

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Shelby County Poor Farm has a public purpose

Editor:

Feb. 23, 2023, the newly appointed Shelby County State's Attorney, Rob Hanlon, was in Springfield opposing a farm bill that would change the wording in the state statute to allow counties to farm and lease property the way it has been done for years. The argument has been that it doesn't serve a public purpose. There are 32 counties that have farms in this state, even though our county has had the most scrutiny.

Mr. Hanlon stated he was there for the people of Shelby County. You can find that information on my.ilga.gov. The bill is HB1076, and you can find the witness slips signed that were opposing it and those who wanted the bill to pass. Mr. Hanlon was appointed on Feb. 2, 2023, by Chairman Bobby Orman and 14 board members. He was sworn on Feb. 16, 2023, exactly 7 days before this hearing. This seemed to be his first order of business after taking office. As a Shelby County citizen, I can honestly say he was not representing me because I wanted the bill to pass and thankfully it did.

Farming is a huge asset to our community here in the heart of Central Illinois. I wanted to share part of the "Poor Farm's" story. Why is it important for us to keep and farm? I can't imagine what personal reason one would have to get rid of a property that the county has owned since 1867. The farm was purchased by 3 commissioners to find a suitable home for the indigent of Shelby County. These were citizens that had no place to go. They had no families to take care of them. They ranged in ages from children to elderly. They raised livestock and had a huge garden. They grew almost everything they ate. There were a lot of residents that died, and some are buried in the cemetery on the property. There is a record of names of all the people that are buried there, including 2 Civil War veterans.



The Shelby County Poor Farm home pictured above in 1925, took care of indigent residents from 1867 to 1958. Although the home is gone, the 197 tillable acres 4 miles north of Shelbyville is farmed for the benefit of the county, and last year brought in \$170,000. Legislation has been introduced to change the wording in the state statute to allow counties to farm and lease property as has been done for years. After a third reading in the House of Representatives on March 23, it passed with 93 yes votes and 18 nays. It has been placed on the calendar for a First Reading in the Senate.

The "Poor Farm" existed until 1958 when it was closed. We have a piece of history that helped shape our county and our community and it continues to provide revenue for the county. Why would we want to get rid of our land that has helped this county thrive and prosper? A piece of history that shows how community is important and coming together to take care of each other to serve a greater cause. If that does not count as a public purpose, then I don't know what does. Last year, it brought in \$170,000 for our county that was generously farmed for free by Stu Fox. The seeds were donated, and the fertilizer was paid from donations and money that was already in the farm account. There were others that volunteered their time and helped in other ways to make sure the crop was successful. These people represent Shelby County. They came together for a purpose and to serve our community for the greater good of our county.

The reason we have the "Poor Farm" is to take care of the citizens of Shelby County. In my opinion it has a public purpose. I encourage everyone to learn more about our farm. If you have lived here your whole life, you may discover your own family ties to the farm.

*Elizabeth Ragan,  
Shelby County resident*

## COMING EVENTS

- Easter Egg Hunt in Strasburg April 8 at park, 10 a.m. by Legion Auxiliary.
- Blood Drive - Altamont VFW Dining Room, April 23 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Beecher City Community Garage Sales, May 6.
- Beecher City Corn Fest July 14-16.
- Pioneer Days of Cowden Aug. 25-26.
- Cowden Covered Bridge Country Music Opry, third Friday of every month from 7 to 10 p.m. at Cowden Com-

- munity Center. Sponsored by Covered Bridge Band. Everyone is invited, free admission. Bring finger foods.
- Herrick Music Show, 2nd Friday of every month at Herrick Community Center. Sponsored by County Line Band. Everyone is invited, free admission. Bring finger foods.
- Shumway Village Board meets third Tuesday of each month, 7 p.m. at the Shumway Kluthe Building. Stewardson Village Board meets the

- second Monday each month at 7 p.m. at the village hall.
- Strasburg Village Board meets the third Monday of each month @ 6:30 p.m. at the Strasburg Community Building.
- Eva Casstevens American Legion Post 535 meets the 2nd Monday of the month at 7 p.m. at Beecher City Area Kluthe Center.
- Banner Township meeting, second Monday of each month @ 7 p.m. at Kluthe Center
- Liberty Township meetings, second Monday of each month at 6 p.m. in Beecher City Village Hall.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

### MONDAY, APRIL 3

Russell Buck, Eva Schultz, Joshua Bales, Amy Day, Sue Jacobs, Nick Lilly, Nelda Webb, Kraig Barnes, Lincoln Giertz

### TUESDAY, APRIL 4

Kellen Mitchell Kemme, \*David & Shelley Buzzard, Alex P. Woodworth

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5

Mike Hankins

### THURSDAY, APRIL 6

Tara Snow, Paul Tabbert, Jacqueline (Schlanser) Wehrle, Brianna Riley, Wallace Summers

### FRIDAY, APRIL 7

\*Jared & Jodi Sphar, Theresa Goeckner, Steve Koester, Amy Whitt, Thomas W. Phillips, Katrina Frailey, Sharen Berni, \*Brad & Michelle Pullen, Tripp Robertson

### SATURDAY, APRIL 8

\*Mr. & Mrs. Doug Heiden, Joan Hoover Evans, Joe Kresin, David Scott Zimmerman, Jacob Davis, Romaine Broughton

### SUNDAY, APRIL 9

Pierce Stepp, April Hudson, Nathan Doty, Courtney Sutter

\*Denotes anniversaries

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

We are pleased to have recorded the following new and renewal subscriptions to the Journal:

Mark & Jean Penwell, Mrs. Barbara Carol Bell, Wyatt Bower, Bart Wright, Nick Lilly, Dr. & Mrs. Roger Perkins, Faye Ellinger, Gary Endsley, Larry Nohren, Gary Wheeler, Ruthann Nichols, Marilyn Montgomery, Melissa Lemay, Carolyn Beitz, Ferd & Arlene McCormick, Mark Schlanser, Karol Kessler, Suzi Niebrugge, Judy Newlin, Troy Kyle, George Kessler, C.F. Bock, Joyce Schoenfeld, Brad Wright, Virgil Strauch, Dawn Doty, Peter Brandenburger, Joyce Petty, Rebecca Frailey Reed, Dale Doty, Mrs. Jim Anderson, James Zalman, Casey & Ryan Dunaway, Mark Wood, Ramona Radloff, David Slifer, Phillip Dial, Zach Sarver, Barbara Bennett, Brock & Krystal Friese, T. Kris Perkins, Butch Hawes, Dennis & Kenna Wirth, Missy Dunaway, Phil Lark, Deanna Batson, Norma Sallee, Lon Antrim, Debra Baginski, Richard Syfert, Gary Bridges, Hilda Kissel.

### We Love Good News!

Share your family's good news with the community

Email News to:

news@beechercityjournal.com



## NEW ARRIVALS

### LUKE JOSEPH HERRMANN

Jacob and Michelle Herrmann of Shumway are proud to announce the birth of their fourth son, Luke Joseph, born on March 8, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. at HSHS St. Anthony's Memorial Hospital in Effingham.

Luke was 20½ inches long and weighed 9 pounds, 5 ounces. He was welcomed home by brothers Albert, age 5; George, 4, and Simon, 2.

Grandparents are Christopher and Karen Jansen of Sigel, Jerry Herrmann of Shumway and the late Kitty Jo Herrmann.

Great-grandparents are Margaret Jansen of Sigel and Gerald and Doris Wyckoff of Effingham.

(Reprinted to correct an error made by the Journal last week.)

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## Meals On Wheels of CEFS

### MENU

#### Monday, April 3

Smothered grilled chicken breast, broccoli, carrots, jello w/ pears, garlic bread

#### Tuesday, April 4

Sloppy joes on bun, potato wedges, calico beans, pineapple

#### Wednesday, April 5

Old fashioned beef stew, cottage cheese, cole slaw, cinnamon applesauce, corn muffin

#### Thursday, April 6

Baked ham, hash brown casserole, green bean casserole, carrot cake, whole grain roll

#### Friday, April 7

Closed - Good Friday

#### Monday, April 10

Swiss steak, au gratin potatoes, spinach, vanilla pudding, whole grain bread

To reserve a meal call the Beecher City Area Kluthe Center, 618-487-5401, by noon at least one day prior to eating.