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## Braidwood PD has a successful year in 2022

Old fashioned police work clears most cases, Chief notes

BY MARNEY SIMON  
EDITOR

The Braidwood Police Department was busy in 2022, clearing cases throughout the year that spanned gamut from sex crimes to burglary.

Braidwood Police Chief Todd Lyons said a number of higher profile

cases came across the desks of detectives and officers in 2022. Cases included a month long vehicle burglary investigation that took place over the summer, an arrest for grooming, various drug arrests, alleged money laundering by a local contractor, and the case of a missing man whose body was discovered in rural Kankakee County. All cases were closed during the year.

"As far as an agency, we have had some major cases come across our desks, and we've solved them all," Lyons said. "We've had some money laundering cases, we've had some [grooming] cases, and we had a lot of break-ins. I'm really happy with the

policing."

Lyons said the investigative work done by the department in relationship to the car burglaries actually helped another department solve a case.

"Chris Altiery does a great job as an investigator, and one of the cases that he did, when we had the break ins, he was able to track cases through license plate readers and locations, and using mapping was able to pinpoint where one of them may have lived and in the Harvey area and work it from there," Lyons explained. "He was able to work with the FBI to get a ping order for their location... and he identified the suspects in the rural

Morris area, contacted that law enforcement and they located the vehicle, got into a pursuit where they fled on foot. Two people were taken into custody.

"We solved several cases through [that kind of tracking and collaboration] and one of the guns that was recovered we found out was involved in a homicide in another jurisdiction," the chief continued. "So, they sent the gun away for testing and we were able to help another agency."

Lyons noted that the successful year for the department is made even more impressive by the fact that Braidwood is a fairly small operation. The department employs 11 full-time

officers and six part-time officers, with an open spot for a full time officer now that one member has transferred to a new department.

"We've had to pull somebody from the DEA task force that we had to bring back because we were short handed, but we've solved all of our major cases in Braidwood," Lyons said. "I'm pretty proud of the things that we're doing, and on top of things, we try to do community events. I'm hoping in the next couple of months to start a citizens police academy, and then something to meet once a week with seniors to have coffee with sen-

SEE BPD, PAGE 2

## Electoral Board meets in Braidwood



Photo by Marney Simon

THE NEW YEAR ENDED in Braidwood with the first meeting of the Electoral Board. The board met on Saturday, Dec. 31 at 9 a.m. at City Hall for a brief 5-minute session, establishing the rules of the board and setting the date for the next hearing. The board is convening to hear the objection made by Wayne Saltzman to the petition by Warren Wietting to run in the April consolidated election for Commissioner of Public Buildings and Property. Saltzman, represented by attorney Matt Campbell in the hearing, has objected to the address that Wietting used on his petition. Wietting is the current Public Buildings and Property Commissioner. Jeff Saltzman is the only challenger for that same commission in the April 4, 2023 consolidated election. State law allows for objections to be made within five business days of the last day of filing. The state statute provides for a designated electoral board to hear objections on election petitions. By code, the board is made up of the Mayor (Bob Jones), City Clerk (Hillary Bohac) and longest standing member of the City Council (Fay Smith). The next hearing of the board will take place on Jan. 11 at 4 p.m. at City Hall. The hearing is open to the public.

## Vaping to be addressed at RCMS

BY MARNEY SIMON  
EDITOR

The Reed-Custer School District is adding more technology to combat use of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes and vapes) among the student body.

During the Dec. 21 regular meeting of the board of education, Assistant Superintendent of Operations Matt Peterson reported to the board that more vape detectors will be in place when the students return from winter break.

"We have two vape detectors being added to the middle school, eighth grade bathrooms," Peterson said. "[Middle School and High School Principals] Mr. Traeger and Mr. Ricketts think that is kind of becoming an issue down there, so those are being added to the middle school in the eighth grade wing."

In January 2022, the district installed its first vape

detectors at the high school. Since they were installed, the detectors have alerted the district to a total of 54 incidents last year, and 15 so far in the current school year.

"Either it's helping or they're not bringing it to school, but they're not vaping in the bathrooms," Peterson said of the effectiveness of the detectors already installed. "Of the 15, seven students have taken the substance abuse class. The class allows them to, if they're an athlete, get back into sports sooner. Or, instead of getting suspended for two or three days, they only get a one day suspension. They're only allowed to take the class one time, we do have a few repeat offenders."

Per the student handbook, the use of tobacco or e-cigarettes on campus comes with a 1-3 day suspension, which is

SEE BOARD, PAGE 2

## Commissioners acknowledge BPD for public engagement

BY MARNEY SIMON  
EDITOR

Members of the Braidwood City Council took a moment in late December to acknowledge one Braidwood police officer who went above and beyond in the line of duty.

During the Dec. 27 meeting of the City Council, Public Health and Safety Commissioner Moose Mikel gave a shout out to Sgt. Brent Goodwin. Mikel said on Dec. 7, Goodwin reached out a helping hand to a local youth who was struggling to get to school on a bicycle.

"While Sgt. Goodwin was on patrol, he noticed a middle school aged kid pushing his bicycle along Route 53 because it had a flat tire," Mikel said during his report at the meeting. "He gave the child a ride to the middle school, and without the kid's knowledge he took possession of the bicycle, and he and Officer Cornelli fixed the flat and changed out parts of the

bicycle, and then returned the bicycle to the school for the child to pick up."

Mikel noted that later in the month, Police Chief Todd Lyons and City Administrator Tony Altiery assisted a resident whose heat was out.

The department also utilized its social media presence to help find a lost dog.

Mikel noted that the efforts were just a few of several positive community interactions that members of the department were able to participate in during December, including Shop with a Cop, Shop with a Hero, and Blue Santa, and movie trivia throughout the month via Facebook.

Mikel also noted that one person utilized City Hall as a warming center during the last

SEE COUNCIL, PAGE 2

## RC provides assistance to families dealing with homelessness

BY MARNEY SIMON  
EDITOR

Officials with the Reed-Custer School District said the schools have had some success in offering up assistance to families who are dealing with unstable housing this year.

On Dec. 21, Assistant Superintendent for Operations Matt Peterson updated the members of the Board of Education on the district's compliance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

The federal legislation authorizes the federal Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program and is the primary piece of federal legislation related to the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness.

Per the Illinois Report Card, 8% of students in Reed-Custer schools were considered homeless in the last school year. Homeless students are defined as those students who do not have permanent or adequate homes. Peterson told the board

that the district started the year with eight students district wide who were eligible. Since August, one student has moved out of the district and two others were moved to permanent housing, although those two students remain eligible for benefits for the rest of the year.

"It allows students access to transportation, waives school fees, free lunches," Peterson said of the act. "I check in with them and if, say they are an athlete and they need a physical, we can provide transportation to get

them there and pay for the physical. We can help them out with food needs, daycare, things like that for the parents. We get money [through grants]."

Peterson said the district is able to help provide those students with items to make their day to day lives at school more normal, such as spirit wear that other students are also wearing.

"We provided all of those students with a bag of household necessities, a very dis-

SEE STUDENTS, PAGE 2

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# BPD

iors and try to keep them up to date on senior scams.”

In November alone, the department made an arrest on a continuing financial crimes case, one felony theft arrest, and one felony forgery arrest. In mid-November, the department made an arrest on predatory criminal sexual assault, and an arrest for concealment of a death.

Officers also made additional traffic stops and a domestic violence arrest in November.

The month's daily activity log showed the BPD answered 376 calls for service, conducted 313 business check, 812 perimeter checks, 126 traffic stops resulting in 79 warnings and 24 citations, and issued 28 local ordinance tickets, many involving truck violations.

Chief Lyons added that there are some plans in place to continue the good

work while adding additional outreach events.

“I feel very confident with our department,” he said. “We’re solving our cases, but we still do our events with the community, National Night Out, and I have some other ideas. We have officers where, part of their responsibility is to increase our community events.”

One thing that the department no longer has—those five helicopters that the city briefly owned.

In January 2019, just months before the April 2019 election, then police chief Nick Ficarelo acquired multiple helicopters through the Law Enforcement Support Office (LESO), which is a federal program that allows for surplus equipment from the Department of Defense to be transferred to law enforcement agencies throughout the country.

But the helicopters were never used, and just sat in storage.

A FOIA request made by the Braidwood Journal in 2020 showed that

the department intended on creating a 24-hour air unit that would service surrounding regional police and fire departments. Essentially, the reach would range from the northern Illinois border, including the Chicago metropolitan area, to the central Illinois region, including the Peoria metropolitan area.

But, Lyons said, it was a plan without any backbone, because while the department didn't have to pay initial costs for the helicopters, the police department would have to figure out insurance, maintenance, payroll for pilots and storage fees.

Lyons said the department was involved in that program when he first started, but he was able to get those helicopters released back into the LESO program, where they are now serving other departments now.

“For whatever reason it just evolved, but I think we can get the same thing done with drones,” he said.

# Board

usually an in-school suspension. That time can be reduced if the students participate in anti-tobacco education.

According to the 2022 National Youth Tobacco Survey, conducted by the CDC and the FDA, 14.1% of high school students nationwide, as well as 3.3% of middle school students, reported that they currently use e-cigarettes. More than a quarter of those youth reported that they vape daily.

In other business before the board on Dec. 21:

• Superintendent Mark Mitchell reported that outdoor improvements to the football field bleachers and press box are ready to resume as soon as the weather allows. “You will see that the old bleachers and the press box are gone. The demo is complete,” Mitchell said. “We had a little bit of an issue where

the plans, in our opinion, moved the bleachers too close to the track, so they adjusted that [and] they're making plans to adjust that so the front of the bleachers ends about two feet in front of the track. Most schools, when they redo them, run them a little closer to the track, but we just didn't want any possibility of somebody running and hitting the structure.”

Mitchell said that immediate plans to work were side-tracked a bit by the weather, but will continue once the weather breaks.

“All the materials are ready to go,” he said.

• Peterson told the board that some delinquent student lunch accounts had been wiped clean, thanks to a donation.

Peterson said a donation of \$1,000 was given to the district, which cleared the lunch accounts for 10 students. The donation was made by a local business owner who wished to not be named.

Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Danielle Valiente said the district is planning an adjustment to the e-learning schedule starting this month for students at the elementary school.

“We are reviewing our e-learning plans, reviewing what we went through last year. We also did a survey at the end of last year to gauge how e-learning went and what we can do for the future,” Valiente said. “We are going to change the schedule at the elementary school a little bit based on some feedback that we got last year, because that is a long time to try to keep the kids on the computer all day, which we knew but we needed to

work though some things. So, we are going to switch to a half day schedule.”

The schedule will split the day for those younger students. Half the children will participate in a morning session, while the other half will return to their computers to participate in an afternoon session. Students will be provided with activities that are not computer based for the time they are not online.

Letters were sent to elementary school families in advance of the return to school. The e-learning days replace snow days that can be planned for in advance, such as days called early in anticipation of a big storm.

# Heating bill assistance

Low-income families in Illinois can now apply for state assistance on their natural gas, propane and electricity bills.

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, or LIHEAP, has \$300 million available. Families can apply by visiting [hpellinoisfamilies.com](http://hpellinoisfamilies.com) or by calling 1-833-711-0374. Information on other state assistance programs can be found on that website as well.

LIHEAP provides one-time payments directly to energy service providers on behalf of recipients.

Families who earn up to two times the federal poverty level are eligible for LIHEAP.

That works out to a 30-day gross income below \$2,265 for a one-person household, \$3,052 for a 2-person home, \$3,838 for a three-person home, \$4,625 for four people, \$5,412 for five people and \$6,198 for six people.

The level of assistance received is needs-based, and last year's LIHEAP recipients received an average of \$1,330 per household, according to the governor's office.

Will County residents can obtain information through the Will County Center for Community Concerns at [wccc.net](http://wccc.net) or by calling 815-722-3262.

## Attorney Wysocki files Zelinski estate claim

### PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE  
TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF  
THEODORE J. ZELINSKI, Deceased; No. 22 PR 735

#### CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given to creditors of the death of THEODORE J. ZELINSKI. Letters of Office were issued to Steven J. Zelinski whose address is 1808 Ardmore St., Joliet, IL 60431 as Independent Executor, whose attorney of record is June, Prodehl, Renzi & Lynch, L.L.C., 1861 Black Road, Joliet, Illinois 60435.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Circuit Clerk's Office, Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before the 28th day of June, 2023 if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the clerk must be mailed or delivered by claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

Marilyn L. Wysocki  
For the Estate of Theodore J. Zelinski,  
Deceased

BY: Marilyn L. Wysocki  
1861 Black Road  
Joliet, IL 60435  
815-725-8000  
Published in the Braidwood Journal,  
Wednesday, Dec. 28, 2022; Jan. 4 and 11,  
2023.

## Attorney McGrath files Elder estate notice

### PUBLIC NOTICE

LEGAL NOTICE  
STATE OF ILLINOIS  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE  
TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS -  
IN PROBATE

In the Matter of the Estate of LINDA ELDER, Deceased. Case No.: 22 PR 494

#### CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given to creditors, of the death of LINDA ELDER, of Frankfort, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued August 19, 2022, to JAY ELDER, whose address is 3304 Yellowstone Dr. SW, Grandville, MI 49418 and MOLLY KUBA, whose address is 21 W. Avenue F, Lewistown, IL 61542, Independent Co-Administrators, whose attorney of record is Timothy J. McGrath, of 440 S. State Street, Manhattan, IL, 60442. The estate will be administered without court supervision unless under Section 5/28-4 of the Probate Act (IL. Compiled Stat. 1992, Ch. 755 par. 5/28-4) any interested person terminates independent administration by mailing or delivering a petition to terminate to the clerk.

Claims against the estate may be filed with the Clerk of the Court at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois, 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before the day of June 28, 2023, or 3 months from the date of mailing or delivery, whichever is later, and that any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

E-filing is now mandatory with limited exemptions. To e-file, you must first create an account with an e-filing service provider. Visit <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/faq/gethelp.asp> or talk with your local circuit clerk's office. If you cannot e-file, you may be able to get an exemption that allows you to file in-person or by mail. Ask your circuit clerk for more information or visit [www.illinoislegalaid.org](http://www.illinoislegalaid.org).

## Attorney Wysocki files Ware estate claim

### PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE  
TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF  
SHIRLEY T. WARE, Deceased; No. 22 PR 709

#### CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given to creditors of the death of SHIRLEY T. WARE. Letters of Office were issued to Hugh J. Ware whose address is 1624 Heiden Ave., Crest Hill, IL 60403 as Independent Administrator, whose attorney of record is June, Prodehl, Renzi & Lynch, L.L.C., 1861 Black Road, Joliet, Illinois 60435.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Circuit Clerk's Office, Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before the 28th day of June, 2023 if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the clerk must be mailed or delivered by claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

Marilyn L. Wysocki  
For the Estate of Shirley T. Ware,  
Deceased

BY: Marilyn L. Wysocki  
1861 Black Road  
Joliet, IL 60435  
815-725-8000  
Published in the Braidwood Journal,  
Wednesday, Dec. 28, 2022; Jan. 4 and 11,  
2023.

## Attorney McGrath files Kochel estate notice

### PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE  
TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS -  
IN PROBATE

In the Matter of the Estate of CLARENCE F. KOCHER, Deceased. Case No.: 22 PR 749

#### CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given to creditors, of the death of CLARENCE F. KOCHER, of Joliet, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued December 12, 2022, to KIMBERLY A. CLARK, Independent Administrator, whose address is 230 Lee St., Manhattan, IL 60442, whose attorney of record is Timothy J. McGrath, of 440 S. State Street, Manhattan, IL, 60442. The estate will be administered without court supervision unless under Section 5/28-4 of the Probate Act (IL. Compiled Stat. 1992, Ch. 755 par. 5/28-4) any interested person terminates independent administration by mailing or delivering a petition to terminate to the clerk.

Claims against the estate may be filed with the Clerk of the Court at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois, 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before the day of June 28, 2023, or 3 months from the date of mailing or delivery, whichever is later, and that any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

E-filing is now mandatory with limited exemptions. To e-file, you must first create an account with an e-filing service provider. Visit <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/faq/gethelp.asp> or talk with your local circuit clerk's office. If you cannot e-file, you may be able to get an exemption that allows you to file in-person or by mail. Ask your circuit clerk for more information or visit [www.illinoislegalaid.org](http://www.illinoislegalaid.org).

## Reed Township sets 2023 meeting dates

### PUBLIC NOTICE

The following meeting dates have been set for Reed Township for the calendar year 2023. Meetings are held on the last Wednesday of the month (\*unless otherwise noted) at 440 N. Division Street, Braidwood, IL 60408

January 25	4:30pm
*February 28 (Tues)	4:30pm
March 29	4:30pm
April 26	4:30pm
May 31	4:30pm
June 28	4:30pm
July 26	4:30pm
August 30	4:30pm
September 27	4:30pm
October 25	4:30pm
November 29	4:30pm
December 27	4:30pm

Published in the Braidwood Journal on Wednesday, Jan. 4, 2023.

## Custer Fire Protection District sets 2023 meeting dates

### PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETINGS  
AUTHORITY UNDER THE  
OPEN MEETINGS ACT

NOTICE IS hereby given that THE Custer Fire Protection District shall have regular meetings of its Board of Trustees on the following dates for the year, January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023.

\*\*Agenda will be posted 48 hours prior to meeting on District website: [www.custerfd.org](http://www.custerfd.org) per OMA.

These meetings shall commence at 6:00 p.m. unless otherwise stated.

Wednesday, January 18, 2023  
Wednesday, February 15, 2023  
Wednesday, March 15, 2023  
Wednesday, April 19, 2023  
Wednesday, May 17, 2023  
Wednesday, June 21, 2023  
Wednesday, July 19, 2023  
Wednesday, August 23, 2023 (\*\*Note: not 3rd Wednesday of the month)  
Wednesday, September 20, 2023  
Wednesday, October 18, 2023  
Wednesday, November 15, 2023  
Wednesday, December 14, 2023 (\*\*Note: not 3rd Wednesday of the month)

All meetings shall take place in the cafeteria of Camelot Education, 35445 Washington St., Custer Park, IL unless otherwise noted.

Notice of special meetings of the Board of Trustees or Electors shall be given as required by statute.

Any questions concerning meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be directed to Ron Pruss, President of the Custer Fire Protection District (815) 458-2680 or by email: [info@custerfd.org](mailto:info@custerfd.org).

Published in the Braidwood Journal, Wednesday, Jan. 4, 2023.

# Students

creet bag of laundry soap, toothpaste, shampoo. I called the parents to make sure they were interested in getting that, they all wanted it and were happy to get it,” he added.

While “homeless” can mean living in a car, abandoned spaces, or in public spaces, it isn't limited to those people who live on the street. The act also defines homeless youth as “children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals.”

Funds available through the act can provide for the following:

Tutoring, supplemental instruction, and enriched educational services that are linked to the achievement of the same challenging State academic standards as the State establishes for other children and youths.

Expedited evaluations of the strengths and needs of homeless children and youths, including needs and eligibility for programs and services such as educational programs for gifted and talented students, children with disabilities, and English learners

Professional development and other activities for educators and special-

ized instructional support personnel that are designed to heighten the understanding and sensitivity of such personnel to the needs of homeless children and youths, the rights of such children and youths under this part, and the specific educational needs of runaway and homeless youths.

Referral services to homeless children and youths for medical, dental, mental, and other health services.

Assistance to defray the excess cost of transportation

Developmentally appropriate early childhood education programs

Services and assistance to attract, engage, and retain homeless children and youths, particularly homeless children and youths who are not enrolled in school, in public school programs and services provided to non-homeless children and youths.

The act also allows funding to be utilized for parental assistance, and for development of coordination between schools and agencies providing services to homeless children and youths.

Peterson serves as the liaison for McKinney-Vento eligible services in the Reed-Custer School District. Residents of the district who believe they may qualify can contact Peterson at [matt.peterson@255.net](mailto:matt.peterson@255.net).

Information on the act and local services can be found on the district's website, [www.rc255.net](http://www.rc255.net), under the “homeless info” tab.

# Council

cold snap.

“These are the things that the police department and staff are doing to improve community engagement,” Mikel said. “Most of the officers do not expect the credit. I just think it's important for the citizens of Braidwood to know.”

In other business before the City Council on Dec. 27:

• The new garbage cans were slated to come this week.

## Warren petitions for name change

### PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
COUNTY OF WILL, SS  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE  
TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION TO CHANGE THE NAME OF Toby Dwain Warren To Toby Dwain Taylor, Case No. 2022 MR000425

#### NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned on behalf of himself/herself, Toby Dwain Warren adult, shall appear in the Will County Courthouse, 100 West Jefferson Street, Joliet, IL 60432 courtroom 905 at 9:00 a.m. on the 17th day of February, 2023 before the judge assigned to hear said matter, and then there present a petition requesting the name of Toby Dwain Warren be changed to Toby Dwain Taylor.

Published in the Braidwood Journal on Wednesday, Jan. 4, 11, and 18, 2023.

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**Deadline for The Free Press Advocate, Braidwood Journal and Coal City Courant**  
Display Advertising: Friday, noon  
News and Classified Advertising: Monday, noon

E-mail: News & News Photos: [news@fpnusa.com](mailto:news@fpnusa.com)  
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Eric D. Fisher, publisher  
Marney Simon, editor



# From slum to success, James Smith makes a name in Braidwood

Success in life is not easily defined. Becoming a success takes hard work and perhaps a bit of luck. Let's look at James A. Smith, a man who started out with no future and with a bit of luck found a great one in Braidwood.



TIME WAS....  
Sandy Vasko

James A. Smith was born in New York City about 1860. He was orphaned at a very young age so his true birth date was unknown even to him. He and his brother John were put in the New York Juvenile Home. It was an overcrowded ghastly place. When they were in their teens they were put aboard an Orphan Train and sent west.

At this point I need to explain the age of the Orphan trains. In the over-crowded cities on the east coast, particularly New York there was a huge problem with orphan children. Immigrants were streaming in, tenements were over crowded and disease ridden, and the menial jobs offered them were often dangerous. In the states to the west that were just opening up to farming, there was a lack of hands to do the work. Children were viewed as free laborers.

So a scheme was devised to put work age children on a train that would make stops

across the Midwest and Western States. People would come down to the train and look the children over. If they found one they liked, the adoption papers were made out immediately and they took the child home on the spot. This practice continued well into the 20th century.

In the October 10, 1879 edition of the Wilmington Advocate, we read, "Asylum children - Another company of boys from the New York Juvenile Asylum will arrive in Joliet at the St. Nicholas Hotel, Wednesday, at 9 a.m., Oct. 15, (next week) and remain three hours, leaving at one the same day. Persons not supplied from the last company and all others desiring boys are requested to be at the hotel promptly."

James rode one of these trains and luckily was taken in by Mr. and Mrs. Adam White in Wilmington and reared on their farm until he was in his twenties. We know that either during that time or shortly thereafter, he took up the trade of a druggist, moving to Morris. And in October of 1880 we read, "Mr. James Smith, the right bower in Brown's drug store, Morris, until lately, is now with Dr. LeCaron."

We know Dr. LeCaron today as a British spy, whose job, besides being a doctor and pharmacist, was to relay information about the Irish League to his colleagues in London. He was not trained as a pharmacist nor is there any record of him being trained as a doctor. Despite that, he was president of the Illinois pharmacist

organization and lobbied for reform in dispensing drugs.

Dr. LeCaron's drug store on Main Street was brand new in 1880 and by 1885 James Smith had purchased it. He operated that business for the next 57 years. M. J. Donna, in his book The Braidwood Story, describes him like this, "He was an avid civic leader, - virtually the people's doctor."

Smith was an ambitious man. He was President of the First National Bank in Braidwood, an engine keeper on the Braidwood volunteer fire department, a member of the school board of District No. 6, a City Commissioner, one of the founders of the Masonic Lodge, and its treasurer, a Knight Templar and a moving force in building the Masonic Lodge on Main Street.

He was married three times, the first time to Nellie Goodrich who died at an early age. They had two children but one died in infancy. He then married Nellie's sister Nettie who had been widowed. Unfortunately Nettie also died after having two children, one of whom also died while very young. Finally in 1905 he married Miss Olive Barker. Olive's family was one of the first to come to Braidwood.

James Smith died in October of 1937 having lived a long and full life, and having risen from the slums of New York to, as Donna put it, "one of the most highly respected pioneers of the community."

## Camper confusion Wilmington residents want answers on violation notices

BY MARNEY SIMON  
EDITOR

WILMINGTON — Neighbors in Northcrest are calling foul on the city of Wilmington, after a handful of residents who park their recreational vehicles and campers on their lots were told they were in violation of city code.

The notices went out last month throughout the city. The notices were not tickets seeking fines, but rather letters stating that those folks who park their campers outside of an enclosure are violating city code. The letters included a copy of the city's ordinance on RV parking.

Russell Busby keeps his RV parked on his paved driveway on Outer Drive. Busby told the members of the City Council during their meeting on Dec. 20 that he's had a camper parked in that same spot for the majority of the 26 years that he's lived in the city.

"I got a notice from [the code enforcement officer] to move my camper, because it's not in the city ordinance. I'm here again after all these years, I've had a camper in my yard since 1999, and it's been good. Because I'm on a corner, I can maybe put it back three feet. That's it," Busby said, adding that his pie-shaped lot makes it nearly impossible for him to store his camper behind his fence.

"I've never had a problem, but now I'm here with you. This right here is uncalled for," he said, arguing that campers have never caused any issues

until the current administration was in office.

"How can we solve this for once and for all, for all the campers up in Northcrest," Busby asked the members of the City Council during the public comment portion of the meeting.

Northcrest resident Dave Carter also approached the council on the topic.

"I got the same notice, and I've had my camper there for nine years," Carter said. "We haven't had a problem until now. And then I go out and we got signatures, but not everybody got a letter who had a camper."

Busby and Carter had 37 of their neighbors, some with and some without campers of their own, sign a petition that the city should back off the camper restrictions. The issue was also front and center on social media, with Mayor Ben Dietz posting an explanation of the letters after some folks said they planned to come to City Hall to argue the validity of the notices.

"Some say it decreases the value of my home," Busby added, referring to that Facebook post by the mayor. "My home was bought for \$47,000. Right now, it's worth \$160,000. So, the \$30,000 camper sitting in front of my yard didn't depreciate my house, as somebody said. So, why can't we leave that in my yard?"

Mayor Dietz said city leaders can discuss the issue further, including changes or tweaks to the current ordi-

nance, but that the proper venue for that discussion is during a meeting of the Committee of the Whole, and not the public comment portion of a City Council meeting.

"We can absolutely add it to the next committee agenda to have it discussed," Dietz said. "So, there are two things. One, we can absolutely have this discussion at the committee meeting where it's intended to have the open discussion. And two, in that ordinance... there is a remedy. If you want to make it a legal conforming use in the city, right in the ordinance it tells you the exact process of how to do that."

Dietz also said the notices that were put on the doors of folks around town with campers were not tickets or fines, but were informational notices.

"A point of clarification with that, there was no violation notice," Dietz said. "That is serving you with what the ordinance says. You weren't ticketed, you weren't penalized. It was simply to tell you that you're in violation... We're not ticketing anyone. That's not the intent."

The city's regulation on storage of RVs and campers was first passed in 2000, and last amended in 2009. According to the code, RVs in residential districts can only be stored "provided they are stored in the rear yard or in a fully enclosed building or structure, including privacy fence. They shall not be stored in required front yard or corner side yard setbacks."



Photo by Marney Simon

**RUSSELL BUSBY KEEPS his RV on his blacktopped driveway in Northcrest, as does his neighbor across street. Busby and several neighbors have objected to the city sending out violation notices for having their campers in their front yards. City code requires campers to be in backyards or behind a fence.**

City code defines a recreational vehicle or travel trailer as a vehicle which is built on a single chassis; 400 square feet or less when measured at the largest horizontal projection; designed to be self propelled or permanently towable by a light duty truck; and designed primarily not for use as a permanent dwelling but as temporary living quarters for recreational camping, travel, or seasonal use.

The ordinance includes an exception, which allows residents to seek a written request to be excused from the ordinance at least 10 days prior to the meeting of the ordinance and licensing committee, which meets the second Tuesday of the month as part of the Committee of the Whole.

"The ordinance itself outlines the remedy if you want it to get approved by the city, it says right there in black and white what you need to do. And part of that is coming to the committee meeting, we need to approve that and that's that," Dietz said.

The mayor continued on to explain that the notices were not intended to be punitive, but rather informative. And, Dietz said, the notices did not go out willfully. The city's new code enforcement officer sent the notices after a second issue was brought to the city's attention.

"The whole reason behind why this is an issue today, is

that I received a complaint that someone was occupying on a semi-permanent or permanent basis one of those campers [in Northcrest]," Dietz said. "And while I was there, also noticed that there were multiple, not just campers but boats and trailers, that were completely blocking the sidewalk. You just can't do that. I'm not saying you (people at the meeting), but at that same time the ordinance enforcing officer can't just notice that person up, and see everyone else that is not complying."

"The whole point of us going through the process of hiring an ordinance enforce-

ment officer was not to issue fines, to make people's lives hell, or anything like that. It's compliance. Or, to change the ordinance that we have," Dietz continued. "Some of them don't make sense. We still outlaw dances. If you look far enough in the code, we still outlaw dances without a permit, I assure you it's there. I can say that we are not looking to serve you a violation, we're not asking you to move anything tomorrow, we're not looking to fine you tomorrow or even in January. That's not the intent."

"The general discussion is, there are issues with people blocking the sidewalk, and I think that's, you can't do that. Same thing if you have the tongue of your trailer over the sidewalk and some kid trips on it. I personally have had two of my kids trip on those. To me that's a no-go, the sidewalk is the sidewalks. Now, if you want to put it in your yard, I don't think anyone is here to say you can't do that... But again, it's the entire town. Nothing we do singles out a single person, it's what's best for town. And the simple fact is, people shouldn't be living in campers and people shouldn't be blocking the sidewalks. We can't notice them up for blocking the sidewalk, then let everyone else who is not conforming to the way the ordinance is written have a free pass."

The issue is expected to be included in the next Committee of the Whole meeting. That meeting takes place on Tuesday, Jan. 10 at 5:30 p.m. at Wilmington City Hall.

## RCMS names Ace winners for December



REED-CUSTER MIDDLE SCHOOL announced the Ace winners for December, students include (from left): Isaac Knight (7th grade), Michael Faletti (8th), Kyla Monahan (6th), Jayden DeVries (6th), and Jessica Stockin (7th).

### NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

The Braidwood Recreation Club will hold its Annual Meeting and Election on Saturday, January 14, 2023 at the Club Office.

Two Petitions were submitted for the Position of Director; Nicholas Stewart and Edward Wilson. The following incumbents have chosen to run for re-election as well; Rich Bolatto, P.J. O'Reilly, Troy Ehringer and Dan Belcher. Election will be for a 3-year term.

The names that will appear on the Ballot for Election will be: Rich Bolatto, P.J. O'Reilly, Troy Ehringer, Dan Belcher, Edward "Eddie" Wilson, and Nicholas Stewart.

No Petitions for By-Law Changes were submitted.

Voting hours for Resident Members will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

There is one vote per Membership. The Annual Meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m.

There will be no processing of Club Dues on this day.

Board of Directors  
Braidwood Recreation Club

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## We can do better

SHADOW LAKES—Hoping everyone had the most wonderful Christmas, whatever way you chose to celebrate. My wish for the new year is that everyone will be a little more kind, and a little less selfish. Remember none of us would be here if it weren't for the immigrants in our family tree, unless of course you're Native American. To those of you who write sarcastic comments, when they are thought provoking or humorous they are a joy to read. When they are mean and spiteful it only makes people feel sorry for you. We all can do better. I know I can. Cyndi Lewis

## A brave patriot

WILMINGTON—Never before have so many witnesses forgotten so much. The January 6th Select Committee interviewed more than a thousand people and the common refrain to their questions was "I don't recall". Was the intelligentsia running our country at that time so truly incompetent? Or rather, did the powerful in high positions find it so easy to disgrace our nation with blatant dishonesty? Regardless, some light shines through. And never more brightly than by a young woman who defied the shameful advice of her attorney who told her to hide the truth. Cassidy Hutchinson told the nation what she knew despite whatever consequences she would suffer. All Americans are forever indebted to such brave individuals who are protecting our democratic republic. Irene

## Another eyesore

WILMINGTON—Hillbilly Heaven here we go again. As I travel down beautiful Route 66 I see the pole barn is done (across from Berkot's grocery store). Now it's used to store a bunch of junk vehicles. It looks like a perfect place for the Munsters, Herman and Lily. They would love it. Thank you building committee for approving this. I bet if this was across from Winchester Green Plaza, it would of never got approved. You guys make Wilmington proud. Where is the ordinance officer? Come on let's clean this place up. I bet Coal City, Braidwood, Lockport and surrounding towns would never allow this. I'm tired of looking at eyesores.

## Too dependent

SHADOW LAKES—My name is Dan Hill. I understand we had a very severe winter across the country this year. I lived in Bridgeview, IL in the winter of 81-82. We had a wind-chill factor of -82 below zero, you can check that. I had the only car in the apartment complex that started. I tried to help many people jump-start their cars. I do not remember anybody dying from this. What is the problem with people today? I do not understand it. Do they not take precautions as we did years ago? Or are they just too dependent on the government?

## Jail doors opened

DIAMOND—Just a reminder. Don't forget as of Jan. 1, 2023 all of Illinois, 102 counties will see their jail doors open to release all prisoners. There will be murderers by the dozens. Assaulting rapists galore, free to trespass at their pleasure. Need I say more. All are dangerous and will arm themselves ASAP. Remember to thank our benevolent Governor Pritzker who wishes you all a miserable new year. P.S. I heard that approximately 95-100 counties of Illinois wish to secede, leaving Chicago and Cook Co. plus any collar counties wishing to stay under their control. Only gossip you understand, but it does sound promising, Sharon.

## A Fox reminder

WILMINGTON—Whenever I see Tucker Carlson and Jesse Watters on Fox I am reminded for all is evil at least Rupert Murdoch hires the handicapped.

## Where it's hot

WILMINGTON—Governors Abbott and DeSantis like to portray themselves as evangelical Christians and yet they treat the least of us as if they were the worst of us. Good thing they are used to hot weather.

## A divided board

WILMINGTON—I heard the Wilmington Area Historical Society has a divided board. I had to see and hear for myself and reevaluated the conditions. It does look like there is a divided board in the museum. Divided board must come together and work together. There have been board members who were voted in and never have shown up for a meeting. The only time they show up is when the Vice President wants to throw someone off the board in which it has happened. Then the Vice President wants to put someone on the board who voted the Secretary off in vote that was against the constitution and the bylaws, and the meeting should have stopped right then but it continued. I also noticed in meeting that things from the Wilmington Township problems were carried over to the meeting at the museum. Is this normal? In my viewpoint attending other meetings in the surrounded communities this is unethical. I have a question for the Vice President. Mr. Vice President. I never understood your ways of conducting a meeting at the museum. Seems when there is no show, your followers don't show either. Can you explain yourself to the community of Wilmington? Until the problem is resolved it will continue to

be the way it is. It can't correct itself until all those who are involved resign and a new board is in place. Noticing how some board member actions are and listen to only one person who thinks they are in control. It doesn't work. Neither does micromanaging the board. Until the board gets on the board and works together hand-in-hand, the situation will remain the same.

## Nice friendly people

SHADOW LAKES—I want to wish my neighbors on Fossil Cove Lane a Happy New Year. It's seldom in life you live in a neighborhood we're 99 percent of the people are nice friendly people. Eddie

## Add to wish list

COAL CITY—How about making a parking lot for parents to pick up their children at the elementary school instead of that line up on the south side of building? That isn't great.

## 5 million here

There is only one person that can deal with the open borders disaster, 9,000 illegally were crossing in Texas alone in one day recently. President Joe Biden refuses to deal with the illegal immigration problems. All he has to do is call on Congress, both parties, to come up with a decent immigration plan and he does nothing. Our tax dollars are caring for the 5 million that came here illegally in 2022 as they are held in hotels, motels, shelters, free bus rides all over U.S.A. Mexico, China, Russia, etc. just enjoy the charades.

## Fraud king

MORRIS—Just when you thought you heard or read it all, along comes Sam Bankman-Fried, age 30, son of two Stanford University law professors. He was once worth many billions and was looked at as the next Warren Buffet in the stock market circle. After he donates recently \$40 million to Democrat Senate candidates running for office. Then he files bankruptcy, now facing criminal charges for wire fraud, security fraud, money laundering, etc. I read this is one of the biggest financial frauds in American history. He was taken into custody in the Bahamas where he owned \$300 million in houses and other real estate holdings plus a house in a wealthy gated community purchased for his parents now part of bankruptcy proceedings. Once he was brought to U.S., New York City, he's allowed out of jail on \$250 million bail to be with his parents in California. It should have been no bail. There's good lawyers and bad lawyers. It's us versus them. Millions had invested in FTX and lost it all. The Democrats will see to it Sam is treated very well.

## Wake up people

SHADOW LAKES—I was born in 1949 and I have never in my lifetime seen a president go through so much by the opposite party. I do believe that Trump wants to bring America back to being a strong country, but the communists, aka Democrats, are doing everything they can to prevent him from ever running or becoming president again and I would be that when he runs in 2024 they will do everything they can to make him lose and he probably will. There are too many misinformed people in this country. Too many people who have never even fought for this country. Too many giveaway programs by the Democrats starting with Lyndon Johnson's great society which in fact has created the single parent family. So I hope you people, my neighbors especially, will wake up. If they don't, I'm accusing them of being Communist.

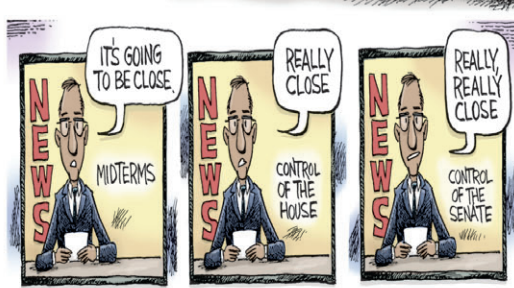
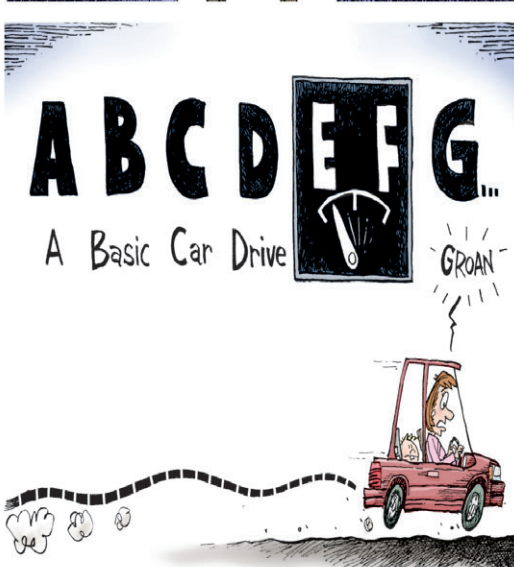
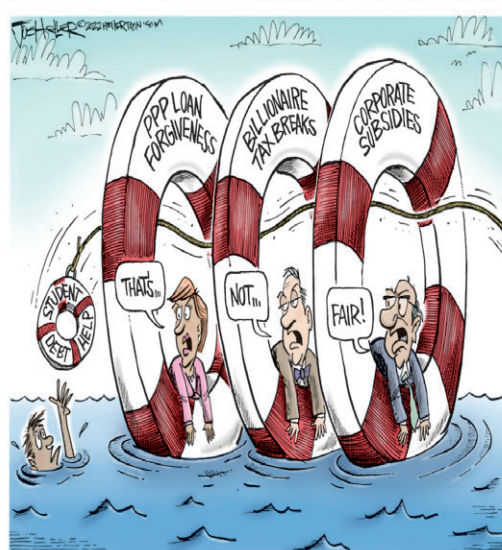
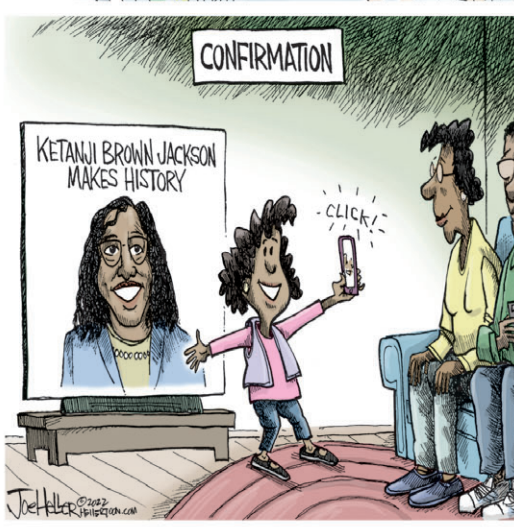
Dan Hill

## Selective prosecution

BRAIDWOOD—Biden's Department of Justice (USDOJ) is selectively targeting pro-lifers. Biden betrayed USDOJ's historic mission to treat all Americans equally under the law. Now USDOJ harasses and selectively prosecutes those who oppose Biden's pro-abortion policies, terrorizing them and their families, while not lifting a finger to prosecute the criminals who vandalized & firebombed 17 pro-life offices & pregnancy centers. FBI SWAT teams with ballistic shields, helmets, and assault rifles executed raids on peaceful pro-life leaders like Mark Houck, the father of seven who was arrested at his rural PA home, and Paul Vaughan, the father of 11, arrested at his TN farmhouse. Both of these arrests took place in front of their children who were terrified to see their fathers shackled in their homes. The purpose of these raids is to chill & discourage pro-life activism. The silent majority must not accept this.

## Out in the cold

WILMINGTON—It makes me sick to see all the people who leave their pets out in the cold during the winter. There are three different houses along our street where dogs are left out at night. One has a dog house while the other two are just in a fenced yard with no protection from the cold. It is so inhumane to leave a pet out in the cold. Have a heart and at least give them shelter in a garage or something. Better yet, put them in your house, show them you care by petting them and giving them a warm home. You'll get lots of love in return.



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# State's minimum wage rises to \$13 an hour

The Illinois minimum wage increased \$1 on Sunday, making the new required minimum wage \$13 an hour.

Minimum wage workers are encouraged to keep a close eye on their paychecks in the new year as any time worked in 2023 must reflect the new \$13 an hour minimum wage.

There have been five increases in the state minimum wage since Governor JB Pritzker signed legislation in 2019 that establishes a schedule of wage increases, putting Illinois on the path to a \$15 an hour minimum wage by 2025.

Prior to the first of these minimum wage increases in 2020, the last time work-

ers in Illinois received an increase in the minimum wage was more than a decade ago in 2010.

"Illinois workers deserve a minimum wage that keeps up with the rising costs of living," said Governor JB Pritzker. "That's why, during my first year as Governor, we raised the minimum wage with a gradual ramp to \$15 an hour. Starting January 1st, minimum wage workers will get a raise and businesses will continue receiving tax credits for providing their workforce with a living wage."

The minimum wage for workers who regularly earn tips has increased to \$7.80 an hour; these workers must still earn the

minimum wage after receiving tips, or the employer is required to make up the difference. Workers under 18 who work fewer than 650 hours a year will earn a minimum wage of \$10.50 per hour.

All employers in Illinois are required to post the "Your Rights Under Illinois Employment Laws" poster in the workplace where notices to employees are regularly posted.

Employees can file a minimum wage complaint with IDOL at <https://www2.illinois.gov/idol/Pages/Complaints.aspx> or by calling the minimum wage hotline: (800) 478-3998.

# Picnic, camping permits go on sale

The Forest Preserve District's picnic and camping permits go on this week, both online and at Sugar Creek Administration Center in Joliet.

Permits are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Picnic permits are available for more than 30 rentable shelters that are nestled in forest preserves throughout Will County. Permits are required for groups of 25 or more and encouraged for smaller groups that want to ensure the use of a specific shelter location.

Browse picnic permit details and view photos of the shelters on the Picnicking Page before deciding on a location for your 2023 get-together with family, friends or colleagues.

Tent camping is allowed at Forked Creek Preserve – Ballou Road Access in Wesley Township, Goodenow Grove Nature Preserve in Crete Township, Hammel Woods – DuPage River Access in Shorewood, McKinley Woods – Frederick's Grove in Channahon and Messenger Woods Nature Preserve in Homer Glen.

In addition to online and in-person booking options, camping permits also are available by phone. A 50 percent discount is offered to youth groups. The Forest Preserve also offers a "No Gear, No Problem" program for those who need to rent camping equipment. The camping gear rental fee will drop from \$25 per rental in 2022 to \$20 in 2023. For more information, visit the Camping Page.

Permits went on sale at 10 a.m. Jan. 3 at these locations: Four Rivers Environmental Education Center in Channahon, Isle a la Cache Museum in Romeoville and Plum Creek Nature Center in Crete Township. These visitor centers are open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 4 p.m. Sundays, and closed Mondays.

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# New year brings price jump at the pump

Gasoline prices in Illinois have risen 10.1 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.24/g Monday, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,378 stations in Illinois.

"For the first time in two months, the nation's average price of gasoline rose sharply last week, as extremely cold weather led to many refinery issues, shutting down over a million barrels of refining capacity, pushing wholesale prices up," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy.

Add to that the first of two state tax increases this year and the price at the pump jumped 29 cents at Wilmington stations, 17 cents in Braidwood and 11 cents in Coal City.

The lowest price in the state on Monday was \$2.69/g while the highest was \$4.99/g, a difference of \$2.30/g. Joliet stations were averaging

\$2.94/g while in Bourbonnais it was \$3.19 and Morris \$3.06.

"While the jump at the pump will likely be temporary as most refiners get back online after cold-weather related issues, some regions like the Rockies may see more price increases than others as cold-weather shutdowns hit the region fairly hard, with one refinery likely remaining down through the first quarter of 2023. Most areas have seen the bulk of the rise already hit, but should oil continue to rally, more increases could be on the way."

Prices in Illinois are 40.5 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 8.7 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has fallen 1.4 cents in the last week and stands at \$4.67 per gallon.

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# Illinois' high court makes history

Majority-female court is first ever

BY JERRY NOWICKI  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Supreme Court made history last month when two newly seated members gave the bench a 5-2 majority of woman judges.

Justices Elizabeth Rochford and Mary Kay O'Brien, of Essex, were sworn in on Dec. 5. The two Democrats were both elected to the high court in November. Justice Joy V. Cunningham, who was appointed to replace retired Justice Anne M. Burke, was sworn in on Dec. 1.

The new justices join Lisa Holder White, who was sworn in as the court's first Black woman justice on July 7. Cunningham became the second, bringing the number of Black justices on the Supreme Court to three, also a high-water mark for the institution.

The historic court will be led by Chief Justice Mary Jane Theis, who officially assumed that title in October, following Burke and becoming the fourth woman chief in the court's history.

She's been on the court since 2010 and ascended to the top spot by the court's standard process, which gives the gavel to longest-tenured justice who hasn't yet held it.

She'll preside over a court on which four of its seven members have been seated for less than six months.

"In my life story, I am not a trailblazer. I am not Mary Ann McMorrow, who was the first woman on our court," Theis said in an interview with Capitol News Illinois.

McMorrow was first elected to the court in 1992.

Diversity on the bench, Theis said, is both enriching to deliberations and important from a symbolism standpoint.

"It wasn't that long ago when Charles Freeman was the first African American on this court. He joined the court in 1990," Theis said. "But he was the only African American up until 2018 and then Scott Neville joined this court."

Neville remained the only Black justice until he was joined this year by Holder White and Cunningham.

"Suddenly, we're now going to have three people (on this court) that are people of color," Theis said. "It says something about our state and something about our court that we've evolved to such a place that we can have that diversity."

While Theis said she's invigorated by the new court and the experiences and worldviews its new members will bring to the bench, she described the challenges of the court's turnover as "innumerable."

## Preschool hike for Little Explorers

The Forest Preserve District of Will County will host a "Little Explorers – Colors of Winter" event from 10-11:30 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 18 at the Four Rivers Environmental Education Center, Channahon.

Bring your preschoolers ages 3-5 to Four Rivers to explore the colors of winter with a story, a hike, hands-on activities, crafts and free play. Dress for indoor and outdoor activities. Free registration is due by Jan. 17.

# Illinois' annual population loss is accelerating

BY GREG BISHOP  
THE CENTER SQUARE

For the ninth consecutive year, Illinois lost population and the losses are accelerating.

Overall, the United States grew by 0.4% over the past year that ended July 1. That's 1.25 million additional people for a total of nearly 333.3 million nationwide.

Most of the states grew with Florida and Texas leading the way in the latest U.S. Census estimates released last week. Eighteen states saw negative net migration. Behind only California and New York, Illinois was third worst for people leaving the state.

Illinois had more births than deaths in the year that ended July 1, and more inbound international migration. But, domestic migration saw the state lose 141,600. For the year that

ended July 1, Illinois lost 110,000 on net.

"Not good numbers for the state and continued rejection of the policies that we've seen from here and it's important to note that our neighboring states, with the exception of Michigan, they all grew," Wirepoints President Ted Dabrowski said.

The total net loss for Illinois in the past year equates to around the size of Peoria or Springfield.

When looking at the annual estimate change from April 1, 2020, to July 1, 2022, Illinois' population went from 12.8 million to 12.5 million, a decline of more than 230,513.

It's not just the annual estimates that show Illinois' decline accelerating. There's continued IRS migration data or moving companies that have Illinois high on the list for outbound moves.

# Mobile food pantry coming to Wilmington

Catholic Charities of Joliet will be hosting a mobile food pantry at Kuzma Care Cottage, 635 S. Main St., Wilmington on Tuesday, Jan. 17, from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Participants need to line up in the St. Rose Church parking lot by entering on the Main Street side. The mobile food pantry will use a "drive thru" method to distribute

food. Please clear space in your trunk or backseat so volunteers can load boxes of food directly into your vehicle.

Food is free to neighbors in need; no ID, proof of address or income is required. Everyone is welcome. Food is distributed on a first-come, first served basis, while supplies last.

# Coal City United Methodist Church to host soup supper

Coal City United Methodist Church, located at 6805 E. McArdle Road in Coal City, will hold a Hallelujah" Soup Supper on Saturday, Jan. 7, from 4 to 6:30 p.m.

They will be serving their delicious homemade chicken noodle soup & chili. Each meal includes your choice of soup, a sandwich, crackers, a beverage, ice cream & dessert. Carry-outs are available.

The cost is \$12 for ages 13 & older; \$5 for children ages 3 - 12 and children age 2 & under eat free. All proceeds will go to the church's building fund. Tickets will be sold at the door.

# Check your button number

Looking for #219

The search continues for a winner of the Christmas Parade split-the-pot button drawing sponsored by the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce.

After two weeks without button owner 183 claiming the \$410 prize money, a new button number—219—has been

drawn. The owner of button number 219 has until 5 p.m. Jan. 6 to claim the prize by calling the Chamber at 815-476-5991.

A new number will be drawn Friday if 219 is not claimed before the 5 p.m. cutoff.

# Tai Chi class to begin

The Wilmington Lions Club announce a 12-week session of Tai Chi on Fridays beginning Jan. 6 at the Lions Hall, 805 River St., Wilmington.

Class will begin promptly at 9:30 a.m. The fee for the 12 weeks is \$35. Seniors and veterans pay \$30 or students who have completed a previous 12-week session will pay \$25.

Tai Chi originated as a Chinese martial art practiced primarily for health benefits. The movements are slow, methodical and repetitive.

It has been shown that this type of activity is perfect for strengthening the tissues around joints and improving balance and strength.

The beginning Tai Chi student will be introduced to the basics of Tai Chi, that of weight transfer as they learn the positions.

The intermediate/advanced student will perfect their practice by working towards the flowing "meditation in motion" which produces the many health benefits of Tai Chi.

Participants should arrive Jan. 6 at 9 a.m. to register. Dress comfortably. For more details call Wayne 815-478-4016.

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# Hop a cruise ship for a Yellow Bird cocktail

The 2023 Wave Season is here! What exactly is Wave Season? Wave Season marks the time of year when cruise lines offer their best deals on cruises for the upcoming year, and the timing is perfect as most of us are looking to board a ship to any destination where the weather is warm.



**THE SUNDAY COCKTAIL**  
Brian Rung

claim that a drink was named after the song. That drink had to be yellow, of course.



The other version of the origin asserts that the drink has nothing to do with the song and has everything to do with the bright yellow color of the drink. In Caribbean countries the drink was likely made with a gold rum which further compounds the gold/yellow tint when added to bright yellow liqueur.

I can see either one of those versions of the origin as correct, more than likely it was a combination of the two.

This is where the twists and turns begin. Let's assume that one Caribbean Island had a version of the Yellow Bird, and you loved it.

Then, you ordered the drink on your next port of call and the bartender literally just made up something on the spot that was sweet, yellow, and loaded with rum. The drink may have been yellow, but it would not have been a Yellow Bird without one key ingredient: Galliano.

Unlike many "yellow" drinks, the Yellow Bird does not rely on pineapple juice or banana liqueur to achieve the bright yellow hue. The yellow tint in the Yellow Bird comes from the curiously complex Italian herbal liqueur, Galliano.

The IBA (International Bartenders Association) specifies that the yellow bird is a four-ingredient cocktail made of lime juice, white rum, triple sec, and Galliano. No Galliano, no Yellow Bird.

Like most herbal Italian liqueurs, Galliano is a digestif meaning it is meant to be enjoyed after a meal. About fifty years ago the mixology community began to experiment with Galliano and found the complexity to be more of an asset than a hindrance and the liqueur became a key ingredient in modern classic cocktails such as the Harvey Wallbanger, Golden Cadillac, and Golden Dream.

Galliano serves as an excellent sweetener due to its strong vanilla notes, but also brings subtle notes of juniper, lavender, peppermint, and cinnamon.

In addition to Galliano, you are going to need a quality triple sec to turn out a great Yellow Bird. It doesn't get any better than Cointreau in that department.

Cointreau is not cheap but is available in 375ml bottles at 50% of the price of the 750ml. If Cointreau is unavailable and you need a substitute, go with Bol's triple sec.

In most cases I avoid overly sweet light rum in cocktails, but in this case a sweeter light rum performs well and compliments the bitter orange peel notes of the Cointreau and the sour lime.

The Galliano is both sweet and floral which ties this drink together. Bacardi light rum may be a bit peppery for this drink, go with a smooth Caribbean rum like Cruzan, or the Nicaraguan Flor de Cana 4 year.

Use fresh lime juice in this and every cocktail that calls for lime juice and be sure to give this drink a good shake to bring all four ingredients together.

I have tried blended versions of the drink loaded with frozen fruit, and I have tried yellow tinted shots by the same name. The original is best, hands down. You may have to visit more than one store to track down Galliano and Cointreau, but I assure you it's absolutely worth the effort.

You have heard the song, now you can enjoy the drink while you plan your 2023 Caribbean cruise. Trust me, you have heard the song. Add the Arthur Lyman version to your playlist while you enjoy the Yellow Bird. If it sounds familiar it's because it has played in nearly every sitcom's "Hawaiian episode" from I Love Lucy to Full House.

The Yellow Bird is built in a shaker and served in a chilled cocktail (Martini) glass.

Combine in shaker:  
1 oz. light rum  
1/2 oz Galliano  
1/2 oz. triple sec (Cointreau is best)  
1/2 oz fresh lime juice  
Shake well with plenty of ice and strain into a chilled cocktail glass  
Garnish with maraschino cherry  
Until next week, enjoy responsibly.

# Zachary Plese weds Jerica Gladstone



MARTY AND MAUREEN PLESE of Wilmington would like to announce the marriage of their son Zachary Plese to Jerica Gladstone, daughter of Patricia and Steele Gladstone of Mechanicsville, Maryland. Zach, a 2014 graduate from Wilmington High School, and Jerica were married on October 14, 2022 in Tennessee and then honeymooned in Hawaii. The newlyweds are both employed by the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department as detectives and live in Nashville, TN.

# Judge invalidates cash bail reform in some counties; Supreme Court appeal pending

BY JERRY NOWICKI  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

SPRINGFIELD — A Kankakee County judge ruled Wednesday, Dec. 28 that lawmakers overreached their constitutional authority in passing a measure to abolish cash bail in Illinois, while other provisions in the wide-ranging SAFE-T Act criminal justice reform were not affected by the ruling.

The ruling by Judge Thomas W. Cunnington leaves the impending cash bail reform in limbo in at least 64 of Illinois' 102 counties that had joined the consolidated lawsuit ahead of the reform's scheduled Jan. 1 implementation.

The reform remains scheduled to take effect in the more than 30 counties that did not sue, which contain roughly two-thirds of the state's population. Of the state's 10 most

populous counties, six were not part of the lawsuit (Cook, DuPage, Lake, Kane, St. Clair and Champaign). The counties of Will, McHenry, Winnebago and Madison were all part of the lawsuit.

The ruling did not invalidate other provisions of the SAFE-T Act which had already taken effect, such as reforms to police officer training and certification standards and police body camera requirements.

Cunnington wrote in a 36-page decision that the cash bail provisions effectively and improperly amended a section of the state's constitution that states, "all persons shall be bailable by sufficient sureties," except in a few specific circumstances.

He also wrote that ending cash bail is an improper overreach by lawmakers, who have no constitutional authority to govern the administrative functions of Illinois courts due

to the separation of powers. Bail, Cunnington wrote, has been held by the Supreme Court to be "administrative" in nature.

The constitution also specifically mentions bail in a section on victims' rights, when it states victims have a right "to have the safety of the victim and the victim's family considered in denying or fixing the amount of bail." Cunnington found that eliminating bail prevents courts from "effectuating the constitutionally mandated safety of the victims and their families."

Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul said in a news release the state will appeal the decision directly to the state Supreme Court, but a timeline for a ruling from the high court is unclear.

"Most of the SAFE-T Act's provisions have been in effect for more than a year, and regardless of today's circuit

court decision, all parts of the SAFE-T Act, including the pre-trial release portions addressed in the court's decision, will go into effect Jan 1," Raoul said. "For instance, the right of individuals awaiting criminal trials — people who have not been convicted of a crime and are presumed innocent — to seek release from jail without having to pay cash bail will go into effect in a few short days, despite the court's ruling against those provisions."

Cunnington rejected other arguments by the dozens of state's attorneys that centered on the legislative process, namely that the bill was not given a proper hearing and violated the "single subject" rule. Court precedent holds that as long as the House speaker and Senate president certify that a bill is properly passed, courts have no standing to intervene, he wrote.

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# OBITUARIES

## Linda Anderson

BRAIDWOOD—Linda A. Anderson (nee Morris), 72, of Braidwood, passed away after a six year battle with cancer, Wednesday, Dec. 28, 2022 at Ascension St. Joseph Medical Center in Joliet.

She was born Sept. 2, 1950 in Columbus, OH to Calvin Morris and Geraldine "Bum" (nee Ashley) Jankowski. Linda graduated from Plainfield High School and retired in 2016 from Ulta Beauty as an executive assistant. She loved cooking and baking, and was proud to be a part of a local quilting group that created lap quilts for disabled veterans.

Surviving are her son and daughter-in-law, Ronald (Kimberly) Fowler, of Wilmington; grandson, Joshua (fiancé, Alexandra Medeiros) Fowler, of Georgia; brother-in-law, Richard Luzbetak of Joliet; sister-in-law, Barb Morris, of Braidwood; brothers: Ray (Ruth) Jankowski, Leonard (Edith) Jankowski and Father James Michael Jankowski; sister, Marianne (Sonny)

Skole and nephews and niece, Jeff (Angie) Luzbetak, Charlene (Paul) Abbinanti, Matthew and Mitchel Morris and several additional nieces and nephews.

Preceding her in death were her parents, Calvin and Bum; sister, Kathleen Luzbetak and brother, Philip Morris.

Cremation rites will be accorded. A memorial visitation for Linda was held at R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory, Saturday, Dec. 31, 2022.

Memorial donations in her name to the American Cancer Society would be appreciated.

For more information and to visit her online guestbook, please log on to [www.rwpatersonfuneralhomes.com](http://www.rwpatersonfuneralhomes.com) or find them on Facebook.

R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory 401 E. Main St., Braidwood, was in charge of arrangements.

## Shirley M. Miller

DIAMOND—Shirley M. Miller, 95, of Diamond, passed away unexpectedly at her home on Tuesday, Dec. 27, 2022.

Born May 22, 1927, in Chicago, Shirley Marie was a daughter of John and Essie Edna (Winters) Albrecht. She was raised in Chicago until her sophomore year of high school, when she moved to Coal City and went on to graduate with the Coal City High School class of 1945. On Sept. 14 of that same year, Shirley married Raleigh Miller in Chicago, and together they made a home and raised a family in the Coal City/Diamond area. She worked various jobs throughout the years, which included employment at the Joliet Arsenal, Testa's IGA, Wescom, DeMert & Dougherty and Major School of Dance. Shirley was an active member of the Coal City United Methodist Church, where she enjoyed singing in the choir, taught Sunday school, was involved with the Evening Star Circle, and more recently active with Friendship Circle. When her girls were young, Shirley volunteered with the PTA/PTO and Music Boosters, served as a 4-H Leader and Brownie Leader, and assisted as a Room Mother. In addition, Shirley was of constant support of her husband Raleigh's musical career and was sure to be in attendance at many of his performances. She served as an Election Judge, belonged to the White Star Chapter of the Eastern Star, volunteered for Meals on Wheels, and leaves a legacy of constant caregiving of the young, the old, and those who needed a helping hand.

A generous, hard-working, kind-hearted and beautiful soul, Shirley's life was centered on family and friends. She took pleasure in feeding the birds, tending to her flower and vegetable gardens, swimming, and decorating her home for the seasons. With her warm smile and jovial laugh, Shirley was one to "never, never, never give up."

Survivors include three daughters: Cynthia

(Dean) Miller-Webb, of Snellville, GA and Romeoville, IL; Jacqueline (Dale) Kuntz, of Kingwood, TX and Carol (Bob) Crawford, of Diamond; grandchildren: Timothy (Hollie) Washburn, of Coal City; Tod (Jamie) Washburn, of Morris; Shelley Crawford, of Parker, CO; Katie (Steve) Hlavac, of Yorkville, IL; Catherine (Michael) Williams, of Marietta, GA; Christy (Andy) Steinhauer, of Powder Springs, GA; Daren (Trisha) Kuntz, of Bennington, NE and Danielle (Joe) Mazurkiewicz, of Grayslake, IL; great-grandchildren: Ali, Emma, Abby, Nolan, William, Ava, Addison, Natalie, Reagan, A.J., Rigdon, Sam, Max, Elise and Jaxson; great-grandchildren: Jace and Jenna, and numerous nieces and nephews.

Shirley was preceded in death by her parents, her husband of 54 years, Raleigh, in 2000; brother-in-law, Gayle Miller; sister-in-law, Faith Miller Harris; and her dear special friend, Tom Trotter.

The family will receive friends for a visitation at the Coal City United Methodist Church, 6805 E. McArdle Rd. in Coal City on Saturday, Jan. 7, 2023, from 10 a.m. until time of funeral service at 1 p.m. Rev. Jay Regennitter will officiate, and burial will follow in Oakwood Cemetery, Wilmington, where Shirley will be laid to rest with Raleigh.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Shirley's memory to the Coal City United Methodist Church, 6805 E. McArdle Rd., Coal City, IL 60416; Bohemian National Cemetery, Braidwood, IL, at [www.bohemiannational.org](http://www.bohemiannational.org); or to a charity of the donor's choosing.

Family and friends are encouraged to log onto [www.ReevesFuneral.com](http://www.ReevesFuneral.com) to sign the guestbook, upload photographs and share Shirley's memorial page online through social media.

Funeral services and arrangements have been made under the direction and care of Reeves Funeral Homes, Ltd. in Coal City.

## Deacon William F. Bevan III

JOLIET—Deacon William F. Bevan III, D.D.S., 86, and a lifelong resident of Joliet, went to eternity on Dec. 25, 2022.

Born July 30, 1936 in Joliet, William was a son of Dr. William F. II and Marguerite (Welch) Bevan. He was proud to have been the great-grandson of Fred Bevan, a Roman Catholic who came from England; served in the Civil War, and is laid to rest in Calvary Cemetery in Kankakee, as well as Herman Welch who emigrated from Germany; also served in the Civil War, and is laid to rest in St. Joseph Cemetery in Cabery, IL.

A graduate of St. Raymond's Grade School (1950), Joliet Catholic High School (1954), Joliet Junior College and Lewis University, William completed his post graduate work at Northern Illinois University and Marquette University. He received his Doctorate of Dental Surgery at Loyola University, and post graduate work at the University of Michigan Dental College. Dr. Bevan practiced Dentistry in Joliet with his father, Dr. William F. Bevan II for 53 years, a practice his grandfather started in 1896.

Dr. Bevan was a life member of the American and Illinois Dental Society; past president of the Will County Dental Society; life member of the Knights of Columbus 4th Degree, and was a member of The Catholic League.

Baptized at Sacred Heart Church in Joliet, William received his First Holy Communion,



Confirmation and was ordained a Deacon at the Cathedral of St. Raymond's. He was assigned a Deacon at St. Paul Catholic Church in Joliet, and most recently at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church in Coal City.

Deacon Bevan will lie in state at the Cathedral of St. Raymond, 604 N. Raynor Ave. in Joliet on Thursday, Jan. 5, 2023 from 4 p.m. until 7 p.m. Vigil Service. Funeral services will follow Friday morning, Jan. 6, 2023 at 11 a.m. in the Cathedral. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated with Rev. Michael Lane presiding, and Deacon Karl Huebner assisting.

Burial will be in Resurrection Cemetery in Romeoville, where he will be laid to rest with his parents.

Pallbearers will be fellow Joliet Diocesan Deacons. Honorary Pallbearers are John Cronin, Jim Sefcik, Art Hrvatin, David Skorupa, Jim Skorupa, John Rems, Tom Grohar, and classmates from the Joliet Catholic graduating Class of 1954.

In lieu of flowers, Masses are preferred. Family and friends are encouraged to log onto [www.ReevesFuneral.com](http://www.ReevesFuneral.com) to sign the guest book, upload photographs and share Deacon Bevan's memorial page.

Funeral services and arrangements have been made under the direction and care of Reeves and Baskerville Funeral Homes.

## Arland E. Percy Jr.

WILMINGTON—Arland E. Percy Jr., 62, of Wilmington and formerly of Joliet, passed away unexpectedly on Wednesday, Dec. 28, 2022 at Silver Cross Medical Center in New Lenox.

Born Sept. 20, 1960 in Mattoon, IL, Arland Edward was a son of Arland "Edward" Percy Sr. of Diamond and the late Linda Jean (Paden) Percy. He attended Laraway School and graduated from Joliet East High School with the class of 1978. Following high school, Arland worked in the Steel Mills before gaining employment with the City of Wilmington Water Department. Most recently he had been working security.

On Oct. 1, 1994, Arland married Brenda (nee Davis) in the First Presbyterian Church in Wilmington, and together they made their home together in Wilmington. Over the years, Arland took pleasure in playing baseball and fishing, and was a fan of all sports, particularly following the Chicago Blackhawks and Chicago Cubs. He enjoyed old movies and radio shows, and had a love of animals, especially his dogs. To his family he was known to be a gentle giant and never mean, vindictive or aggressive to anyone. Arland always enjoyed making people laugh and will be remembered for his witty

sense of humor.

Survivors include his wife, Brenda; father, Ed Percy; two sisters, April Veerman, of New Lenox and Georgianna (Jeff) Shenk, of Braidwood; his mother-in-law, Annette Kincheloe, and brother-in-law, Douglas Davis, both of Wilmington, and numerous nieces and nephews.

Arland was preceded in death by his mother, Linda Percy; brother-in-law, Brad Veerman; maternal and paternal grandparents, and his father-in-law, Benjamin Kincheloe.

Cremation rites have been accorded, and a memorial service is being planned for a later date. Correspondences may be directed to the family c/o Baskerville Funeral Home.

Family and friends are encouraged to log onto [www.BaskervilleFuneral.com](http://www.BaskervilleFuneral.com) to sign the guestbook, upload photographs and share Arland's memorial page online through social media.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Arland's memory to his family for their distribution.

Cremation services and arrangements have been made under the direction and care of Baskerville Funeral Home in Wilmington.

## Jeff J. Bowen

BRAIDWOOD—Jeff J. Bowen, 63, of Braidwood, passed away Saturday, Dec. 24, 2022 at his home.

Born July 20, 1959 in Joliet, he was the son of Gifford and Barbara (nee Linssen) Bowen. He was a graduate of Lockport Township High School and member of the Loyal Order of the Moose Lodge #241 in Wilmington and Teamsters Local #179 and #705. Jeff was an over the road truck driver his entire life. He was known to be a "backyard mechanic" who enjoyed working on his vehicles and he also appreciated the art of bushcraft.

Surviving are three children: Chance Houston Gifford (Jade) Bowen, of Wilmington; Sgt. Austin Taylor Bowen, of Braidwood and Dakota Raye (Christopher) Pahr, of Goodlettsville, TN; six grandchildren: Kaylie Eitzkorn, Damian Mixon, Nickolas Bowen, Elijah



Bowen, Matthias Bowen, and Waylon Bowen; five siblings: Neil, Jerry, Jan, Rosie, and Linda; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Preceding him in death were his parents and beloved wife, Rebecca Lynn (nee Elliott) Bowen, who he married Nov. 24, 1978 in Lockport and predeceased him on Nov. 17, 2019.

Funeral services were held at the R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory on Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2023. Interment followed in Mt. Vernon Cemetery in Lemont, IL.

For more information and to visit his online guestbook, please log on to [www.rwpatersonfuneralhomes.com](http://www.rwpatersonfuneralhomes.com) or find them on Facebook.

R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory, 401 E. Main St., Braidwood was in charge of arrangements.

## Benny R. Cline Jr.

ORLAND PARK—Benny R. Cline Jr., 53, of Orland Park, passed away on Dec. 23, 2022 at his home.

Born July 31, 1969 in Chicago, he was a son of Benny Sr. and Carolyn (Thomas) Cline. Benny was raised and educated in Chicago. On July 8, 2017 Benny married Heidi Lamkin in Luttrell, TN she survives. Benny enjoyed watching WWE and was a huge sports fan, with many considering him to be the biggest Chicago Cubs fan in all of history. He enjoyed playing catch but more importantly being a commentator during the baseball games which most people found more exciting than the game itself. During his time in Tennessee he served as a deacon at his church. He was known by many to always see the good in people and seem to never know a stranger. Benny loved both Country and Christian music and could always be heard singing. He truly wore his heart on his sleeve and saw other people's needs above his, often times saying, "They need it more than I do." Benny cherished his family and will always be remembered for his love of life and dedicated service to others.

Survivors include his wife, Heidi Lamkin, of Orland Park; two children, Colleen Cline, of



Spring Valley, IL and Carrie Cline (Bina), of Homer Glen, IL; three brothers: Michael Cline, of Orland Park; Earl (Amy) Cline, of Rochester, IN and Randy (Jenny) Cline, of Kokomo, IN; two sisters, Martha (Jorge) Alvarado, of Orland Park and Rebecca (Jeff) O'Shaughnessy, of Orland Park and several nieces, nephews and cousins.

Benny was preceded in death by his parents.

The family will receive friends at Reeves Funeral Home, 75 N. Broadway, one block north of IL Route 113, in Coal City on Jan. 4, 2023 from 9 a.m. until time of funeral service at 12 p.m. Reverend Dr. Roy Backus will officiate and burial will follow in Braceville-Gardner Cemetery.

Preferred memorials in Benny's memory may be made to the family to assist with funeral expenses.

Friends and family are encouraged to log onto [www.ReevesFuneral.com](http://www.ReevesFuneral.com) to sign the online guestbook, submit photos and share Benny's memorial page via social media.

Funeral services have been made under the direction and care of Reeves Funeral Homes, Ltd. in Coal City.

## Ronald Gabriel

ELWOOD—Ronald Rex Gabriel, 70, of Elwood, passed away Friday, Dec. 30, 2022 at the Lightways Hospice Home in Joliet.

Born March 25, 1952 in Joliet, Ronald Rex was a son of Rex L. and Marion L. (Clever) Gabriel. He was raised and educated in the Plainfield area, and went on to serve in the United States Army during the Vietnam Conflict. Upon his honorable discharge, Ron went on to make his career as a mechanic.

He was an active member of Families of Faith Church in Channahon; belonged to the American Warriors Motorcycle Club, and was a member and the past Jr. Commander at Stone City VFW Post 2199. Ron will be remembered for his love of motorcycles, and his passion for Veteran's organizations.

Survivors include his brother and sister-in-law, Jerry and Shelley Gabriel, of Joliet; nephew, James Rex Gabriel (Amber Marie Hubner); great-niece, Aurora Skye Gabriel and great-nephew, Logan Hubner, as well as numerous



cousins and friends.

Ron was preceded in death by his parents, Rex and Marion Gabriel.

Cremation rites are being accorded, and a Memorial Service is in the planning at Families of Faith Church in Channahon.

Following the services, Ron will be laid to rest with military honors in Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood.

A complete obituary with service details will be updated as information becomes available.

Preferred memorials in lieu of flowers may be made as gifts in Ron's memory to a Veteran's Organization of the donor's choosing.

Family and friends are encouraged to log onto [www.BaskervilleFuneral.com](http://www.BaskervilleFuneral.com) to sign the guest book, upload photographs and share Ron's memorial page online through social media.

Cremation services and arrangements have been made under the direction and care of Baskerville Funeral Home in Wilmington.

## Dorothy Ventsias

DIAMOND—Dorothy J. "Dottie" Ventsias, 90, of Diamond and formerly Joliet, passed away unexpectedly on Dec. 20, 2022 at Silver Cross Medical Center in New Lenox.

Born April 22, 1932 in Lockport Township, Dorothy Joan was a daughter of Kelly George and Lucy (Coates) Barto. She was raised and educated in the Lockport area and graduated from Joliet Township High School. Dorothy married John Ventsias and worked alongside John for more than 25 years as the office manager for the family restaurant supply business. Throughout the years, Dottie enjoyed numerous crafts and took pleasure in cooking and baking. In addition, she enjoyed the theater, both stage plays and movies. She was a member of the Country Meadows Association.

Dorothy is survived by two sisters-in-law, Thea Ann Ventsias, of Stamford, CT and Penny Barto, of Sugar Grove, IL, and one brother-in-law, James Ventsias, of Yorkville, as well as numerous nieces, nephews and friends.

Dorothy was preceded in death by her parents, husband, John on Dec. 25, 2002; son,

Anthony on March 22, 2013 and daughter, Deborah on Dec. 17, 2013.

Cremation rites have been accorded.

A memorial gathering will be held at Reeves Funeral Home, 75 N. Broadway, one block north of IL Route 113 in Coal City on Thursday, Jan. 5, 2023 from 10 a.m. until time of Celebration of Life at 12 p.m. Inurnment will follow in Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood at 1:30 p.m., where she will be laid to rest with her late husband.

Preferred memorials in lieu of flowers may be made as gifts in Dottie's name to any of her favorite charities: St. Jude Children's Research Hospital; Native American Heritage Association or to Morning Star Mission in Joliet.

Family and friends are encouraged to log onto [www.ReevesFuneral.com](http://www.ReevesFuneral.com) to sign the guestbook, upload photographs and share Dorothy's memorial page.

Cremation services and memorial arrangements have been made under the direction and care of Reeves Funeral Homes, Ltd. in Coal City.





# OBITUARIES

## Rosie Lee Waters (nee James)

CHANNAHON—Rosie Lee Waters, 80, of Channahon, passed away on Monday, Jan. 2, 2023, at Rock Run Place Assisted Living and Memory Care in Joliet.

Born Nov. 2, 1942, in New Haven, IL, she was a daughter of Orville and Thelma May (Kennedy) James. Rosie was raised and educated in Norris City and graduated from Norris High School with the class of 1960. Rosie worked as a CNA for Morris Hospital retiring after 32 years. Rosie loved her four-legged feline pets, and most importantly cherished her family especially her time with her grandchildren.

Survivors include four children: Scott (Dreama) Unland, of Virginia; Julie (Bob) Watts, of Coal City; Donnie (Jen) Unland, of Virginia and Laurie (Tim) Smith, of Channahon; numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren; one sister, Euna (Ron) Stokes, of Norris City; one brother, Wayne (Ruth) McKenzie, of Norris City; one sister-in-law, Sue James, of Norris City,



as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

Rosie was preceded in death by her parents, husband, Robert; sister, Sheila Horste; one brother, Ray James and stepfather, Warren McKenzie.

The family will receive friends at Reeves Funeral Home, 408 E. Washington St., one block east of IL Route 47 in Morris on Monday, Jan. 9, 2023 from 9 a.m. until time of funeral service at 11 a.m. Rev. Dr. Roy Backus will officiate, and burial will follow in Willard Grove Cemetery where Rosie will be laid to rest with her husband, Robert.

Friends and family are encouraged to log onto [www.ReevesFuneral.com](http://www.ReevesFuneral.com) to sign the online guestbook, submit photos and share Rosie's page via social media.

Funeral services have been made under the direction and care of Reeves Funeral Homes Ltd. in Morris.

## Michael D. Brown Sr.

FLORIDA—Michael D. Brown Sr., 76, passed away at his home in Florida on Sept. 24, 2022 after a very long illness.

Mike was an employee of Caterpillar Inc., from 1965-1998, as a welder, instructor, and supervisor. He was a lifelong conservative who had a strong sense of right and wrong. In his Florida retirement he served on several county boards and was chairman (2017-2018) of the Republican Party of Charlotte Co. He worked hard from the time he was a child until the last decade of his life. Mike played hard, too: He was an outstanding pony league baseball pitcher and a fast and tough high school football player. In his younger days, Mike enjoyed fishing and hunting. In his later



years, Mike and Gloria enjoyed boating and Mike's Harleys. In his home workshop, he was a craftsman of fine solid-oak cabinetry and furniture as well as beautiful stained glass art pieces.

He is survived by his wife, Gloria (Fox); his children: Lisa, Mike Jr. and Pat; grandchildren: Lucas, Michael, Katie, Rebekka and Angus; two great-grandchildren, several nieces and nephews; and two sisters, Betty and Diana.

He was preceded in death by his parents, David and Greta Brown; nephew, Erich and great-niece, Riley.

His ashes were interred in the memorial garden of his church on Nov. 19, 2022.

## Barney Stewart

COAL CITY—Barney Stewart, 78, of Coal City, and formerly of Chicago, passed away unexpectedly on Sunday, Jan. 1, 2023 at his home.

Barney is the husband of Nancy; father of Elizabeth (Stephen) Scofield, of England; Debbie (Rich) Carollo, of Colorado and the late Troy Stewart; grandfather of six, great-grandfather of one and brother to Chris and Joey Smolka.

The family will receive friends for a visitation at Reeves Funeral Home, 75 N. Broadway, one block north of IL Route 113 in Coal City on Monday, Jan. 9, 2023 from 11 a.m. until time of funeral service at 1 p.m. Rev. Jay Regennitter

from the Coal City United Methodist Church will officiate. Burial will follow.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Barney's memory to PAWS Chicago.

A complete obituary is available on the funeral home website, and will be published in next week's paper.

Family and friends are encouraged to log onto [www.ReevesFuneral.com](http://www.ReevesFuneral.com) to sign the guest book, upload photographs and share Barney's memorial page online through social media.

Funeral services and arrangements have been made under the direction and care of Reeves Funeral Homes, Ltd. in Coal City



Photo by Eric Fisher

FOG AND DROPLETS of rain greeted area residents to start the new year. This photo was taken about 6 a.m. near Prairie Land and Vista Dr in Wilmington. With the flash turned on, the photograph shows the moisture in the air as it blew with the wind. The forecast for this week shows highs above freezing with rain expected Wednesday into Thursday before sunny skies prevail.

## Automatic renewal for FOID card with fingerprints

The Illinois State Police (ISP) can automatically renew a person's Firearm Owner's Identification Card (FOID) for individuals who have submitted a full set of fingerprints to ISP specifically for their FOID card or Concealed Carry License.

The individual's FOID card will remain active for a period of 10 years from the date of the Firearms Transaction Inquiry Program approval.

Individuals who apply for a FOID card may include a full set of their fingerprints transmitted through a live scan fingerprint vendor licensed by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR). Individuals who currently have a FOID card but have not submitted a full set of fingerprints to ISP may do so by going to a live scan vendor and uploading them to their account at [www.ispfsb.com](http://www.ispfsb.com).

## Drawing by Grace Keane



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# Dropoff string lights, electronics

Will County's free electronics drop-off event will be held Thursday, Jan. 12, from 5-7 p.m. at the Wilmington City Hall parking lot, 1165 S. Water St.

Holiday string lights that are no longer working may be dropped off for recycling. This is for string lights only, no stand alone LEDs, CFLs or other fluorescent lights.

Participants are reminded to remain in their vehicles at all times, show ID by holding it to the window for staff to see and then allow staff to remove items without assistance from each vehicle.

Items accepted include: Televisions (limit 2), monitors, printers, computers (desktops, laptops, notebooks, tablets),

electronic keyboards, fax machines, videocassette recorders, portable digital music players, DVD players, DVD recorders, video game consoles, small scale servers, scanners, electronic mice, digital converter boxes, cable receivers, satellite receivers, cell phones, computer cable, portable digital assistants

(PDAs) and zip drives.

Electronic items contain materials that can be recycled countless times while other materials in items are considered hazardous.

The recycling takes place in Wilmington the second Thursday of each month. An ID showing Will County residency may be required.

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Email: [ggresham@amfam.com](mailto:ggresham@amfam.com)

## CCAC to hold annual meeting

The Coal City Area Club will be holding their annual meeting on Jan. 18, 7 p.m. at 285 S. Broadway, Coal City. The regular monthly meeting will follow.



Front Row: Grace Smith, Dayna Vargocko, Samantha Olson. Back Row: Sherry Yakima, Dr. Garrett B. Smith, Sara Daniels and Kelly Olson

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### LOST & FOUND

Have you found a lost pet or lost a pet in Will County? Please call Will County Animal Control. We may have your pet. We want to reunite your family, 815-462-5633. fr/tfn

### MISCELLANEOUS

**Hall Rental** - Available for parties, showers & meetings. Seats 100 people, full kitchen available. If interested call New Hope Presbyterian Church in Coal City, 815-634-8332. ch 27a-tfn

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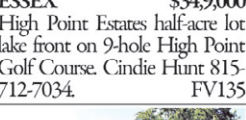
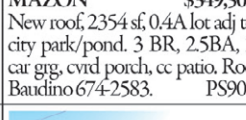
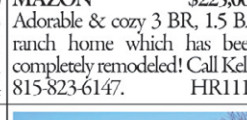

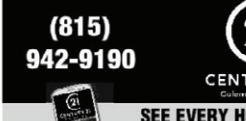


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 <b>DWIGHT</b> \$199,500 10 years new, 3 BR, 2.5 BA, 2.5 car grg, adj 0.2A lot avail. Open plan, covered porch, deck. Rod Baudino 674-2583. DW307	<b>GRUNDY COUNTY'S #1 HOME SELLER</b> (815) 942-9190 SEE EVERY HOME ON THE MARKET AT <b>C21.COM</b> Source: Midwest Real Estate DataBase, (MLS) Single Family Detached Homes Sold in 2021 By Grundy County Offices.	 <b>S. WILMINGTON</b> \$198,000 3 BR, 2 BA brick ranch home with two car garage is located on a large corner lot. Text Shawn 815-474-6670. LC75	 <b>GARDNER</b> \$155,000 3 BR, 1 BA ranch with large kitchen. All appliances stay. 24 ft. above-ground pool and hot tub. Kelly 815-823-6147. EU303	<b>RESIDENTIAL LOTS Including Wooded and Waterfront</b>
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### REAL ESTATE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 13TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT GRUNDY COUNTY - MORRIS, ILLINOIS ARVEST CENTRAL MORTGAGE COMPANY Plaintiff, -v- RAYMOND M. FARCUS et al Defendant 2022 FC 18 NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered on December 8, 2022, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 11:00 AM on January 25, 2023, at the Grundy County Courthouse, 111 East Washington Street front door entrance, MORRIS, IL, 60450, sell at a public sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate: Commonly known as 1285 S GORMAN RD, MAZON, IL 60444 Property Index No. 09-07-200-010 The real estate is improved with a residence. Sale terms: 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, including the Judicial Sale fee for the Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund, which is calculated on residential real estate at the rate of \$1 for each \$1,000 or fraction thereof of the amount paid by the purchaser not to exceed \$300, in certified funds/or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. No fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court. Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale. The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information. If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1). IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW. You will need a photo identification issued by a government agency (driver's license, passport, etc.) in order to gain entry into our building and the foreclosure sale room in Cook County and the same identification for sales held at other county venues where The Judicial Sales Corporation conducts foreclosure sales. For information, examine the court file, CODILIS & ASSOCIATES, P.C. Plaintiff's Attorneys, 15W030 NORTH FRONT-AGE ROAD, SUITE 100, BURR RIDGE, IL, 60527 (630) 794-9876 THE JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION One South Wacker Drive, 24th Floor, Chicago, IL 60606-4650 (312) 236-SALE You can also visit The Judicial Sales Corporation at www.tjsc.com for a 7 day status report of pending sales. CODILIS & ASSOCIATES, P.C. 15W030 NORTH FRONT-AGE ROAD, SUITE 100 BURR RIDGE IL, 60527 630-794-5300 E-Mail: pleadings@il.cs-legal.com Attorney File No. 14-22-01588 Attorney ARDC No. 00468002 Case Number: 2022 FC 18 TJSC#: 42-4588 NOTE: Pursuant to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, you are advised that Plaintiff's attorney is deemed to be a debt collector attempting to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. Case # 2022 FC 18 13209562 Published in the Free Press Newspapers on Wednesday, Dec. 21 & 28, 2022 and Jan. 4, 2023.

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# Indoor plants that can help your home air quality

Dear EarthTalk: Do houseplants really improve indoor air quality? Which ones are the most effective as such?

-- Kay Hamm, Los Angeles, CA



Indeed, in order to make a considerable difference in the air quality of your home, you'd have to keep a large number of houseplants under specific climatic conditions, requiring a large amount of effort, time and money that isn't realistic for most of us.

Having houseplants can even worsen indoor air quality if you are overwatering them, as overly damp soil may promote the growth of microorganisms which can affect allergic individuals.

However, if you are interested in keeping houseplants that have the potential to clean the air in your home, there are a variety to choose from.

There are two major air pollutants found in homes: particulates—dust, mold, etc.—and volatile organic compounds (VOC)—gases that are released from materials such as fabric, paint and cleaning products.

Spider plants, philodendrons, ZZ plants, dumb canes, pygmy date palms and ivies are among the plants suited to indoor living that are especially good at filtering out particulates.

Other plants especially good at removing volatile organic compounds (VOCs) out of your indoor air include pathos, bamboo, Areca palms, rubber plants and peace lilies. You can usually find a wide assortment of indoor plants — and get more advice — at a local nursery or garden center.

Of course, there are also many other ways to improve the air quality of your home. Keeping a clean home reduces the amount of particulate matter in the air.

Investing in air purifiers and home air filters can help reduce both the concentration of VOCs and particulate matter that could be impairing your indoor air quality. Simple tasks like opening your windows and airing out your home in the warmer

months increases air circulation and benefits your home's indoor environment.

EarthTalk® is a 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. Send questions to: [question@earthtalk.org](mailto:question@earthtalk.org).

In recent years, more and more people have developed an interest in keeping houseplants. There are many potential reasons why there has been such a resurgence in indoor gardening. Many people took up tending to houseplants during the pandemic as a quarantine hobby.

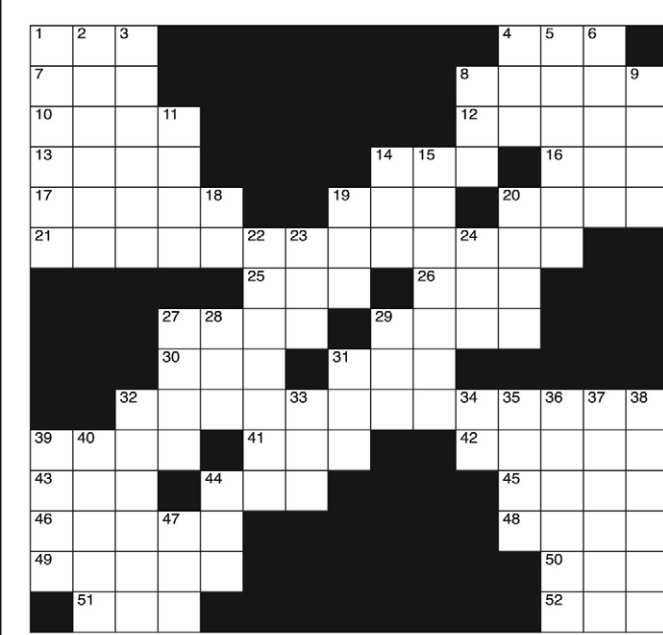
As the years have progressed, people's interest in keeping houseplants has continued to thrive and it's easy to understand why. They live up any living space, and provide people with something to care for—both which provide many mental health benefits.

However, there has been speculation as to whether or not keeping houseplants provides environmental and health benefits through purifying the air in our homes.

The short answer is that houseplants do have the potential to purify the air in our homes. When plants perform photosynthesis, they take carbon dioxide out of the air and emit oxygen as a byproduct.

Since plants output oxygen into the surroundings, by scientific definition they have the potential to increase the oxygen concentration in your living space. However, the degree to which they can detoxify the air and measurably make a difference to the air quality in a person's living space is another matter.

"There is currently no evidence...that a reasonable number of houseplants remove significant quantities of pollutants in homes and offices," reports the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.



### CLUES ACROSS

1. Basics
4. Swiss river
7. Constrictor snake
8. Building occupied by monks
10. Discount
12. Deal a blow to
13. Relating to the ear
14. Thyrotropin
16. Loud, unpleasant noise
17. Large intestines
19. Move with a curving trajectory
20. Witnesses
21. You need both to live
25. Dash
26. Network
27. Dig
29. C. European river
30. Supplement with difficulty
31. Corporate executive
32. Carroll O'Connor's onscreen wife
39. No variation
41. Airborne (abbr.)
42. "Heidi" author
43. Affirmative
44. Pie \_\_\_ mode
45. W. Asian country
46. Grotesque or bizarre
48. Delicacy (archaic)
49. Textile
50. Denial
51. Electronic data processing
52. Attempt

### CLUES DOWN

1. Engulf
2. Waterside hotel
3. Printed cotton fabric
4. Defensive nuclear weapon
5. One who follows the rules
6. Lace up once more
8. Fire byproduct
9. Hankerings
11. Outer
14. One-time aerospace firm
15. Seafood
18. Commercial
19. Epoxy hardener (abbr.)
20. Samoan monetary unit
22. Type of gland
23. Arrest
24. Check
27. Past participle of be
28. Alias
29. Major division of geological time
31. Kids programming channel (abbr.)
32. Joked
33. Helps little firms
34. Roman numeral 50
35. Impressive in size or scope
36. Domineering leader
37. A person who delivers a speech
38. One after 89
39. Young hawk
40. The scene of any event or action
44. A team's best pitcher
47. Integrated data processing

## License plate fees for low-income drivers drop

Eligible older adults and persons with disabilities will see their annual license plate renewal fee reduced by more than half in the new year.

Public Act 102-0807, which took effect Jan. 1, drivers who qualify for IDoA's Benefit Access Program will pay only \$10 for their license plate stickers, a decrease from \$24 currently.

"During this time of high inflation, many older adults are finding it increasingly difficult to cover everyday expenses," said Illinois Department on Aging Director Paula Basta. "This income-based discount on license plate renewals is welcome news for older drivers, helping them save money and keep their vehicle registration current."

The Department on Aging's Benefit Access Program determines eligibility for a

license plate discount from the Secretary of State's office and free transit on fixed route systems in Illinois.

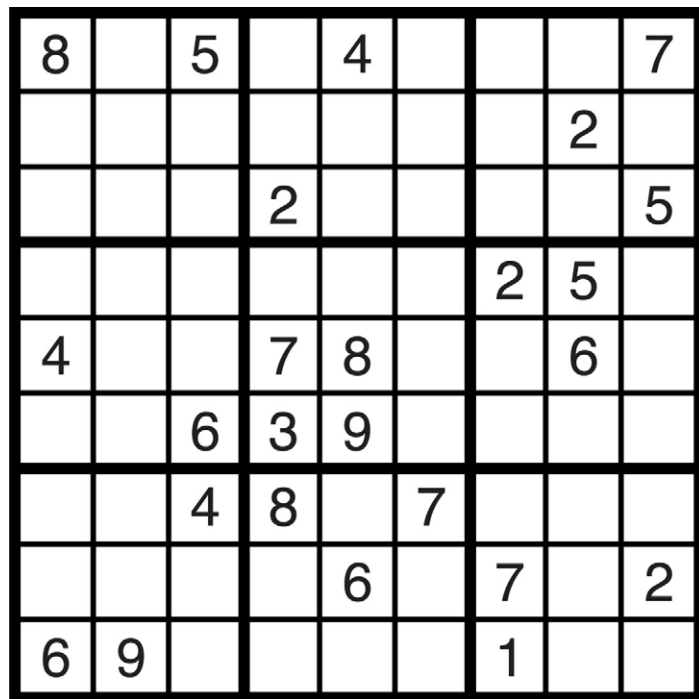
To qualify, residents must be at least 65 years of age or 16 years of age and disabled, as well as meet income requirements. For a household containing one person, the annual income cap is \$33,562.

To apply for the Benefit Access Program online, please visit [www.ilaging.illinois.gov/benefitsaccess.html](http://www.ilaging.illinois.gov/benefitsaccess.html). For assistance with the online application, older adults can call IDoA's Senior HelpLine at 1-800-252-8966.

Those with specific questions about the price reduction, or about their vehicle's registration status, are encouraged to contact the Illinois Secretary of State's office at 800-252-8980.

IDoA serves older Illinoisans and their caregivers by administering quality and culturally appropriate programs that promote partnerships and encourage independence, dignity, and quality of life. For information about the Department's programs

and services for older adults and persons with disabilities, visit [www2.illinois.gov/aging/programs](http://www2.illinois.gov/aging/programs) or contact the Senior HelpLine toll-free at 1-800-252-8966, Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.



## Employers reminded to display new poster

The Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL) has released the 2023 version of the "Your Rights Under Illinois Employment Laws" poster.

Employers must display the poster where employees will see it.

The poster is available at [www.labor.illinois.gov](http://www.labor.illinois.gov).

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# Comets leaves Marseilles with lessons learned

After opening the Marseilles Holiday Tournament with a decisive 63-38 victory, the Reed-Custer boys basketball team ventured down a bumpy path coach Mark Porter hopes they don't go on again.

The Comets, who beat Wilmington by 26 points the first time they met, got by the Wildcats a second time but this time by 10. They lost their next game to Marquette, 69-57, before escaping with a 56-55 victory over Serena in the end.

It was an uncharacteristic tournament run for a team that has lost only two of 12 games so far. But that's what tournaments are for, to face stiffer competition to learn mid-season what needs to be done before the regional and sectional begin.

On Thursday the Comets uprighted things by defeating Serena, 56-55.

Reed-Custer had a 43-37 lead after three quarters when Serena went on an 18-13 run and almost won it. Thankfully the Comets, who went to the line 24 times, made 16 of their free throws.

Wes Shats paced the Comets with 27 points, many off his 19 rebounds. He was the only Comet with double figures as Jake McPherson finished with nine points, Lucas Foote scored eight, Jace Christian seven and Josh Bohac five.

Credit Serena for making nine three-pointers while the Comets had just two.

## Comet loss

Reed-Custer was up 17-16 after one quarter but trailed the rest of the game as Marquette won Wednesday's contest, 69-57.

Marquette dished out 24 assists as they scored off several quick baskets as they shot 50 percent from the field while RCHS shot 36 percent.

McPherson had the hot hand for the Comets with 19 points and seven rebounds. Foote stepped up for 12 points and six rebounds while Shats tallied 11 points and 11 rebounds.

Also scoring for the Comets were Christian with nine points, Bohac with four and Collin Monroe with two.

## Scratch the 'Cats

Reed-Custer scored just enough to get the

job done on Tuesday, defeating Wilmington the second time this season, 48-38.

Credit the Wildcats for sticking around after trailing 24-15 at the half. The 'Cats went on a 14-8 run in the final frame but the Comet lead was too much to overcome.

Reed-Custer played its starters the entire game, led by Shats with 16 points off 14 rebounds. McPherson contributed 13 points, including three treys, while shooting 4-for-6 at the free throw line.

Foote was a factor with seven points while Christian handed out six assists while scoring six. Bohac also finished with six points.

Reed-Custer plays at Serena Wednesday (tonight), at Coal City Thursday, at Rock Falls Friday and at Momence Monday.

## Lady Comets give it a go during Lisle event

Reed-Custer girls basketball team played for 5th place in the consolation bracket of the Lisle Holiday Tournament on Friday but lost to the hosts, 37-27.

The Lady Comets played a tough first half, but lost momentum and couldn't hang with the Lions to finish the game.

Laci Newbrough paced the Lady Comets with 10 points. Natalie Flores tallied five points. Leah Grace stepped up for four points. Samantha Sprimont scored three points while Madison Keenan and Brooklyn Harding chipped in with two points each. Caelan Cole made a free throw.

### A tourney win

The Lady Comets picked up a win in the third round of the Lisle Holiday tournament on Thursday night against Elgin-St. Edwards, 30-21.

Reed-Custer had a very slow start to the game, but turned up the heat second half to pick up a win.

Lady Comet leaders included Harding with 12 points, 1 rebound, 5 steals and 2 assists; Cole with 11 points, 3 rebounds and 4 steals; and Newbrough with 5 rebounds, 1 steal and 1 assist.

Keenan chipped in with 3 points, 5 rebounds and 2 steals while Sprimont scored 2 points, 1 rebound, 2 assists

Flores tallied 2 points and 2 rebounds while Gwen Stewart recorded 2 rebounds and 1 assist; and Addison Brown with 1 rebound

### Plano loss

Reed-Custer lost 42-39 in the second round of the Lisle Holiday tournament on Wednesday night against Plano. The Comets battled hard all game, but missed key shots that determined the end result.

Harding led with 12 points, 3 rebounds, 5 steals, 1 assist. Kaylee Tribble hustled for 9 points and 5 rebounds while Newbrough finished with 8 points, 4 rebounds, 1 assist.

Scoring five points each were Cole and Keenan while Sprimont crashed the boards for 8 rebounds.

### Tough start

Coach Shelby Zwolinski's squad lost to ICCP in the opening round of the tournament, 65-20.

Harms: 1 steal  
Stewart: 1 point, 1 rebound  
Cole: 6 points, 1 steal  
Grace: 1 rebound, 1 assist  
Keenan: 2 points, 3 rebounds, 2 assists  
Sprimont: 1 steal, 1 assist  
Harding: 1 steal, 1 assist  
Newbrough: 3 rebounds  
Tribble: 9 points, 1 rebound, 1 steal, 1 assist, 1 block  
Flores: 2 points, 1 rebound, 1 steal  
Addison Brown: 3 rebounds, 1 steal  
The Lady Comets host Streator on Thursday.

## Youth free throw contest planned

The Braidwood Council 1574 Knights of Columbus will host the free throw championship contest on Saturday, Jan. 8. Registration will be at 1 p.m., and competition will begin at 1:30 p.m.

Boys and girls ages 9 to 14 are invited to participate at the Godley Park District, 500 S. Kankakee St. There is no participation fee however proof of age will be required.

One boy and one girl from each age group will advance to district competition.

For more information, or to help out at the competition, call Dave Wollgast at 815-287-2036.

## Tigers fall to Coal City, get by Saratoga

The 8th grade GSWB Tigers were defeated by Coal City on Dec. 15.

Holden Grimes led with 11 points, Reed Millette had 7, and Cooper Biros had 3. Aiden Mack, Aiden Bodine, and Coleman Slush each had 2 points.

On Monday GSWB 8th-grade fell Streator Woodland 33-25. The Tigers had a bad second quarter but outscored the Warriors in the other three.

Holden Grimes led with 13 points, followed by Cooper Biros with 6.

Hunter Partilla, Aiden Mack, and Chris Ozee each had 2 points.

The Tigers lost to Wilmington on Dec. 12, 32-19.

Cooper Biros led with 4 points, Chris Ozee and Holden Grimes each had 3, Tyler Galass had 2 and Logan Rice and Reed Millette each had 1.

The 8th-grade Tigers beat Saratoga 27-25 on Dec. 12. Holden Grimes led with 14 points, and Cooper Biros and Reed Millette each had 4. Chris Ozee had 3 points, and Aiden Mack had 2.

# Beloved volunteer leaves \$1 million gift to Morris Hospital Foundation

Gretchen Johnson had already left a legacy at Morris Hospital by serving as the organization's first and only volunteer historian for more than 20 years where she preserved the hospital's history dating all the way back to its 1906 founding.

Now the dedicated volunteer, who passed away in July 2021 at the age of 90, has become part of history herself

by leaving a \$1 million gift to Morris Hospital through her estate. It's the largest gift the Morris Hospital Foundation has ever received from a single donor.

"Gretchen had always disclosed that she was going to make a gift to Morris Hospital, but we don't discuss the amount with our legacy donors," said Hannah Wehrle, Morris Hospital Auxiliary &

Foundation Officer. "As shocked as I was by the size of the gift, it's not surprising that even after she's gone, Gretchen is still finding a way to support Morris Hospital."

A lifelong resident of Morris, Johnson started volunteering at Morris Hospital in 1998. A few years later when the hospital was preparing for its centennial celebration, she was asked if she was interested

in researching the hospital's history. Johnson graciously accepted the assignment, which evolved into a permanent volunteer historian role where she dedicated her volunteer hours to researching and preserving the hospital's history, spending countless hours reading archived newspaper articles at the Morris Public Library and putting together scrapbooks and typewritten reports. She had a total of 8,591 documented volunteer hours with Morris Hospital.

Prior to becoming a Morris Hospital volunteer, Johnson worked as a clerical secretary for the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Grundy County Home. She also worked in the accounting and administrative department for Northern Petro Chemical Company. She and her husband Samuel R. Johnson, who died in 1981, did not have children.

"Even though Gretchen wasn't an employee of Morris Hospital, this is where she spent the majority of her hours. Morris Hospital was home for her," said Wehrle. "She was valued and appreciated, and she loved the interactions she had with employees, patients and community members."

Wehrle said that Johnson left her gift unrestricted, meaning the Morris Hospital Foundation can apply the gift to the areas of greatest need. "Unrestricted gifts are very important to the Morris Hospital Foundation because they allow us to provide funding for new services and programs and updated equipment and technology that are really important to the community but might not otherwise have been possible," Wehrle explained. "Leaving a gift of this size and allowing us to decide what to do with the money demonstrates that Gretchen loved Morris Hospital and trusted us enough to know that however we use the money, it will be in good hands."

Despite the magnitude of the gift, Wehrle said Johnson's dedicated volunteerism at Morris Hospital will always be her greatest legacy.

"What's most special is how many hours she gave of herself," said Wehrle, noting that even in the height of the pandemic during Johnson's final years of life, she continued to do her volunteer work from home. "She was an incredibly patient, very thoughtful person, and so incredibly kind. She truly was like a little angel on earth."



## Put your health first this New Year!

Start the New Year out right by scheduling your annual check-up with your primary care provider! Annual check-ups help you monitor existing health issues, keep you up-to-date on vaccinations and screening tests, and increase the likelihood of detecting new health issues before they develop into something serious. If you have fallen behind with your routine check-ups, the New Year is the perfect time to get back on schedule.



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## JV Tigers win one of their last four games

The 7th-grade Gardner-So. Wilm-Braceville Tigers were defeated 40-22 by Coal City on Thursday.

Caden Christensen led G-SW with 8 points, and Cameron Gray and Case Christensen each added 5. Brody Grimes and Isaiah Bouwma each had 2 points.

On Monday the 7th-grade Tigers lost to Streator-Woodland, 32-25. Case Christensen led with 8, followed by Caden Christensen with 7.

Isaiah Bouwma had 5 points, Thomas Phillips had 2, and Camero Gray had one point.

The JV Tigers beat Wilmington Tuesday 27-21. Case Christensen led with 15 points, Caden Christensen had 9 points, Cameron Gray had 2, and Brody Grimes added 1.

They lost to Saratoga last week. Caden Christensen led with 12 points, Case Christensen followed with 9, and Brody Grimes added 8. Thomas Phillips, Wyatt McNally, and Isaiah Bouwma each had 2 points.

## G-SW boys split Ransom

The Gardner-South Wilmington-Braceville boys basketball team split with Ransom last Tuesday with the 8th-graders losing and the 7th grade winning.

The varsity boys made a great comeback to fall short by 4 points to Ransom, 36-32.

Reed Millette led G-SW with 12 points while Holden Grimes scored 8, Cooper Biros contributed 7 points and

Aiden Mack added 5.

The JV squad was paced by Caden Christen who scored 20 points to defeat Ransom 43-8.

G-SW 7th graders who also scored included Brody Grimes with 11, Cameron Gray had 6, Case Christensen chipped in 6 while Thomas Phillips and Wyatt McNally put up 2 points each.

## Amended code paves way for wellness clinic

A new business is coming to the village of Coal City in the new year.

Jennifer Loughran plans to open a wellness clinic at 695 S. Broadway, a facility that will combine a variety of wellness concepts in one space.

Loughran will be providing mental health therapy for individuals, families and children.

In addition to her counseling office, the clinic will provide space for a beauty salon featuring hair styling and permanent ink makeup applications among other services.

The application of permanent ink falls under adult uses in the village's zoning code and such businesses are limited to operating within industrial areas.

The location Loughran selected for her business is zoned commercial, so the proposal to provide the service of permanent color applications to lips, eyelids and eyebrows—licensed under the Tattoo and Body Piercing Establishment Registration Act and the Illinois Department of Public Health—was not allowed in that space based on the town code.

Commissioners of the Planning and Zoning Board took the matter under consideration and recommended amending the adult use definition in the town's zoning code to exclude services traditionally provided within a beauty salon. Those services include micro-blading, permanent ink application to lips, scalp, eyelids, eyebrows and mastectomy recovery applications.

The Village Board approved the recommendation at its December meeting with no objections.