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**McDonough County Farm Bureau awards four scholarships**

**IN THE KNOW**

**Macomb man pleads guilty to sex charge**

By Nathan Woodside  
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A Macomb man pleaded guilty on Tuesday to charges of attempted criminal sexual assault.

Jared L. Williams, 24, was arrested on March 28 stemming from an alleged incident that occurred on March 20.

According to reports, Williams and another friend went to an apartment in Wigwam Hollow Circle to have dinner and watch movies with two female acquaintances.

Later that night, reports said the victim, relatively unknown to Williams, went to sleep on a mattress in the home. She told police that when she went to sleep, she was fully clothed, but woke up on her stomach with Williams on top of her in the act of a sexual assault.

Williams' plea on Tuesday was part of an agreement with prosecutors in which the charges were reduced from criminal sexual assault.

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MACOMB PUBLIC LIBRARY

## Real-life reading



NATHAN WOODSIDE/THE VOICE

Children pet a young lemur Wednesday at the Macomb Public Library. Brown's Oak Ridge Zoo, of Smithfield, put the program on for local children, letting them get up close and personal with a bobcat, as well as a lemur, chinchilla, fox and cougar. According to Nancy Brown, her zoo is the only family-owned facility of its kind in Illinois. She said the zoo is open every day between May and October.

## TIF talks ongoing with WP School District

By Nathan Woodside  
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Colchester Mayor Danny Bice said Monday that he will continue negotiations with the West Prairie School District before the city council defines the boundaries of a proposed tax increment financing (TIF) district.

At past meetings, West Prairie School Superintendent Dr. Jonathan Heerboth has expressed concerns that the district would funnel too much property tax revenue away from local schools.

"I think that the city and the school working together is going to be the key to success," Heerboth said on Monday. "We need a plan that we can all get behind and promote. My main concern is that if this is going to be successful, then we need to have a plan for success, and what the ramifications of that plan are."

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## Project H.O.P.E. seeking donations

By Ryan Hagan  
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Project H.O.P.E. (Help Our People Eat) is opening a thrift store in August and is asking for donations. A store gift certificate will be awarded to the person collecting the most items.

Rhonda Brown, the group's outreach coordinator, said, "We hope (the store) will prove to be a continual funding source for the dinners and to expand the ministry visions that we have...We are collecting merchandise to sell, but we are in need of a lot of fixtures for the store."

Project H.O.P.E. is a faith-based ministry that hosts free monthly dinners for community members.

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## Larson's Brown Bag dancers



SALLY ADAMS/THE VOICE

Pictured is Annabelle Clark of the Jayme S. Larson Academy of Dance, performing at Wednesday's Brown Bag concert in Chandler Park. Next week's show will feature Cindy McClintock.

BUSHNELL

## New air and heating units for City Hall

By Sally Adams  
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City Hall will get new heating and air conditioning units after discussions by the Bushnell City Council Tuesday.

Alderman Jerry Merrick told aldermen the air conditioner in the City Hall building has not been functioning. Despite some previous discussion about not replacing the unit in hopes of saving money, the council decided otherwise. Currently the furnace, located in the basement of the building, also needs to be replaced.

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## Bushnell's swimming pool open for 50th season

By Lainie Steelman  
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Bushnell's municipal swimming pool is celebrating its 50th summer of operation.

The pool, located in the town's VFW Park on Cole Street, was established in 1960 by the Bushnell VFW Post #1422, with help from local businesses and community members. Dedicated in 1961 with a plaque on the wall of the entrance, the pool is managed by a municipal pool board. This summer, the pool employs 11 people, including co-managers Brandon Coates and Jim Howard.

The pool includes a bathhouse with separate girls' and boys' shower rooms; a basket room for storing personal items and a concession stand manned by volunteers. Through gifts and memorials, a sun deck was added in 1967 and later diving boards were added. The pool has a depth of 10 feet, 6 inches at the deepest end. Attendance at the pool has steadily increased since June.

"June was kind of rough because of the weather," said Coates, who is in his fourth season of working for the pool and occasionally serves as a lifeguard. "But everyday it's been warmer and we've done better."



LAINIE STEELMAN/THE VOICE

Eric Cox, 9, and Katie Finch, 11, jump off the diving boards at the Bushnell municipal swimming pool, which is now open for its 50th season. The pool is in Bushnell's VFW Park on Cole Street.

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