



Trump's AI image sparks backlash

INSIDE, 6A

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UW Health has acquired several properties seen Monday including Rockford's Briggs Mansion, 1244 E. State St., in addition to 1238, 1246, 1250 and 1318 East State St., with plans to demolish them in May and make way for a SwedishAmerican Hospital future expansion project. JEFF KOLKEY/ROCKFORD REGISTER STAR

Man found guilty of sexual assault

26-year-old arrested one day after prison release

Jeff Kolkey
Rockford Register Star
USA TODAY NETWORK

Winnebago County Court Judge Debra Schafer has found a 26-year-old man guilty on four counts of criminal sexual assault after a bench trial, State's Attorney J. Hanley announced in a news release.

Deion T. Jackson, of Rockford, a day after being released from prison, was arrested in November 2024 when a man reported that one of his relatives had sexually assaulted a woman at a house in the 2100 block of Martha Avenue, the release said. Jackson was on probation for aggravated battery involving conduct of a sexual nature at the time, according to the release.

Criminal sexual assault is a Class 1 Felony punishable by four to 15 years in prison and three years to life of parole. Eighty-five percent of the sentence for each count must be served and each must be served consecutively, the release said.

Sentencing is scheduled to proceed May 26.

Jeff Kolkey writes about government, economic development and other issues for the Rockford Register Star. He can be reached via email at jkolkey@rrstar.com and on X @jeffkolkey.

EARTH DAY GIVEAWAY

300+ oak saplings offered to area residents

Nida Tazeen
Rockford Register Star
USA TODAY NETWORK

Residents in the Rock River region can pick up free tree saplings this April as part of an environmental restoration effort, according to a community announcement.

The Rock River Trail will distribute more than 300 bare-root red oak, bur oak, white oak, and pecan saplings to the public. The event is scheduled at

See GIVEAWAY, Page 8A

'HONORING OUR PAST'

To save it, preservationist backs moving Rockford's Briggs Mansion

Jeff Kolkey Rockford Register Star | USA TODAY NETWORK

Landmarks Illinois is investigating a longshot plan to physically move a Civil War-era house that may have been a stop on the Underground Railroad to prevent UW Health from demolishing it.

UW Health plans in May to raze the house at 1244 E. State St. known as the Briggs Mansion to make room for an unspecified future expansion project.

The hospital system acquired the property last month. It has already applied to the city of Rockford for demolition permits to demolish it, three nearby structures and a parking lot at 1238, 1246, 1250 and 1318 East State. One of the buildings has a distinctive mural

painted along its sides.

Landmarks Illinois Chairman Ron Clewer is hoping to work out a deal with UW Health and the city to save the Briggs Mansion, even if it has to be moved and would no longer reside in its historic location. It would be an arduous and costly process, but Clewer said it can be moved for an estimated \$600,000 to a city-owned lot nearby.

"We did find that there's actually some city-owned lots not that far from the Briggs Mansion current site, just on the fringe of the hospital campus, which still have great visibility," Clewer said. "And so I'm reaching out today to see if the city would have an interest in

perhaps pledging a lot if we could start to meet with the hospital and talk about moving it."

Construction workers would disconnect the house from its foundation, install immense timbers through the building, and then jack it up high enough to be placed on a semi-truck, Clewer said. The truck would then drive the house slowly, at about 5 mph, to its new location. Clewer is hopeful UW Health would cover the expense as part of its contingency construction cost or utilize its foundation to raise the money.

See BRIGGS MANSION, Page 2A

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