. An email or phone contact for Heidner's campaign was not available via campaign disclosure documents.

Illinois Interstate Shootings Decrease For Fourth Straight Year

For the fourth year in a row, the number of shootings on Illinois interstates has dropped. The Illinois State Police (ISP) is reporting interstate shootings statewide decreased 31% in 2025, compared to 2024, with zero fatal interstate shooting in Illinois. This is the first time in roughly a decade there has been zero interstate shooting fatalities.

"Public safety has been a key priority under my administration, and thanks to sustained investments and the efforts of the Illinois State Police, our state has seen safer interstates year after year," said Governor JB Pritzker. "In the past four years alone, interstate shootings have decreased by 80% and no one lost their life to gun violence on Illinois' interstates in 2025. We're committed to building upon this progress and will continue working tirelessly to improve public safety across Illinois."

"When faced with a surge of violence on Illinois interstates, ISP took immediate action, dedi-

cating personnel, technology, Air Operations, K9 units, forensics, and investigative expertise, successfully decreasing the number of shootings," said ISP Director Breidan F. Kelly. "Our multifaceted approach has proven to be effective, but as crime evolves, so will we in order to keep our communities safe."

The use of ISP Air Operations and Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs) has been instrumental in identifying and tracking those committing crime, as well as reducing crashes. ISP uses its Air Operations to help track vehicles and individuals fleeing from officers, reducing the risk of a high speed pursuit that can result in a fatal crash. ISP also uses ALPRs, not only to assist in apprehending individuals in real time as the crime occurs, like a vehicle hijacking, but also during investigations. Troopers and Special Agents can use ALPRs to identify vehicles that may have been involved in or witnessed an interstate shooting and (Continued On Page 4)

WE ARE ONLINE

If you would like to subscribe to the online edition, or the print edition of the Lacon Home Journal/ Toluca Star Herald simply log on to: www.laconhomejournal.com to sign up.