



COMMUNITY | **B3**
Krista Phillips honored to serve as Fair Queen

RECORDS | **B3**
Microburst dumps rain, downs trees

SPORTS | **B1**
Alvin and Kellie Siebert have left their stamp



EFFINGHAM

DAILY NEWS

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SUBMIT NEWS

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HISTORY

Today is Tuesday, July 28, the 209th day of 2026. There are 156 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On July 28, 1945, a U.S. Army B-25 bomber crashed into the 79th floor of New York's Empire State Building, killing 14 people.

On this date:

- In 1794, Maximilien Robespierre and Louis Antoine de Saint-Just were executed by guillotine during the French Revolution.
- In 1914, World War I began as Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.
- In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson announced he was increasing the number of American troops in South Vietnam from 75,000 to 125,000.
- In 1976, an earthquake devastated northern China, killing at least 242,000 people, according to an official estimate.

Postal delivery information:

- In 1984, the Los Angeles Summer Olympics officially opened; 14 Eastern Bloc countries, led by the Soviet Union, boycotted the Games.
- In 1996, 8,000-year-old human skeletal remains (later referred to as Kennewick Man) were discovered in a bank of the Columbia River in Kennewick, Washington.
- In 2018, Pope Francis accepted the resignation of U.S. Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, the emeritus archbishop of Washington, D.C., following allegations of sexual abuse, including one involving an 11-year-old boy. Both died in April of 2025.





IN-STORE SALES HOURS
8:00AM - 5:30PM MON - FRI
8AM - 3PM SAT

FARM FAIR

Effingham County Fair returns for 82nd year

MARIE ADAMICK

DAILY NEWS

The Effingham County Fair will return for the first eight days in August with fan favorites and new attractions.
One new attraction this year will be a Freedom 250 Truck, which Fair Board President Phil Hartke is the most excited about.
The truck opens up to a 24-foot by 40-foot, handicap-accessible room, which will have interactive screens to test visitors' knowledge on the history of America, 50 portraits of significant historical American figures with information for each and more.
"I think that this is a home run this year to have that museum," said Hartke. "People need to really come and enjoy that because we'll

all learn something. We all need to learn a little bit more about the founding of the country and the Constitution and everything."
Hartke noted that the actual signing of the Declaration of Independence was on Aug. 2, 1776 – the first official day the Freedom Truck will be open at the fair.
Another new attraction this year is a map that will have all 175 family farms in the county that have stayed within the family for over 100 years. Three of them trace back to 1839, according to Hartke, 11 years after the State of Illinois joined the Union.
Envelopes with the families' last names will have a sticker inside with the family's last name and the year the farm was registered with the family. The family members will then put the sticker on the map, and

they can take the envelope to the fair office for two free horse race tickets – good for any day.
"I think it's a good emphasis because agriculture is really important," said Hartke. "Family ownership is real important to the farmers of Effingham County."
The fairgrounds will be decorated with an abundance of American Flags to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the country, and a large one owned by Hartke will be on display at the grand stand. Celebratory fireworks will be shot off after the Miss Effingham County Fair Queen Pageant and "Little Miss" Pageant.
On Aug. 2, there will be an antique tractor show, organized by the Farm Bureau and the Mill Road Thresherman Association. Tractors



Jeff Long | Daily News

Shown is the Ferris Wheel at the 2023 Effingham County Fair.

See FAIR on A7



Photos by Marie Adamick | Daily News

Car R30 stuck on one of the concrete barriers during the 2025 demolition derby at the Effingham County Fairgrounds.

ALEX WALLNER

DAILY NEWS

EFFINGHAM — Once a driver, now behind the scenes, Jon Becker has always had demolition derbies in his blood.
Becker drove in them from 1985 to 2001.
Following an injury, he was forced to work with demolition derbies through a new lens.
"I joined the fair board in 2008 and helped manage the demo," Becker said. "I had also announced demos from 2001 to just recently, but only do the Effingham County Fair now."
Becker made many friends while competing.
He mentioned that he did have some success. He also competed at the Midwestern National Championships in Kankakee, Ill., as well as Six Flags.
"Those were a few things that I enjoyed doing," he said.
Becker has seen demolition derbies grow over the years. From hundreds of entrants with minimal classifications to more classes, but with fewer entrants nowadays.
"You had full-sized cars and compact cars and that was it," Becker said. "You didn't have trucks, minivans or a lot of things they have nowadays. They would also do heat races, depending on how many cars were there, and

then a consolation race. Any-one who hadn't made a feature event was eligible to race in the consolation race for a chance at the feature event and then all of those qualifiers at the end of the night would come back for a large feature.
"Now, every event is run one time and then you go to a different class."
When fairgoers attend the demolition derby on Aug. 8, some of the classes featured will be: Semi Stock, Stockish and Compact.
Becker said that a new class this year will be MWFA.
"These are classes where you

can't do too much to [the automobiles]," Becker said. "You show up to the track, drive the car into the parking lot at 1 p.m., and have it ready to go by 5 p.m."
Each class allows you to do something different to the car.
Becker said that the change in classes is based on one thing.
"Affordability and getting more people involved," he said.
With the ever-changing landscape of demolition derbies comes corresponding difficulties.
Becker said that the control of everything isn't always in his hands.



2025 Miss Effingham County Fair Queen Krista Phillips and 2025 Junior Miss Effingham County Fair Queen Leah Ring ride a demolition derby car and wave at the crowd before the demolition derby at the Effingham County Fairgrounds.



Marie Adamick | Daily News

Emmerson Hansen of The Mutineers practices for the band's August 2 performance at the Effingham County Fair.

Free stage brings local acts to county fair

MARIE ADAMICK

DAILY NEWS

The free stage is returning this year to the Effingham County fair with a variety of local acts, including musical acts such as The Mutineers, Avery Bohnhoff and Evan Williamson.
This will be The Mutineers' first year playing the free stage at the county fair. Formed in 2023, the band has had a few lineup changes, but now consists of Emmerson Hansen, Braden McBride, Braden Magelitz, Brandon Beccue and Zackary Hurren.
The band mainly plays covers of 1960s and 1970s classic rock songs, with a few 80s, 90s and 2000s rock and punk songs sprinkled throughout. Some covers they play include "I Can't Get No) Satisfaction" by The Rolling Stones, "I Want You (She's So Heavy)" by The Beatles and "Somebody to Love" by Jefferson Airplane. They were mainly influenced by Creedence Clearwater Revival and other classic rock bands from that era.
During summer breaks from school, The Mutineers play almost every other weekend, recently performing in Rock for Kids at The Stage at Lake Sara: a fundraiser for Effingham County's crisis nursery.
"I feel like, right now, people like us.

See ACTS on A2



Submitted by Evan Williamson

Evan Williamson



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CHEVROLET & TOYOTA LINE-UP



2026 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 Custom



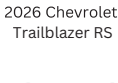
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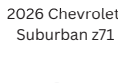
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2026 Chevrolet Silverado LT Trail Boss

AT THE EFFINGHAM COUNTY FAIR | AUGUST 1 - 8

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