




Our County

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS? Contact editor Jodi Pospeschil at editor@mcdonoughvoice.com or (309) 833-2114

WEATHER

Today
 **HIGH 76**
LOW 62

Sunday
 **HIGH 85**
LOW 68

Monday
 **HIGH 88**
LOW 72

The Voice

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What's going on here?

By Ryan Hagan | Staff Writer

New Dollar General in the 776

Construction on a new Dollar General store is underway next to Illinois Route 336, near West Prairie Middle School. Bob Elkan, president of Westmore Group, Inc. of Chesterfield, Mo., says the building should be completed by late July. In addition to regular Dollar General merchandise, about 25 percent of the 9,026 square foot building will be devoted to grocery items, including frozen foods.

Elkan said Illinois Route 336 was a major influence in selecting a location. He projects the store will do well, drawing customers from 15-20 minutes away.

The store will closely resemble the LaHarpe Dollar General, which

was also built by Westmore Group, Inc.

Emily Wisse, media relations manager at Dollar General, said demographics, traffic patterns, and customer needs made Colchester an ideal store location.

The store's goal is to be a convenient shopping choice for customers in a three- to five-mile radius. Wisse said the store will employ six to 10 people. Anyone interested in applying may obtain an application in the store after opening. She also said the Colchester store's hours and grand opening date are still being determined. Dollar General operates over 9,000 stores across 35 states.



RYAN HAGAN/THE VOICE

Colchester's Dollar General is expected to be completed in late July.

HAVE A QUESTION YOU WOULD LIKE ANSWERED? TELL US!
PHONE (309) 833-2114 **E-MAIL** news9@mcdonoughvoice.com

TIF

Continued from page A1

According to a map Heerboth presented to the West Prairie School Board, the proposed TIF district could encompass a wide swath of Colchester, including commercial, institutional, residential and undeveloped property, that is considered to be "blighted," or to have stagnant property value.

Heerboth said that while he supports the Colchester City Council in its effort to boost economic development, he hopes those representing West Prairie School District will have a seat at the table as the TIF discussions continue. "It's very difficult to see how we can come out ahead," Heerboth said of the TIF district, but he gave the West Prairie Board some of his projections about the potential impact.

Under the Colchester City Council's plan for a TIF district, West Prairie will receive, up through 2034, property tax revenues from the TIF district in the amount of \$213,934.63 per year - the revenue received in 2011 - even as the EAV increases from the present \$4.3 million to a potential \$16.3 million 23 years down the road as the TIF district becomes developed.

During that time, the city of Colchester could collect as much as \$589,655 per year in property tax revenue, depending on the actual EAV money, which would have gone to West Prairie.

"That's assuming this TIF is successful," Heerboth said of his projections.

The fact that there have been no long-range studies done on the real impact of TIF districts on Illinois communities, and that there isn't any state oversight of such districts and how cities use TIF funds, are other concerns Heerboth raised.

Furthermore, Heerboth said he is apprehensive about the impact on other taxing bodies and the services provided by them.

He said he believes Colchester's TIF will be approved by the Colchester City Council, as the council initiated the TIF district as a way to attract a discount retail store, Dollar General. Ground at a space along Illinois Route 336 has already been cleared for a Dollar General store, which is scheduled to be completed late this summer.

Heerboth said he plans to attend, along with representatives of the West Prairie School Board, the Colchester City Council's public hearing on the proposed TIF district. That hearing is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on June 16 at Colchester City Hall.

Heerboth said it is common for school districts to negotiate with city councils when TIF districts are created, to assure they receive a portion of the TIF funds or financial assistance when capital projects arise.

West Prairie Board President Scott Vogler said he shares Heerboth's concerns, and he thanked the superintendent for clearly explaining the potential impact of the TIF.

"Last night I saw the first information about how it really worked," he

said Friday about the TIF district, "and it concerns me. Hopefully we can figure something out to the benefit of the school district and the community."

In other business Thursday:

- Heerboth said he received notice the school district may not receive its fourth quarter transportation fund payment from the state, which totals about \$80,000.

- "I don't know if it's politics or reality," he said, indicating Governor Pat Quinn's struggle to end the state budget crisis might have something to do with the missed payment, "but we'll be contacting our legislators over that."

- The board directed Heerboth to move forward with the South Elementary roof project. The life/safety amendment for the project was recently approved by the Illinois State Board of Education.

- Heerboth reported that employee health insurance in the district will cost \$7,320 per covered employee for the 2011-12 school year, an increase of 9.2 percent.

- Scott Sullivan, technology administrator, demonstrated to the board how the school district's new student management software, Lumen, works.

Sullivan said he is working with the district's teachers and administrators on training for the new software. The web-based software, which will be accessible by West Prairie staff as well as students and parents, will be used for keeping track of grades and assignments. It will also serve as a website for parents and students to pay for school meals and other district fees. The software will be linked from the West Prairie's website and be up and running by the time school resumes in August.

- The next West Prairie School Board meeting will be held at 7 p.m. Thursday, June 23, at the middle school library in Colchester.

CALENDAR

Saturday

MACOMB

Historic Oakwood Cemetery tours lead by local author and historian John Hallwas, 10 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Meet at the Oakwood Cemetery's sexton's building. Proceeds support the Macomb Woman's Club social service memorial committee. Tickets are \$10 and are available at the Western Illinois Museum.

COLCHESTER

Friends of Argyle Lake State Park - Spring Exotic Plant Removal Workday: 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Help Friends of Argyle and park staff remove nonnative plants from the woods at Argyle. Litter collecting is an option for younger volunteers. Bring a sack lunch and enjoy a picnic after your work. Tools and gloves will be provided or bring your own. Meet at the park visitor center.

LAHARPE

Walk with Me - Walk in the fight against ALS: Registration is from 9-10 a.m. at the Annex in LaHarpe. The 2.5 mile walk will begin at 10 a.m. Cost \$25. T-Shirt & light lunch following walk included. Strollers and wagons welcome.

COLCHESTER

Dedication ceremony for the Veterans Memorial in Colchester: 11 a.m. in downtown Colchester.

Sunday

MACOMB

Historic Oakwood Cemetery tours lead by local author and historian John Hallwas, 10 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Meet at the Oakwood Cemetery's sexton's building. Proceeds support the Macomb Woman's Club social service memorial committee. Tickets are \$10 and are available at the Western Illinois Museum.

Monday

MACOMB

Memorial Day program in Macomb: 10:30 a.m. The Macomb American Legion and Macomb VFW posts will host a program at the American Legion building,

221 E. Washington St., Macomb.

Memorial Day medal ceremony: 1 p.m. at the American Legion building, 221 E. Washington St., Macomb. Medals belong to twins Archie and Willis Vaughn, of Ipava, who were hiked in action in France in September 1944 and posthumously awarded Silver Stars for heroism. Medals will be donated to the Western Illinois Museum during the ceremony.

Thursday

MACOMB

The Elms 33rd Ice Cream Social will be held Thursday evening at 6:30 p.m. rain or shine. Maggie Dexter, Gracie Wetzel and Michael Haas, and miss Macomb Megan Ervin will perform. The public is invited to attend.

June 3 - 5

GOOD HOPE

Sodbuster Days celebration: A variety of events are planned throughout the weekend, including food, entertainment and contests. The annual parade will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday. A community worship service in the park begins at 10:45 a.m. Sunday and a firefighters' water fight will be held Sunday at 1 p.m.

June 11

MACOMB

The Social Service Memorial Committee of the Macomb Woman's Club will host a Garden Walk from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Tickets are \$12 and are available at the Western Illinois Museum, Citizens Bank, MidAmerica National Bank and Vintage Accents.

Print Exclusives



Below is a list of stories you will find today only in the printed edition of The McDonough County Voice:

- WIU Vet's Club donates to RTR - Page 6A
- Ussery makes Lock of Love donation - Page 6A.

Look who turns 70 today!
 Love,
 Your kids,
 grandchildren &
 great grandchildren

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Villas

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- KUNG FU PANDA (PG)
- PIRATES ON THE CARIBBEAN: ON STRANGER TIDES (PG13)
- BRIDESMAIDS (R)
- THOR (PG13)
- FAST FIVE (PG13)
- SOUL SURFER (PG)
- THE HANGOVER PART II (R)

24 HOUR SHOWTIMES
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 309-833-2626

33rd Annual Ice Cream Social
Thursday, June 2, 6:30 p.m - 8:00 p.m.

Will be held inside rain or shine
 Ice Cream, Pie or Cake and Beverage
 \$4 Adults \$2 Children 12 & Under
 Proceeds go toward residents activity fund.

Entertainment provided by
**Maggie Dexter,
 Gracie Wetzel & Michael Haas.**

Tickets available at the door.

For more information call:
 Tina Cox, Elms Activity Director (309) 837-5482

The Elms 1212 Madelyn Avenue • Macomb