

# The Sunday Pantagraph

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Sunday, June 7, 2026

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## ROUTE 66 CENTENNIAL

# 'IT'S JUST BOOM, IT'S THERE'



CLAY JACKSON, THE PANTAGRAPH

Joseph Diaz of Diaz Sign Art of Pontiac adds finishing touches to a newly installed Route 66 mural at Sprague's Super Service Station on Friday, June 5, 2026, in Normal.

## Route 66 mural catching eyes as Normal introduces 2 art installations

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NORMAL — A new mural at Sprague's Super Service Station is giving Route 66 travelers another reason to stop, look and take a photo in Normal.

Joseph Diaz of Diaz Sign Art in Pontiac was putting the finishing touches Friday on the newly installed mural at Sprague's, 305 Pine St., ahead of the Route 66 centennial celebration weekend in McLean County.

Normal will host a 1950s-theme roadside picnic from noon to 4 p.m. Sunday at One Normal Plaza, 610 E. Lincoln St., which is just blocks away from Sprague's, as part of the countywide Cruisin' Through the Century weekend.

Painted on multiple aluminum panels, the mural imagines Normal through a nostalgic, midcentury lens. It features the historic Normal Theater, references to Steak 'n

Shake and a Route 66 shield, tying together local history, roadside advertising and the Mother Road.

The mural was funded through a Route 66 Centennial Grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, awarded to VisitBN in February for multiple projects in McLean County.

The Sprague's mural is one of two public art installations in Normal ahead of the Route 66 centennial weekend. A few blocks away, the Town of Normal also planned to install "Whorled," an 8-foot-tall stainless steel and dichroic glass sculpture by Chicago artist Nicole Beck, at the Sculpture Park at One Normal Plaza, 1110 Douglas St.

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## Celebrating 100 years alongside Route 66

Ed Carroll of Bloomington 'born the same time Route 66 started'

OLIVIA JACOBS  
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BLOOMINGTON — Edward J. Carroll of Bloomington grew

up with Route 66, and he is celebrating his 100th birthday this weekend along with the fabled Mother Road.

"I was born the same time Route 66 started, same day, everything on June 7, 1926," he said, referring to this weekend's centennial celebrations across McLean County.

Please see **BIRTHDAYS**, Page A5



CLAY JACKSON, THE PANTAGRAPH

Steven Carroll, left, and David Carroll talk with their father, Edward J. Carroll, on Wednesday, May 27, 2026, at his home in Bloomington.

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## LOGAN CORRECTIONAL CENTER

# Illinois closing Lincoln facility

State moving ahead with plan for new Crest Hill women's prison

JEREMY GORNER  
Chicago Tribune

SPRINGFIELD — Logan Correctional Center in Lincoln is closing, the Illinois Department of Corrections announced, moving forward with a plan to shut down the women's prison and rebuild it south of Chicago, near the site of another prison being shuttered.

The announcement follows through on a 2024 plan from Gov. JB Pritzker to replace two aging, deteriorating prisons — Logan, the state's only multi-level women's correctional facility, and Stateville Correctional Center, a maximum-security men's facility in Crest Hill. Under the plan, both institutions would be rebuilt on or near Stateville's current site.

"This marks a major milestone in the State's effort to modernize Illinois' correctional infrastructure, as capacity replacements for some of its oldest facilities ... are beyond their useful life: Stateville Correctional Center, built in 1925, and Logan Correctional Center, which includes buildings dating back to the 1930s," IDOC said Friday in a prepared statement.

The new prisons will include design features that focus on "creating rehabilitative and gender-responsive spaces with housing, education, programming, medical and mental health, dietary, and recreational areas to support the successful re-entry of individuals into their communities," according to the statement.

Altogether, Pritzker has said the plan would cost taxpayers about \$1 billion. The proposal was meant to avoid the state paying hundreds of millions of dollars in deferred maintenance costs for the two facilities, IDOC has said.

The agency has said moving Logan to the Stateville site would provide a better geographical balance for women's prisons in the state "by providing a northern facility to pair with" the women's Decatur Correctional Center, which is only about 36 miles from Logan's current location. The rebuild could take up to five years, IDOC has said, and there's no intent "to repurpose or reuse the current Logan" facility.

As of March 2025, Logan Correctional Center employed 450 people and had an incarcerated population of just over 1,000.

The new women's facility in Crest Hill will have a capacity of 800 beds, and the new men's facility will have a capacity of 1,500 beds, according to the state's announcement.

Shutting down Logan would be another blow to the Lincoln area after the closures of Lincoln College and Lincoln Christian University, and other businesses and facilities over the years. Plans are in motion, however, to reuse the Lincoln Developmental Center, a compound for developmentally disabled adults that was closed years ago, as a juvenile justice facility.

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