

THE

# Beacon-News

\$2.00 FRIDAY, AUGUST 29, 2025 AURORABEACONNEWS.COM

## Fox Valley schools adjusting to world of AI



Denise Crosby

Hearing the news earlier this month that the Rochelle-based News Media Corp. was shuttering over two dozen newspapers across the Midwest – with four in Illinois – was a hard hit not just for journalists and the communities these local papers served but for democracy in general.

But what we’re seeing now and in recent years, including how the internet has decimated my profession, is nothing compared to how technology is chang-

ing the landscape in so many professions and industries. A recent Chicago Tribune editorial pointed to Goldman Sachs projecting that by 2045, advances in generative AI and robotics could fully automate up to 50% of jobs.

Certainly parents I’ve spoken to are concerned about how to discuss career opportunities with their kids. Likewise, educators are seeing more uncertainty among students as they “realize what they had imagined in high school may look very different by the time they graduate,” noted Arin Carter, associate vice president for student success and motivation at Aurora University.

“The pace of change can feel overwhelming, but that is where

proactive career counseling makes a difference,” she said.

Among students’ biggest concerns is how difficult it can be to get noticed by employers who increasingly use AI-powered applicant tracking systems, Carter pointed out. And that’s just one example of how universities must help students navigate how AI is reshaping the job market.

Likewise, Steve John, lead counselor at West Aurora High School, said more students are expressing uncertainty about their paths into the workforce, but they are also far more aware of how AI will shape those careers.

And because this is such a “tech savvy” generation,” they are “intrigued by the possibilities that

AI holds,” he continued. “They want to know how it can reshape their careers ... they see how it is changing.”

All of which is why career exploration must be an early part of the process, insist high school and college educators, who realize their role is even more important in guiding students to think more critically about the skills needed to be successful.

Indian Prairie District 204 has been “intentional about exposing students to careers, starting in elementary school and expanding that learning in middle and high school,” said District 204 Director of Innovation Brian Giovanini, who also pointed to the district’s partnership with Digital Promise, a nonprofit that focuses on educa-

tion, technology and research to improve learning opportunities across all grade levels.

At West Aurora, this focus on skills and mindset in a rapidly-changing landscape is identified as “Blackhawk Ready,” said John, and includes a team of educators and counselors who “continue to acquire new information” that can best be shared with students and the community.

It all comes down to preparing students to use AI thoughtfully in whatever path they choose, insisted East Aurora District 131 Superintendent Robert Halverson. That means pairing technical understanding with “uniquely

**Turn to Crosby, Page 3**



**Above:** A plan for a proposed residential development in what is currently rural La Fox, an unincorporated community in Kane County, shows room for 900 homes and large open-space areas, developers said. **DAVID PATZELT/SHODEEN GROUP**

Looking toward a parcel of land east of LaFox Road and south of the Union Pacific West Line railroad tracks in unincorporated La Fox that is planned to be part of Shodeen’s proposed 900-unit residential development. **R. CHRISTIAN SMITH/BEACON-NEWS**

## Aurora sets drive-thru electronics recycling

Beacon-News staff

The city of Aurora’s Property Standards Division will host its annual free Fall Electronics Recycling Drive-Thru event from 8 a.m. to noon Saturday, Sept. 6, at the Metra Route 59 Train Station at 1090 N. Route 59 in Aurora.

The free event is open to Aurora residents only. Registration online is mandatory to take part in the event. The first 2,000 Aurora residents who register will secure a spot for the drive-thru. To register, go to [www.aurora.il.us/ElectronicsRecycling](http://www.aurora.il.us/ElectronicsRecycling).

The event provides the community with a safe and convenient opportunity to recycle older electronics, city officials said in a press release.

Registered residents can bring up to two television or computer screens and an unlimited amount of other approved electronics to be recycled, according to the release.

No businesses will be allowed to drop off electronics at the event, organizers said.

“This serves as one of the most popular events of the year here in Aurora,” Aurora Property Standards Director Ruthy Harris said in the release. “We appreciate being able to provide this service to the community and look forward to helping all residents safely dispose of older electronics, helping to sustain our environment.”

Electronics that will be accepted at the event include cables, cable boxes, cameras, cash registers, cellphones, copiers, cords, DVD players, fax machines, keyboards, laptops, printers, print cartridges, projectors, radios, satellite dishes, stereos, typewriters, VCRs and video games, the release stated.

Household items that will be accepted at the event include blenders, bread makers, carpet sweepers, coffee makers, clocks,

**Turn to Recycling, Page 2**

## Upward and onward?

Campton Hills set to hold public hearing, vote on annexation in September for 900-unit housing development

**By Molly Morrow**  
Beacon-News

Campton Hills is moving forward with its consideration of whether to annex land currently part of an unincorporated community in Kane County into the village, as a local developer looks to build up to 900 housing units on the property.

The village is holding a public hearing about possibly annexing the land Sept. 4, and could vote on an agreement to do so at the same meeting.

Since the early 2000s, multiple developers have tried and failed to turn the area — in what is currently rural La Fox, an unincorporated community in Kane County — into a residential development.

But the most recent proposal, by Geneva-based developer Shodeen Group, features a less dense housing plan than previous projects, according to past reporting. And it has the support of the local open space organizations that have previously

**Turn to Vote, Page 3**

## Last Fling fest offering tons of fun, new security rules

**By Annie Alleman**

Naperville’s end-of-summer sendoff returns this Labor Day weekend with new security measures in place but the same dedication to throwing an epic bash for the community, organizers say.

The 60th annual Last Fling will be offering a carnival, parade, business expo, food and beverage vendors, kids’ activities, lots of live music and no entrance fee. Its hours are 5 to 10 p.m. Friday, Aug. 29; 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 30-31; and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday, Sept. 1, along the

downtown Naperville Riverwalk at Main Street and Jackson Avenue.

Presented by the Naperville Jaycees, the event raises money for nonprofit organizations and civil improvements in Naperville and DuPage County, said Karen Coleman, a Jaycees member and Last Fling’s public relations chair.

“We’ve got the cold-blooded creatures, a bubble party, we’ve got a water balloon toss — all that really fun stuff that families love to do and we love doing them because they’re so fun to watch,” she said. “We’re really excited about the musical acts.”

What attendees need to know is

there are new security measures in place, Coleman said. One big change is only clear, 12-inch-by-12-inch bags will be allowed to brought into the festival grounds other than medical and diaper bags, which may undergo additional scrutiny. Additionally, all attendees will be required to go through metal detectors.

“Obviously, those changes relate to things going on in the world, not just Naperville,” she said. “We’re following suit to eliminate risk and make sure the event is safe. It’s pretty standard procedure now for

**Turn to Last Fling, Page 3**



A spaghetti-eating contest is one of many family-related activities being held as part of this weekend’s Last Fling fest along the downtown Naperville Riverwalk. **NAPERVILLE JAYCEES**