

# A-C Marching Band's Summer Days absence annoys board members

By Michael Kloppenburg  
Star-Gazette Reporter

Repeated non-appearances by the A-C Central Marching Band at the Ashland Summer Days festival led to aggravation amongst members of the A-C school board at the June 20 regular meeting of the board. The band did not appear at this year's summer days festivities, held last weekend, and did not appear last year either. According to middle/high school Principal Dan Williams, band director Kim Webster informed him that arranging practices in the summer was too difficult.

"[Webster's] point was the difficulty of getting everybody together in the middle of the summer to practice," said Williams.

Board members Todd Jokisch and Scot Atwood were not convinced by the explanation.

"Others schools do it. We have Jacksonville here," said Jokisch.

"They don't have any problem getting them together for a summer trip to New York or wherever," said Atwood.

Atwood further warned that failing to appear in community events may undercut the marching band's ability to gain community support for its trips and other plans.

"People are saying that when [marching band members] come and ask everyone for money, going door to door for a trip or whatever, they can't understand why the band can't perform in front of the community," said Atwood, "The people like to see the kids. They understand some can't come because of vacation of whatever. I think they have a valid point."

Jokisch suggested that failing to appear at community events may endanger board support for future trips.

"If they don't support the community that supports them, maybe those won't be approved in the future," said Jokisch.

Board president Ginny Thompson expressed being disturbed that the board only found out the marching band would not participate in summer

days when phone calls came from the community asking about the marching band.

"I find it a little disconcerting we talked about this last time around and said we don't want that to happen again and we're only finding out that it's not happening because community members are calling," said Thompson, "To me that kind of seemed like a directive."

Superintendent Rebecca Canty said the administration was also unaware there would be no band appearance. "We didn't know [Webster] wasn't going to do it," said Canty.

Williams said he had previously communicated with Webster on the importance of the marching band appearing at summer days.

The next joint meeting of the A-C and PORTA school boards will be on July 17. The board discussed agenda topics and other information they might want presented at the meeting. Board member Scott Boston said he would want to see any data on population projections for the districts that were available and what the plans of each board were if reorganization did not take place. Board member Jeremy Garner said he wanted to know what teachers' jobs might be lost and Thompson wanted to know more about transportation in a combined district. Teacher Dena Leinberger attended and urged board members to pursue reorganization vigorously.

"I just hope that you do not put it on the back burner," said Leinberger, "We've combined one elementary and one middle school class. That's going to be showing up in the high school very, very, very soon and that means fewer and fewer students."

Leinberger also said that another reason to act soon is that a reorganization effort can take two to three years from start to finish.

Canty presented on state financial aid. She said general state aid was going to be 89% prorated, meaning A-C

would receive 11% less. Canty said that in writing up the budget she planned for receiving only 80-85% of payments. She also said the state was cutting driver's education money from \$24 million to \$18 million and there would be no payment on this in June. Canty summed it all up as "not good news."

Several board members expressed at recent comments by Gov. Pat Quinn about school districts having the funds to absorb pension costs. Quinn is seeking to shift school employee pension costs from the state to the school districts. Board member Jennifer Allen responded with exasperation. "We're required to (have those funds) or we get put on the financial watch list," said Allen.

The cost for replacing and maintenance of the student laptop computers will be \$44,175. Canty said this is within the original budget for the computers.

Williams and elementary Principal Deb Rogers reported on the results from the Illinois Standard Achievement Test. The ISAT is taken by grades 3-8. All classes had more than 80% meeting or exceeding standards except the 6th grade. 69% of 6th graders met or exceeded standards in reading and 78% in math. Williams said the 6th grade has a higher number of special education students than other classes. Rogers said the ISAT is the same for regular and special education students and that special education students will therefore not perform as well as regular students on the ISAT.

Rogers also said she had been worried that poverty in the district might drive down scores, but was impressed by the results. "I was very pleased," said Rogers.

Rogers reported a sewer pipe in the Chandlerville building had been repaired earlier this month. The pipe had been in danger of shearing off due to the building settling.

Williams gave his last  
**Continued on page 8**

## Park District Co-Business of the month



Congratulations to The Beardstown Park District and their staff on being chosen June 2012 Co-Business of the Month. The Beardstown Park District provides recreation programs and activities for the citizens of Beardstown and the surrounding communities. The park district is responsible for the operation of five parks totaling 100 acres. Facilities include nine ball diamonds (six lighted), the Schewe Community Center (weight rooms, tumbling room, gymnasium and meeting room), nine shelters, four outdoor basketball courts, one tennis court, eight horseshoe pits and four playground areas. The Beardstown Park District was established in 1954 and currently offers over 75 recreational programs year round to meet the needs of its citizens. Brochures and additional information may be obtained by calling or stopping by the park district office located at the Schewe Community Center or at its website: [www.beardstownparkdistrict.com](http://www.beardstownparkdistrict.com).

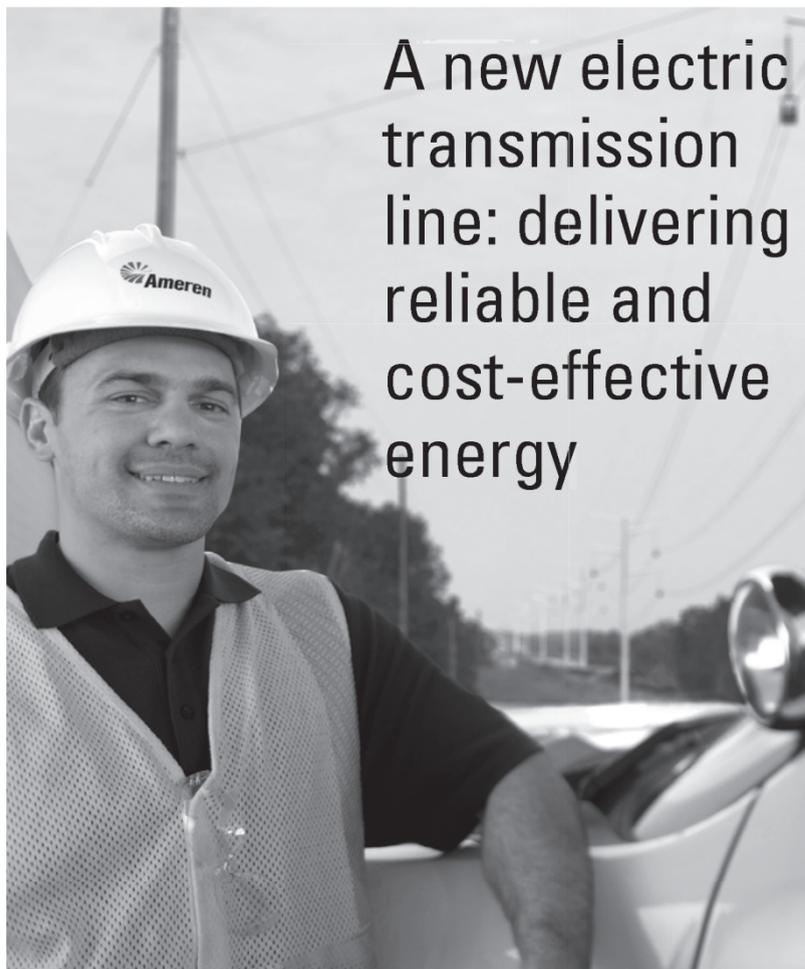
## Community Leadership and Action Scholarship awarded

The Community Leadership and Action Committee (CLAC) of Virginia awarded Kelly McMillan with their 2012 Scholarship. She plans to attend Quincy University and work toward a degree in nursing.

Each year, CLAC awards a scholarship to a graduating Virginia High School senior based on their pursuit of higher education, school activities and community service. Past recipients are Natalie Ackerman, Katherine Lee, Stephen Prather, Emily Strang, Kelsey Lee and Wayne Strang.



Submitted photo  
Kelly McMillan receives a scholarship from The Community Leadership and Action Committee.



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<p><b>Idaho</b> <b>Baking Potatoes</b> <b>69¢ lb.</b></p>	<p><b>Dole</b> <b>Cole Slaw Mix</b> 14 oz. <b>\$1.19</b></p>
<p><b>IGA</b> <b>Shredded Cheese</b> 8 oz. <b>2/\$4</b></p>	<p><b>Prairie Farms</b> <b>Skim Milk</b> gallon <b>\$2.79</b></p>
<p><b>Totino's</b> <b>Pizza Rolls</b> 7.5 oz. <b>\$1.49</b></p>	<p><b>Stoneridge Creamery</b> <b>Ice Cream Bars</b> 12 ct. <b>\$2.69</b></p>
<p><b>IGA</b> <b>Ketchup</b> 36 oz. <b>\$1.89</b></p>	<p><b>Old El Paso</b> <b>Taco Seasoning</b> 1 oz. <b>89¢</b></p>
<p><b>Creamette</b> <b>Rotini</b> 12-16 oz. <b>\$1.39</b></p>	<p><b>Joy</b> <b>Ice Cream Cones</b> 24 ct. <b>\$1.59</b></p>

## Virginia residents urged to attend City Council meeting

### Electric aggregation presentation on agenda

By Jody Woltman  
Star-Gazette publisher

The City of Virginia urges residents to attend the July regular city council meeting for a presentation on the possibility of electric aggregation services. A representative of Integrys Energy Group, which supplies the electricity billing to the city, has approached Mayor Steve Sudbrink with the possibility of offering electricity rate aggrega-

tion to city residents. Municipal aggregation, by Illinois law, allows municipalities and counties to arrange for the purchase of electricity supply on behalf of residential and small business investor-owned electric utility customers within the municipal or county borders. The underlying theory is municipalities and counties may be able to use the collective bargaining power of all residents to secure a price lower

than that of the supply price offered to each class by Ameren Illinois. Based on public response at the council meeting, a decision will be made to add the aggregation opportunity on the November ballot. The Illinois Commerce Commission offers information on the topic at PlugInIllinois.org. The city council meeting will be held on Monday, July 9 at 7:30 p.m.

## Heat, drought squeeze area

By Michael Kloppenburg  
Star-Gazette reporter

The entire state is broiling in the grip of excessive and dangerous heat. For the past week, the mercury has made daily attempts to reach the century mark. The heat has exacerbated an already serious drought situation in the central part of the state. The heat wave arrived a week ago today when temperatures reached into the 100-105 degree range across the region. Over the weekend, temperatures continued the daily climb to dangerous levels. Independence Day saw the same story, as temperatures once again made for the upper 90's.

The drought, already rated "severe," the second level of a four level scale, has become worse as heat has evaporated much of what little moisture remained. In fact, the heat wave has resembled desert heat more than it has resembled an Illinois heat wave. In Illinois, humidity usually makes the air feel hotter than the actual air temperature. But the limited availability of moisture has kept heat indices fairly close to the actual air temperature.

Much needed rain arrived over the weekend, but much more is needed for area crops, which are suffering in many spots. The story is the same over much of the country. As corn has begun pollinating, and nervousness over

the drought has caused corn futures to begin to rise. Comparisons are being made to a 1988 drought that cost \$78 billion according to a National Weather Service drought specialist as reported by Bloomberg BusinessWeek. A Reuters article quoted a Purdue University agronomist that said that this year's drought will rival and may surpass the 1988 event. Parts of southern Illinois have been upgraded from "severe" to "extreme" drought and those conditions are expected to move north.

For other parts of the country, the drought has meant more than lost crops. Colorado is experiencing one of its most destructive fire seasons ever. A massive fire has destroyed almost 350 homes on the northwest side of Colorado Springs. Another fire in western Colorado has put over 250 homes to the torch. Many other western states are also battling large blazes. Dry conditions have dictated a firework-free Independence Day in many locations.

The heat has been blamed for several deaths across the nation. The advice for avoiding heat illness is being repeated. Citizens are being advised to drink plenty of non-alcoholic and caffeine free fluids, remain in air conditioning if possible, limit strenuous outdoor activity and avoid outdoor activity in the hottest part of the

day if possible, wear loose fitting clothing and a hat, and don't leave children or pets unattended in a locked car.

The heat has also played a role in spawning violent weather. On Friday, a violent storm system called a derecho raced east through the Ohio valley. Beginning west of Chicago in the late morning hours, the fast moving storm exited the mid-Atlantic after nightfall and continued out to sea. Along the way, the line of thunderstorms, taking a shape on radar resembling the curve of an archer's bow, brought winds that exceeded 90 mph in some cases. The National Weather Service received more than a thousand reports of wind damage and at least 13 people were killed, mostly under falling trees. The storm is also estimated to have left four million people without power and therefore air conditioning. Power crews raced to remove fallen trees and repair downed power lines, but many remained without air conditioning as temperatures soared into the triple digits. Many spent the weekend in malls or wherever else they could find refuge from the heat.

When will the heat wave move on? Unfortunately not before the early part of next week. Rain is also expected to be difficult to come by. The heat of summer is definitely on.

## Local Disc golfers go a few rounds, despite heat



Aaron Tebrinke/Star-Gazette

Mark Canada of Beardstown and Dennis Rebman of Rushville started off the week with a few rounds of disc golf at the disc golf course inside Art Jones Park.

They are members of the Professional Disc Golf Association and participate in a league called the Spring-

field Disc Golf Club. Last year the pair won division doubles in the Capital City Challenge in Springfield, Bloomington Normal Open, and an Effingham tournament. "We play here a lot," said Canada, "this week I am on vacation, so we play all the time."

They both tried out 21

discs of various weights and sizes. Rebman explained why their team complement each other, "he's a flicker, and I am a crow body. We've got the left and right hand approach for our advantage."

The two moved quickly to not let the 93° heat slow down their fun.

## Beardstown crash leads to hospitalization, DUI charge

By Michael Kloppenburg  
Star-Gazette reporter

A Beardstown woman was taken to Culbertson Memorial Hospital following a June 27 crash in the 1100 block of Arenz Street in Beardstown.

Ramona S. Evans, age 52, of 611 W. 4th Street was taken to the hospital

and was also cited for driving under the influence of alcohol. According to information in a report by Beardstown police officer Rodney Wilson, Evans was driving her 2004 Buick LeSabre LI north on Arenz Street, came around a curve, and swerved across lanes, striking a parked vehicle.

According to the citations, Evans was not wearing a seat belt. In addition to the DUI and failure to wear seat belt citations, Evans was also cited for failure to reduce speed to avoid an accident and improper lane usage. Evans' court date is set for July 24.

### Correction Notice

The Virginia Learning and Fitness Center story in the 6-21-12 issue of the Star-Gazette indicated the cost of tutoring sessions as \$5.00 per session. The cost is \$10.00 per session.

### Beardstown TIF advisory committee meeting

There will be a meeting of the Beardstown TIF Advisory Committee on Friday, July 6, at 10 a.m. at the Beardstown City Hall Council Cham-

bers. The agenda will be finalizing the 2012-13 Tax Increment Funding budget. Other topics may be discussed.

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<p><b>Fresh Cucumbers</b> <b>69¢ each</b></p>	<p><b>Green Bell Peppers</b> <b>79¢ each</b></p>
<p><b>Prairie Farms Margarine</b> <b>pound</b> <b>\$1.19</b></p>	<p><b>IGA Grade A Large Eggs</b> <b>dozen</b> <b>\$1.19</b></p>
<p><b>North Star Sundae Cups</b> <b>6 ct.</b> <b>\$2.39</b></p>	<p><b>IGA Whipped Topping</b> <b>8 oz.</b> <b>\$1.09</b></p>
<p><b>IGA Pork and Beans</b> <b>15 oz.</b> <b>69¢</b></p>	<p><b>Creamette Macaroni</b> <b>16 oz.</b> <b>\$1.39</b></p>

# Council to decide on water projects

By June Conner  
Star-Gazette editor

The Beardstown City Council is looking into further water improvements for the City of Beardstown. Monday night's meeting of the committee as a whole resulted in a base project and two alternates at an estimated cost of \$698,331 being placed on the next agenda.

The main project is putting in a 16 inch water transmission main followed by a valve replacement at the water storage tank on Edwards Street and the replacement of the two inch water main with a four inch main in an alley between Edwards and Bay Streets from 12th to 14th. Laverdiere Construction out of Macomb came in with the lowest bid on all three projects. According to City Clerk

Brian "Pete" Ruch Tax Increment Finance funds and grant money would fall short about \$246,000 which could come from the water reserves. This would leave about \$180,000 in the water reserves according to Ruch. The next Beardstown City Council is July 17 when the project will appear on the agenda for vote.

### Committee as a whole discuss pay increases

The committee as a whole discussed two options for salary increase for the city clerk's position. The position now pays \$48,895 and the proposals would include base salary with increases and training level increases based on achieved certifications. Any changes in salary has to be voted on within the next couple of

months to be effective the next term of office. Mayor Bob Walters said that Ruch was head and shoulders above any clerk he had worked with.

"He has been my right hand," Walters said.

Ruch is serving his third term in the office.

Mayoral Candidate Randy Taapken proposed to the committee last night that the \$30 committee meeting pay that the mayor and alderman receive should be dropped from the mayor's pay next term of office.

Taapken said, "No matter what job I take if I'm salaried, I understand that its for 40 or 90 hours.

After discussion the committee voted to take the matter to the council, increasing the committee pay to \$50 from \$30 and leaving in the mayor's payment. Taapken cast the only dissenting vote.



Submitted photo

## July 4th Beardstown celebration contest winners

The winners of the Beardstown July 4th contests are:

Cutest Baby Contest

Baby Boy, 1 & Under - Bryson Ogden, son of Sarah and Brandon Ogden  
Baby Girl, 1 & Under - Ryann Crabtree, daughter of Andria and Carl Crabtree.

Cutest Toddler - 2-3 years-old.

Boy - Gerardo Ruiz, son of Gerardo and Yanelli Ruiz.

Girl - Genesis Montoya, Daughter of Daniel and Maria Montoya.

Little Mister Firecracker - 4-6-year-old.

Adam Gobel, son of Sara Mann and Chris Gobel.

Little Miss Liberty  
Sophya Ogden, daughter of Sarah Bennett and Brandon Ogden.

Winners of the Bud Krohe Memorial greased watermelon races, held July 4th include:

10 & under: First - Shayna Price and Zack Watson; second - Drew Sarnecki and Jacob Pate.

11-15: First - Derek Bowman and Drew Sarnecki; second - Kylie Alexander and Madysen Fox.

16-21: First - Scott Warden and Jacob Pate; second - Matthew Watson and Morgan Davidsmeier.

22-49: Kathy and Jacob Pate.  
50+: First Kendra

Joskish and Monty Osborne; second - Janet Osborne and Sue Wilson. Winners of the Trike and Bike races were:

4 & under: First - Gerardo Ruiz.

5-6: First - Kendall Kerns.

7-8: First Clay Johnson; second - MacKayla Kerns.

Winner of the Celebrity Trike Race - Chad Fisher, Department of Public Works, Beardstown

Winner of the Beardstown Fire Department water fights was H<sub>2</sub>OwN whose members included Donnie Collins, Nick Knous, Mark Cook, and Willie Looker.

## 6th Annual Back to School Fair planned for August 4

The 6th Annual Back to School Fair will take place on Saturday, August 4 from 8 a.m.-12 p.m. at the First Christian Church, 1421 Beard

Street.

This free event will provide school supplies, physicals, dental exams, clothing, and entertainment for the whole family.

For questions and to register for school physicals, please call the church office at 323-1677.

### Unusual cloud



Mary Jockisch/Star-Gazette

Mary Jockisch snapped this photo of a strange cloud formation Monday morning on her way to the Star-Gazette office.

Ameren – continued from page 2

Ameren offers these tips against scammers:

- Never give your credit card, debit card, Social Security, ATM, checking, or saving account numbers to anyone who comes to your home, calls, or sends an email requesting this information.
- If a caller claims to be an Ameren representative and asks for immediate payment over the phone

or requests other personal information, hang up and call 800.755.5000 in Illinois or 800.552.7583 in Missouri.

- Never allow anyone into your home who wants to check your electrical wiring, natural gas pipes, or appliances unless you have scheduled an appointment or have reported a natural gas leak and the person has proper identification.

· Photo identification is carried by every Ameren employee and includes name, employee number and an official Ameren logo.

- If you suspect someone is impersonating an Ameren employee, end the conversation and immediately call your local police and then Ameren Illinois, 800.755.5000, or Ameren Missouri, 800.552.7583.



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**\$1.19 lb.**

**Prairie Farms**  
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6 oz.  
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**Gold Peak**  
**Tea**  
59 oz.  
**\$2.29**

**Kool Pops or**  
**Flav-or-ice**  
24 ct.  
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**Marinades**  
.71 oz.  
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**Family Pack**  
**Chicken Leg Quarters**  
**89¢ lb.**

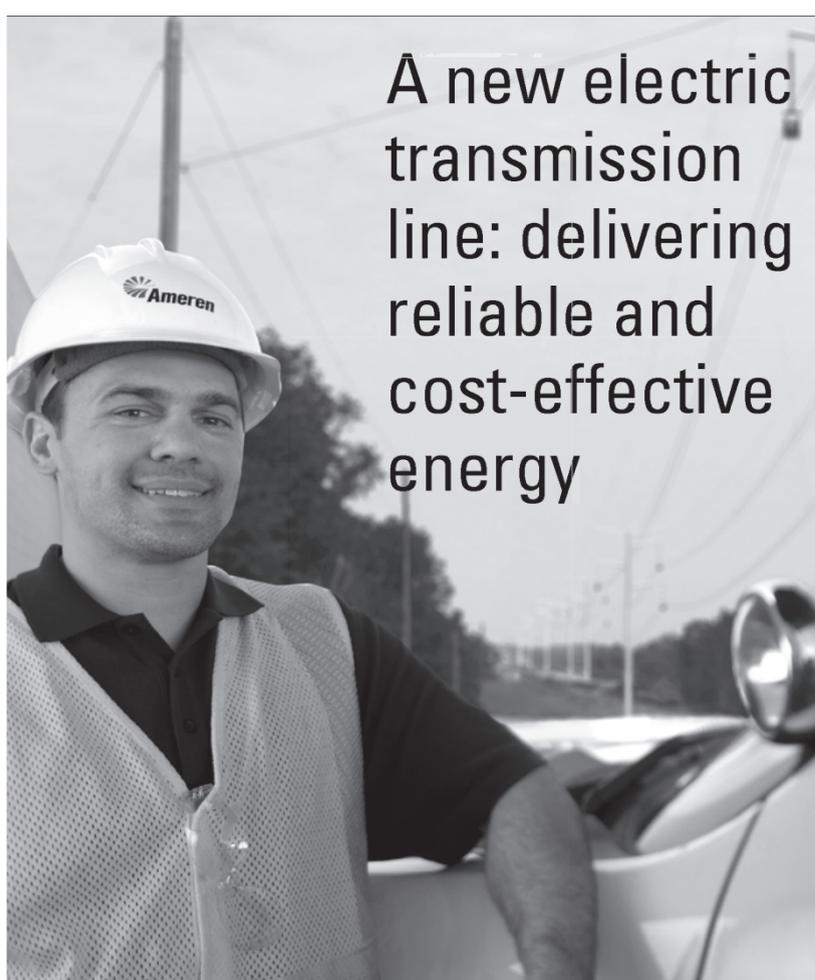
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16 oz.  
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**Cottage Cheese**  
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**IGA**  
**Kidney Beans**  
15 oz.  
**89¢**

**Hershey's**  
**Chocolate Syrup**  
24 oz.  
**\$2.29**



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