

East Dundee village president censured

Board calls Pearson out for partisan politics, ‘inappropriate’ comments

By Gloria Casas
FOR THE NAPERVILLE SUN

East Dundee Village President Dan Pearson was formally censured by the village board Monday for inviting two Republicans, one of whom was gubernatorial candidate Darren Bailey, to give political speeches during the village’s Oktoberfest.

The censure was unanimous and also cited other actions and comments Pearson has made, including his endorsement of a candidate’s social media page comment stating the “language in America is English” and “inappropriate and distasteful comments” made mostly toward women during the Oktoberfest stein-holding contest.

“Whether or not you agree with this motion, I would just encourage you to read the entirety of (the resolution),” Trustee Scott Kunze said. “It’s not simply about the actions of inviting political candidates on stage. There is a list of things that have been done that have cost this village a lot of money in legal fees.”

A censure has no legal penalties and doesn’t remove an official from office. It’s a formal statement of disapproval against an official for inappropriate or unethical behavior.

The Kane County state’s attorney’s office has confirmed last week it received a complaint about Pearson’s Oktoberfest actions, charging he violated state elections laws prohibiting the use of public funds to promote political candidates or parties.

The censure resolution stems from Pearson’s decision to allow Bailey and Jennifer Davis, who is running for the 8th District Congressional seat, to take the stage at Oktoberfest on Sept. 26. During his comments, Bailey urged voters support him in his Nov. 3 election

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The East Dundee Village Board unanimously voted Monday to censure Village President Dan Pearson for inviting Republican candidates to give political speeches at the village’s Oktoberfest and other actions. **GLORIA CASAS/THE COURIER-NEWS**



Erika Kirk stands as she is acknowledged by U.S. President Donald Trump as he speaks on the first day of the 2026 Republican National Convention at the American Airlines Center on Sept. 9 in Dallas, Texas. Turning Point USA CEO Erika Kirk at the Republican convention on Sept. 9, 2026, in Dallas. Kirk brought her “America: Love it or Leave It” tour to Elgin’s Judson University Tuesday. **KEVIN DIETSCH/GETTY IMAGES**

Erika Kirk draws big crowd in Elgin, some protesters

By Gloria Casas
FOR THE NAPERVILLE SUN

Turning Point USA CEO Erika Kirk brought her “America: Love it or Leave It” tour to Elgin’s Judson University Tuesday and was greeted by a crowd who lined up early to attend — and a handful of people who turned out to protest.

Students, faculty, staff and visitors gathered outside Herrick Chapel, many wore patriotic gear like red sweatshirts emblazoned with the word, “Freedom.”

Kirk is a businesswoman and podcaster who took over as head of Turning Point following the murder of her husband, Charlie

Kirk, in September 2025.

The tour aims to “encourage students to defend free speech, challenge prevailing college narratives, affirm the values of American principles and confront the fashionable anti-Americanism that insists on hating the country while refusing to leave it,” according to a Turning Point USA news release announcing the tour.

The organization did not allow media coverage of the event.

Kirk’s fall campus tour is making stops across the country with special guests that include Donald Trump Jr.; Tulsi Gabbard, former director of U.S. National Intelligence; Glenn Beck, a conservative political commentator and radio

host; and Ben Shapiro, conservative political commentator and media host.

In addition to those who protested at the event, social media commenters voiced criticism that the Christian university would host Kirk and Turning Point, which has been cited by some for its provocative and controversial positions. Among them were Elgin City Council members Tish Powell and Diana Alfaro.

“This is not a good look for an institution that claims to want to be part of our extremely diverse community and actively recruits students of color to attend their university,” Powell wrote.

Quoting poet Maya Angelou,

she wrote, “‘when people show you who they are, believe them.’ We see you, Judson University. No more plausible deniability.”

A Judson University spokesperson said the university did not invite Kirk to campus and declined to comment on Kirk’s appearance. The university has a Turning Point USA chapter.

While protests were reportedly planned, only a few people actually attended in opposition. The university is a private school and security was tight.

June, a college student who asked that her last name not be used, took to the sidewalk outside

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Black & Gray Brewing in East Dundee shuts its doors

By Mike Danahey
FOR THE ELGIN COURIER-NEWS

After almost eight years in business, Black & Gray Brewing Co. in downtown East Dundee has poured its last pint of beer.

“This was not a decision that we wanted to make, but one that — financially — we have no choice but to endure. We are eternally grateful for this experience,” director of operations Chris Kennedy and owner Teresa Kennedy, a married couple, posted on social media Thursday, Oct. 1.

The message noted that over the past two years, those involved with the operation have watched “brewery after brewery close, sharing the announcements with each other and saying, with a sense of impending doom, ‘There goes another one.’ Well, now it’s our turn.”

Speaking after the news was made public, Chris Kennedy said that for Black & Gray, which opened in February 2019, a contraction in the craft beer market, coupled with high borrowing costs, increased labor costs and increased raw material costs, all contributed to the decision.

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Black & Gray Brewing Co. in downtown East Dundee closed its doors on Oct. 1. The brewery and taproom opened in February 2019. **MIKE DANAHEY/THE COURIER-NEWS**

DENNIS HASTERT 1942 - 2026

Former US House speaker was disgraced, went to prison



Former U.S. House Speaker Dennis Hastert leaves Dirksen U.S. Courthouse in Chicago after sentencing on April 27, 2016. **ZBIGNIEW BZDAK/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

By Rick Pearson, Christy Gutowski and Jason Meisner
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

J. Dennis Hastert rose from a rural high school wrestling coach to the heights of power as the longest-serving Republican speaker of the U.S. House before an ignominious fall and imprisonment amid revelations he sexually abused youths he had coached.

Once the third-most-powerful elected official in the country, serving as speaker from 1999 until 2007, Hastert died Sunday of natural causes at his home in Plano while under hospice care, Kendall County Coroner Jacquie Purcell said. He was 84.

His death came a decade after he was sentenced to 15 months

in prison for illegally structuring \$950,000 in bank withdrawals to evade federal reporting requirements. The money was for hush payments to one of his victims, identified in court only as Individual A.

Hastert’s admission in court that he had sexually abused several boys he coached on the Yorkville High School wrestling team in the 1960s and 1970s left him living a life largely “isolated from society,” one of his attorneys said. Friends who had encouraged his rise in national politics and celebrated him as a local hero shunned him.

It was a stunning fall for a politician hailed across party lines in Illinois, where many colleagues knew him not as “Mr. Speaker” but as “Denny” or simply “Coach.”

For the family of one of his

victims, his death brought little relief.

“I thought I would feel more relief and kind of a final closure, and I do, but nothing changes the fact that I lost my brother and I believe he had a lot to do with it,” said Jolene Burdge, whose brother, Stephen Reinboldt, told her Hastert abused him throughout high school. Reinboldt died years before the allegations against Hastert became public.

John Dennis Hastert III’s political career was yet another example of the important role that timing plays in politics.

After serving as a teacher and wrestling coach at Yorkville High School in the mid-1960s, he led the

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