

# Our County

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

## WEATHER

**Today**  
 **HIGH 85**  
**LOW 72**

**Sunday**  
 **HIGH 85**  
**LOW 71**

**Monday**  
 **HIGH 88**  
**LOW 71**

## The Voice

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## GIS

Continued from page A1

The GIS Center will also use the services of a land surveyor from McClure Engineering, based in Macomb.

Sperry said according to information from the 2010 Census, the total population of the combined school districts is 10,520, which breaks down into seven school board representation districts with a population of 1,502 each.

The combined population includes Prairie City, which is part of the B-PC District, and St. Augustine, part of the Avon School District.

"Obviously, there's two communities that are going to factor heavily into this district," Sperry said of Bushnell and Abingdon, which hold the bulk of the population. "Each one of those districts will effectively have two (school board) districts per community."

Avon will receive "just over one" school board representation district," Sperry said, and the other representation districts will be filled by the outlying areas.

Drafting the legal description will take about a month to complete, Sperry said, while the GIS Center will finish drawing the new school board representation boundaries in a few weeks.

Between now and the March 20, 2012, election, the Committee of 10 will hold informational meetings about the proposed consolidation and visit services clubs and community organizations to talk about the committee's work.

The next Committee of 10 meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. Thursday, July 28, at B-PC High School. Committee of 10 Chair Jerry Arthur said that now that each school board has voted - each board approved a motion to do so during Wednesday evening board meetings - to be petitioners, the consolidation petition could be formally approved by the committee at the July meeting, in keeping with the Sept. 26 deadline to file it with the Knox County Regional Office of Education.

Because the bulk of the consolidated district's equalized assessed valuation will be in Knox County, the petition will be filed with the Knox County Regional Office of Education.

For more information about the Committee of 10, including meeting dates and the complete recommendations for the consolidation, visit <https://sites.google.com/site/abingdon-avonbpc/>.

## MACOMB

### Kay Harris honored by McDonough County League of Women Voters

On Thursday, the League of Women Voters of McDonough County honored the late Kay Harris, a longtime member of the Macomb community and one of the founding members of the league.

Harris was a local activist with many interests, especially environmental policies affecting Macomb, the county, the region and the state. She was also the driving force in organizing the League's workshops on how to run for public office. She was also a candidate for several offices.

The League of Women Voters of Macomb began in 1965.



SALLY ADAMS/THE VOICE

Pictured, from left are Mary Kubasack, Janel Harris, Tom Storie and Sara Boeckelman. A bench has been placed in front of the former Harris and Harris law firm. Dedicated to Kathryn Lawson Harris, the bench was donated by the League of Women's Voters of McDonough County for her many civic contributions.

## TIF

Continued from page A1

West Prairie School District Superintendent Dr. Jonathan Heerboth, however, believes the plan could be a drain on local education funds.

On Thursday, Heerboth addressed the hearing audience, saying there is evidence that the TIF will cause educational programs, and possibly schools, to close.

Heerboth said property values in Colchester have increased annually and depriving the district of that added property tax revenue, whether there is development or not, could be devastating.

"The TIF district will have a significant impact on the school district," Heerboth said.

According to evidence submitted by the superintendent, the school district has received about \$30,000 more per year in tax revenue from property value increases alone within the proposed TIF district.

"Should that continued for the next 23 years, you can see that's a significant amount of money that would no longer be going to the school district," Heerboth said. "Our school costs increase every year, so we're counting on this kind of an increase in our Equalized Assessed Valuation to cover the increase in inflationary costs...It's a little bit more every year, and our costs go up a little bit every year. We count on that little increase every year to make it up."

Moran responded that when the state provides state aid to schools, the property value is taken into consideration, so at least a portion of that tax money will be made up.

Moran also noted that school enrollment has been going down "significantly." He said enrollment has dropped by 98 students since 2004.

Heerboth noted that all taxing bodies, including the fire district, county, and the library, among others, would be hurt similarly.

Heerboth noted that because of these losses in tax revenue, taxpayers would foot the bill the school district must levy in expenses related to the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund, Social Security, liability insurance and bond costs.

Heerboth also questioned the amount of housing included within the district, which offers tremendous incentives to develop low-income housing.

Moran responded that it's yet to be seen what work will be done in the TIF district, so it's unfair to assume that money would go to low-income housing.

"It would be unfair if we weren't using TIF dollars to support homeowner housing given the fact that there is a need," Moran said.

He added that the plan is to improve the housing, which would increase the number of families in Colchester, which would increase school enrollment, leading to more educational funding from the state.

"The school district wants to see Colchester do well, and Colchester wants to see the school district do well," Moran said. "I'm here to tell you that the impact on the school isn't quite as bad as what the doctor is making it out to be, but I'm not saying that there's not an impact. There is a lot of give and take here."

Moran said the city could help the school district using TIF funds, if TIF money isn't used, it could go back to the taxing bodies, and the city council has the power to remove any plot of land from the TIF district.

McDonough County Clerk Gretchen DeJaynes expressed concern that too much of Colchester is included in the district, more than 50 percent of the city's property value.

She said she's not necessarily against a TIF district, but the more EAV included, the more it hurts the taxing bodies.

Moran responded that the district boundaries include everywhere in town that his blighted, but that could be amended.

Moran said he wants to have an open conversation with all taxing body representatives.

"What's going to happen without it?," Moran asked. "We know the history of Colchester. There's been more folks leaving town than coming to town. There's more of a history of folks not investing in Colchester than investing. How much worse does it need to get? That's the question I'm trying to pose."

## CALENDAR

### Saturday & Sunday INDUSTRY

**Pinhook Days - "A Salute to Agriculture":** A variety of events, entertainment and displays are planned for the community's annual celebration, including a car show beginning at 8 a.m. Saturday, a parade at 10:30 a.m. Saturday and joint church services in the park's shelter house at 10 a.m. Sunday.

### Saturday

#### MACOMB

**Ice Cream Tasting Festival at The Old Dairy:** Proceeds from the eighth annual event will benefit the Western Illinois Museum. The event runs from 2 - 4 p.m. and samples of 12 ice cream flavors are available for a \$6 donation.

### June 23 - 26

#### MACOMB

**Heritage Days celebration in Macomb:** A variety of events are planned around the multi-day event, including entertainment, the annual parade and a carnival.

### June 24

#### MACOMB

**Friends of the Library book sale:** 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., south of the library, 109 E. Jefferson St. All proceeds are reinvested in the library.

### June 25

#### MACOMB

**Friends of the Library book sale:** 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., south of the library, 109 E. Jefferson St. Bag sale from 3 - 4 p.m. All proceeds are reinvested in the library.

### LAHARPE

**Cpl. Joshua D. Palmer Tribute & Remembrance Ride:** 8 - 9 a.m. - sign-up. The Annex, LaHarpe. Ride kicks off at 10 a.m. Donation dinner and auction to follow at the Annex at 5 p.m. The event is open to public.

### June 26

#### MACOMB

**Project H.O.P.E.'s monthly Soup and More Dinner:** 4 - 6 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall of the First Presbyterian Church of Macomb, 400 E. Carroll St. For free transportation call Patricia at (309) 333-7747.

### June 27

#### MACOMB

**McDonough County Democratic Central Committee,** 6:30 p.m.,

## Print Exclusives



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

- First Bankers Trust becomes VIBE sponsor - Page 12A
- May real estate transactions - Page 9A.

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- MR. POPPER'S PENGUINS (PG)
- SUPER 8 (PG13)
- X-MEN: FIRST CLASS (PG13)
- THE HANGOVER PART II (R)
- PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: ON STRANGER TIDES (PG13)
- BRIDESMAIDS (R)
- GREEN LANTERN (PG13)

24 HOUR SHOWTIMES  
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## CELLS

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However, Patrick reported a complete recovery after three days. According to the program's website, donors' stem cells should regenerate in four to six weeks.

Patrick won't know the

boy's condition or name for at least six months after the donation.

He says it's part of an effort to keep donors and patients from becoming emotionally attached before it's clear that the donation was successful. Patrick says he would like to meet the boy he helped in the future.

Donating stem cells is

a relatively simple procedure akin to donating blood through the Red Cross. "It's not a burden," Patrick said, "There's nothing to it."

Patrick did not get paid for his donation. He said his only incentive was the satisfaction of helping others. "The greatest feeling in the world is just giving people a chance to live,"

he said.

Patrick is pursuing a double major in history and geography at Western Illinois University and is considering a teaching career. He graduates this fall.

To learn more about stem cell donation, visit the National Marrow Donor Program's website, marrow.org.

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