



COMMUNITY & RECORDS | **A3**

Hummel crowned 2026 National American Miss Illinois Pre-Teen Queen

SPORTS | **B1**

Newton finishes fourth at IESA Class 2A Softball State Finals Tournament



EFFINGHAM

DAILY NEWS

IN MEMORY

- Robert D. 'Bob' Reardon

Obituaries, **Page A3**

To submit an obituary, visit obituaries.effinghamdailynews.com.

WEATHER

Today: Cloudy and less humid.
Tomorrow: Mostly cloudy.
Full report, **Page A2**

ONLINE

EffinghamDailyNews.com and on social media

INSIDE

Records & Community.....	A3
Markets	A4
Classifieds.....	A5
Sports.....	B1
Home.....	B4

SUBMIT NEWS

- news@effinghamdailynews.com
- sports@effinghamdailynews.com
- 217-347-7152

HISTORY

Today is Tuesday, Sept. 22, the 265th day of 2026. There are 100 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Sept. 22, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, declaring all enslaved people in

Postal delivery information:



Photos by Dylan Barbee | Daily News

Altamont Fire Protection District gear hangs on racks between fire trucks in cramped quarters at the fire station. The proposed new facility will have a designated storage room for gear that has been exposed to carcinogens.

‘We have become overcrowded’

Altamont fire district awaits funding for new station

DYLAN BARBEE
DAILY NEWS

ALTAMONT — As Altamont Fire Protection District receives a call for a fire in the south side of the city, its volunteer firefighters quickly race to put on their gear. They then load up their trucks, crammed into the station's garage, and head out of the building on West Jefferson Avenue.

However, before crossing into the south side of Altamont, where 73% of the station's calls are based, the crew is forced to wait for a train.

Long-time Fire Chief Jon Becker said a fear that has been talked about for 50 years was realized last September when a pedestrian was struck by a train near the Main Street crossing. The railroad crossing was closed for an extended period of time that evening, cutting off the fire station's access to calls on the south side of the city.

"We were blocked," Becker said. "Our only access would have been all the way east at 450th Street or all the way west to 200th Street. It was pretty wide, about a 2 1/2-mile range where we were cut off."

The fire station's volunteers on shift were required to cross the railroad tracks by hopping over train car couplers to set up a landing zone for the victim to be flown out by helicopter. Some volunteers at the district happened to be on



The Altamont Fire Protection District station, located on West Jefferson Avenue, was built in 1969.



A storage truck sits outside the Altamont Fire Protection District station. The potential new station will have enclosed storage rooms for gear and equipment.

See **STATION** on A2

Parents ask Unit 30 board to help with playground improvements

HERB MEEKER
FOR THE DAILY NEWS

DIETERICH — With the Liberty Park improvement project on hold, two parents asked the Unit 30 school board to support efforts to make the playground accessible for all children.

Darin and Tara Probst have a daughter with cerebral palsy, making it hard for her to join her classmates on the playground equipment in the village park next to Dieterich Elementary School. They were disappointed when they learned the village cannot apply for a grant for playground improvements because the school uses that part of Liberty Park.

That has placed the \$360,000 project, which included additional improvements in the public park, at an impasse over funding.

"This is a project that means a lot to us, and we want it to continue," Darin said.

He suggested the school district find a way to help, possibly through a one-time donation.

Tara said new equipment could improve safety, including a roll-in slide that could help much younger children. Plus, a new soft surface would be safer for children and allow use of the playground after rain-fall. That feature could also help grandparents taking children to the playground outside school hours.

"Our daughter wants to be independent. Now she needs an aide to be with her on the playground," Tara said.

The school board agreed to discuss options, but the school district would need a detailed cost quote. The district doesn't appear to be interested in buying the playground area from the village.

After a public hearing on the annual budget and audit report, which received high marks from Krista McLaren of Kemper CPA Group, board members approved the Fiscal Year 2027 District Budget with revenues estimated at \$9,029,575 and expenditures projected at \$9,089,035, resulting in a deficit of \$50,818.

Superintendent Cary Jackson said the deficit is due to paying off the remaining balance of the roofing, solar and tuckpointing work at the school and the purchase of two off-lease buses.

In other matters, Jackson reported the tax rate for Unit 30 has decreased to \$3.81, a drop of 10 cents from the previous year. At the same time, the equalized assessed valuation on property in the district has increased by 12%.

The school district discussed much-needed upgrades to the secondary gym, built in the 1930s and making it one of the oldest school gymnasiums in the region. Such a project could include installing a new gym floor, new stage curtains, more safety padding and locker room renovations.

In personnel moves, board members voted to hire Emery Langford, Trevor Egan, Riley Koester and Brody Gerth as student workers. In addition, the board appointed Devin McManaway as Eco team sponsor, and Landon Keck submitted his resignation as volunteer high school basketball coach. The mentor list was also approved.

After reviewing the report, the board accepted the 2026 teacher and administrator salary report. It appears on the school district website. The reports are required by state law for Illinois public schools.

See **UNIT 30** on A2

Confederate states should be freed as of Jan. 1, 1863, if the states did not end the fighting and rejoin the Union.

On this date:

- In 1776, during the Revolutionary War, Capt. Nathan Hale, 21, was hanged as a spy by the British in New York.
- In 1957, Haitian women were allowed to vote for the first time, 153 years after Haiti became an independent country; François Duvalier was elected president.
- In 1961, President John F. Kennedy signed congressional legislation making the Peace Corps a permanent federal agency within the State Department; it became an independent agency in 1981.

6 10898 00001 5

2026 Toyota Tundra

Finance As Low As
2.99% APR
For 72 Months

OR Get Customer Cash
\$1,000
Applies to 22 Trim Levels

KICKOFF SALES EVENT

2026 Chevrolet Silverado 1500

Finance As Low As
0% APR
For 60 Months. That is for 5 Years! No Payments for 90 Days

OR Buy With More Than
\$7,000 Off MSRP
Discounts Differ By Trim

Dan Hecht

CHEVROLET TOYOTA

Rt 45 South, Effingham
www.danhecht.com
217-342-4111