



COMMUNITY | **A2**
Local 4-H youth compete in 2026 dairy producer contest

MARKETS | **A5**
US, Canada trade war escalates

SPORTS | **B1**
Hearts fall to Breese Mater Dei



EFFINGHAM

DAILY NEWS

EffinghamDailyNews.com

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2026

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IN MEMORY
• Paul D. Johnson
Obituaries, **Page A2**
To submit an obituary, visit obituaries.effinghamdailynews.com.

WEATHER

Today: Hot with sunshine and a few clouds.
Tomorrow: Mostly sunny and hot; a p.m. t-shower.
Full report, **Page A3**

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• news@effinghamdailynews.com
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HISTORY
Today is Tuesday, Sept. 8, the 251st day of 2026. There are 114 days left in the year.
Today's Highlight in History: On Sept. 8, 1974, one month after

Postal delivery information:



Herb Meeker photo

Teutopolis Village Trustee Dave Tegeler, left, makes a point to residents attending last week’s hearing on the proposed TIF as Trustee Greg Oseland looks on. Board members faced tough questions on the proposal that would add a new subdivision on the southwest corner of the community.

Teutopolis TIF discussion

New TIF district plan draws criticism

HERB MEEKER
FOR THE DAILY NEWS

Teutopolis Village Board members faced a volley of questions on a proposed Tax Increment District for a new southwest subdivision.

The Sept. 2 public hearing drew about 16 residents to Village Hall, with several questioning the commitment to providing infrastructure for a third TIF district as existing neighborhoods need immediate attention for fixing problems.

The hearing lasted almost one hour prior to the regular board meeting, had Trustees and their TIF adviser justifying the effort and explaining how the village has been working to fix water and storm sewers, roads, sidewalks plus various infrastructure issues. The hearing is part of a long process for establishing a new TIF, if approved, would be located on the southwest edge of the community. The village will purchase land for the new TIF with negotiations proceeding with three landowners at this time.

The village invested in the Prairieview subdivision with a TIF two decades ago to address declining enrollment in the Teutopolis school district, Mayor Dave Repking said.

“People were finding it hard to buy lots in town. Many were interested in a new subdivision so they could build here,” Trustee Dave Tegeler said referring to a past survey on housing.

Creation of the TIF district on the south edge of the village offered property lots for a fraction of the going rate for lots in town and a financial mechanism for paying for new streets, sidewalks, street lighting, sewer and water lines for the subdivision. The TIF option also bypassed the problem of village property owners unwilling to sell lots. “They didn’t want houses built close to them,” Tegeler said.

Prairieview has proved a success with dozens of houses built there and the sale of the final housing lot pending. This has added more families to the village, more students to the school district and more property tax money due to the residential development of

what was once farmland. When new homes in the TIF are added to the tax rolls the property tax money is set aside to pay for money previously borrowed for the subdivision infrastructure. A local review board determines how TIF money is distributed, adhering to state law. The tax money can be spent outside the TIF district if the use is considered to have an impact on the district.

The new subdivision will require a \$7.5 million investment by the village. TIF money from Prairieview tax receipts will help with that cost. The village can also borrow money from the westside industrial park TIF district. Adam Shaw, TIF adviser to Teutopolis, said that transfer process is known as “porting.”

Nicolle Zerrusen questioned why TIF 3 is needed now that school enrollment has increased. She noted flooding after storms in her neighborhood, unsafe walking routes for children, lack of sanitary sewer service to existing homes in

See **TIF** on A3

Teutopolis façade plan has green light

Train horns will keep blaring for now

HERB MEEKER
FOR THE DAILY NEWS

Teutopolis village trustees agreed to consider a program for improving commercial building facades during their regular meeting Wednesday night.

The village praised efforts to improve the fronts of Repking Eyecare and Community Support Systems. The discussion covered the possibility of setting up a façade improvement fund to offer partial reimbursement to building owners changing their fronts. Trustee Dan Zerrusen suggested having the question covered by a board committee, which could be under the jurisdiction building and grounds. Other board members were supportive of that approach.

Trustee Dave Tegeler said some residents have asked if the village



Herb Meeker photo

A pair of commercial buildings along Main Street in Teutopolis are examples of modern and historic facade designs.

could become a train-horn free zone similar to what Effingham has done with intersections along Canadian National Railway. Train horns warn motorists and pedestrians at crossings, including those

with automatic lighted crossing gates blocking traffic as the train passes. The question is whether the roadway crossings could be

See **FAÇADE** on A3

Effingham man charged with possession of child sexual abuse material

DAILY NEWS

Attorney General Kwame Raoul charged an Effingham man with possessing child sexual abuse material, according to a press release.

The case is part of Raoul’s ongoing work, in collaboration with federal law enforcement agencies and local law enforcement officials throughout Illinois, to apprehend offenders who download and trade child sexual abuse material online.

The Attorney General’s office charged Travis J. Gillespie, 54, in Effingham County Circuit Court with two Class 1 counts of possession of child sexual abuse material, each punishable by up to 15 years in prison. Sentences are ultimately determined by the court. Gillespie is detained at the Effingham County Jail, and his next court date is Sept. 17.

“Offenders who repeatedly prey on children must be stopped,” Raoul said. “My office’s Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force will continue to partner with state and local law enforcement agencies to find individuals who exploit minors and hold them accountable.”

Raoul’s investigators, along with officers from the Effingham Police Department and the Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System (ILEAS), conducted a search on Thursday of Gillespie’s residence in the 1400 block of Fayette Avenue in Effingham. Gillespie was arrested after evidence of child sexual abuse material was found.

“Crimes involving the exploitation of children are among the most serious offenses law enforcement is called upon to investigate. The Effingham Police Department is grateful for the diligent work and expertise of the Illinois Attorney General’s Office and for the opportunity to assist with this investigation,” said Effingham Police Chief Kurt Davis. “Cases like this demonstrate the importance of strong partnerships and information sharing among law enforcement agencies. We remain committed to working alongside our state, federal and local partners to protect children and keep our community safe.”

Raoul’s office is prosecuting the case with Effingham County State’s Attorney Aaron Jones’ office.

The public is reminded that the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Raoul’s office, with a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, runs the Illinois Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force that investigates child exploitation crimes and trains law enforcement agencies. The task force receives CyberTips, or online reports of child sexual abuse material, from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Over the last several years, CyberTip-line reports have steadily increased. In 2025, reports to the ICAC Task Force increased by 45% over 2024.

Illinois’ ICAC Task Force is one of 61 ICAC Task Forces throughout the country and is comprised of a network of more than 200 local, county, state and federal law enforcement agencies. Since 2019, the Attorney General’s ICAC Task Force has received more than 82,900 CyberTips and has been involved in more than 1,250 arrests of sexual predators. Since 2006, the Attorney General’s ICAC Task Force has been involved in more than 2,600 arrests of sexual predators. In 2025, the task force was involved in rescuing more than 30 child victims from ongoing abuse. The task force also has provided internet safety training

See **CHARGED** on A3

taking office, President Gerald R. Ford granted a “full, free, and absolute pardon” to former President Richard Nixon for any crimes committed during Nixon’s presidency.

On this date:

- In 1504, Michelangelo’s towering marble statue of David was unveiled to the public in Florence, Italy.
- In 1565, a Spanish expedition established the first permanent European settlement in North America at present-day St. Augustine, Florida.
- In 1664, the Dutch surrendered New Amsterdam to the British, who renamed it New York.

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Jeff Mitchell
jeffmitchell@danhecht.com

Trevor Arsenault
trevorarsenault@danhecht.com

Gene Zerrusen
genezerrusen@danhecht.com

Chad Koester
chadkoester@danhecht.com

Elizabeth Buckels
elizabethbuckels@danhecht.com

Maggie Britton
maggiebritton@danhecht.com

Aaron Thomas
aaronthomas@danhecht.com

Payton Johnson
paytonjohnson@danhecht.com

CHEVROLET TOYOTA

Rt 45 South, Effingham
www.danhecht.com

217-342-4111