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COMMERCIAL-NEWS

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The last at-large emu was spotted at Turtle Run Golf Club on East Liberty Lane in Danville by TJ Hicks and his playing partners recently.

LONE RANGER

Last at-large emu seen at Turtle Run

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DANVILLE — There is one solo, unbothered emu hanging out at the Turtle Run Golf Club. The address of the golf course is 332 E. Liberty Lane in Danville, which seems quite appropriate considering the use of an emu in Liberty Mutual television commercials. Mason Brines, a pro shop employee at Turtle Run, says the lone emu pretty much stays to itself. “Basically, it’s all over the course,” Brines said. “It kind of just wanders around, mainly in

the morning. “It like has a really weird run. Yeah, I mean, it’s pretty fast... As fast as a cart, to be honest.” TJ Hicks spotted the flightless bird roaming while he was golfing earlier in July at Turtle Run. “We saw it and went closer; it didn’t seem to be bothered by us getting closer,” Hicks said. “It gets really close to the golfers,” Brines added. Ashlee, who declines to provide her last name is the owner of the emu and she is grateful for all of the updates and the community support. “I enjoy the pictures people send me and appreciate updates and

their willingness to not scare him/her and just enjoy the uniqueness of an emu,” Ashlee said. “We obviously would like the emu to be back with the mob, but for now, especially with projected temperatures, the safest option is to just ‘let it be’ and develop a plan to safely capture it and also not damage the beautiful golf course in the process.” And while the bird has been on the run for a few months at this point, Ashlee says the elusive emu is not going to hurt anyone unless provoked. “Emus are not a threat to people or other animals if not chased,” she said. “However, if we were to

try and chase it right now, it would likely run the risk of the emu overheating or, even worse, running into the nearby street. For now, I hope the golfers and the community get to see the emu from a distance and enjoy a one-of-a-kind animal that has become Danville’s unwritten mascot.” Several emus escaped during a flood in the Danville region back in June. All but this one have been captured through community help. The owners ask if you spot the lone remaining emu near Liberty Lane, feel free to post a photo on the Danville Scanner UnRated page.

Photo provided by TJ Hicks

Back-to-school drive hosted by Momfident

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DANVILLE — Momfident is collecting items for Vermilion County students going back to school until Saturday, Aug. 1. JoBrea Mason, Founder & CEO of Momfident, a local nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting women, children, and families in our community, says they are still in need of supplies. “I just felt like there’s a lot of back-to-school giveaways, and like people always give away like, you know, the school supplies, book bags, pencils, and all that,” Mason said. “But like... some of the basic clothing necessities aren’t always met.” And Mason witnesses firsthand some of the struggles District 118 students face. “Working in the Danville School District, I actually see like, you know, some of the basic clothing necessities aren’t always met,” Mason said. “So we have kids that come to school and they might not have socks or might not have underwear. So like I just wanted that to be a burden taken off of parents that may need that.” They are trying to raise \$1,000 to help out more than one school in the Vermilion County area. Mason said they hope to reach at least 100 students, if not more. “We’re working to raise awareness of this often-overlooked need and would greatly appreciate any mention that helps connect the community with this effort,” Mason said. They need children’s underwear, socks, undershirts, hygiene products for males and females, and feminine hygiene products. “These items will be distributed to local schools throughout Vermilion County to help ensure students have access to necessities, allowing them to start the school year with dignity and confidence while also providing support to students in need throughout the year,” Mason said. You can drop off donations at North or South Mad Goat Coffee locations, Sassy Shake on North

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Mosquito testing in your backyard

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The pesky mosquito can carry a deadly disease like West Nile Virus. Learn how you can help by collecting the eggs of the pesky bug in your backyard by becoming a mosquito ambassador with the Prairie Research Institute. Dr. Kylee Noel, a researcher with the Illinois Natural History Survey, says the program aims to raise awareness of mosquito-borne diseases. And a batch of mosquitoes tested positive for West Nile virus in Vermilion County earlier this month in ‘northern rural Danville,’ according to the Vermilion County Health Department. “Anyone can participate and help us identify which mosquito species are present throughout the state, which provides us with knowledge about what mosquito-borne diseases may be present in a given area,” said Noel. “It can be easy to think of mosquitoes just as nuisances, but my hope is that this program will shed light

on the danger of mosquito-borne diseases and provide information to help protect people from mosquito bites.” The goal of the program is to collect as much research as possible this summer. And the goal is to make the program ‘statewide throughout Illinois.’ While the current pick up locations are in the Champaign-Urbana area, Noel says she is working to expand the network. The kits have the materials needed to collect the eggs, Noel says just mail the collection back. You can pick up a kit • Urbana Free Library, located at 210 W. Green St., Urbana • Middle Fork River Forest Preserve Interpretive Center, 3485 County Road 2700 E., Penfield • Champaign County Extension Office, 801 N. Country Fair Drive, Suite D, Champaign • Anita Purves Nature Center, 1505 N. Broadway Ave., Urbana • INHS Medical Entomology Lab, 1902

Griffith Drive, Champaign Noel said to give her a call to schedule a pick-up at 217-300-5941 or email krnoel@illinois.edu “If someone is unable to make it to a pickup location, we are also able to mail the materials, but the participants will need to provide their own cup for the collection,” Noel said. West Nile was first detected in 1999 in New York, according to the Illinois Department of Health. In Illinois, the virus was first detected in September 2001 from two dead crows in the Chicago area. Illinois has had 884 human cases, with 64 resulting in death, according to the IDPH since. The infection symptoms include slight fever, headache, high fever, body aches, tremors, and more. Symptoms generally happen within 3-14 days of a bite from an infected mosquito. Those over the age of 60 are more at risk. “Stay vigilant on mosquito bite protection:

See **MOSQUITO** on 3



Photo provided

Egg collection kit you can pick up to become a ‘mosquito ambassador’ with the Prairie Research Institute.



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