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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2026 | A FREE PRESS NEWSPAPER • (815) 476-7966

Council approves \$25,000 for Master Parks Plan

BY ROSE PANIERI
 STAFF WRITER

The Braidwood City Council recently voted to spend \$25,000 for a comprehensive plan that will be used as a guide for upgrading the city's existing parks.

The city plans to hire Hitchcock Design Group of Naperville for a comprehensive master parks plan.

The plan will include an inventory and analysis of the three parks run by Braidwood Park District, including Old Smokey Park, Lions Kiddie Park, Luke H. Goodrich Park, the Braidwood Zoo, and future park developments under the park district or City of Braidwood.

The plan will assess and gather community engagement concerning the parks, suggest improvements that can be made in a master plan that could be followed in the future.

The comprehensive

plan comes at the same time the city will implement at 1 percent grocery tax, earmarked for the park district. The estimated \$170,000 will be used for capital improvement projects using proceeds from the city's grocery tax, including upgrading current playground equipment, to adding new amenities.

"It will also help guide the City when it comes to any new amenities which might be covered with funding outside of the grocery tax proceeds," Josh Bolatto, Commissioner/Board Secretary of the Braidwood Park District, said.

Commissioner Warren Wietting questioned the plan.

"This comprehensive master plan, does it include the proposed new park," he asked, referring to a proposed town center behind Casey's.

Mayor Todd Lyons clarified, stating it is a plan

for Braidwood's existing parks.

Commissioner Wietting abstained and Commissioner Dale Walsh voted against the plan.

Prevailing wage

A motion was made to adopt prevailing wage rates for laborers, mechanics, and other workers performing work on public works for the city of Braidwood.

As required by the state's Prevailing Wage Act, the city agrees to hire contractors who pay the prevailing rate of wages as determined by the Illinois Department of Labor.

Competitive bidding

The council approved an ordinance for a competitive bidding procedure.

"This states that our threshold of anything over \$25,000 needs to be bid competitively, or come back to the council to waive the bid at a two-thirds majority," Steve Gulden, the city's adminis-

SEE COUNCIL PAGE 2



BRAIDWOOD'S NEWEST police officer, Ashton Harvey (left) was recently sworn in by Braidwood Mayor Todd Lyons.

A Grand Slam Christmas:

Second grader gifted massive baseball card collection

BY ERIC FISHER
 PUBLISHER

A letter to Santa written by a Steven's Intermediate School second grader did more than make it onto the front page of the Free Press Advocate, it set a chain of generosity in motion that turned one young baseball fan's Christmas break into something he will remember for a lifetime.

The Free Press Advocate featured 20 unedited letters to Santa on the front page of its Dec. 24 edition, showcasing the curiosity and holiday wishes of local second graders.

The letters were filled with questions like: How does Santa fly? How old is he? How many elves does he have, and would he share one?, along with wish lists that ranged from puppies and kittens to iPhones, Lego sets, Barbie dolls, video games, jewelry, books and even a robot "to help me do my chores."

Among those letters was one written by Hank Alberico.

"I would like new baseball cards because I love them," Hank wrote, along with requests for a remote control car and a hoverboard.

That simple line caught the attention of Wilmington subscriber John Weiss, who knew immediately he had to make a phone call. Just a day earlier, Weiss had been talking with long-time friends Jordan and Cathy Goodman of Kankakee, who mentioned they were planning to get rid of duplicate cards from their baseball card collection.

"I called them and they had not gotten rid of them yet," Weiss said. "It was a matter of good tim-

ing." Weiss suggested the cards go to Hank.

The Goodmans quickly reached out to the Free Press office to ask how they could pass along the collection. The connection was easy, the paper knew Hank's parents, Chris and Jordan Alberico. Before the day was over, the Goodmans dropped off a large bin filled with baseball cards, and a call was made to Hank's father.

Chris agreed it would be a wonderful surprise and decided to keep it a secret from his son.

When Hank and his dad arrived at the office, Hank shyly admitted he had asked Santa for baseball cards. He was then told that a kind couple from Kankakee wanted to help make that wish come true. When Hank saw the bin— 48 boxes, each neatly organized with 210 cards— his jaw dropped. He was speechless. So was his father.

"Wow, I didn't imagine they were giving him that many," Chris said, after realizing the collection totaled more than 10,000 cards. "We have a lot of cards to go through."

For Chris, the moment brought back memories of his own childhood. He was a collector too, saving birthday money and lawn-mowing cash for trips to Sippy's, where baseball cards were sold in the back of the store.

"As soon as I had a spare \$2 or \$3, my buddies and I would ride our bikes there," Chris said. "Every time I'd buy a pack there was this excitement— hoping for a collectible card. There were three of us who did a lot of swapping. It was all good, clean fun."



OVER 10,000 CARDS—Hank Alberico, a second grader at Steven's Intermediate School, displays a fistful of baseball cards that were given to him after writing a letter to Santa wishing for new cards to add to his collection.

That same excitement is what he hopes Hank will experience now.

Baseball cards have long held a special place in American culture, with most modern cards carrying sentimental rather than financial value. The majority of cards are worth anywhere from a few cents to a few dollars, depending on condition and demand.

Only a small fraction ever become highly valuable. The most expensive baseball card ever sold, the 1909-11 T206 Honus Wagner, fetched more than \$7 million at auction, while a 1952 Topps Mickey Mantle card sold for over \$12 million in 2022. Cards of legendary players like Babe Ruth, Jackie Robinson and Willie Mays can also command six- or seven-figure prices in pristine condition.

For Hank, though, the value isn't measured in dollars.

He already has a couple of binders filled with his favorite cards, including those of his favorite player, Ken Griffey Jr., the Hall of Famer who played 22 seasons and became one of baseball's most beloved stars.

Now, with thousands of cards waiting to be sorted, swapped and admired, Hank has something even better than a rare collectible, a reminder that sometimes, the magic of Christmas shows up long after the holiday, carried by a few Good Samaritans, good timing and a simple letter to Santa.



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Eagle Watch returns to Channahon with raptors, hikes and hands-on fun

When the snow flies and creeks and rivers ice over, you know it's time for the Forest Preserve District of Will County's annual Eagle Watch event.

This year's free, all-ages bald eagle celebration is set for 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 10, at Four Rivers Environmental Education Center in Channahon.

"We've had an incredibly successful bald eagle nesting season this year in Will County, and we cannot wait to celebrate them at Eagle Watch," said Jess McQuown, a program coordinator at Four Rivers.

The event includes live bird presentations from Hoo Haven of Durand, Ill.; guided outdoor hikes; indoor Talon Talks; family crafts; an Eagle Eye Scavenger Hunt; and food from Lil' Deb's Mobile Eats.

"We're thrilled to have a presenter who is new to Eagle Watch this year, and she will be bringing a very exciting lineup of raptors with her," McQuown said. "We are particularly excited about the turkey vulture, which will be a first for Four Rivers."

The hikes will allow visitors to view the eagles that nest near Four Rivers and other eagles that may be spotted searching for fish in the river as smaller creeks freeze up in winter.

"Four Rivers is a spectacular place to see eagles,"



Photo courtesy Forest Preserve of Will County

HEAD TO Four Rivers Environmental Education Center in Channahon on Saturday, Jan. 10, for the Forest Preserve District of Will County's annual Eagle Watch event.

McQuown said. "There is always a lot of activity thanks to the local nesting pairs and the immature and migratory eagles looking for food on the river."

Eagle Watch is a great event that celebrates the return of the once-endangered bald eagle, which is now thriving in Illinois. State officials estimate

there are around 3,100 eagles spending winter in Illinois, the biggest population outside of Alaska.

That's what makes Eagle Watch so special, McQuown said. Visitors can see eagles in Will County where once they were a rare sight.

"Nothing beats a cold winter morning with a bald

eagle perched in view or soaring overhead," she said.

Here is the schedule for the day:

- Hoo Haven live presentations: 11 a.m.: Live bird presentation (45 minutes); 12:30 p.m.: meet and greet (20 minutes); 1:30 p.m.: live bird presentation (45 minutes).

- Guided outdoor hikes (40 minutes on paved trails): 11:50 a.m.; 12:55 p.m.; 2:20 p.m.

- Indoor Talon Talks (15 minutes): Noon: Eagles of the World; 2:30 p.m. family

matters.

Family crafts and the Eagle Eye Scavenger Hunt will be offered throughout the event. Registration is not required.

Venezuela situation unlikely to result in drop in gas prices

Average gasoline prices in Illinois have fallen 3.6 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$2.86/g, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,378 stations in Illinois.

There are a few bargains in the area. With the exception of Coal City, area gas stations are now charging below \$3/g. In Wilmington expect to pay from \$2.61/g at BP, up to \$2.74/g at Mobil.

In Braidwood, gas is \$2.99/g at all reporting stations.

Coal City stations continue to charge \$3.09/g across the board.

In Morris, you'll pay \$2.75/g, except for Shell, where gas is \$2.81/g.

Bourbonnais wins as cheapest town for gas, with Road Ranger charging \$2.56 per gallon, up to \$2.69 at BP.

"Another week, and motorists have been greeted with the sixth straight weekly decline in the national average price of gasoline as seasonality continues to drive trends at the pump," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy.

"While more states did see prices rise this week, most of those increases were in 'price-cycling' markets, where routine jumps often follow larger declines. Elsewhere, a majority of

states saw prices inch lower again. And with GasBuddy's 2026 Fuel Outlook set for release this week, we'll soon have a clearer sense of what drivers may face next year—particularly as new developments in Venezuela put fresh attention on the global oil market.

"Some Americans believe gasoline prices could be impacted in a significant way, but I'm here to throw a bit of cold water on that. Even under the most optimistic outcomes, it could take years of positive developments for additional supply to meaning-

fully move the needle, and the impact on U.S. gasoline prices may ultimately be limited. For now, I expect gas prices to bottom out in the weeks ahead before beginning their seasonal climb toward March."

The lowest price in the state is \$2.28/g while the highest was \$4.49/g.

Prices in Illinois are 21.0 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 31.9 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has decreased 2.3 cents compared to a week ago and stands at \$3.49 per gallon.

PEO Chapter GK to meet

The next monthly meeting of Chapter GK PEO will be Monday, Jan. 12, at 7 p.m.

It will be hosted by Barb Springer and the program will be about Founders Day presented by Bonnie Huston

Picnic, camping permits on sale for area preserves

It's time to start planning some 2026 fun in the Forest Preserve District of Will County by reserving your picnic shelter or campsite in advance. Picnic and camping permits went on sale Jan. 2 online and at five Forest Preserve visitor centers.

Picnic permits are available for more than 30 rentable shelters 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.

Visit the Picnicking Page, reconnectwithnature.org/rental-spaces-will-county/, for more information.

Camping permits can be obtained for five Forest Preserve campgrounds. Visit the Camping Page, reconnectwithnature.org/activities/camping/, to view campsites and learn more about each location.



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Reset, rebalance, refresh

Join in a 31-day sobriety challenge during Dry January

January 1 marks the new year and a new challenge: Dry January. This is the time to reset and renew after an indulgent holiday season. Dry January is a one-month sobriety challenge where participants abstain from drinking alcohol for 31 days. The goal is to cleanse the body, adopt healthy new habits, and re-evaluate one's relationship with alcohol.

Yes, just one month can bring about many physical and mental health benefits according to a Healthline article, including repaired liver damage, decreased risk of heart disease, improved sleep, and weight loss. The decision to participate in Dry January can be a personal choice or group effort. Either way, if

you decide to take the challenge, consider the following tips to help you plan for success:

- Remove any alcohol from your home and other areas you may frequent. Load up on non-alcoholic beverages, such as water, seltzers, teas, and juices.
- Avoid events and locations where drinking is prevalent, like bars, parties, and sporting events. Establish your support group by letting your inner circle know your plans. Forgive yourself if you slip up. Tomorrow is another day to try again.

"Dry January is an opportunity for individuals to reset, refresh, and re-evaluate their relationship with alcohol," said Illinois Control Commission Executive

Director, Lisa Gardner.

"Every day you choose clarity and wellness is a win. Most importantly, this is a personal journey. Take this time to shape your new life in the new year. Best of luck!"

To learn more about the ILCC visit www.ILCC.Illinois.gov

Advisory Board being formed for Joliet Army Ammunition Plant restoration

PUBLIC NOTICE

Joliet Army Ammunition Plant Seeking Interest in Establishing a Restoration Advisory Board (RAB)

The Department of Defense (DoD) recognizes the importance of stakeholder participation in the decision-making process of the Installation Restoration Program (IRP). In accordance with 10 U.S.C. § 2705 and DoD/Army policy, the U.S. Army Environmental Command (USAEC) and Joliet Army Ammunition Plant are inviting community involvement with environmental restoration efforts that are part of the IRP. This program is dedicated to the planned and focused cleanup, if necessary, of sites associated with past DoD activity at Joliet Army Ammunition Plant, located in Will County, Illinois.

A RAB is a formal volunteer stakeholder group that regularly meets to discuss environmental restoration at specific DoD-owned properties on Joliet Army Ammunition Plant. The DoD, in coordination with USAEC, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, installation leadership, and members of the local community can make up the RAB. Participation in a RAB involves a time commitment from volunteers but provides a valuable platform for individuals interested in DoD cleanup efforts to exchange information with state regulators, Army management, installation personnel, and other community members. Additional information regarding the RAB process, membership, and responsibilities can be found at:

<https://www.epa.gov/fedfac/restoration-advisory-board-rab-implementation-guidelines#recruiting> and <https://aec.army.mil/index.php?cID=326>

Community members interested in volunteering and serving on a Joliet Army Ammunition Plant RAB, or who would like additional information, are asked to contact:

Thomas P. Toudouze
Environmental Support Manager
U.S. Army Environmental Command
Midwest and Central America Division
Fort Sam Houston, Joint Base San Antonio, Texas
Office - (520)-674-1984
E-mail - thomas.p.toudouze2.civ@army.mil
Please respond within 30 days of this notice.

Published in the Free Press Advocate, Wednesday, Dec. 24, 2025 and Jan. 7, 2026.

Sheriff's sale of 2027 Roberts Street

PUBLIC NOTICE

PURSUANT TO THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT YOU ARE ADVISED THAT THIS LAW FIRM IS DEEMED TO BE A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

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

Illinois Housing Development Authority
Plaintiff,
vs.
Robert D Bradbury, Jr. A/K/A Robert Bradbury, Jr. NO. 25 FC 0426
A/K/A Robert Bradbury; Will County Community Development Department; REICH, JUMBECK, STOLE & REEB, LLP; Lakewood Shores Improvement Association
Defendant.

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE

Public notice is hereby given that pursuant to a judgment entered in the above cause on the 14th day of October, 2025, MIKE KELLEY, Sheriff of Will County, Illinois, will on Thursday, the 15th day of January, 2026, commencing at 12:00 o'clock noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 1001, Joliet, IL 60432, sell at public auction to the highest and best bidder or bidders the following-described real estate:

Lot 374 in Sixth Addition to Lakewood Shores, a Resubdivision of part of Lots 211 and 214 both inclusive in 1st Addition to Lakewood Shores and also parts of Section 1 and 12 in Township 32 North, Range 9 East of the Third Principal Meridian, according to the Plat thereof recorded December 5, 1957 as Document No. 838571, in Will County, Illinois.
Commonly known as: 2027 Roberts Street, Wilmington, IL 60481
Description of Improvements: ONE STORY SINGLE FAMILY HOME. TWO CAR DETACHED GARAGE.

P.I.N.: 08-24-01-306-035-0000
Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale 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. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County.

In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the purchaser of the unit, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and legal fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 and the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Illinois Condominium Property Act.

Pursuant to Local Court Rule 11.03 (J) if there is a surplus following application of the proceeds of sale, then the plaintiff shall send written notice pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/15-1512(d) to all parties to the proceeding advising them of the amount of the surplus and that the surplus will be held until a party obtains a court order for its distribution or, in the absence of an order, until the surplus is forfeited to the State.

FOR INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:
MCCALLA RAYMER LEIBERT PIERCE
1 N. Dearborn Suite 1300
Chicago, Illinois 60602
P: 312-346-9088
F: 312-346-9088

Plaintiff's Attorney MIKE KELLEY
Sheriff of Will County
Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, Dec. 24, 31, 2025 and Jan. 7, 2026.

Sheriff's sale of 25050 South Timber Drive

PUBLIC NOTICE

PURSUANT TO THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT YOU ARE ADVISED THAT THIS LAW FIRM IS DEEMED TO BE A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

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

Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC
Plaintiff,
vs.
Unknown Heirs and Legatees of Christine Kolenda; et. al. NO. 25 FC 0042
Defendant.

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE

Public notice is hereby given that pursuant to a judgment entered in the above cause on the 5th day of November, 2025, MIKE KELLEY, Sheriff of Will County, Illinois, will on Thursday, the 22nd day of January, 2026, commencing at 12:00 o'clock noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 1001, Joliet, IL 60432, sell at public auction to the highest and best bidder or bidders the following-described real estate:

LOT 5 IN TIMBER CREEK, BEING A SUBDIVISION OF PART OF THE NORTHEAST 1/4 OF SECTION 16, IN TOWNSHIP 34 NORTH, AND IN RANGE 10 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED NOVEMBER 22, 1978, AS DOCUMENT NO. R78-46651, AND CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION RECORDED MAY 21, 1980 AS DOCUMENT NO. R80-13418, IN WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

Commonly known as: 25050 South Timber Drive, Elwood, IL 60421
Description of Improvements: Residential
P.I.N.: 10-11-16-202-008-0000

Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale 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. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County.

In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the purchaser of the unit, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and legal fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 and the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Illinois Condominium Property Act.

Pursuant to Local Court Rule 11.03 (J) if there is a surplus following application of the proceeds of sale, then the plaintiff shall send written notice pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/15-1512(d) to all parties to the proceeding advising them of the amount of the surplus and that the surplus will be held until a party obtains a court order for its distribution or, in the absence of an order, until the surplus is forfeited to the State.

FOR INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:
Codilis & Associates, P.C.
15W030 N. Frontage Road Suite 100
Burr Ridge, Illinois 60527
P: 630-794-5300
F: 630-794-9090

Plaintiff's Attorney MIKE KELLEY
Sheriff of Will County
Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, Dec. 31, 2025, Jan. 7 and 14, 2026.

Will Co. Health offering COVID-19 shot

The Will County Health Department (WCHD) is informing residents that the new 2025-26 COVID-19 vaccine is available at the Will County Health Department Immunization Clinic and at the Will County Community Health Center.

The WCHD Immunization Clinic has the COVID-19 vaccine available for all ages six month and older at in Joliet at the Main Office of the Will County Health Department (501 Ella Avenue). Vaccines are available to residents with Medicaid or Medicare. Limited pri-

vate insurance plans are also accepted while low-cost vaccines are available for the uninsured or underinsured.

For additional information or to make an appointment at any of the three above locations, please call the WCHD Immunization Clinic at 815-740-8143.

The Will County Community Health Center is also offering the COVID-19 vaccine at the Joliet location at 1106 Neal Ave. For additional information or to make an appointment at the Community Health Center, please call 815-727-8670.

School Dist. 209-U seeks Exterior Renovation bids

PUBLIC NOTICE

Section 00 02 00 - Notice To Bidders

Sealed bids for the 2026 Exterior Renovation Work, Wilmington High School, Wilmington, Illinois for Wilmington Community Unit School District 209-U will be received by the Board of Education, Wilmington Community Unit School District 209-U, at their District Office, 209U Wildcat Court, Wilmington, Illinois, until 2:30 P.M. prevailing time on the 21st day of January, 2026. Bids will be opened and read aloud at that time.

The work is to be performed in accordance with the proposed Contract Documents as prepared by Healy Bender Patton & Been Architects, 4040 Helene Avenue, Naperville, Illinois. The proposed Contract Documents may be obtained upon request to the office of the Architect at file@healybender.com. Bidders will be required to complete a Registered Plan Holder Record form and a Bidding Documents License Agreement for the Project.

Upon receipt of a completed Registered Plan Holder Record form and a Bidding Documents License Agreement, prospective bidders will be sent bidding documents and will become registered plan holders. During the bidding period, the office of the Architect will send project addenda, clarifications, and other project information to registered plan holders via the email address(es) listed on the Registered Plan Holder Record on file at the Architect's office.

These proposed Contract Documents may be viewed online at Dodge Data & Analytics internet site at www.construction.com.

Bids will be received on General Contract Work, including all trades.

Each bid must be accompanied by a Bid Guarantee in the form of a Bid Bond, Certified Check or Bank Draft in an amount equal to not less than ten percent (10%) of the bid and made payable to Wilmington Community Unit School District 209-U, 209 Wildcat Court, Wilmington, Illinois. No bid shall be withdrawn for a period of thirty (30) days after the bids opening date without the consent of the Owner. Checks or drafts of unsuccessful bidders will be returned as soon as practical after opening and checking the bids.

Successful bidder must provide a Performance Bond and a Labor and Material Payment Bond in the full amount of the Contract, acceptable to the Owner. This Contract is subject to the Illinois Prevailing Wage Act (820 ILCS 130/1 et seq.).

The Owner reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any informalities in bidding. Contact Chris Crawford, Director of Facilities at 815-693-5941 to make arrangements to visit the site.

BOARD OF EDUCATION
WILMINGTON COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 209-U
WILMINGTON, WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, Dec. 31, 2025 and Jan. 7, 2026.

School Dist. 209-U seeks flooring work bids

PUBLIC NOTICE

Section 00 02 00 - Notice To Bidders

Sealed bids for the 2026 Flooring Work, Bruning Elementary School, Wilmington, Illinois for Wilmington Community Unit School District 209-U will be received by the Board of Education, Wilmington Community Unit School District 209-U, at their District Office, 209U Wildcat Court, Wilmington, Illinois, until 2:00 P.M. prevailing time on the 21st day of January, 2026. Bids will be opened and read aloud at that time.

The work is to be performed in accordance with the proposed Contract Documents as prepared by Healy Bender Patton & Been Architects, 4040 Helene Avenue, Naperville, Illinois. The proposed Contract Documents may be obtained upon request to the office of the Architect at file@healybender.com. Bidders will be required to complete a Registered Plan Holder Record form and a Bidding Documents License Agreement for the Project.

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BOARD OF EDUCATION
WILMINGTON COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 209-U
WILMINGTON, WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, Dec. 31, 2025 and Jan. 7, 2026.

Sheriff's sale of 509 East Cross Street

PUBLIC NOTICE

PURSUANT TO THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT YOU ARE ADVISED THAT THIS LAW FIRM IS DEEMED TO BE A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

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

MidFirst Bank
Plaintiff,
vs.
CHRISTINA D. WALLACE; UNITED STATES OF AMERICA; LNVV FUNDING LLC NO. 25 FC 0314
Defendant.

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE

Public notice is hereby given that pursuant to a judgment entered in the above cause on the 21st day of October, 2025, MIKE KELLEY, Sheriff of Will County, Illinois, will on Thursday, the 22nd day of January, 2026, commencing at 12:00 o'clock noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 1001, Joliet, IL 60432, sell at public auction to the highest and best bidder or bidders the following-described real estate:

THAT PART OF LOT #43 IN UNIT 1 OF ROPP'S SUBDIVISION, LYING SOUTHWESTERLY OF THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBED LINE BEGIN AT THE NORTHWESTERLY CORNER OF SAID LOT 43 AND RUNNING THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY TO A POINT ON THE EAST LINE OF THE SAID LOT 43 THAT 30 FEET SOUTHWESTERLY OF THE NORTHEASTERLY CORNER THEREOF IN UNIT 1 OF ROPP'S SUBDIVISION, A SUBDIVISION OF THAT PART OF THE SOUTH HALF OF SECTION 24, IN TOWNSHIP 33 NORTH, AND IN RANGE 9 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, LYING EAST OF THE CENTER LINE OF KANKAKEE STREET IN THE CITY OF WILMINGTON EXTEND NORTHWESTERLY AND WEST OF THE WESTERLY RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF THE GULF, MOBILE AND OHIO RAILROAD ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED SEPTEMBER 17, 1952 AS DOCUMENT NO 714634 AND AMENDED BY DOCUMENT NO 724551, IN WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS LOT NO FORTY-TWO (42) IN UNIT NO 1 OF ROPP'S SUBDIVISION, OF THAT PART OF THE SOUTH HALF OF SECTION 24, TOWNSHIP 33 NORTH, RANGE 9 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, LYING EAST OF THE CENTER LINE OF KANKAKEE STREET IN THE CITY OF WILMINGTON, ILLINOIS, EXTENDED NORTHWESTERLY AND WEST OF THE WESTERLY RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF GULF, MOBILE AND OHIO RAILROAD (ALTON RAILROAD), ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED SEPTEMBER 17, 1952 AS DOCUMENT NO 714634 AND AMENDED BY DOCUMENT NO 724551, IN WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS

Commonly known as: 509 East Cross Street, Wilmington, IL 60481
Description of Improvements: Single Family
P.I.N.: 03-17-24-309-006-0000

Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale 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. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County.

In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the purchaser of the unit, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and legal fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 and the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Illinois Condominium Property Act.

Pursuant to Local Court Rule 11.03 (J) if there is a surplus following application of the proceeds of sale, then the plaintiff shall send written notice pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/15-1512(d) to all parties to the proceeding advising them of the amount of the surplus and that the surplus will be held until a party obtains a court order for its distribution or, in the absence of an order, until the surplus is forfeited to the State.

FOR INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:
LOGS LEGAL GROUP LLP
2121 Waukegan Rd, Suite 301
Bannockburn, Illinois 60015
P: 847-770-4348
F: 847-291-3434

Plaintiff's Attorney MIKE KELLEY
Sheriff of Will County
Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, Dec. 31, 2025, Jan. 7 and 14, 2026.

Village Christian Church adds third service

The Village Christian Church, 965 E Division St. Coal City, is adding a service at 8 a.m. in addition to its popular services that are held at 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m., starting Jan. 25.

The 8 a.m. service will be shorter and will end at 8:45 a.m. Kid Village will be open for both 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. services.

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SUNDAY FUNDAY!

DOORS OPEN AT NOON! FIRST RAFFLE AT 2PM!

It's NOT BINGO but a RAFFLE like BINGO... You play it like BINGO!! Lots of cash prizes!!! BIG PRIZES!!!

QUEEN of HEARTS

Every TUESDAY at 553 W. Kennedy Rd. Braidwood

You must play BINGO to participate.

Doors open at 4pm. Drawing is held at intermission.

For BINGO players only on Tuesday nites and see the QUEEN rules at the BINGO hall for rules and regulations.

Braidwood Post 039 BINGO

Tuesday Night Flash Max Bingo

Pull Tabs	6:30pm	Hot Food, Snacks & Beverages
Bingo	6:30pm	553 Kennedy Road
Doors Open	4:00pm	Braidwood, IL 60408

Home of the "Big Guy"
Commander Bill Kiley
815-216-2570

Wilmington Baseball Softball Assoc. 2026 Registration*

When:
Fri., Jan. 9, 6-8 p.m.
Sat. Jan. 10, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Where:
Stevens Intermediate School
221 Ryan Street, Wilmington
(enter thru gym doors in back)

Fees:	Pony (ages 14 & under).....\$115	
	Bronco (ages 12 & under).....\$105	
	Mustang (ages 10 & under).....\$100	
	Pinto (ages 8 & under).....\$90	
	Shetland T-Ball (ages 4-6).....\$85	

There is a multiple player discount for families with two or more players.

There is a \$20.00 late sign up fee for anyone not paid in full by Jan. 31. If the player's division is full they will be placed on a waiting list and contacted with further details.

WBSA will be holding a raffle ticket fundraiser that goes along with registration each player must sell ten \$5 raffle tickets. All raffle tickets must be prepaid at time of pickup. There will be a \$75 per family volunteer fee. This money can be earned back by working in the concession stand during games. More information available at registration.

The WBSA welcomes any players to register from the local area; players do not have to live in Wilmington.

Shetland players must be 4 years old by 4/1/26 to be able to participate.
Registration forms and medical release forms are available at sign up.

***NO ONLINE REGISTRATION FOR 2026 SEASON**

Sheriff's sale of 25050 South Timber Drive

PUBLIC NOTICE

PURSUANT TO THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT YOU ARE ADVISED THAT THIS LAW FIRM IS DEEMED TO BE A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

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

Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC
Plaintiff,
vs.
Unknown Heirs and Legatees of Christine Kolenda; et. al. NO. 25 FC 0042
Defendant.

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE

Public notice is hereby given that pursuant to a judgment entered in the above cause on the 5th day of November, 2025, MIKE KELLEY, Sheriff of Will County, Illinois, will on Thursday, the 22nd day of January, 2026, commencing at 12:00 o'clock noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 1001, Joliet, IL 60432, sell at public auction to the highest and best bidder or bidders the following-described real estate:

LOT 5 IN TIMBER CREEK, BEING A SUBDIVISION OF PART OF THE NORTHEAST 1/4 OF SECTION 16, IN TOWNSHIP 34 NORTH, AND IN RANGE 10 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED NOVEMBER 22, 1978, AS DOCUMENT NO. R78-46651, AND CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION RECORDED MAY 21, 1980 AS DOCUMENT NO. R80-13418, IN WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

Commonly known as: 25050 South Timber Drive, Elwood, IL 60421
Description of Improvements: Residential
P.I.N.: 10-11-16-202-008-0000

Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale 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. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County.

In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the purchaser of the unit, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and legal fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 and the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Illinois Condominium Property Act.

Pursuant to Local Court Rule 11.03 (J) if there is a surplus following application of the proceeds of sale, then the plaintiff shall send written notice pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/15-1512(d) to all parties to the proceeding advising them of the amount of the surplus and that the surplus will be held until a party obtains a court order for its distribution or, in the absence of an order, until the

Congress advances whole milk bill

BY TAMMIE SLOUP FARMWEEK

After more than a decade of whole milk being absent from school cafeterias, legislation allowing for more milk options awaits the president's signature.

The Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act, passed by the U.S. House on Dec. 15 and the Senate in November, would overturn USDA's 2012 restrictions that have limited schools to providing only flavored and unflavored, low fat, fat-free and lactose-free milk.

The legislation would help revitalize an industry that has steadily lost market share and reconnect children to the benefits and taste of milk.

Agriculture groups, including Illinois Farm Bureau, have supported the Whole Milk for Healthy Kids legislation.

"This is a significant win for Illinois dairy farmers and

most importantly, for school children," IFB President Philip Nelson said. "With passage of the Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act, students will once again have access to a fortified, nutritious whole milk option at school, supporting healthy growth and development. This is an initiative we have worked toward for years, and we are grateful to see strong bipartisan support in Congress."

The legislation would amend the National School Lunch Program to exclude milk fat from calculations of saturated fat in school meals and let students receive non-dairy beverages such as soy milk without a doctor's note.

"It's also important to remember this legislation does not require any student to drink or any school to serve whole milk," House Ag Committee Chair Glenn "GT" Thompson, R-Pennsylvania, said on the chamber floor.

"Rather, this legislation simply gives schools the flexibility to serve a broader variety of milk in the school lunch room."

In 2010, Congress passed the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, which aimed to reduce childhood obesity and cut health risks for kids. It required school meals to include more whole grains, fruits and vegetables, protein and low-fat dairy and less sugar, sodium and fat.

Starting in 2012, whole and 2% milk were not permitted in school meals because those products are higher in saturated fat and calories than lower-fat options.

"Once the bill is signed, the USDA, through its Food and Nutrition Service, will issue updated guidance and regulations that reflect the new statutory authority," AFBF Economist Danny Munch said earlier this month.

"Individual school districts will then decide if and when to offer whole milk or 2% milk in their cafeteria menus. Many school districts adjust those menus between semesters or on an annual cycle, so adoption could occur within the start of the new year or months later when they set up for next year."

Ag Secretary Brooke Rollins said the legislation is a significant step forward in strengthening school nutrition and supporting America's dairy farmers, and "is more than a policy change; it's a practical tool for promoting health nationwide and ensuring that America's next generation thrives."

This story was distributed through a cooperative project between Illinois Farm Bureau and the Illinois Press Association. For more food and farming news, visit FarmWeek Now.com.

Know the differences between E-Bikes

If you are thinking of purchasing an E-bike for yourself or your children, please be aware that Illinois law requires a legal low-speed electric bicycle (e-bike) to meet all of the following requirements:

- The motor must not exceed 750 watts of power.
- The maximum assisted speed must not exceed 28 mph.
- The bicycle must have fully functional pedals.

Devices that have a motor greater than 750 watts or are capable of going faster than 20 mph without pedaling are e-motos, not e-bikes.

E-motos should not be purchased for minors nor operated by anyone under 18 years old.

Reputable bike shops understand state and local regulations. You're encouraged to shop at a trusted, local bike shop when shopping for a legal e-bike, pedal bike, and accessories. They can help you determine the right e-bike for your needs and will provide the service and support you need to ride safely.

Check out Ride Illinois' Bike-Friendly Illinois Map to locate local bike shops and to learn more about bike safety.

CLASSIFIEDS

HELP WANTED

NOW HIRING - Two full-time tellers (floating) and one full-time teller (Wilmington). Apply in person at Grundy Bank, 201 Liberty St., Morris or 120 S. Main St., Wilmington or send resume to info@grundy.bank

HOME FOR RENT

Coal City, 85 W. Center Street. 3BR, 1BA, all appliances included, 1 car attached garage. \$1,150 a month with 1/2-yr lease, first+last & security dep., credit checks. Call Terri 815-712-7848. cc53-3

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.

PETS

Large Selection of Dog and Cat Food, treats, accessories, health aids, clothing, Birthday treats, wall art, jewelry, gifts, greeting cards and Home of Fritters for Critters Pet Treats. New! Brew and Chew Dog Treats. Trinity Barkery 240 W. Baltimore Wilmington, IL 60481 815-476-5104 slewis@trinityservices.org.

SERVICE & REPAIRS

Bubbles Cleaning Service
Dawn Boardman Business and Home Cleaning Service. Weekly, bi-weekly, monthly. Many references available. Please leave message 815-661-6180. cc41-13

FIREWOOD, Dry, seasoned, hard woods \$149, plus delivery. Quick, friendly service. 815-260-0108. cc52-1

Julie's Remodeling
Siding, soffit, roof repairs, painting, seamless gutters, fencing, tree removal, lawn care, Complete Handyman service! Bonded and Insured, 20 yrs.. Call Lee 815-791-5731.

Mike Collins Roofing, re-shingles and gutter cleaning, aluminum gutter screen, no repair to small or too big. Free roof inspection. Low prices. Lic #104.007296 Ask for Mike at 815-730-1303. ck47-17

A Thousand Words Photography
385 N. Second Ave. Coal City
Mandy Eaton
815-791-2913

REAL ESTATE

SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE OF 2027 Roberts Street, Wilmington, IL 60481 (ONE STORY SINGLE FAMILY HOME. TWO CAR DETACHED GARAGE.). On the 15th day of January, 2026 to be held at 12:00 noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 1001, Joliet, IL 60432, under Case Title: **Illinois Housing Development Authority Plaintiff V. Robert D Bradbury, Jr. A/K/A Robert Bradbury; Will County Community Development Department; REICH, JUMBECK, STOLE & REEB, LLP; Lakewood Shores Improvement Association** Defendant. Case No. **25 FC 0426** in the Circuit Court of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, Will County, Illinois. Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale 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. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County. In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-

MICALLA RAYMER LEIBERT PIERCE
1 N. Dearborn Suite 1300 Chicago, Illinois 60602
P: 312-346-9088
F: PURSUANT TO THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT YOU ARE ADVISED THAT THIS LAW FIRM IS DEEMED TO BE A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. Published in the Free Press Newspapers on Wed., Dec. 24 & 31, 2025, and Jan. 7, 2026.

SITUATIONS WANTED

Wanted: Stories about local people, organizations and events. If you know a neighbor with an interesting hobby, collection or cause, give the editor a call at 1-815-634-0315 or 1-815-476-7966. tfn

REAL ESTATE

SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE OF 509 East Cross Street, Wilmington, IL 60481 (Single Family). On the 22nd day of January, 2026 to be held at 12:00 noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 1001, Joliet, IL 60432, under Case Title: **MidFirst Bank Plaintiff V. CHRISTINA D. WALLACE; UNITED STATES OF AMERICA; LVNV FUNDING LLC; Defendant.** Case No. **25 FC 0314** in the Circuit Court of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, Will County, Illinois. Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale 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. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County. In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2),

LOGS LEGAL GROUP LLP
2121 Waukegan Rd, Suite 301 Bannockburn, Illinois 60015
P: 847-770-4348
F: 847-291-3434
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STORAGE

PUBLIC STORAGE
Clementine's Closets
815-530-0200
- No Deposit - Starting at \$50
515 Davy Lane, Wilmington

WANTED TO BUY

Buying all gold, silver, sterling, coin and paper money collections. Call Crown Gold & Coins, Wilmington, 815-370-6110. Email: crowncoin23@gmail.com ch1-8

REAL ESTATE

SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE OF 25050 South Timber Drive, Elwood, IL 60421 (Residential). On the 22nd day of January, 2026 to be held at 12:00 noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 1001, Joliet, IL 60432, under Case Title: **Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC Plaintiff V. Unknown Heirs and Legatees of Christine Kolenda; et. al. Defendant.** Case No. **25 FC 0042** in the Circuit Court of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, Will County, Illinois. Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale 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. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County. In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the purchaser of the unit, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and legal fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 and the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Illinois Condominium Property Act. Pursuant to Local Court Rule 11.03 (J) if there is a surplus following application of the proceeds of sale, then the plaintiff shall send written notice pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/15-1512(d) to all parties to the proceeding advising them of the amount of the surplus and that the surplus will be held until a party obtains a court order for its distribution or, in the absence of an order, until the surplus is forfeited to the State. For Information Please Contact:

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WANTED

WANTED Volkswagen
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* Bus *
* Dune Buggy *
Any Condition. Cash Buyer.
Larry T.
815-671- 8741

WANTED

WANTED SCRAP METAL
• Farm Machinery
• Garden Tractors
• Snowmobiles
• Appliances
• Anything Metal
Free pickup 7 days 815-210-8819

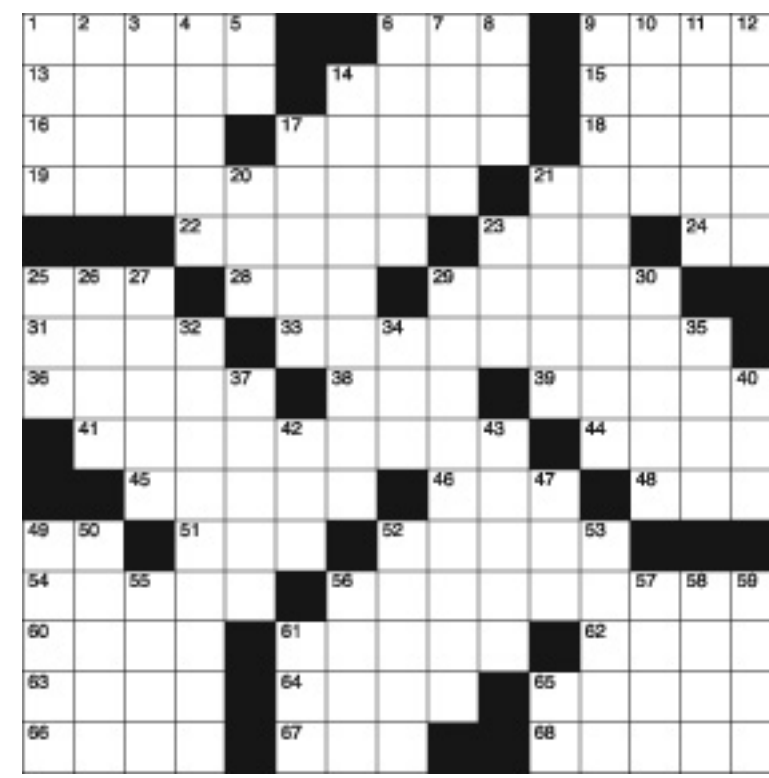
Local Advertising That Works as Hard as You Do

CLUES ACROSS

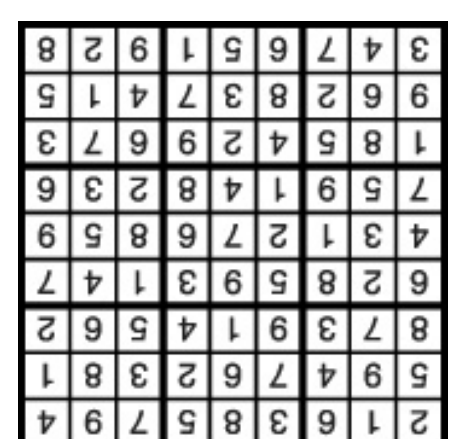
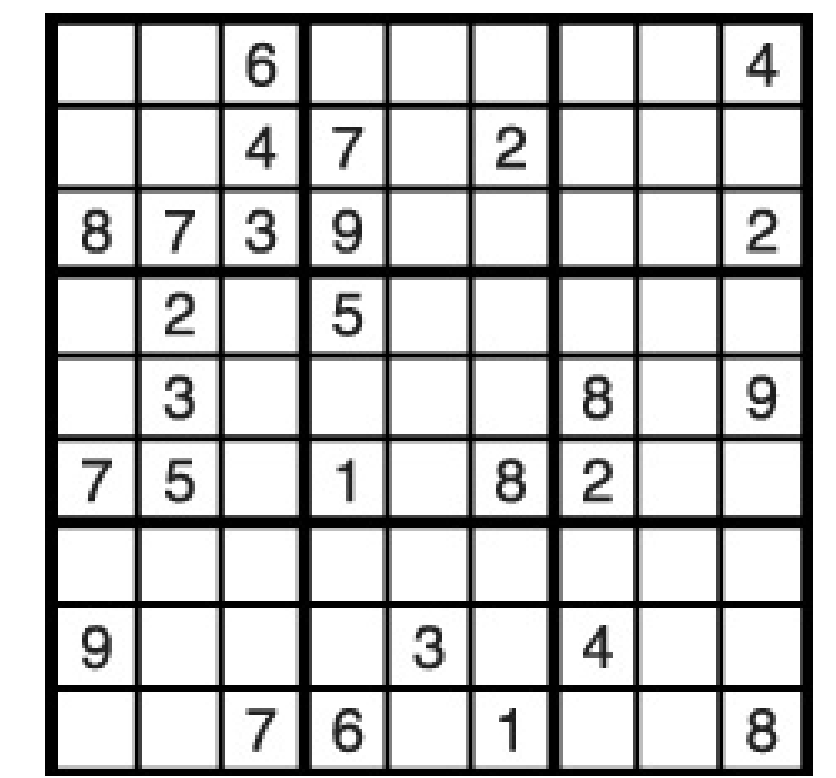
- Lakes
- Electromotive force
- Invests in little enterprises
- Longtime Utah Jazz coach
- Small sailboat
- Actor Idris
- Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls
- System that detects objects under water
- Harsh, grating noise
- Steward
- A fencing sword
- Infections
- Actress Ryan
- Sodium
- Swedish castle
- A lump of slime
- African antelope
- Insurance providers
- Choosy
- Ringworm
- Unpolished
- Drenches
- Pant style
- Son of Noah
- Spiritual being
- Upton Sinclair novel
- Journalist Tarbell
- Popular sports highlight show
- Born of
- Rich tapestry
- S. China seaport
- State of being unclothed
- Surrounded by
- Residue
- Away from wind
- Dried-up
- Visionary
- A very large body of water
- Garden tools
- Screen type
- Ancient Scandinavian poet

CLUES DOWN

- Millisecond
- Spanish city
- A sudden very loud sound
- "The Indiana Jones of beer"
- Tin
- Sea eagles



- Volcanic crater
- Type of coat
- Women's apartments in Ottoman palace
- Divulge a secret
- Norwegian playwright
- "It's a Wonderful Life" director
- Poisonous perennial plant
- 18-year astronomical period
- Clothes
- Places to sit
- Family of regulator genes
- New York ballplayer
- Impressive in size or scope
- Jacques ____, French biologist
- One from the Big Apple
- Genus of woolly lemurs
- Songs to one's beloved
- Indigenous person of N.E. Thailand
- Supplemented with difficulty
- Farewell
- Investment account (abbr.)
- One from Utah
- Begets
- A male child
- Break apart
- Brief appearance
- Partner to "ooohed"
- A light informal meal
- Fabric with smooth, shiny surface
- One billionth of a second
- Ancient Italian-Greek colony
- Close tightly
- Mail out
- Language
- Computer characteristic



Comets matmen finish 9th during Abe's Rumble

The Abe's Rumble, one of the largest dual-team wrestling tournaments in the Midwest, brought together 62 teams for two days of competition Dec. 29-30 in Springfield.

Battling through a deep field, the Reed-Custer wrestling team finished ninth overall in the Gold Division, capping the tournament with a clutch victory in the ninth-place match.

Reed-Custer opened the tournament in dominant fashion, sweeping Pool D with four decisive dual wins to guarantee a spot in the Gold bracket.

Round 1: Reed-Custer def. Litchfield 61-14
Round 2: Reed-Custer def. Westville 52-29
Round 3: Bye
Round 4: Reed-Custer def. Farmington 67-8
Round 5: Reed-Custer def. Tolono Unity 45-33

The Comets racked up bonus points throughout pool play, piling up pins, forfeits, and technical falls that showcased their depth.

Advancing into the 32-team championship portion, Reed-Custer continued to prove it belonged among the tournament's elite.

The Comets upended Benton 46-32 to lock them into the top 16 of the Gold Division, guaranteeing at least a ninth-place finish overall.

Reed-Custer's path to ninth place required resilience after a setback in the Gold bracket. Oregon pulled ahead to beat Reed-Custer 45-34. The Comets bounced

back with a 57-21 win over Seneca and then edged Tolono Unity, 38-37.

In the match for 9th place, Reed-Custer got by Canton, 42-38.

The ninth-place dual came down to critical bonus-point wins, as Reed-Custer secured falls at 165, 175, 190, and 215 pounds to edge Canton and close the tournament on a high note.

Several Comets turned in stand-out tournaments, winning more than half of their matches and providing key momentum across both days:

Christian Mounts (285): A consistent anchor at heavyweight with multiple falls, including key wins over Westville, Tolono Unity (twice), Benton, and Oregon.

Dominic Alaimo (215): One of the team's most reliable scorers, posting numerous pins and delivering decisive victories, including the ninth-place match.

Aiden Shultz (190): Piled up falls against quality competition and rebounded well after losses, finishing strong in the placement rounds.

Nathan Vogler (175): Collected several quick pins in pool play and bounced back with clutch wins late in the tournament.

Reed Newbrough (165): Provided steady production throughout, earning multiple falls and playing a pivotal role in the ninth-place victory.

Colton Drinkwine (113): A spark plug in the lineup, racking up falls, forfeits, and a major decision while consistently putting points on the board.

Cole Harris (120): Delivered

bonus points early and often, including several falls under a minute.

Kaaden Wood (126): Recorded multiple falls and technical falls, giving Reed-Custer critical separation in several duals.

Jayden Sanchez (132): A frequent bonus-point scorer with falls in pool play and key wins in the consolation rounds.

Collin Bryant (106): Opened multiple duals with fast pins and contributed important team points throughout the tournament.

Rylan West (138): Provided highlight wins, including technical falls and timely pins against strong competition.

While some Comets faced tough stretches against elite Gold-bracket opponents, the overall effort reflected a balanced lineup capable of competing with top programs statewide.

At the top of the standings was Coal City who captured the Gold Division championship, defeating Lena-Winslow 52-21 in the first-place match. Coal City's depth and bonus-point production separated them from the field over two days of competition.

Gold Division - Top Nine Teams were Coal City, Lena-Winslow, Vandalia, Murphysboro, Fithian (Oakwood), Olympia, Oregon, Petersburg PORTA and Reed-Custer.

The Comets will host Sandwich/Plano today (Wednesday) before traveling Thursday to Manteno for a ICE quad meet. On Friday and Saturday they will compete in the Princeton individual tournament.



Courtesy photo

THE GULBRANSEN PIANO Company in Chicago rose to national prominence during the early 20th century by producing high-quality, affordable instruments designed for middle-class American homes. By the 1920s, Gulbransen had become one of the most recognized piano brands in the country, including in Coal City where jeweler Frank Schimandle advertised them often in the Coal City Courant. Another local piano seller and repair man was Barney Faletti.

FROM THE COURANT ARCHIVES

When piano ownership centered around one block of town

STAFF REPORT

In early January 1925, a striking advertisement in the Coal City Courant captured a moment when music was not just entertainment, but a defining feature of everyday life in Coal City.

The ad, published Jan. 7, 1925, boldly declared "Gordon Avenue - The Musical Street of Coal City," celebrating an extraordinary local phenomenon: An explosion of piano ownership centered around one block of town.

At the heart of the advertisement was Gulbransen Piano Company, whose instruments were being sold by Coal City jeweler Frank Schimandle.

The ad proudly reported that nine Gulbransen Registering Pianos had been sold on Gordon Avenue alone—within just two blocks. Even more remarkable, five additional Gulbransen pianos were sold within a single block, and three more were purchased in the two days leading up to Christmas.

Rather than vague claims, the advertisement listed neighbors, families, and familiar local figures, turning the notice into both a sales pitch and a community roll call.

Among those named as buyers were H. Stocker, Gus Smith, Clyde Argyle, Dave McNeil, James Arthur, Martin Guiney, and William Lohmar, with additional purchases credited to residents of nearby towns such as Mazon. The message was clear: owning a Gulbransen piano had become a point of local pride.

Beyond pianos, the ad also highlighted sales of Victrolas and Zenith radios, underscoring how rapidly Coal City homes were embracing modern music and technology. The advertisement closed with a confident slogan: "There's a reason. It means satisfactory service."

Beneath it stood Schimandle's name, reinforcing his reputation not just as a jeweler, but as a

trusted merchant bringing culture and innovation to town.

The Gulbransen Piano Legacy

Founded in 1904 by Axel Gulbransen, the Gulbransen Piano Company of Chicago rose to national prominence during the early 20th century by producing high-quality, affordable instruments designed for middle-class American homes. By the 1920s, Gulbransen had become one of the most recognized piano brands in the country.

The company was especially known for its Registering Piano, an advanced form of player piano that allowed music to be replayed with tempo intact, setting it apart from standard mechanical pianos of the era. For families without formal musical training and anywhere from \$350 to \$1,000 depending on the model, a Gulbransen brought concert-style performances into the living room at the turn of a lever.

During the 1920s, Gulbransen pianos symbolized prosperity. They were often the centerpiece of family gatherings, holiday celebrations and community events, exactly the role they appear to have played on Gordon Avenue.

The advertisement from 101 years ago does more than sell instruments, it preserves a snapshot of Coal City at a time when music connected households block by block. Gordon Avenue earning the title "The Musical Street of Coal City" was not marketing exaggeration; it reflected a real, shared cultural experience.

Over a century later, the names printed in that ad still echo with significance. They represent a moment when Coal City families invested not only in furniture or luxury goods, but in music, community, and the sounds that would fill their homes for generations.

A fully restored Gulbransen is worth up to \$50,000 today.



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Bundle up and join the new winter walking Trail Club

The Forest Preserve of Will County's new Trail Club invites residents to walk together this winter from January through March.

Weekly group hikes at different preserves, times and days of the week make it easier to stay motivated and keep moving all season. Participants who attend at least three walks this season will earn a Trail Club sticker. The program kicks off on Tuesdays, at Whalon Lake in Naperville.

January's walks will be at 10 a.m. Tuesdays around the 1.6-mile loop at Whalon Lake in Naperville. In February, Trail Club will meet at 3 p.m., Thursdays for 1.5-mile hikes at Lake Chaminwood Preserve in Channahon.

March's meetings will be at 9 a.m. Saturdays for 2.2-mile hikes at Lake Renwick Preserve - Turtle Lake Access in Plainfield.

Visit reconnectwithnature.org to learn more.