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ILLINOIS SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

LESS TRAGEDY,
MORE LEARNING



CLAY JACKSON PHOTOS, THE PANTAGRAPH

Jeremiah King, left, and Sophia Joyce play Romeo and Juliet, repsectively, during the Illinois Shakespeare Festival’s Theatre for Young Audiences production of “Get, Set, Romeo and Juliet!” on Thursday, July 16, 2026, at Ewing Cultural Center in Bloomington.

Interactive ‘Romeo and Juliet’ helps kids make good choices

KAITLYN KLEPEC
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BLOOMINGTON — The Illinois Shakespeare Festival’s Theatre for Young Audiences teaches children how to think through and make good decisions with “Get, Set, Romeo and Juliet!” — a retooled play that gives kids the option to “rewind” the play and test out alternate endings to the classic tragedy.

The 40-minute show opened Thursday, June 25, and will continue at 10 a.m. every Thursday and Saturday morning on Ewing Cultural Center’s grounds until the show closes Aug. 1.

The play is designed to be fun for the whole family, with free

admission.

“My wife loves theater, and (it’s) just getting the kids active at a young age and getting them to see it,” said Logan Calvin of why his whole goes to the play.

He has been seeing the youth shows with his wife and children since their oldest, Lucy, 3, was just a baby. Now, they are accompanied by their other children, Henry, 2, and Oliver, who is 7 months old.

“Also, Lucy in particular just absolutely loves it, and asks, once you go once, we’d come back every week,” Calvin said.

Calvin said he appreciates theater’s role in teaching kids valuable messages in a fun and

IF YOU GO

What: Illinois Shakespeare Festival’s “Get, Set, Romeo and Juliet!”

Where: Ewing Cultural Center grounds, 48 Sunset Road, Bloomington

When: 10 a.m. July 23, 25, 30, Aug. 1

Cost: Free

Running time: 40 minutes

More info: illinoisshakes.com

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The Illinois Shakespeare Festival’s Theatre for Young Audiences production of “Get, Set, Romeo and Juliet!” is performed on Thursday, July 16, 2026, on the grounds of the Ewing Cultural Center in Bloomington.

ECONOMY

Fewer houses being built

Mortgage rates, supply glut slow construction

LUCIA MUTIKANI
Reuters

WASHINGTON — U.S. single-family homebuilding fell for a third straight month in June while permits for future construction dropped to the lowest level in 10 months, weighed down by higher mortgage rates and a glut of unsold new homes on the market.

Homebuilding also is constrained by rising costs for land and materials. Builders and economists said it would take a while for the housing market to benefit from bipartisan housing affordability legislation Congress recently passed, which among other provisions waives or speeds up environmental reviews for construction projects.

The bill became law despite President Donald Trump refusing to sign it, demanding that a separate voting bill be passed.

“The potential uplift to housing starts from streamlining environmental reviews, easing rules on manufactured housing and encouraging zoning

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FACT-FINDING TRIP

Normal looks at Aurora data center

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NORMAL — Town of Normal staff traveled to Aurora earlier this month with one goal: see and hear a large data center before recommending how the town should regulate one.

Normal Planning and Zoning Director Mercy Davison said neither she or other town staff members on the July 2 trip had previously seen a large data center in person.

The group viewed the exterior of the CyrusOne campus and spoke with Aurora planning and zoning officials about the city’s experience with the facilities.

“As a baseline, we needed to see, hear and look at what these things are,” Davison said, noting the town is not currently reviewing a data center proposal. “We just need information.”

Davison said one of the clearest lessons was the importance of where a data center is located in relation to nearby homes.

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