



Epstein survivors seek justice

NEWS, 1B

THE STATE Journal Register

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2025 | SJ-R.COM

THE OLDEST NEWSPAPER IN ILLINOIS | PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Firefighters get new contract

Bargain settled by an arbitrator for first time

Steven Spearie
Springfield State Journal-Register
USA TODAY NETWORK

City of Springfield firefighters have a new four-year contract, which, for the first time in history, was settled by an arbitrator. The ordinance authorizing the approval

of the agreement, which had been negotiated over the past year, passed with seven “yes” votes on the Nov. 4 city council meeting. Ward 2 Ald. Shawn Gregory voted “present” over concern about residency issues in the contract. Ward 3 Ald. Roy Williams Jr. and Ward 5 Ald. Lakeisha Purchase

were absent. In a letter to city council members, former Mayor Jim Langfelder urged a vote down of the contract. For Local 37 members, said union president Kainan Rinaberger, the contract, which is retroactive to March 1, means a 5% increase across the board over each of the next four years. At the end of the contract, the new hire pay will be roughly \$74,500 annually, he

said. The overall impact to the city’s budget over the life of the contract, said Ramona Metzger, the director of the Office of Budget & Management, would be \$11.5 million and goes up \$12.4 including items such as sick leave payout contribution, workman’s compensation and employer contributions.

See FIREFIGHTERS, Page 4A



A groundbreaking ceremony was held for Be Neighbors Affordable Housing for Veterans Inc. on Nov. 11 in Springfield.

THOMAS J. TURNEY/THE STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER

Groundbreaking held for tiny homes for veterans

Plan for unhoused has been controversial

Claire Grant
Springfield State Journal-Register
USA TODAY NETWORK

A groundbreaking ceremony was held for a controversial housing project on Veterans Day in Springfield. Be Neighbors Affordable Housing

for Veterans Inc., an Illinois non-profit designated to develop veteran’s communities and put unhoused veterans back onto their feet, held a groundbreaking event at the site of the nonprofit’s first community. The housing community at 2835 Stanton St. will have 18 homes at 546 square feet each with a connected parking space for an unhoused veteran to live. In the center for the community, a resource and learning cen-

ter with computers and access to aid will be built to support the veterans inside the housing. Harvey Hall, the founder of Be Neighbors and a veteran himself, said from the beginning he didn’t want to create a place just to house veterans, but to provide them the services they need to succeed. “Together we gather not only to

See TINY HOMES, Page 6A

HEALTH INSPECTIONS

Roaches, flies and moldy food found in kitchens

Claire Grant
Springfield State Journal-Register
USA TODAY NETWORK

A mainstay bar in Springfield has a mold problem. During a routine health inspection on Oct. 23 at Main Gate Bar and Grill, 2143 N. 11th St., inspectors found mold on shelves and food items and sauces in the walk-in cooler. In total, the restaurant racked up 20 violations during the visit, which includes seven repeat violations. The inspector also noted some food did not have any date marks, while other foods with date marks were well past the seven-day expiration date listed. An inspector noted finding pans of raw chicken being stored above pans of raw fish in the walk-in cooler, which was also missing thermometers. Without a thermometer, multiple food items like chili, raw chicken and beef patties for burgers had to be tossed. A reinspection for the restaurant took place on Nov. 3, with no public notes. Throughout the course of October, 205 health inspections took place across Sangamon County, 10 businesses were found to have 10 or more violations.

How violations work

Food establishments are inspected by the Sangamon County Department of Public Health on an annual schedule that is determined by assigned risk

See INSPECTIONS, Page 2A



1203 Carroll St. • Pawnee, IL • (217) 525-9260
WESTANDBEHINDOURDOORS.COM



HAPPY Thanks-Savings

NON-INSULATED
GARAGE DOORS

STARTING AT
9x7 Door for \$1,006
16x7 Door for \$1,535

INSULATED
GARAGE DOORS

STARTING AT
9x7 Door for \$1,130
16x7 Door for \$1,806

Professionally Installed By Our Certified Technicians!

*Offer expires 11/30/25

