



One-handed pitcher who threw no-hitter still resonates today

SPORTS, 1B

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Wheat farmers struggle in America’s heartland

Dennis Schoenhals watches a combine harvest wheat in a field at his farm in Kremlin, Oklahoma, on June 12.
PHOTOS BY NICK OXFORD/REUTERS

‘Amber waves of grain’ recede

Emily Schmall
REUTERS

On a foggy morning in May, Dennis Schoenhals drove a carload of crop scouts around the wheat fields of northern Oklahoma, part of an annual tour to evaluate the health of the crop. But on some fields, Schoenhals and other farmers had already abandoned plans to harvest the grain for sale because prices had sunk to five-year lows.

Farmers cut their losses early this year across the U.S. wheat belt, stretching from Texas to Montana. They were choosing to bale the wheat into hay, plow their fields under or turn them over to animals to graze. In Nebraska, wheat acreage is less than half of what it was in 2005.

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Schoenhals inspects a head of wheat at his farm. With prices hovering around \$5 per bushel, U.S. wheat farmers have reached an inflection point, with many forced to either lose money, feed wheat to cattle or kill off the crop.

MEASLES OUTBREAK

Health officials combat Trump’s cabinet

Tom Ackerman
Springfield State Journal- Register
USA TODAY NETWORK

Illinois officials say they’re combatting “dangerous misinformation” from the Trump administration as the U.S. battles a measles outbreak.

After an outbreak earlier this year, the state has not seen any new cases of measles since late May.

Officials touted that milestone on July 11 in the midst of a nationwide outbreak with 1,288 cases reported so far this year, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. That’s the most cases the U.S. has seen since the disease was declared eliminated in 2000.

Here’s what’s happening in Illinois.

When was the last outbreak in Illinois?

Eight cases of the disease were reported in southern Illinois in April and May that were all linked to each other. Two additional, unrelated cases were identified in Cook County around the same time.

That outbreak has ended in Illinois, officials said, as no new cases have been reported in the state since May 22, which marks two full incubation periods since the last confirmed case.

The Illinois Department of Public Health confirmed the first case of measles in the state on April 23.

How did Illinois do this?

Officials, including IDPH Director Sameer Vohra told reporters on July 11 that the conclusion of the recent outbreak in the state is a result of several strategies.

In addition to identifying potential sources of exposure and encouraging

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Rural PBS stations brace for cuts

Public media lifeline for isolated communities

BrieAnna J. Frank
USA TODAY

Judy Blackburn estimates she spends at least three hours a day on average watching PBS.

The 89-year-old lives alone in Courtland, Kansas – a city of less than 300 people in the north-central part of the state about 15 miles south of the Nebraska border.

Afternoons can be “a little long” for

Blackburn, who admits to watching “way too much television” to pass the time.

But she says PBS programming – everything from “Antiques Roadshow” and cooking shows to programs on Elton John and The Beatles – bring her comfort and joy.

Sherie Mahin lives in Courtland, too. She said PBS’ “good, clean, wholesome” content has been important for the in-home day care she’s run for 35 years. Programming like the number and letter of the day segment on “Sesame Street” has become a big part of their daily routine, she said.

Now, it’s all at risk as Congress weighs what is known as a rescission bill this week, legislation that enacts a series of cuts to already approved funding, including \$1.1 billion from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Blackburn and Mahin both watch Smoky Hills PBS, based out of the roughly 100-person city of Bunker Hill, Kansas. A loss of federal funding, which makes up roughly half of its budget, would be catastrophic for the television station and the more than 1.2 million Kansans it reaches across 71 counties,

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Smoky Hills PBS, a rural Kansas station, relies on federal funding which may soon be cut.

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