



10 YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

BED BLITZ ‘PUTS HANDS TO WORK’



DREW ZIMMERMAN PHOTOS, THE PANTAGRAPH

Members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc. build a bed frame during the 10th annual Bed Blitz on Oct. 17 at YouthBuild McLean County in Bloomington.

250 volunteers assemble frames for kids in need

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BLOOMINGTON — Nathan Garard, head coach of Heyworth High School’s baseball team, said he first learned about the West Bloomington Revitalization Project’s annual Bed Blitz last year through his girlfriend’s volunteer work.

This year, he invited 10 of his players to load finished beds built by hundreds of local volunteers into U-Haul trucks to be delivered to families in need.

“It’s just great to see everybody working together for a common goal,” Garard said. “You could be anywhere on a Saturday morning so it was great to see everybody here this morning and hopefully we can make a tradition out of this.”

Over the last 10 years, the Bed Blitz has identified children that sleep on air mattresses, couches or the ground and provided them with a new bed frame built by volunteers and mattress donated by Sherman’s. By the end of Saturday’s volunteer work, the Bed Blitz will have provided more than 1,400 children with beds.

Program co-founder Robert Bosquez said he never expected



Volunteers load mattresses into U-Haul trucks as part of the 2026 Bed Blitz on Oct. 17 at YouthBuild McLean County in Bloomington.

the program to last as long as it has.

The idea was first conceived to make use of various tools in the organization’s Tool Library.

After reaching out to local non-profits such as Recycling Furniture for Families, it was discovered that there was an urgent need for beds in the community. Sherman’s donated 40 mattresses in the first year but has donated more than 100 annually in recent years.

Because of the high demand, WBRP created an application process and received more than 100 requests, which were prioritized based on the sleeping conditions of the children.

Bosquez said another obstacle in the program’s history was the ability to deliver the beds to eligible families. However, WBRP has been able to deliver all of its beds for the second year in a row.

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Robert Bosquez, second from left, helps members of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority Inc. during the 2026 Bed Blitz on Oct. 17 at YouthBuild McLean County in Bloomington.

TOWN COUNCIL

Normal looks at ammonia water fix

\$90K plan to pilot a bio-based treatment

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NORMAL — Normal would test another way to remove excess ammonia from its drinking water under a \$90,000 proposal set for a Town Council vote Monday, three years after an earlier pilot failed.

The water department is recommending a six-month trial using equipment rented from Veolia Water Technologies, according to council documents.

The town staff expects the project to begin around late November and help determine whether a different biological treatment process could address a problem the town’s existing treatment system cannot fully resolve.

Five of Normal’s 12 operating wells have excess ammonia, and those wells supply most of the town’s water, according to council documents.

They are also the town’s highest-producing wells, pumping between 900 and 1,200 gallons per minute each. The other wells produce between 150 and 400 gallons per minute.

Running different wells together helps blend water with higher and lower ammonia levels, but the resulting supply still contains more ammonia than the current treatment processes can remove, according to council documents.

Ammonia is commonly found in groundwater. Excess amounts can

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■ **INSIDE:** Normal considers fire department equipment, pausing Bramble Hall project **PAGE A3**

ELECTION 2026 ANALYSIS

Democrats’ landslide? Maybe not

TIM REID
Reuters

WASHINGTON — Republican President Donald Trump’s low approval ratings, voter concern over high prices and dissatisfaction with the Iran war led many analysts and opinion polls to predict significant Democratic gains in the Nov. 3 midterm elections.

But six analysts and party strategists told Reuters several factors could prevent Democrats from turning those favorable political conditions into a landslide, even if the party ultimately makes gains in Congress.

Here are six reasons Democrats may fall short of expectations.

Fewer competitive House races

The number of competitive U.S. House races shrank sharply over the past three decades as partisan polarization and redistricting — including gerrymandering — made more seats safely Democratic or Republican.

Analysts estimate only about 40 to 50 of the House’s 435 seats are truly competitive this year.

Most expect Democrats to retake the lower chamber, but with a majority of perhaps 5 to 20 seats, limiting the scope for gains like those in 2018, when Democrats picked up 41 seats.

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