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# THE PLATTEVILLE JOURNAL

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**Inside**

**SOUTHWEST**

The restoration of the British Hollow smelter

**SOUTHWEST: 1B**



April is

Daffodils and other flowers could be seen growing on North Chestnut Street in Platteville Saturday (above). Then came Sunday's snowstorm, which buried those same flowers under 4 inches of snow.



the cruelest month

Photos by Steve Prestegard

**In search of pool leaks**

The Platteville Common Council approved spending up to \$62,000 to try to find the Family Aquatic Center water leaks.

**LOCAL NEWS: 3A**

**No track? No problem**

The Platteville boys track team, which now has no home track, won the Lancaster Invitational.

**SPORTS: 14A**

**No-no win**

**SPORTS: 14A**

**Index**

- Business 2B
- Church directory 8B
- Classifieds 4B
- Court news 6B
- Education 10B
- Entertainment 7A
- The First Amendment 4A
- FYI 5A
- Humane Society 6A
- Livingston/Rewey 3B
- Society 3B
- SouthWest 1B
- Sports 14A
- The Week 1B

**Weather**

2023	High	Low	P"
April 10	73	48	—
April 11	79	56	—
April 12	83	51	—
April 13	81	60	—
April 14	68	59	—
April 15	73	41	.33
April 16	49	31	.03
Week's precip.....	0.36		
2023 precip. ....	4.78		
Average precip.....	3.80		

**WEATHER FORECAST:**  
www.weather.gov/[Zip code]

Records	High	Low
April 10	92 1930	18 2003
April 11	82 1977	20 1957
April 12	82 1941	19 1957
April 13	83 1887	20 1957
April 14	82 1880	21 1921
April 15	86 1896	21 1921
April 16	85 1896	14 1875
Average	56	40

## 11 houses, 765 city citations

by Steve Prestegard  
editor@theplattevillejournal.com

A decade ago the City of Platteville found itself briefly in the real estate business after it purchased 12 homes from the owner, who had accumulated \$367,000 in ordinance violations against 17 city properties he owned.

The city faces a somewhat similar situation with another property owner, although some of the properties are already for sale. The city has no current plans to purchase any of the other properties, though the city may end up losing money if the properties are sold.

David Donisi of the Town of Platteville owns 11 houses

that have been given, according to city records, "approximately" 765 citations for outdoor violations of the city's municipal code since March 2020.

Most of the citations were for multiple offenses of accumulating garbage, rubbish or refuse, keeping indoor furniture outdoors, and failure to comply with an order of a building inspector.

The houses are located at 375 W. Adams St.; 190 N. Elm St.; 730 Fremont St.; 160, 180, 420 and 680 N. Hickory St.; 420 Market St.; and 135, 155 and 355 N. Water St.

Six of the houses have accepted offers that are below

**See HOUSES page 5A** ▶



One house at 375 W. Adams St. (right) has occupants without a lease, according to city officials. Another house at 155 N. Water St. (below) is one of three North Water Street houses.



## Daus from 3 to 2

Platteville Common Council District 3 Ald. Barb Daus will represent District 2 as of this week's council reorganizational meeting after Ald. Eileen Nickels chose not to run again and Daus, the Common Council president, was the only candidate after redistricting moved her into Nickels' district.

Daus' replacement for the last year of her District 3 term is expected to be chosen by the council May 23 after the application deadline of May 12 and a council work session with applicants May 16.

Last week's Journal incorrectly reported Daus' former



**Barb Daus**  
and now current Common Council seats.



## Neighbors oppose R-LO waiver

by Steve Prestegard  
editor@theplattevillejournal.com

A UW-Platteville student recently purchased a house for himself and three roommates for the rest of their time as UWP students.

That poses a problem because of where the house is located.

While the city's R-1 Residential Zoning allows up to four unrelated people to live in the same house, the house

**See R-LO page 5A** ▶

The house at 1135 Perry Dr. is one of the R-LO houses on Platteville's west side.

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# Southwest Wisconsin's week of wild spring weather swings

Even by Wisconsin standards the weather the past week featured wild swings:

**Wednesday:** Platteville set a record high of 83 degrees, beating the previous record set in 1941. Thursday's high of 81 missed the record high by two degrees. Boscobel reached 88 Wednesday, Prairie du Chien reached 85, and Viroqua reached 84.

**Sunday:** Platteville got 4 inches of snow, which was not as much as some areas received to the north. According to the National Weather Service in La Crosse south of Westby got 10.5 inches, northeast of Stoddard got 10 inches, Viroqua and La Farge got 8.5 inches, Seneca got 7 inches, north-northwest of Prairie du Chien got 6.5 inches, and Mount Zion got 6 inches, and Patch Grove got 4.5 inches. The low of 31 Sunday night was 42 degrees colder than Saturday's high of 73.

**Monday:** Iowa-Grant and other schools started two hours late.

**Tuesday:** A flood warning took effect for the Mississippi River at McGregor, Guttenberg and Dubuque.

The Mississippi at McGregor was expected to top flood stage of 16 feet and reach 21.3 feet by Monday. The Mississippi at Guttenberg was expected to top flood stage of 15 feet and reach 18.5 feet by Monday.

The Mississippi at Lock and Dam 11 was expected to top flood stage of 16 feet and reach 19.4 feet by Monday morning. The Mississippi at Dubuque was expected to top flood stage of 17 feet and reach 21.2 feet by Monday morning.

The NWS termed the Mississippi flooding forecast as "moderate," with chances of "major" flooding increasing with rain in the forecast for later this week.

**Today:** The NWS Storm Prediction Center said Monday there is a small chance of severe weather in Southwest Wisconsin.

# Home buyer, real estate agent didn't know about overlay

**R-LO from page 1**

at 1135 Perry Dr. is part of the city's R-LO Limited Occupancy Residential Overlay District, on Platteville's west side, which limits occupancy to two unrelated people.

The purchaser of the house, Devyn Dahlke, is asking the city to remove the R-LO designation from his house for up to two years. Dahlke said neither he nor his real estate agent knew about the R-LO overlay when he purchased the house.

The city Plan Commission April 3 proposed instead of removing the R-LO designation to retain it but to give Dahlke up to two years to comply with the ordinance.

Dahlke's neighbors oppose both, with some suggesting Dahlke should be required to give up two of his roommates.

Dahlke purchased the house, which he said was on the market for two days, after he and his roommates were forced to leave the duplex where they lived because they

were "constantly victims of domestic violence day in and day out" with other occupants of the duplex.

Dahlke said he is not charging his roommates rent while he owns the house.

Union Street homeowner Gene Weber called it "a very sad situation for everyone involved," said Dahlke and his real estate agent "did proper due diligence and failed to make themselves aware of the overlay district restrictions. ... This is a buyer-beware situation ... ignorance of the law is no excuse."

Weber said the council's choice was between "110 tax-paying owners who literally have put in thousands of hours to get and keep this overlay district in place to assure single-family housing" near Westview Elementary School "or support a buyer and a real estate agent who failed to check out the zoning."

Instead of waiving the designation or delaying

enforcement, Weber suggested that Dahlke "remain in the home with one other non-related person" by June 1 or Sept. 1.

Moonlight Drive homeowner Tom Osting said either removing R-LO or "allowing an extended violation" would "set a bad precedent that the council would be held to in the future that could encourage noncompliance."

Westhill Avenue homeowner Mary Jo Hennessy said the overlay district was created because "we did not want to become like Cedar Street and other streets near the university that became mostly rental and the families moved out." She said "a couple" homeowners "moved into our area to get away from housing problems in other areas of town."

Eighteen people also registered against removing the R-LO designation. The council also received 78 signed petitions opposing the overlay removal.

The R-LO district was created for houses west of Stonebridge Circle whose owners chose to be in the overlay area because of concerns about the spread of rental housing in their neighborhood. Being in the R-LO district requires the homeowner to petition for the designation, which means that not all properties in the area are R-LO properties.

Osting said the ordinance "is doing exactly what the ordinance was trying to do ... trying to keep the area family-oriented, aesthetically pleasing, a quiet neighborhood attractive to any new family seeking to establish roots in Platteville."

A public hearing on Dahlke's request is expected to be part of Tuesday's Common Council meeting.

At-large Ald. Kathy Kopp called it "a very unfortunate situation" but added, "the neighbors have spoken very clearly ... who is the next person that's going to be coming in asking for a change?"

# IG student arrested after threats

**DODGEVILLE** — An Iowa-Grant student was arrested for making terroristic threats April 10.

The unnamed juvenile made "threatening remarks,"

according to an Iowa County Sheriff's Office news release. The juvenile and his family cooperated with authorities in searches of the juvenile's family's home and electronic

devices, the news release said.

The news release said there was neither an "imminent threat to the school or plans to execute an attack."

# Tower project needs one more site

**by David Timmerman**  
newseditor@tds.net

**LANCASTER** — The Grant County Emergency Communication project has there is one more tower site to determine before planning is completed.

The project to modernize the county's obsolete emergency communication system will also expand high speed broadband within the county.

The system, when it is operational sometime next year, will have 11 communication towers throughout the county that will create near blanket coverage for emergency radios, greatly reducing dead zones that make it impossible

for emergency responders to communicate at a scene.

Sheriff Nate Dreckman said the final site the county is looking to lock in is in Cassville, which has been the most challenging region to deal with due to its topography.

Grant County proposed ways to cover the area around Cassville and the Mississippi River, including placing a tower on the Iowa side of the river, before landing on the current idea — a tower on the bluffs.

"We just need to do the balancing act," said County Board Chair Robert Keeney of the four possible locations.

Unlike the current tower system, which has repeaters within the towers to send emergency messages, each of the new towers will be connected to fiber optic lines. This will mean each tower will broadcast independently, so if one tower goes down, then system will still be broadcasting.

The county looked at microwave antennas on each tower to communicate with one another before coming up with the fiber optic idea, which will also create a broadband loop within the county.

# Citations began in March 2020

**HOUSES from page 1**

the houses' assessed value. Three other houses are listed for sale for asking prices that also are below the houses' assessed value, according to city records.

Some of the houses are vacant, while some are occupied, in some cases without a lease, "basically squatting on the properties," said Director of Community Development Joe Carroll. "It's been a challenge for the realtor and the guardian service to get the properties vacated."

guardian, is now handling the properties.

City staff are not certain of the total fine amount. First-offense fines for violation of the ordinance are fined \$200.50, second-offense violations are fined \$263.50, and third-offense or subsequent violations are fined \$326.50.

Carroll estimated the city's portion of the fines at \$114,000, given that the city receives \$50, \$100 and \$150 from the citations, with the rest going to Grant County as court costs or assessments.

the citations, as well as other lienholders whose liens are holding up their sale. Carroll said the properties also have lender debt, liens against the properties and possibly back taxes.

"I hate to be the only one to release," said Common Council president Barb Daus. "I wouldn't mind releasing, but I would like others to feel the same pain."

In addition to the citations, the city has used the time of the city attorney and staff time in issuing the citations, Carroll said.

# JOURNAL Obituaries

**DEANNE M. BAKER-GORMAN**

Deanne M. Baker-Gorman, 60, of Potosi, died on Monday, April 10 at Orchard Manor in Lancaster.

Deanne was born on Sept. 5, 1962, in Lancaster, daughter of Lyle and Marilyn (Bellmeyer) Baker. Deanne was married to Gary Gorman in Lancaster. Deanne graduated from Platteville High School, class of 1981. After high school, she worked various jobs. She attended SWTC in Fennimore, where she became an administrative assistant. After school, Deanne started her career at Mound City Bank in Platteville, where she worked for almost 28 years. Deanne enjoyed doing crafts and crocheting. She had a great fondness for cats and dogs.



Deanne is survived by her son, Lucas Gorman; parents, Lyle and Marilyn Baker; sister, Debra Davies; brother, Dennis Baker; and nieces, Jessica Davies, Nikki (Randon) Huber and Alicia (Brett Coulthard) Baker. She was preceded in death by her sister, Denise Bast; nephew, Stacey Bast; grandparents, Lester and Edna Bellmeyer and Roy and Gladys Baker; and aunt, Jean Bellmeyer.

Funeral services will be at 11 a.m. on Saturday, April 22 at the Melby Funeral Home & Crematory in Platteville. Pastor Mary Ann Floerke will officiate. Burial will be at Whig Cemetery in rural Platteville. Visitation will be from 5-7 p.m. on Friday, April 21 at the Melby Funeral Home & Crematory in Platteville and will continue on Saturday from 9:30 a.m. until the time of the service. Memorials may be made to the Deanne Baker-Gorman Memorial. Online condolences can be made at [www.melbyfh.com](http://www.melbyfh.com).

**BARBARA L. BROWNING**

Barbara L. Browning, 76, of Platteville, died on Friday, April 14, 2023.

Barb was born on April 4, 1947, in Platteville, daughter to John and Lou Ella (McPherson) Withrow. Barb graduated from Platteville high school and attended cosmetology school in Dubuque. For many years she did hair for many people in the community. Later Barb worked at K & K Floors, Platteville. Barb was an active member of the Platteville United Methodist Church, and United Women of Faith. She gave a lot of her time as a volunteer for the American Red Cross for over 25 years and Grant County Relay for Life. Barb enjoyed spending her weekends during the summer with her family boating on the Mississippi.



Barb is survived by her three children Darcy Browning, Cory Browning, and Mara Browning; brother Gary (Sharon) Withrow; two sisters, Peg (Richard) Meyer and Pat (Jim) Bruun; sister-in-law Shirley Withrow, brother-in-law Dean Collins and many nieces and nephews; and granddog, Gunner. She was preceded in death by her parents John and Lou Ella Withrow, brother Jack Withrow, and sister Lynn Collins.

Private Celebration of Life will be at the Melby Funeral Home & Crematory, Platteville. United Methodist Rev. Tammy Clausen will officiate. Burial will be at Nip-n-Tuck Cemetery at a later date. The Melby Funeral Home & Crematory, Platteville, is serving the family. Online condolences can be made at: [www.melbyfh.com](http://www.melbyfh.com)

**CAROL A. RINIKER**

Carol A. Riniker, 70, of Platteville died on Sunday, April 16, 2023, at her home.

Carol was born on July 14, 1952 in Dubuque, Iowa, daughter of Jacob and Florence (Schmid) Riniker. Carol graduated from Platteville high school and attended SWTC, Fennimore. Carol worked for the City of Platteville for many years, where she was the administrative assistant for the Community Planning and Development Department. She enjoyed doing stamping and crafts.



Carol is survived by her daughter Lisa Riniker and her husband, Josh Kiley; three grandchildren, Konnor, Kameron and Lydia Kiley; sisters, Jeanette Means and Cheri (Terry) Oftedal; brother, Ric (Carolyn) Riniker; and nieces and nephews. She was preceded by her parents, brother, David Riniker, his wife Margie Riniker, and brother-in-law, Ronald Means.

Memorial services will be at 11 a.m., Thursday, April 20 at the Melby Funeral Home & Crematory, Platteville. Pastor Mark Dieter will officiate. Burial will be at Hillside Cemetery, Platteville. Visitation will be from 4 - 7 p.m., Wednesday, April 19 at the Melby Funeral Home & Crematory and will continue on Thursday from 10 a.m. until the time of the service. Online condolences can be made at [www.melbyfh.com](http://www.melbyfh.com).

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Miscellaneous  
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## Records

**GRANT COUNTY MARRIAGE LICENSES**  
Bryce Villarreal and Addie Martin.

**GRANT COUNTY DIVORCES**  
Brittany R. Nezoslosky & Patrick N. Nezoslosky.  
Eric A. Payette and Stacy M. Kantorowicz.

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