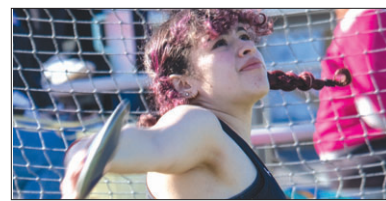


RCMS students
recognizedComets trackster
get up to speed

BRAIDWOOD JOURNAL.com

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17, 2024

A FREE PRESS NEWSPAPER • (815) 476-7966

'When I wake up, I ask how can I make the world a better place'

BY ROSE PANIERI
STAFF WRITER"Heroes wear capes,
and I'm anti cape."

-Freak

Speaking of heroes, where have they all gone? We just don't run across the likes of Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King, or Anne Frank these days. Or do we?

Actually, we do, and one of those heroes hides in plain sight in Braidwood. His legal name is Walter Kozielski. He celebrated his 57th birthday on April 16. By the time you read his story, you'll agree he's a good guy, maybe even a hero (though he'll probably deny it).

What? You've never heard of Kozielski? Have you never dropped into Top Fuel Saloon on Hickory Street in Braidwood?

If you have, then you most certainly know Kozielski, but most likely, you know him under his alias: Freak.

Somewhere along the line, young Walter was given the nickname "Freak," and it stuck. It's the name he prefers.

"The only people that call me Walter are the police," Freak quips. "My mom doesn't even call me Wally. I'm not ashamed of the name; it's not a secret, and I won't throw you out of the bar if you call me Wally."

Freak is a rock fan, and the pseudonym is appropriate for a guy who



Photo by Rose Panieri

FREAK IS PROUD of his radio broadcasting station housed in a semi truck parked inside Top Fuel Saloon.

was a roadie for heavy metal bands. It's appropriate for a "shock jock" who worked on a syndicated radio show for nearly a decade.

It's ironic, really, since Walter is a fine Polish/Germanic name that roughly translates to "military hero," which is pretty macho when you think about it.

Freak was born in Chicago. His mother, Joyce Kozielski, raised him to be a fighter, but she also made sure her son understood exactly what he was fighting. He developed a deep compassion for those who suffer, and he fought injustice. Freak dislikes bullies and will not tolerate bad behavior.

"I didn't grow up rich: Single mom, two kids, food stamps," Freak said. "And, you know, my mom was working two part-time jobs, and I never really had everything. Then again, I did have everything, if you know what I mean."

Joyce Kozielski was a go-getter. Though the family wasn't rich, she

made sure they were fed, clothed and educated. She instilled a sense of righteousness, by example.

Freak spent his elementary school years at St. Francis Borgia, in Chicago, under the tutelage of nuns.

"I got cracked around the head a couple of times by those nuns," Freak said, laughing. "If you were really bad, they would hit you with the metal edge of the ruler."

His high school years were spent at Prosser Career Academy in Chicago. It was a rough school with an unspoken hierarchy, where only the strong survived. Prosser taught Freak that life isn't fair. He developed tact and diplomacy, and he vowed to work hard to achieve his goals. He wanted to succeed in life.

One of Freak's goals was a music career. Soon after graduating from Prosser in 1985. He found work as a roadie with heavy metal bands like Metallica, Iron Maiden, and Motorhead. It was a dream come true.

When the thrill of touring wore off, Freak found a disk jockey job at WTMX-FM (The mix). The music was a bit bland for his taste, and he soon graduated to WRCX-FM (The Blaze), where he blossomed, becoming a rough and tough air personality, though many fans sensed the compassion behind his facade.

He worked hard – and still does – never refusing a task, feeling it was beneath his dignity.

"I learned everything about every aspect of the radio station," Freak said. "I learned what every single button in the station does until I could

SEE FREAK PAGE 2

LRS to help town do some Spring cleaning

BY ROSE PANIERI
Staff Writer

The Braidwood City Council revealed last week that LRS, Braidwood's trash and recycling service, will be mailing a flyer to all subscribers, announcing annual spring cleanup on scheduled trash pickup days – either Monday, May 6 or Tuesday May 7.

LRS will accept tires but no rims (limit four), mattresses, box springs, furniture and appliances. Also accepted will be small electronics, including desktop and laptop computers, notebooks, tablets, keyboards, electronic mice, DVD players, DVD recorders, digital recorders, fax machines, satellite receivers, scanners, VCRs and video game consoles.

Televisions and monitors will be accepted for an extra charge of \$35 per item. Electronics should be placed in a paper bag or box and clearly marked "E-WASTE" in large print. Not accepted are oil paint, medical waste, hazardous waste and landscape waste.

Call (815) 725-4555 to submit a request 24 hours prior to your service day. For information, call or email ENVRD@LRSrecycles.com.

Donation to
Fishing for a Cure

Mayor Karen Hart requested a motion, which was passed, to donate \$1,000 to Constellation's 23rd annual Fishing for a Cure, a benefit to raise funds for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

Cystic Fibrosis is a progressive genetic disease that affects the lungs, pancreas, and other organs. Just three decades ago, the average person with cystic fibrosis would live only to the age of 30, but

now 50 years is typical, and some patients with the disorder now live into their eighties.

The benefit will be held from 6:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Braidwood Generating Cooling Lake in Braceville, with cash prices totaling \$10,000. For information, visit ConstellationEnergy.com.

Street repairs

City engineer Dave Weber reported on the status of city streets.

"I need to still put together a report with the tools that the city will need in order to judge how much they want to spend this year in order to fix the worst streets," he said. "The city of Braidwood has 35.2 miles of streets within their city lies under their jurisdiction. The good thing is that generally the overall average is about 5.5 rating on a scale of one to five so in general the streets are good."

Weber said he would compile a report and meet with Commissioner of Streets and Public Improvement Dale Walsh and City Administrator Tony Altieri the week of April 14 to formalize the budget and begin street repairs.

New city engineer

Weber reported that his last day as city engineer will be Friday, May 31. He introduced his replacement, Sean Kelly, who has worked with the city of Minooka, has more than 20 years experience.

Safer restraining device

Commissioner of Public Health and Safety Ron Wilczak made a motion to approve the purchase of Bola Wrap, equipment and training. The proposal is for \$33,347.51 to be paid out of the asset forfeiture (property confiscated from crime) rather than from the budget or taxes. The motion

was approved.

Tony Larrimore, regional sales manager for WRAP Technologies, attended the meeting to demonstrate the Bola Wrap, a restraint tool designed for de-escalation, a non-pain compliance device that launches Kevlar cord to apprehend

Hiring of police officers

The city council approved a motion to approve the hiring of three new full time police officers.

"This is what we feel is necessary for adequate coverage in the city," Wilczak said. "This will also help eliminate most if not all the overtime requirements that are now required."

Wilczak also pointed out that the police department is likely to lose three officers to retirement within the next two years. Since it requires approximately a year to adequately train new hires.

Regulation of
open burning

The city council approved a motion to approve an ordinance to regulate open burning. The motion is to revise the current ordinance, taking into consideration both the needs and rights of citizens to have clean air to breathe, as and to provide a venue for individuals to have fires to burn approved items responsibly. The revised ordinance will include the city of Braidwood and Shadow Lakes.

The ordinance may be reviewed at braidwood.us under the "Residents" section.

Agreement with
Will County Sheriff

The city council approved motion for the inter-governmental agreement between the city of Braidwood and Will

County Sheriff. The agreement authorizes the chief of police to enter into the agreement with the Will County Sheriff to store and maintain warrants originating from the city of Braidwood and the transport of wanted persons to the county jail.

The cost for the service each year is \$3,714.66.

Funding for projects

The city of Braidwood is working with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). The agency has developed a draft list of improvements to be done as part of the city council's recommendations.

Following an open house and collection of data last year, CMAP informed the city of Braidwood of the American Rescue Plan (ARP), a federally-funded effort, passed two years ago, providing funds to assist communities and their different projects. Wilczak and Altieri have been in contact with the Will County plan and will investigate obtaining funds for major projects in Braidwood.

Purchase of tractor
and truck

The city council approved the purchase of a 2024 Caterpillar D3 compact track loader from Altofer Cat in an amount not to exceed \$101,710.

Also approved was the purchase of a 2023 Ford Super Duty F-450 from Kunes Auto Group in an amount not to exceed \$113,915.03.

ESDA Report

Over the past fiscal year, the Emergency Service and Disaster Agency (ESDA) volunteers spent 140 hours assisting the police department. The agency devoted 30.5 hours to the severe weather operations.

SEE CITY COUNCIL PAGE 2

Suspect shoots
self, dies during
traffic stop

STAFF REPORT

A man wanted in connection with an attempted homicide in the City of Aurora was stopped by Grundy and Will County Sheriff's officers in the 21000 block of Cottage Road, Wilmington, on Monday where he ended up turning a gun on himself and committing suicide.

In a press release issued by Will County Sheriff, deputies with the Will County Sheriff's Office responded to Cottage Road in Wilmington to assist the Grundy County Sheriff's Office on a traffic stop around 10 a.m.

While responding, deputies were advised that members of the Grundy County Sheriff's Office were attempting to stop a vehicle that was wanted in connection with an attempted homicide.

That incident occurred earlier that morning at approximately 7:31 a.m. when officers with the Aurora Police Department responded to the 700 block of Charles Street for a domestic disturbance. Information regarding this incident was disseminated to police agencies across the state to locate the fleeing vehicle and suspect after a shooting occurred inside of a residence.

Deputies with the Grundy County Sheriff's Office located the vehicle in Grundy County and attempted to stop it. After a brief pursuit, the vehicle stopped in the 21000 block of Cottage Road in Unincorporated Wilmington in Will County. The suspect,

Jeffrey Emerson, exited the vehicle with a firearm.

Deputies with the Grundy County Sheriff's Office attempted to deescalate the situation and provided commands to Emerson to put the weapon down. He then pointed the weapon to his chest and fired the weapon.

Deputies with the Will County Sheriff's Office arrived on scene and began to coordinate with Grundy County deputies in clearing the vehicle for officer safety and administering life saving measures to the downed individual.

Deputies perform CPR to the individual with the self-inflicted gunshot wound and applied a chest seal to his wound. Emerson succumbed to his injuries on scene and was later pronounced deceased.

Detectives and Crime Scene Investigators (CSI) with the Will County Sheriff's Office were sent to the 21000 block of Cottage Road to gather evidence and conduct interviews regarding this investigation.

An autopsy was being done by the Will County Coroner's Office.

Sheriff Mike Kelley extended his gratitude to all the agencies involved in locating the offender. "Events like these are a constant reminder of the dangers that the women and men of law enforcement face every day," Kelley said.



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BUY 1 GET 1 FREE

Freak, continued from page 1

do anything. It adds to your value.”
 Freak's big break came in 1994, when he landed a spot on the syndicated “Mancow's Morning Madhouse.” That was where he was officially christened “Freak.” All things considered, he was lucky, as one of his colleagues was dubbed “Turd.”
 Freak stayed with the show a grueling nine years, often working 14 hour days, doing whatever needed to be done. In the end, it was worth it since he was nominated for A.I.R. Awards five times, winning in 1997 and 2002.
 While Freak has always kept a foot in the radio world, he has also tried his hand at a number of other pursuits.
 “I was teaching radio broadcasting at Triton College, and I've also taught a few as a guest lecturer at Columbia College,” he said. “I wasn't liked by staff at Columbia. I was a little too honest for them. Being too honest gets me in a lot of trouble.”
 At some point, Freak began dreaming of having a place of his own, somewhere he could broadcast live while enjoying life. After a couple of false starts, he opened the bar that became Top Fuel Saloon in 2016. From there, Freak morphed into the man he was always meant to be.

“I have this bar, everything I fought for, and I've got this mouthpiece, the radio station and social media,” Freak said. “I've got this venue, and I give back to the community.”
 For the past eight years, Freak has become known, loved, and admired, not only for his morning show, but for his philanthropic pursuits.

For example, on April 7, Top Fuel Saloon held its Ninth Annual St. Baldrick's event, raising \$10,400.

“I don't like to give money to corporations, AT ALL,” he said. “So what we do is pick a sponsor family. This year it was William, two-years-old, from Joliet. He has some unpronounceable disease. Every penny of that money went directly to the family.”

Though he refuses to talk politics, Freak agrees the country is broken and needs to be fixed. From his vantage point, Freak sees people falling through the cracks every single day and it upsets him.

Rather than complain on Facebook, he started a food bank to make life a bit less terrifying for desperate people.

Freak runs his own food pantry at the saloon, 275 S. Hickory St., Braidwood. The food provided is kept in commercial grade refrigerators and freezers, routinely inspected by the Will County Health Dept. A certified food handler inspects all items to ensure safety. No one is turned away for any reason.

“We do the food pantry every Friday at 3 p.m.,” he said. “We don't do a residency check. We absolutely don't take money, even if they want to donate. We just did our 200th food pantry last January. We fed 6,118 people. That is what feels good.”

While we're on the subject, Freak accepts donations of food, clothing, and toys. Donations are appreciated.

“I tell people to not throw anything out,”



Photo by Rose Panieri

FROM LEFT, FREAK and his friends, Lori Baker and Richard Isberg, enjoying a quiet moment before Top Fuel Saloon opens for the day.

Freak said. “One guy's mother passed away, he brought in whatever was in her pantry. We shouldn't be wasting food.”

An avid supporter of veterans, Freak dedicates a table in his restaurant to the unknown veteran. A flag he found adorns a shrine in his restaurant.

“I found the flag while volunteering cleaning up meth labs. It was a flag that had been draped over a coffin,” Freak said. “I tried to find the family, but it didn't work out. I decided to keep the flag in honor of the veteran.”

At Top Fuel Saloon, a lone table is dedicated to the unknown veteran with the flag and a place setting to show respect. When Freak was preparing the flag, he got a surprise.

“I was having trouble folding the flag, and I couldn't figure out why,” Freak said. “A buddy pointed out that the flag had only 48 stars and needed to be folded differently. That blew me away because the veteran was probably from World War I.”

Freak raises money for veterans, children (Toys for Tots), and just about anyone who needs a helping hand. He volunteers countless hours and he's always available for those who need a shoulder to cry on.

“We did our Polar Plunge team for Special Olympics,” he said. “Actually, we have a Special Olympian who works here two days a week. We

call him “Hot Wheels,” and he does a lot to help out. Oh, and he's a great Olympian, too.”

Bottom line: if there's a worthy cause – and it doesn't involve a corporation, Freak is onboard.

Five Star Dive Bar

Freak proudly calls Top Fuel Saloon a “Five Star Dive Bar,” and at first glance it appears rather risky and dangerous. The bar is dark and neon lights touting The Seven Deadly Sins adorn the walls.

As the weather warms up, a wide array of colorful Harleys migrate to Top Fuel like exotic birds. It looks rough and tough, and might intimidate bashful folks.

While there are a host of counter-culture patrons, Top Fuel Saloon is probably closer to a carnival than a dive. The focal point is a semi truck that houses Freak's radio station. Six days a week, from 6 to 10 a.m., Freak is currently the program director at WRXQ 100.7 FM in Joliet.

“I'm up at 5:30 and on the air from six to 10 a.m.,” Freak said. “It can be a long day for me.”

True, the liquor flows and there may be an occasional rowdy, but mostly harmless, crowd. Freak may have a kind heart, but he's nobody's fool. Anyone causing serious trouble gets a boot out the door.

While Top Fuel Saloon serves its purpose

City Council, continued from page 1

Administrative duties required 119 hours. Mutual aid given to the EMA and ESD agencies totaled 44.5 hours. The total hours for all activities for the monthly man hours was 777.5 man hours.

Road closures

The following road closures were announced:

Center St. Crossing:

Beginning Monday April 22 at 7 p.m. reopening Wednesday, April 24 at 5 p.m.

Main St. Crossing:

Beginning Monday May 6 at 7 p.m. and reopening by Wednesday May 8 at 5 p.m.

Additional actions:

- Approved minutes from the March 26 meeting.
- Approved to hiring a water maintenance worker.
- Approved payroll in the amount of \$83,099.60.
- Approved bill payments of \$253,522.5
- Approved announcement of public hearing for the purpose of considering and hearing testimony regarding the proposed annual budget.

BY ROSE PANIERI
STAFF WRITER

It's like a scene from a Spiderman movie. A perpetrator is in a tense standoff with police. An officer pulls out a device that looks about as dangerous as a stud finder. The suspect laughs.

The device shoots a green laser beam at the man's shins. The sound of a gunshot fills the air, startling the perpetrator. Rather than being shot, or otherwise injured, the man finds himself entangled in what looks suspiciously like a spider's web (but is actually Kevlar). Without further ado, the suspect is handcuffed and carted off to the hoosegow.

This device, BolaWrap, is real and will soon be used by the Braidwood police to apprehend suspects.

Braidwood Police Chief Bret Goodwin recently attended a demonstration of the device. Goodwin immediately saw the advantages of making the BolaWrap available for use by his officers.

“I believe as a supervisor, it is one of my responsibilities to provide the officers with the tools and resources they need to do their jobs,” Goodwin said. “The BolaWrap will help mortar the gap between passive resistance and active resistance.”

BolaWrap was designed by WRAP Technologies in Tempe, Ariz., in 2016. It was modeled after bolas used by cowboys to capture livestock.

The BolaWrap is marketed as a non-lethal tool to detain individuals not complying with police orders. It consists of a hand-held remote restraint device that wraps suspects in virtually indestructible Kevlar, effectively de-escalating potentially dangerous situations, safely and without pain.

Tony Larrimore, regional sales manager for WRAP Technologies demonstrated the BolaWrap on Goodwin at the April 9 Braidwood City Council meeting.

Upon being effectively “bola-wrapped,” Goodwin showed no signs of trauma or discomfort. Despite being more fit than the average citizen, he was unable to escape.

“It does not rely on pain compliance; in fact, it is designed to cause no pain or significant injury,” Goodwin said. “It is minimally intrusive, like handcuffs, which can be removed as easily as they are applied.”

BolaWrap was designed to be used on non-compliant subjects not responding to verbal commands by officers. It's a tool to de-escalate potentially violent situations

without the use of tools like tasers that may cause discomfort or ineffective in a small sector of the population.

The device is said to be especially effective in subduing individuals with mental illness, dementia, those under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and suicidal individuals.

“De-escalation begins the moment we arrive on scene, and this tool - if needed - can be very effective in achieving our goal,” Goodwin said. “This device is a supplement, not a substitute, to the tools and tactics we already possess.”

According to Wrap Technologies, BolaWrap prioritizes safety by avoiding direct physical contact and minimizing the risk of injury for both officers and citizens. The

device reduces the risk of injuries, limits liabilities and decreases complications for individuals, officers and bystanders.

The cost of \$33,347.51, approved by Braidwood City Council on April 9, will be paid with funds from asset forfeiture (property confiscated from crime) rather than from the budget or taxes.

“I have tried to make decisions that favor the changes necessary for progress or steady improvement within the department,” Goodwin said. “I feel, embracing new technologies directly correlates to that.”

High-tech device will enable police to apprehend suspects without force

Attorney Terry Wallace files new address with clerk's office

PUBLIC NOTICE

Assumed Name Publication Notice
 Certificate 35068 was filed in the office of the County Clerk of Will County on April 8, 2024 wherein the business firm of Terrence Joseph Wallace, Attorney, located at 54 N. Ottawa St., Suite B40, Joliet, IL 60432 was registered; that the true or real name or names of the person or persons owning the business, with their respective post office address, is as follows:
 Owner Name: Terrence Joseph Wallace
 Owner Address: 17995 West Hunt Club Drive, Mokena, IL, 60448
 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and Official Seal at this 8th day of April, 2024.
 Lauren Staley Ferry
 Will County Clerk
 Published in the Braidwood Journal on Wednesday, April 10, 17 and 24, 2024.

Reed-Custer to host youth basketball camp

Registration is underway for the youth basketball camps for boys entering grades 1-2, 3-5 and grades 6-8 to be held July 15-18 at the Reed-Custer Elementary School gym. Participants will learn how to improve their individual and team skills through summer competition. The fundamentals of basketball will be stressed in a fun atmosphere where the players can develop a love for the game. The campers will be grouped by ability and age. Their purpose is to prepare the campers for basketball competition at their respective grade levels.

Grades 1-2 camp will be held Monday through Thursday, from 8 to 9:15 a.m. at the Reed-Custer Elementary School gym. Grades 3-5 camp will be 9:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. Grades 6-8 camp will be 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. High school basketball staff and players will conduct the camp.

Fee is \$40 cash or make checks payable to Reed-Custer High School. Please return the camp form to the office at RCES or RCMS with your payment by May 17. Walk-ins are welcome the first day but you may not receive a camp T-shirt

2024 Reed-Custer Comets Youth Basketball Camp Application

Name _____ Grade Next Year _____
 Address _____
 Phone _____
 T Shirt Size (please circle) Youth L or Adult S, Adult M, Adult L, Adult XL or Adult XXL

I hereby authorize the directors of the Comet Basketball Camp to administer first aid in case of an emergency. My son is physically fit according to our family physician.

Parent or Guardian's Signature _____

Micheal Kaminski 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 MICHEAL DAVID KAMINSKI to the new name of MICHAEL DAVID ROBLEDLO KAMINSKI, Case No. 2024 MR000120

NOTICE
 Notice is hereby given that the undersigned on behalf of himself, MICHEAL DAVID KAMINSKI, adult, shall appear in the Will County Court Annex Building, 100 West Jefferson Street, Joliet, IL 60432 courtroom 905 at 9:00 a.m. on the 13th day of June, 2024 before the judge assigned to hear said matter, and then there present a petition requesting the name of MICHEAL DAVID KAMINSKI be changed to MICHAEL DAVID ROBLEDLO KAMINSKI.
 /s/ Micheal David Kaminski
 Published in the Braidwood Journal on Wednesday, April 17, 24 and May 1, 2024.



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Eric D. Fisher, publisher
 Marney Simon, editor

A beer murder in Braceville

Although Braidwood has a reputation for being a rough town, the other towns of the coal field were no different. Last week we looked at the very beginnings of Braceville, and the coming of crime to that corner of the coal fields. The date is August 1, 1894.



TIME WAS....
Sandy Vasko

The miners and railroad men had just settled their four-month long strike. Men were going back to work, so they celebrated, a little too much. Climb aboard the way back machine for 140 years ago.

From the pages of the Joliet News:

"Another brutal murder has aroused the people of Braceville to a high state of excitement. The dreadful crime was committed the night of August 1 on the heels of a drunken carousal. All the parties concerned are Polanders."

"The victim is Thomas Willonski. The murderers are two brothers, Adam and Joseph Sodiskie. The former and another man believed to have taken a criminal part in

the affair are prisoners in the county jail at Morris, being taken there this morning. Joseph is a fugitive from justice, having made himself scarce immediately after the crime. Officers are now in search of him, and there are good chances of his apprehension before long."

"The trouble had its inception, it is said, in the uncalled for generosity of the brewing company, who gave away several kegs of beer to celebrate the return of the men to work in the mines. As a result, there was a drunken orgy Wednesday night."

"The Poles drank considerable of the liquor and about midnight got into a free for all fight. During the melee, Willonski was singled out by the Sodiskie brothers as the particular object of their wrath. They fell upon him with clubs, and beat him in a most brutal manner."

"The unfortunate man fell prostrate, and the beating continued. A sickening feature is the fact that a sister of the Sodiskies took a hand in the affray and pounded the man

with a beer bucket. Willonski was literally beaten to death, his injuries resulting fatally about 9 o'clock yesterday morning."

"Adam Sodiskie and a companion were shortly afterwards arrested, Joseph Sodiskie escaping. The prisoners were bound over to the grand jury, without bail."

"A telegram has been received in Joliet from Constable Pope of Braceville, to keep a lookout for Joseph Sodiskie. He is five feet high, of dark complexion, and about 30 years of age."

"Little is known of the victim, except that he came from Indian Territory a short time ago."

"There has been altogether too much beer drinking and carousing of late in Braceville for the good of the community, and the wonder is that, as a result of the frequent fights, more fatal results are not recorded."

"In this connection the deadlock between the saloons and the Board of Trustees of Braceville, resulting in the closing of all the saloons, will be received with a good deal of satisfaction by friends of law and order."

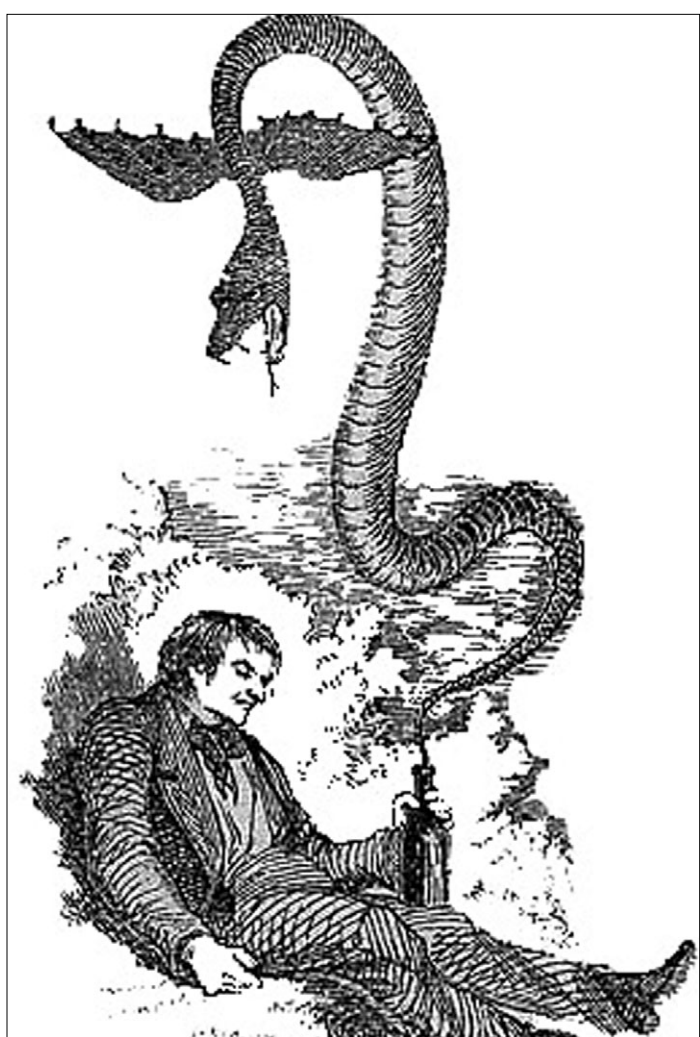
"The saloonkeepers wanted to close out their whisky

deals altogether, and sell beer only, under a reduced license. They petitioned the trustees to this effect, but the trustees could not see it that way, and declined to rant he request."

"This made "Mr. Saloonman" mad, and he forthwith declared that if he couldn't sell as he wanted to he would quit business for the next three months at least. The village board didn't scare a little bit, and as a result all the saloons are closed, and the liquor business suspended for the time being."

"The village authorities, under existing circumstances, will see that none of the saloons do a moonshining business, and thus the people will have a chance to enjoy the benefits of a real temperance town - if the saloon men keep their word."

"The mines opened up August 2 morning at Braceville and quite a large number of men went to work. It is expected that by next week everything will be in good working order and all the men will find employment. Business will quite likely pick up again and the town will have a little more life in it than it has had for the past four months."



A DRAWING OF the demon alcohol that caused the murder of a Polander in Braceville in 1894.



Courtesy photo

RCMS ANNOUNCED the ACE winners for the month of March, students include (from left) Amelia Meckler (8th grade), Payton Garner (8th), Colton Schultz (8th), Kayla Condrey (7th), Johanna Janopoulos (7th). Not Pictured: Maddelynn Dienes (6th)



Courtesy photo

RCMS STUDENT of the Month winners for the month of March were picked for a characteristic that was focused on was courtesy, students include (front, from left) Front Row L-R: Oren Price (7th), Brayden Landgraf (8th), Abigail Spielbauer (8th), Nathan Banach (7th), Brody Osborne (6th) and Emma Hertz (6th). Back Row: Mackenzie Junkroski (7th), Makenzie VanWinsen (8th), Faith Hathorn (7th), Adalyn Steichen (8th), Haley Stephens (6th) and Laurelai Kucera (7th). Not Pictured: Dominic Zilinger (6th).

RCHS accepting clothing and other recyclables

The Recycling Club of Reed Custer High is participating in a recycling effort to raise funds and make the world a better place.

Recycling containers are located at the front parking lot of the High School, 249 Comet Dr., between the administration building and the middle school.

The following recycling resources will be available:

Recycling Bins: Paper, Cardboard, Glass, Aluminum, Plastic (No. 1, 2, 5 only). There are two bins, each lists what is accepted. Anyone may drop off items.

Used Clothing Drop Off:

New to the program is a collection bin for used clothing and shoes.

Donations should be put inside the collection box only. If the bin is full, and items do not fit inside, please return at a later time to make your donation.

The collection is for clothing, shoes, and items that can be easily bagged for deposit.

In addition to raising money for the school, a tree will be planted for every full bin picked up. This is a great opportunity to reduce the amount of waste that ends up in landfills.

Immaculate Conception to host Trivia Night

Mark your calendar, get your team together and join the Immaculate Conception Church in Braidwood for a night of fun during Trivia Night.

The event will be Saturday, April 27. Doors open at 6 p.m., games begin at 6:30 p.m.

Pizza will be served, you bring everything else BYOB, (coolers welcome), snacks, tableware, etc. Don't forget to decorate your table in the theme of your choice.

Table of eight is \$60 or 10 per person. Call Sara Wollgast 815-341-5946 to hold your table or with any questions.

First Presbyterian Church to hold hanging flower sale

The First Presbyterian Church of Braidwood will be selling hanging baskets of flowers for \$25. They will be available Tuesday, April 30.

There will be Supertunia baskets, Fuchsia, Geraniums, Millionbells/Calibrachoa, Lantanas, and Dragon Wing Begonias for sale.

Pre-orders are being taken ahead of time by calling or texting LuAnn Bolatto at 815-790-7134. The number of baskets and color choices will be needed when you contact her. Please note these baskets may be used as regular pots of flowers too.

Fossil Ridge Library News

Lap-Sit with Miss Robin every Wednesday, 10:30-11 a.m.

Preschool Craft Corner with Miss Robin, 11:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Toddler Time every Thursday, 10-11 a.m.

Adult Programs

Thursday, April 18-Mind Games: Art of Deception Perception, 6-7:30 p.m.. Our brain decides how we perceive everything around us. It finds patterns and solves problems efficiently, except for when it lies to us. In this engaging program, storyteller and presenter William Pack helps us explore the real science of how our brains trick us into seeing and believing things that don't exist. You'll experience how optical illusions work, why people fall for scams, etc.

Monday, April 22-Fiction Addiction, 5:30-6:30 p.m. The book club meets monthly on the fourth Mondays at 5:30 p.m. to discuss a book selected by one of the members. This

group discusses a wide variety of books. Copies of the monthly book selections are available for checkout at the front desk. All readers are welcome to join.

Family Programs

Every Wednesday, Lap-sit with Miss Robin, 10:30-11 a.m. This program introduces your child to the wonderful world of books. We do require caregiver participation and guidance as we read, sing, and do finger plays.

Monday, April 15-Prairie Tales-Croakin' Around, 5-6 p.m. Join us as the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie brings its prairie programs to Fossil Ridge. Become an amphibian expert & discover how to tell the difference between a frog and a toad. Learn about these amazing amphibians that live around us. Grasp the safe way to hold these croakin' critters. Ages 6 and older are suggested. Caregiver must accompany

children under 9 years.

Child Programs

Monday, April 22, 29-Book buddies with Miss Robin, 4-5 p.m. Bring your sibling, caregiver, friend, or favorite stuffed animal and spend quiet time reading together to help you gain confidence in your reading skills.

Homeschool Programs

Wednesday, April 24-Pollination Pals and Wetland Wonders Field Trip, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Plum Creek Nature Center, 27064 Dutton Rd., Beecher, IL 60401. First session Pollination Pals is for ages K-8. After lunch second session is for ages 4th-12th grade. More information for this trip can be found at the library. Each trip is limited to 40 students. Cost is \$2 per child. Parents are free.

Registration is required for all programs.

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Migrants help the economy

SHADOW LAKES—In this new era we are living there is a belief it is ok to be a bigot. I encourage people to look up "Open doors for the American dream," Regan's last speech as president. There are fear mongers spreading lies about immigrants saying that they're bringing drugs into our country. That they are criminals and that they are poisoning the blood of the country. All lies. Many studies have shown and proven that new arrivals in this country are far less likely to commit a crime than those already living here. Studies have also proven that immigrants are good for the economy of the country. It is also false that they don't pay taxes. Now I'm not justifying illegal migration. Illegal migration is a problem but not in the way that the fear mongers make it to be. I encourage people to do their own research instead of letting fear mongers poison your mind. Look up Ronald Regan speech on immigration.

All right by me

WILMINGTON—Easter is over and I heard Jesus just left Chicago and he's bound for New Orleans and I'm just all right with that.

Don't blame Biden

SHADOW LAKES—For those people complaining about high inflation and the high cost of consumer products, before you go blaming President Biden, I encourage you to do a little research on the impact that Trump tariffs have on the US economy. For those that don't know, tariffs is just another word for tax. Now you going posting billions of dollars and imports coming from other countries and the companies importing these products pass the cost onto the consumer. What do you think is going to happen? A third grader should be able to figure this one out.

The wayback machine

WILMINGTON—Remember the cartoon of Sherman's dog, Mr. Peabody, who took Sherman to the past on his Wayback machine. Arizona's recent court decision takes their people back 160 years to 1864 when extreme laws banned abortion even under the circumstances of rape and incest. Those were the days when women could not vote and would have to wait another 55 years to do so. Are Republicans dragging us back to those dark days? With voting rights under siege, human rights oppressed and books banned from library shelves, we are backsliding into the abusive world of MAGA

which favors tyrants. What else would you call a system which allows Trump to declare himself dictator on day one and assassinate his political opponents without consequence? Trump has made our nation unrecognizable because he believes he should be above the law. But what is the reality? Trump puts on his pants one leg at a time just like everyone else. Irene

Disloyalty in Congress

DIAMOND—It seems that there are some members of congress flying Palestinian flags in the halls of congress which should be removed. The only flag that should be allowed to be put up in the halls of congress is the American flag. So if the members of congress aren't honoring the American flag then they are revoking their oath of office and these people in congress should be sent back to the country that they worship. Since the people in congress are not working on behalf of the American citizens and they should be denied tax payers funds.

Our corrupt courts

SHADOW LAKES—The judicial system has always been corrupt. Start by looking at the New York court system where they are trying everything possible to put Donald Trump behind bars and also putting him in strange court systems. Americans are being deprived of their legal rights with the help of Democrat leaders. Not many people know just how disgusting our judicial system works against the citizens in Democrat controlled states and it does not matter what political party you recognize.

Done nothing great

DIAMOND— A reply to "Real Solutions" from last weeks Soundoff. Why didn't Trump have the ability to stop the pandemic in America? It was a world pandemic, pretty much unstoppable. Although, maybe shutting down the borders immediately would have prevented it. First of all, were they going to be closed for two years? No....That would be impossible as our current administration has proven. Also, you say Biden implemented real solutions like vaccines? Sorry, Trump started that but they were never finished until Biden took over. Furthermore, what world leader would not have had structured distribution for the vaccine in their countries? Biden did nothing great, he did what was expected of him. Last, why don't we use Sound -Off for positive things about our communities? All these lies on both sides of the ball are disgusting. Use Facebook for that.



A personal decision

WILMINGTON—Trump keeps taking bows and all the credit for getting rid of the abortion issue. Originally, he backed a national ban on abortion. How about this, Donald. Let women, not states, not the Supreme Court, not Congress, nor the President, decide for themselves what personal health decisions they want to make. And I wish people would quit calling this man President Trump. Ex-President is bad enough on this abortion flip-flopper.

Quarter watching

WILMINGTON—I found this interesting. Look at a quarter made before Biden was president and you will see George Washington with In God We Trust by his face. In coins made after Biden took office 2022 Washington has his back turned to In God We Trust. Father of our country turning his back to God. Is that the way you feel America should feel Joe ?

Wishy Washy Wafflers

BRAIDWOOD—The ruling by the Arizona Supreme Court to ban abortion in the cases of rape and incest has gotten everyone's bloomers into a bunch. And it's no wonder. This is what Republicans wanted and now they're running for the hills in fear that this judgment is too extreme for voters after all. It's quite a sight to see Trump flip-flopping, ducking, shirking, skirting and sidestepping this decision because the American people are so upset and he knows it. Trump's entire MAGA bunch cannot and will not govern seriously because they consist of nut jobs like MTG and Lauren Boebert who tried to destroy our nation by having our police officers attacked at our nation's Capitol in 2021. And now in the past year, the private lives of decent citizens will be dictated by those who sit on ivory pedestals wearing robes and doing Trump's bidding. Women will die as a result.

A weak president

WILMINGTON—Putin did not invade the Ukraine when Trump was president. He waited until Biden took office because he knew Biden's

foreign policy was weak and wrong and now we are paying for that war. Trump had sanctions on Iran and Iran had no money to fund terror groups. Biden took them off and gave them \$50 billion that now funds groups to attack Israel and we are paying for that war like the southern border that we are paying for. He did all this because it was Trump's doing and it made Trump look right and Biden will not let that stand no matter the cost to the country.

Debt is growing

BRAIDWOOD—Biden continues to spend money we don't have. Our national debt is now \$34 trillion. We are paying \$1 trillion a year just for interest on the money the government borrows from foreign countries.

We were just fine

When we went to Coal City High School in the 80s we didn't even have football. We had wrestling. We were OK with that. We did OK without football. Wrestling, no football, wow. Sandy, class of 1981

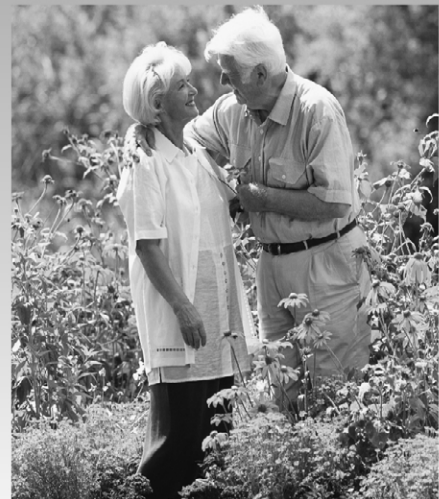
Ideal for pickleball

COAL CITY—Well, it's that time of year again. The weeds are beginning to sprout on the unused tennis courts at North Park. Maybe it's time the village spent a little money and put some pickleball nets up. Or maybe use the pads near the Lions. The possibilities are there, it just takes some adaptation and action. Something for the citizens as well as the teams of the town to do. The other nearby towns seem to have money in the budget to do it. Morris added two last year and has eight courts now with four more coming.

Who died fighting

SHADOW LAKES—World War I, World War II, Korean, Vietnam, Spanish American, Afghanistan and Iraq memorials have all had to be publicly funded, but yet we can use taxpayer money to support a few million illegals. Pritzker has even given them debit cards for \$1,200 to \$1,400 a month. Well, it's not just about Pritzker, it's about the government not doing what is right for people who have fought and died for this country. Dan Hill

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Commentary

The solution is in your hands

BY DAVID A. FRYE

It's time to be honest with you. You're the problem. Every year about this time we warn you, the motoring public, that highway work is beginning across the country.

State Police, State Departments of Transportation, workers, Unions, OSHA and more; we produce public service announcements and billboards and newspaper ads begging you to be alert, slow

down, and drop the phone in work zones.

Yet, every year the number of fatalities in work zones increases. We have tried to scare you by telling you about the stiff penalties for speeding and reckless driving in work zones. We have tried to appeal to your humanity by talking about the tens of thousands of lives that have been destroyed due to work zone accidents.

Yet every year, the number of work zone crashes exceeds 100,000.

We have successfully lobbied state legislatures across the country to enact stricter safety laws with tougher penalties. We have fought for reduced speeds in work zones, and cones, then barrels, then barrier walls. We have fought for work zone cameras and police officers. We have fought for higher minimum fines for speeding in work zones, and mandatory jail time for accidents.

That still doesn't seem to have done the trick.

My Union, the Laborers International Union of North America (LIUNA), requires hours of safety training before our members ever set foot on a job site. They are qualified flaggers; they know the best techniques for keeping themselves and their co-workers safe on the job. Our members are equipped with all appropriate personal protective gear; hard hats, steel toed boots, high visibility safety vests, gloves, glasses, and ear plugs.

But we can't protect them from you. National Work Zone Awareness Week is this week. It is held annually to remind

the motoring public that there are now people out there fixing those potholes and finishing those projects you've been complaining about all winter.

These workers are not here to "make you late" or inconvenience you. They are doing the hard and dangerous work it takes to keep you and this country moving - literally.

And, what each of them wants more than anything is to get home safely from their job. It's really the least any of us can ask for in any job.

You are the wild card. We can't make you slow down in work zones. We can't make you leave earlier, and we can't make you wait two minutes to answer the phone or respond to that text. That is YOUR responsibility.

We will continue to remind you that one second of distraction, or poor decision-making, can have a lifetime of consequences. We will continue to implore you to slow down in work zones. We will continue to fight for tougher penalties and tighter safety regulations.

However, none of that will help us achieve the goal of zero accidents and zero fatalities in work zones without your commitment to the safety of workers and drivers in work zones. It's past time to break the patterns, and be the solution instead of the problem. Slow down. Be alert. Help everyone get home safe.

David A. Frye is vice president and Midwest Regional Manager for the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA).

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Harmon: There's no appetite to fund new stadiums

Chicago-area news outlets have been so intent on amplifying every possible angle on the proposals for new publicly financed sports stadiums that they've sometimes missed the bigger picture.



CAPITOL FACTS
 Rich Miller

Senate President Don Harmon last week tried to make it simple for everyone what that bigger picture is.

In a speech to the Illinois Chamber, in town for its annual lobby day, Harmon said he made it clear to White Sox Chairman Jerry Reinsdorf when he visited Springfield earlier this year seeking public funding for a new stadium, and has tried to make it clear ever since that there is "next to no appetite to fund a new stadium with taxpayer dollars."

Harmon didn't leave the door open a crack by saying "next to no appetite." There might be some members who could be open to the idea, but there simply aren't nearly enough of those folks right now to cobble together a majority of 30 votes in the Senate and 60 in the House and a governor's signature.

Meetings he and other leaders have had with other sports team owners have also been blown out of proportion. Harmon told the audience that all sorts of people meet with him on a regular basis, "but the common theme running through all of this is that it's often my job to let them down."

Hopefully, people can take a breath and stop hyping every sports team owner move as some sort of sign. I mean, we haven't even seen an act-

al plan yet from the White Sox or the Bears (or the Sky, or...).

Harmon's overall message in his speech, however, was aimed at the business community itself and he boiled down to the old adage, "Don't let perfect be the enemy of the good." He emphasized that point when he was asked about a bill to scale back penalties in the state's controversial Biometric Information Privacy Act.

Sponsored by Senate President Pro Tempore Bill Cunningham, Senate Bill 2979 would limit the penalties for violating state law on businesses collecting biometric information (fingerprints, eye scans, etc.) from workers and customers without prior informed consent. The law currently penalizes each unlawful collection of that data, but the bill limits the penalties to each person from whom data is collected, saving businesses which violate the law a ton of money.

The Illinois Supreme Court ruled last year that its hands were tied when the fast-food chain White Castle appealed its loss of a lawsuit which the company claimed could cost it as much as \$17 billion in damages. The company argued, in part, that the 2008 law could result in an unconstitutional "annihilative liability" for businesses caught up in lawsuits. The top court said it was up to the General Assembly to make any changes and all but begged the legislature to act.

When Harmon was asked about possible additions to

the bill, he said the proposal was designed specifically to address the Supreme Court's ruling and added that (like with the stadiums) he didn't see "an appetite for additional amendments."

Harmon also said he was "a bit disappointed" at the opposition from some top business groups. "We are delivering a huge win for Illinois businesses," Harmon claimed. "It's not everything they want, but if you listen to my speech, progress is good. Nobody gets everything that they want."

"I also recognize," Harmon said, "that many bills are awful and horrible and the end of the world until they pass, when they're suddenly really good. And I hope that the business community will recognize the importance of this reform when it passes."

Two days later, Sen. Cunningham called it for a vote.

Some groups had pushed Cunningham to explicitly make his law retroactive in order to help companies that have already been hit with massive penalties. But

Cunningham said courts could "take judicial notice" of the amendment when asked to determine or reduce an award.

Asked by Senate Republican Leader John Curran about data center owners who are worried that they could be sued for merely hosting illegally collected biometric information stored by their clients on their cloud servers, Cunningham acknowledged the issue, but said no data centers have yet been sued. He said he wanted to focus on the Supreme Court's "invitation" to address the law. He did not rule out future action, though.

After bringing up another issue raised by the trucking industry, Curran eventually said that he'd recommend supporting the bill and it passed 46-13, with five Republicans joining their leader.

Perfect was not the enemy of the good.

Rich Miller also publishes Capitol Fax, a daily political newsletter, and CapitolFax.com.

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Exhibitors' spaces will be approximately 10-feet wide by 10-feet deep. A non-refundable fee of \$45 no later than April 15. \$60 for a space if paid April 16 or later. Chamber members are given a \$20 discount on vendor fees.

Set-up time begins at 7 a.m. After checking in at the north end of Water St. and arrive no later than 8 a.m. and remove all vehicles before 8:40 a.m. or spaces will be forfeited.

The Wilmington Chamber of Commerce will not assume liability for losses, damages and/or injuries by or to exhibitors.

Applications can be submitted and paid on line at wilmingtonchamber.org/redcarpet. Checks must be mailed and made payable to Wilmington Chamber of Commerce, 616 Davy Ln, Wilmington, IL 60481.

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Native species plant sale begins for Nature Foundation

The Nature Foundation of Will County's annual online native plant sale runs through April 27 until 4 p.m.

The spring sale will focus on pollinators and will feature a variety of monarch butterfly, hummingbird and bee favorites.

The Bringing Nature Home Native Plant Sale list is on the Foundation's website, willcountynature.org, and species will be added over time. Three-plant plug packs are \$9 each.

Plants can be picked up between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. Saturday, May 18, or 9 a.m. to noon Sunday, May 19, at Isle a la Cache Preserve in Romeoville. An in-person native plant sale will also be held at Isle a la Cache during the plant pickup weekend. Cash, checks and credit cards are accepted.

will also be offered that make using native plants easy and rewarding. Rain barrels can be ordered in advance via The Conservation Foundation and Upcycle and picked up during the plant sale pickup dates.

Also on Saturday, May 18, vendors will be in attendance to offer items for sale and plant advice including Wild Birds Unlimited - Joliet, Will County Audubon, Village of Romeoville's Conservation and Sustainability Committee, Pizzo & Associates and Good Steward Ecoscapes.

Native plant talks will be held in Traders Cabin and Forest Preserve staff will be selling nature-themed apparel and merchandise. Proceeds from both the plant and merchandise sales benefit the Foundation, which helps the Forest Preserve District protect nature, restore biodiversity and preserve natural habitat

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Take It Outside Challenge - kicks off

Spring Fling, the next seasonal session in the Forest Preserve District of Will County's 2024 Take It Outside Challenge, runs through June 15.

If you didn't join the 1,200 people who participated in the Take It Outside Challenge in 2023 or the 800 competitors for the Winter Workout session in early 2024, you can participate now. Simply download the free Goosechase app on your smartphone, create an account, and search for Spring Fling or enter the join code V813P4. Unlike last year's yearlong contest, the 2024 challenge is broken into four seasonal sessions with breaks in between.

Nature-themed missions will be released weekly within the app and include GPS check-ins at preserve locations, photos or video of outdoor sights and creatures, and trivia questions. Submit answers in the app on your phone to earn points.

You can monitor your progress on the app's leaderboard. After Spring Fling concludes, there will be another break and then two more seasonal competitions:



THE NEXT SEASONAL session in the Forest Preserve District's Take It Outside Challenge begins April 14. So, download the free Goosechase app to your phone and get started exploring nature to earn points and prizes.

- Summer Soiree: Sunday, June 30, through Saturday, Sept. 21 (join code BD13J5)
- Fall Frolic: Sunday, Oct. 6, through Saturday, Dec. 14 (join code ED7MGP)

The top three competitors will receive \$500 for first, \$250 for second and \$150 for third place. Other prizes also will be

awarded at random, including Forest Preserve and Wild Bird Unlimited of Joliet gift cards.

For more information on prizes and the challenge, read the complete list of rules online at ReconnectWithNature.org.

The Take It Outside Challenge is sponsored by The

Nature Foundation of Will County. Take It Outside hats, shirts, and bandanas are available for purchase at OutsiderThreads.com and all proceeds go to the Foundation, which supports the Forest Preserve District's nature education, conservation and restoration efforts.

Limit eating fish from these local waters

The Illinois Department of Public Health has identified three bodies of water in Grundy County and the Kankakee River in Will County that have fish consumption advisories.

Heidecke Lake, the Illinois and Mazon rivers through Grundy County have fish consumption advisories warning anglers to avoid eating certain species that may be unsafe due to high mercury levels or PCBs.

A statewide methylmercury advisory applies to all Illinois waters. IDPH recommends that women of child-bearing age and children limit their consumption of predatory fish (bass, sauger, walleye, flathead catfish, gar, muskellunge, northern pike, trout, and salmon) to 1 meal per week, unless more restrictive advisories are in place.

Smallmouth bass longer than 18 inches from Heidecke

Lake should be avoided while channel catfish and common carp from the Mazon River may contain PCBs, thus eaten only once per week.

Illinois River through Grundy County - channel catfish, common carp, white bass and smallmouth bass all contain PCBs limit to one meal per month.

Kankakee River from Wilmington dam to Illinois River common carp risk of PCBs limit to 1 meal per month while smallmouth bass 15 inches or longer may contain mercury women of child-bearing age and children limit to one meal per month.

Largemouth bass 15 inches or longer taken from Ponderosa Lake in Kankakee County contain mercury while the DesPlaines River channel catfish, freshwater drum and common carp should not be eaten.

Gardner Lions to serve pancake breakfast April 21

The Gardner Lions Club will serve breakfast at the Gardner American Legion Hall on Sunday, April 21, from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m.

The menu will consist of pancakes, sausage, eggs, toast, biscuits & gravy. The cost is \$9 for adults and \$5 for children ages 5-10. Children under the age of five will eat free.

Everyone is welcome to come out for a great breakfast, support the boy scouts and the Lions.

Gauge workouts by singing a song

The American Heart Association recommends 150 minutes of moderate intensity exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise per week.

For those with that goal in mind, many do 30 minutes of sweat-building for five days per week. Others do 50 minutes per day for three days.

It's good to mix it up with

cardio on one day and weights on the next day.

Moderate intensity can be gauged by singing a song while working out. If the strain of the workout means you can't sing without running out of breath, you're at moderate intensity. Vigorous would be an activity above that, like running.

Will County woman charged with fraud using Facebook

A Will County woman is facing state charges for allegedly purchasing three vehicles via Facebook Marketplace using fake identification and fraudulent checks.

The Illinois Attorney General's office has charged Jocelyn Buster, 26, of Plainfield, with three counts of theft by deception, Class 2 felonies punishable by up to seven years in prison; three counts of possession of a stolen motor vehicle, Class 2 felonies punishable by up to seven years in prison; and two counts of money laundering, Class 2 felonies punishable by up to seven years in prison.

Sentences are ultimately determined by the court.

Buster pleaded not guilty, and her next court date is scheduled for May 20.

"My office is committed to identifying and holding individuals accountable

whether they engage in theft or fraud in the real world or on social media," Illinois State Attorney Kwame Raoul said. "With online sale marketplaces growing in popularity, I urge Illinois consumers to take proactive steps to protect themselves from fraud."

Officials allege that in June 2023, Buster contacted three Facebook users expressing interest in vehicles each user had posted for sale on Facebook Marketplace. Buster allegedly purchased all three vehicles using fake identification and paid with checks and fraudulent cashiers' checks.

After purchasing two of the vehicles, Buster is alleged to have sold them to suburban car dealerships.

The public is reminded that the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Raoul reminds Illinois consumers to follow the below

safety tips when purchasing or selling products using online marketplaces:

- Meet in a safe location, during the day and bring a friend. Many police departments have designated safe exchange zones where you can meet a buyer/seller to sell or exchange your item.
- Don't share unnecessary personal information or account information with the buyer or seller.
- When using a third-party app, stay on the platform and don't communicate or send pictures to any interested party outside the app.
- Stick to cash and don't accept or make payments through peer-to-peer apps, like Venmo or Zelle, or use personal checks.
- If someone tries to scam you, report it to the online marketplace and law enforcement.

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OBITUARIES

Mary Lou Bennington

MORRIS—Mary Lou Bennington, 77, of Morris, passed away Wednesday, April 10, 2024 at the Lightways Hospice Home in Joliet.

Born Sept. 27, 1946 in La Salle, IL, Mary Louise was a daughter of James and Angela (Ratkiewicz) Donnelly. She was raised and educated in La Salle and graduated from La Salle Peru High School with the class of 1964. Mary Lou began working at a young age in the grocery store owned and operated by her parents in La Salle.

She was a devout Catholic and active parishioner with Immaculate Conception Church in Morris, where she worked as the church secretary for 10 years. Mary Lou was ever attentive to the congregants of the church, serving as a Eucharistic Minister for many years, and would often offer rides to members of the church who were unable to drive themselves. She also served in the Council of Catholic Women for 27 years, volunteered her time at the Morris Lincoln Nursing Home where she called bingo, and was involved with the Children of Light organization for many years and would attend their annual retreats to aid the visually impaired. Mary Lou was involved with the Big Brothers Big Sisters program, along with her husband, Tom, and was proud to be a positive influence in young men and women's lives.

In her later years, she took great pleasure traveling with her husband, Tom both stateside and internationally. Travelling to Italy was a profound moment in Mary Lou's travels, leaving a lasting impression and treasured memories. Her cooking and baking skills were well known and she would always have something prepared to share with all of her family and friends. Mary Lou was a truly selfless person



and was always looking out for the needs of others. She remembered every occasion and would always send a thoughtful card to recognize her friend's or family's birthday, anniversary, or any other life event. Mary Lou lived for her family and friends, especially her grandchildren who were precious to her, and dedicated herself to being of service to anyone who crossed her path.

Survivors include her son, Shawn (Lesley) McGuan, of Morris, and her grandchildren, Kendall and Parker McGuan, of Morris; three brothers and one sister: James (Mary Ellen) Donnelly, of Richardson, TX; Thomas Donnelly, of Cocoa Beach, FL; Pamela (the late Steven) Randol, of Paducah, KY and Kevin (Victoria) Donnelly, of Hinsdale, IL; her daughter-in-law, Stacey (Craig) Johnson, of Coal City and numerous nieces and nephews.

Mary Lou was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Tom Bennington, and her son, Jeff McGuan.

Funeral services were held Monday, April 15, 2024 at Immaculate Conception Church in Morris. A Mass of Christian Burial was concelebrated with Reverend Jason Stone and Reverend Richard Smith presiding and Deacon Paul Jung assisting. Burial followed at Mount Carmel Catholic Cemetery in Morris.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Mary Lou's memory to the Alzheimer's Association or Lightways Hospice.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guest book, log onto www.reevesfuneral.com upload photographs, and share Mary Lou's memorial page via social media.

Funeral services and arrangements were made under the direction and care of Reeves & Baskerville Funeral Homes and Crematory in Morris.

Joan Ryan

COAL CITY—Joan Ryan (nee Pantaleone), 97, of Coal City, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, April 9, 2024 at The Arc Nursing Home in Dwight.

Born Dec. 9, 1926 in Coal City, Joan Marietta was a daughter of James Pantaleone and Madeline (Marietta) Pantaleone-Burla. She was raised and educated in Coal City and graduated from Coal City High School with the class of 1944. Joan married Harold Ryan in 1946 and together they would make their home and raise their family in Coal City.

She worked for several years at the Coal City grain elevator and was a devoted member of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church in Coal City. Joan regularly volunteered to count offerings after mass and took an active role in the Mother's Club, assisting the children and teachers at the catholic grade school.

She was an avid reader and took great pleasure in sitting under her favorite tree at the Coal City Area Club beach enjoying a good book. Joan was a member and past board member of the Coal City Area Club, assuming the role when her husband passed away, making her one of the first women to be on the board. She also liked crocheting and oil painting, and never missed an opportunity to stop at a garage sale.

Joan's legacy is one of devotion to her family, blessed to see her family grow into five generations, and pass on her loving and nurturing spirit to all who knew and loved her.

Survivors include her six children: Kathleen (the late Jerry) Butz, Jean (Robert "Hunky") Jacovec, Patricia (the late Chet) Davito, Harold (Anita) Ryan, Michael (Theresa) Ryan and James (Victoria) Ryan; 10 grandchildren: Tony



(Julie) Jacovec, Christine (Dan) Paprochi, Kate Davito, Jake (Spencer) Davito, Timothy (Jenn) Ryan, Jennifer (John) Endrst, Patrick Ryan, Nick Ryan, Sara (Nathan) Marlowe and Ben Ryan; as well as 13 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild; one sister-in-law, Juanita Pantaleone, and numerous nieces and nephews.

Joan was preceded in death by her parents: James Pantaleone and Madeline (Louis) Pantaleone-Burla; two brothers: Peter Pantaleone and James (June) Pantaleone; and two sons-in-law: Chet Davito and Jerry Butz.

Funeral services were held Friday, April 12, 2024 at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Roman Catholic Church in Coal City. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated by Reverend Joshua Miller and assisted by Deacon William Dunn.

Burial followed the funeral at Mt. Olivet Catholic Cemetery in Wilmington.

Pallbearers were: Tim Ryan, Patrick Ryan, Toni Jacovec, Ben Ryan, Jake Davito, and David Pantaleone.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Joan's memory to the Coal City Food Pantry, 6805 E. McArdle Rd., in Coal City or to the Arc of Dwight, 300 E. East Mazon Ave., in Dwight for Senior Activities.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guest book at www.reevesfuneral.com to upload photographs, and share Joan's memorial page via social media.

Funeral services and arrangements have been made under the direction and care of Reeves & Baskerville Funeral Homes and Crematory in Coal City.

Cayden Edders

WILMINGTON—Cayden James Edders, six month old son of Brian Edders and McKayla Olinger, passed away unexpectedly on Thursday, April 4, 2024 at his home.

He is survived by his parents, Brian and McKayla, of Wilmington; maternal grandparents, Utah Jr. and Amy Olinger, of Saltville and maternal great-grandmother, Mary Olinger, all of Saltville, VA; aunts and uncles: John (Kristen) Edders, of Orland Park, IL; Tammy (Kevin) Kalivoda, of Alsip, IL; David (Samantha) Edders, of New Lenox, IL and Danielle Stamper and Utah Olinger III, both of Saltville, VA and three brothers: Landon Holtz-Edders, Nathan Edders and Andrew Edders.

Cayden was preceded in death by his paternal grandmother, Mary Edders.

The family will receive friends for a visita-



tion at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 E. Kahler Rd., in Wilmington on Tuesday, April 16, 2024 from 4p.m. until the time of funeral service at 7 p.m.

Family and friends will assemble on Wednesday, April 17, 2024 at 11 a.m. to prepare for a funeral procession to Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood for committal services at 12 p.m.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guest book at www.ReevesFuneral.com to upload photographs, and share Cayden's memorial page via social media.

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

Denna Gallegos

JOLIET—Denna Gallegos, 46, of Joliet, Passed away unexpectedly on Sunday, March 24, 2024 at John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County in Chicago.

Born Jan. 6, 1978 in Joliet, Denna was a daughter of Daniel Hendrix and Peggy Gallegos. She was raised and educated in Joliet where she attended Joliet schools. Denna was a loving mother to her children and was especially proud of her grandson whom she treasured.

Survivors include her father, Daniel Hendrix, and her husband, Jose Arriaga; three children: Jacob Palmer (Katie Ilkanic), Jose Arriaga, Jr., and Favian Arriaga; one grandson, Kashton Palmer, and two sisters: Eugenia Taylor



and Nickie Gallegos. Denna was preceded in death by her mother, Peggy Gallegos and her sister, Peggy Taylor.

Cremation rites have been accorded and there are no memorial services planned at this time.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guest book, log onto www.reevesfuneral.com upload photographs, and share Denna's memorial page via social media.

Cremation services and arrangements have been made under the direction and care of Reeves & Baskerville Funeral Homes and Crematory in Wilmington.

Danny M. Polniazek

WILMINGTON—Danny M. Polniazek, 76, of Wilmington, formerly of Joliet, passed away Tuesday, April 9, 2024 at Ascension St. Joseph Medical Center in Joliet.

Born Sept. 5, 1947 in Joliet, Daniel Matthew was a son of Chester and Margaret (Marolt) Polniazek. He was raised and educated in Joliet, graduated from Joliet Central High School with the class of 1965, and attended Joliet Junior College. Danny was a gifted musician, which allowed him to perform professionally as a solo act and in duets for many years. Music was his true passion and he especially enjoyed playing and listening to folk music, with the Kingston Trio being his favorite performers. Danny also took pleasure in trying his luck at the casinos from time to time, and had a special place for all animals in his heart. He was the most honest and considerate person you would ever meet, and will be remembered for being an excellent listener and for his dry sense of humor.

Survivors include his brother and sister:



Chet and wife (Susan Edwards) Polniazek of Houston, TX and Maureen (Greg) Carboni, of Wilmington; two nieces, Suzi Polniazek and Debbie (Sam) Taylor, both of Houston; several cousins, including Larry (Donna) Tomasic, of Joliet and his long-time friend and music partner, Fran Rinaldo, of Downers Grove.

Danny was preceded in death by his parents and several aunts and uncles.

Per his wishes, cremation rites are being accorded and the family is planning a Celebration of Life at a later date.

Family and friends are encouraged to log onto www.BaskervilleFuneral.com to sign the online guest book, upload photographs, and share Danny's memorial page via social media.

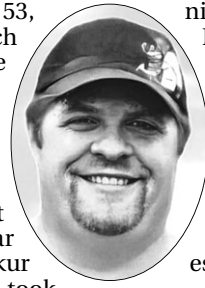
Cremation services and arrangements have been made under the direction and care of Reeves & Baskerville Funeral Homes and Crematory in Wilmington.

Michael Rich Jr.

JOLIET—Michael "Mikey" Rich Jr., 53, of Joliet, passed away Saturday, March 30, 2024 at the Lightways Hospice Home in Joliet.

Born April 20, 1970 in Joliet, Michael Dale was the son of Michael Rich Sr. and Bernadette (Lake) Nealis. He was raised in Joliet and attended Joliet schools. Mikey was a cabinet maker by trade, working for Romar Cabinet Makers for six years and Brakar Custom Cabinetry for three years. He took great pride in his work and strove to demonstrate his strong work ethic. Mikey loved music and took great pleasure in playing the drums, and he was a model car enthusiast and spent countless hours building them.

Survivors include his parents, Michael Rich Sr. and Bernadette Nealis; one sister, Tammy Jo Rich; as well as numerous cousins and his



nieces and nephew: Joey, Faith and Hope Mendoza, who he loved dearly.

Special thanks are extended to his cousin, Andy Smith, and his best friend, Tommy Castillo, his uncle, George Lake, and his caregiver, Paula Platt, for all their support for Mikey during his illness.

Per his wishes, cremation rites are being accorded and there are no services planned at this time.

Family and friends are encouraged to log onto www.Reeves-Baskerville.com to sign the online guest book, upload photographs, and share Mikey's memorial page via social media.

Cremation services and arrangements have been made under the direction and care of Reeves & Baskerville Funeral Homes and Crematory in Gardner.

New parade route for WBSA opening day

The Wilmington Baseball Softball Association will hold its opening day parade this Saturday, April 20.

Parade begins at 9:30 a.m. Parade route has been changed for this year. It will start at the Stevens Intermediate School parking lot and travel south on Kankakee St. to Kahler Road (stop light).

Players and coaches will parade west on Kahler Rd. to the South Island ballfields where the first pitch and opening day ceremony will be held.

Big Oil profits soar as consumers pay more

Average gasoline prices in Illinois have risen 0.4 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.96/g Monday, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,378 stations in Illinois.

Wilmington gas prices were \$3.72/g to \$4.19/g. Braidwood was a solid \$4.09/g across the board, and Coal City is holding steady at \$3.99/g. Further afield, Bourbonnais ran the gamut between \$3.85/g and \$3.89/g. Morris came in at \$3.74/g to \$3.89/g.

Prices in Illinois are 29.1 cents per gallon higher than a month ago and 10.2 cents per gallon lower than a year ago.

"Motorists in the mid-Atlantic and Northeastern U.S. will soon see a spike in prices as they make the leap to summer gasoline—as much as 20-50 cents per gallon higher in nearly a dozen states," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy. "On the West Coast, price increases should finally slow, but the national average will likely climb again in the coming week."

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Illinois was priced at \$3.18/g Monday while the most expensive was \$8.77/g, a difference of \$5.59/g.

Library to host garden talk on native plants

The Wilmington Public Library is thrilled to announce a two-part Pollinator Garden Series, presented by the esteemed Master Gardener, Naturalist, and Composter, Nancy Kuhajda.

These informative and engaging programs are designed to inspire and educate community members on the importance of pollinators and how to create a thriving, sustainable garden environment.

On Tuesday, April 23 at 6 p.m., in the Community Room at the Library will be Native plants and home landscaping.

Discover the beauty and benefits of incorporating native plants into your home landscaping.

Kuhajda will share her expertise on selecting, planting, and maintaining native plants to create a vibrant and eco-friendly garden space. Learn how to enhance your outdoor environment while supporting local wildlife and promoting biodiversity.

On Tuesday, May 21, at 6 p.m. in the Community Room, attracting butterflies and pollinators to your garden.

Join us for an enchanting exploration of the world of

butterflies and pollinators. Kuhajda will provide valuable insights and practical tips on creating a welcoming habitat for these beautiful and essential creatures.

Learn about the best plants, flowers, and design techniques to attract and sustain a variety of pollinators in your own garden.

Both programs are free and open to the public. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to learn from an expert and take the first steps towards creating your own pollinator-friendly garden oasis. Call 815-476-2834 to register.

Grundy Bank announces school spirit debit cards for local high schools

School spirit is essential for fostering a sense of community and pride among students, encouraging unity and support for school activities and events.

Grundy Bank has kicked off its school spirit debit card featuring four area school districts—Morris High School, Wilmington High School, Seneca High School and Coal City High School.

"We are thrilled to be able to bring school spirit cards to our local communities all while raising funds each time a card is purchased. This is a great way to show your school spirit while making everyday purchases." Said Christine Mendez, Marketing & Sales Director of Grundy Bank.

School debit cards will cost \$5 each and all funds will be directly sent back to the designat-

ed high schools quarterly. Purchasing a school debit card is simple and only takes a stop into one of Grundy Bank's convenient locations at either the main branch in Morris or in Wilmington and receive your new spirit card instantly.

"This initiative offers a fantastic chance for parents, grandparents, and community members to make a positive impact. By selecting a school to support you're giving back by helping to fund programs, events and other student activities" said Kevin Olson, President & CEO of Grundy Bank.

Spirit cards are available to existing Grundy Bank clients or clients who open a new account.

For locations and information on Grundy Bank call 815-942-0130 or visit grundy.bank.

Thank You

Thank you to everyone who supported us during Sharon's recent illness and passing. Your visits, cards, food, flowers and attendance at her services held us up at a very difficult time.

Special thanks to the ladies of the First United Methodist Church for a wonderful luncheon, Baskerville's for her service and Pastor Harriette for her kind words.

Scotty Vercelli
Debbi and Mark Cox
Nan and Jim Coleman
Steve and Laura Vercelli

Bill Gates and Jeff Bezos goal for developing nuclear fusion

Dear EarthTalk: Why are Bill Gates and Jeff Bezos, among others, so bullish on developing nuclear fusion as a power source?

--- Mark P. Newton, MA
While nuclear fission is commonly used in nuclear power plants across the globe, nuclear fusion is a lesser-known process. Whereas fission is the process of releasing energy by splitting atoms apart, fusion is the opposite. During nuclear fusion light nuclei collide with each other to form heavier nuclei, a process that releases large amounts of energy.

EARTH TALK

Questions & Answers About Our Environment

To produce fusion, it requires a combination of the hydrogen gasses deuterium and tritium, which are heated to over 100 million degrees Celsius. The end result is a helium nucleus and a neutron, formed

from the collision of light nuclei. Fusion power offers so many advantages that many have heralded it the "Holy Grail" of clean energy. The most enticing advantage is that nuclear fusion produces no carbon emissions. The only by-products of the reaction are small amounts of helium. There are also abundant resources to produce fusion. Deuterium can be extracted from water and tritium can be produced from lithium. Nuclear fusion offers a safer alternative to nuclear fission, as a large-scale nuclear

accident is not possible in a fusion reactor. And unlike fission, there is no radioactive waste as a result. The energy efficiency of fusion is another major advantage. One kilogram of fusion fuels could theoretically provide the same amount of energy as 10 million kilograms of fossil fuel. Many billionaires and tech moguls have recognized the potential of nuclear fusion and have invested in its future, Bill Gates being the most well-known. Founded by Gates in 2015, Breakthrough Energy Ventures is a fund set up to invest in clean energy transition innovations. Breakthrough Energy is supported and funded by other well-known billionaires like Jeff Bezos and Richard Branson.

The first nuclear fusion reactor was started up in 1951, while the first windmills and solar panels were built in the 1880s. Other energy sources have had much more time to be perfected and improved upon. They also achieve much higher net energy gains than fusion. EarthTalk® is a 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. Send questions to: question@earth-talk.org.



WORKERS AT THE National Ignition Facility (NIF) at Lawrence Livermore National Labs are still working to get nuclear fusion off the ground as an energy source of the future.

Illinois poised to play integral part in sustainable jet fuel

BY KEVIN BESSLER THE CENTER SQUARE

In an industry that has yet to develop, Illinois transportation, manufacturing and agricultural sectors are exploring opportunities with sustainable jet fuel. The inaugural Sustainable Aviation Fuel Conference brought together several stakeholders in Lisle, including the Illinois Corn Growers Association and the Illinois Manufacturers' Association. "This inaugural event is bringing together key stakeholders in the industry to explore the unique opportuni-

ties this new initiative offers Illinois and the Midwest," said Mark Denzler, president and CEO of the Illinois Manufacturers' Association. "Sustainable aviation fuel could grow into the largest new market for the U.S. and Illinois manufacturers have the opportunity to be at the forefront, creating jobs and taking the lead in efforts to reduce global carbon emissions." Gov. J.B. Pritzker said Illinois farmers could play an integral part in the sustainable aviation fuel industry. "Everything you need is here," said Pritzker. "We are the nation's number one producer

of soybeans, number two producer of corn, and we are responsible for 90% of the U.S. oil seed production." Sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) can be made from plant or animal materials including agricultural waste and can reduce carbon emissions compared to traditional jet fuel, but is up to five times more expensive than its counterpart. "There's one big negative and that's the cost," Exxon Mobil Vice President Jack Williams said at a recent conference near Chicago. "As we think about how we want to grow SAF, we have got to focus on how do we minimize the costs."

In 2023, Illinois passed an incentive to support SAF, creating a \$1.50 per gallon purchase tax credit to support the supply and use of SAF within the state. Illinois will give airlines operating in the state the ability to claim credit for fuel purchased if the fuel achieves a reduction of at least 50% lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions when compared to petroleum jet fuel. The Illinois agriculture industry stands to benefit with an emerging sustainable aviation fuel sector.

Recycling expert to speak in Wilmington

Marta Keane, Will County's Recycling Program Specialist, will offer a presentation to the public at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, April 24, during a Wilmington Garden Club meeting held at the park district building 315 N. Water St., Wilmington. The presentation will be on the many items recycled curbside and the many more that must be recycled at special collection sites. Over the years, as ways to recover and recycle more materials have grown, what can and can't be recycled can get confusing. Couple that with "wish recycling"—a term for people placing items in the recycling container they hope can be recycled but isn't recyclable—and miscommunication by

corporations, and it's clear to see how frustration has increased in the recycling industry. Common questions include should you leave caps on or off plastic bottles, tubs or jugs? Can that pizza box be recycled? Should you wipe or wash recyclables? Get answers to these questions and more during this April 24 session that is free to the public. If your community group, church, Homeowners Association, or business would like to host this presentation on recycling, please contact the Resource Recovery and Energy Division of Will County's Land Use Department.

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District 209-U seeking bids for milk

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice is hereby given that the Wilmington Community Unit School District 209U, Will County, Illinois, will receive bids to furnish milk for the School Nutrition Program for the 2024-2025 school year.

By and for the Board of Education Wilmington Community Unit School District 209U Peggy Kunz, Secretary, Board of Education

Published in the Free Press Advocate Wednesday, April 17 and 24, 2024.

Elwood School District plans meeting to discuss special ed, homeschool options

PUBLIC NOTICE

On May 30, 2024 at 9:00AM a meeting conducted by Elwood School District will take place at 409 N. Chicago Avenue, Elwood, Illinois 60421.

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, April 17, 2024.

Sheriff's sale of 951 Meadowbrook Rd.

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.

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE 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.

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, April 10, 17 and 24, 2024.

Annual Spring Scrap-A-Thon is Saturday

The Braidwood Presbyterian Women will be holding a Spring Scrap-A-Thon on Saturday, April 20, from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. at 106 South Lincoln Street in Braidwood.

For just \$40 you can have a fun-filled day of scrapping, door prizes, raffles and food. To reserve your spot please call or text Elizabeth Bell at 1-405-820-5944.

Attorney Meents files Wheeler 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 BARBARA ANN WHEELER, Deceased; No. 2024 PR 124

Notice is given of the death of Barbara Ann Wheeler, Letters of Office as Independent Executor were issued on March 22, 2024, to Terrie A. Cairns, whose address is 305 E. Pine Meadow Court, Morris, Illinois 60450; whose attorney is Meents Law, P.C., 25158 West Eames Street, Unit A, Channahon, Illinois 60410.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before October 4, 2024, or 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.

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://efile.illinoiscourts.gov/service-providers.htm to learn more and to select a service provider.

Terrie A. Cairns Independent Executor of the Estate of Barbara Ann Wheeler, Deceased

Attorney Meents files Smeets 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 CAROLINE E. SMEETS, Deceased; No. 2024PR184

Notice is given of the death of Caroline E. Smeets, Letters of Office as Independent Executor was issued on April 2, 2024, to Anita Elliott, whose address is 304E Stuart Court, Lockport, Illinois 60441; whose attorney is Meents Law, P.C., 25158 W. Eames Street, Unit A, Channahon, Illinois 60410.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Will County Courthouse, 100 West Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before October 11, 2024, or 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.

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://efile.illinoiscourts.gov/service-providers.htm to learn more and to select a service provider.

Anita Elliott Independent Executor of the Estate of Caroline E. Smeets, Deceased

Notice of delinquent tax deed for 165 Flora Fern Rd.

PUBLIC NOTICE

TAX DEED NO.: 2024TX000093 FILED: 03/15/2024 TAKE NOTICE

County of: Will Date Premises Sold: January 10, 2022 Certificate No.: 20-00018 Sold for General Taxes of (year): 2020

YOU ARE URGED TO REDEEM IMMEDIATELY TO PREVENT LOSS OF PROPERTY

Redemption can be made at any time on or before September 13, 2024 by applying to the County Clerk of Will County, Illinois at the Office of the County Clerk in Joliet, Illinois.

Notice of delinquent tax deed for 30 Aspen Lane

PUBLIC NOTICE

TAX DEED NO.: 2024TX000094 FILED: 03/15/2024 TAKE NOTICE

County of: Will Date Premises Sold: January 10, 2022 Certificate No.: 20-00026 Sold for General Taxes of (year): 2020

YOU ARE URGED TO REDEEM IMMEDIATELY TO PREVENT LOSS OF PROPERTY

Redemption can be made at any time on or before September 13, 2024 by applying to the County Clerk of Will County, Illinois at the Office of the County Clerk in Joliet, Illinois.

Sheriff's sale of 403 N. Main St.

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.

FEDERATED BANK, AN ILLINOIS BANKING CORPORATION, Plaintiff, vs. FOX'S PIZZA, INC., an Illinois Corporation; GREGORY M. FOX, personally; UNKNOWN OWNERS and NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS, Defendant. No. 23 FC 0996

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE Public notice is hereby given that pursuant to a judgment entered in the above cause on the 22nd day of February, 2024, MIKE KELLEY, Sheriff of Will County, Illinois, will on Thursday, the 2nd day of May, 2024, commencing at 12:00 o'clock noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 904, Joliet, IL 60432, sell at public auction to the highest and best bidder or bidders the following-described real estate:

LOTS 7 AND 8 IN BLOCK 29 OF THE ORIGINAL TOWN OF WINCHESTER, NOW CITY OF WILMINGTON, IN THE WEST HALF OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 25, TOWNSHIP 33 NORTH, RANGE 9, EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, IN WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS

Commonly known as: 403 N. MAIN STREET, WILMINGTON, IL 60481 Description of Improvements: Commercial building operated as a pizza restaurant.

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.

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: Guerard Kalina & Butkus 310 S. County Farm Road Suite H Wheaton, IL 60187 P: 1-630-665-9033 F: 1-630-690-9652 Plaintiff's Attorney

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, April 10, 17 and 24, 2024.

Dung Thi Kim Vo 122/58, Thich Quang Due Phung 4, Quan Go Vap, TP HCM, Vietnam Hung Viet Vo 29/43, Le Duc Pho, Phung 7, Quan Go Vap, TP HCM, Vietnam Xuan Thi Kim Vo 362/5 Phuong 16, Quan Go Vap, TP HCM, Vietnam Thach Van Vo 148/11/2C, Duong 59 Phung 14, Quan Go Vap TP HCM, Vietnam Vui Thi Vo 666/8, Duong Vo Van Thiet Phuong 1, Quan 3 TP HCM, Vietnam Occupant 165 Flora Fern Rd Wilmington, IL 60481 Citibank, NA as Successor to Citibank Federal Savings Bank 5800 S Corporate Place Sioux Falls, SD 57108 Citibank, NA as Successor to Citibank Federal Savings Bank 2775 Fergie Dr Naperville, IL 60564 Lauren Staley Ferry, Will County Clerk 302 North Chicago Street Joliet, IL 60432 Prepared By: Law Offices of Heather Ottenfeld, PC 180 West Washington Street, Suite 810 Chicago, Illinois 60602 (847) 721-4996 service@lohocp.com ARDC #6278178 8139-941076

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, April 3, 10 and 17, 2024.

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RC HS trackster get up to speed

The Reed-Custer track and field team showcased talent and determination in a April 9 meet, with several athletes achieving personal records and securing impressive finishes across various events.



Photo by Zandie Sims

REED-CUSTER'S Jake Sandstrom competes in the long jump during last week's home meet.

In the 100 meters varsity finals, Dominic Alaimo secured a commendable 5th place with a time of 12.45 seconds. Damien Andrade demonstrated his prowess in the 200 meters varsity finals, clinching 4th place with a personal record time of 25.25 seconds, while Chandler Lowe and Brock Billingsley also gave strong performances in the same event.

In the 400 meters varsity finals, Andrade once again proved his mettle, claiming 3rd place with a time of 58.91 seconds, followed by a solid performance from Chandler Lowe. Jayden Bustos and Vincent Bollino showcased their endurance in the 800 meters varsity finals, securing 2nd and 4th place, respectively.

Bustos continued his winning streak in the 1600 meters, claiming 1st place with a time of 5:13.75, while Bollino demonstrated his consistency with a 4th place finish.

Colton Waldvogel dominated the competition in the 3200 meters, seizing 1st place with an impressive time of 13:26.76. The team's relay efforts were equally commendable, with the 4x100 and 4x400 relay teams securing 4th place finishes.

In the field events, Alaimo

excelled in the pole vault clinching 1st place with a height of 2.90 meters, while also making notable contributions in the discus event. Jeffery Shenk showcased his strength and skill in the shot put and discus events, earning respectable finishes and setting personal records along the way.

The Lady Comets also competed with the following results:

- Madysen Meyer showcased her speed with a 1st place in the 100 meters and a 2nd place in the 200 meters, setting a personal record.

- Nichollet Chew impressed with a 1st place in the 200 meters and a 2nd place in the 100 meters.

- Kaitlyn Lantka dominated the 400 meters and excelled in pole vault, securing 1st place finishes in both events.

- Alyssa Wollenzien displayed her versatility with 1st place finishes in 100m hurdles, high jump, and triple jump, setting personal records along the way.

- Arlethe Leyva tried hard in shot put and discus, securing 5th and 4th place finishes respectively, and setting a personal record in discus.

- Dakota Altiery gave a solid performance in the 800 meters varsity finals.



Photo by Zandie Sims

LADY COMET Arlethe Leyva set a personal record in the discus throw during last week's home meet.

Comets bounce back after having a rough week

The Reed-Custer baseball team shutout Herscher 13-0 on Monday, getting back on track after losing four games last week.

Alex Bielfeldt fired a 3-hit shutout to earn the win. Cameron Smith led the way

offensively with 3 hits. Landon Jankus had 2 hits. Joe Bembenek, Luca Trucano, Brady Tyree, Jake Reardon, and Bielfeldt added a hit each.

The Comets fell to Clifton Central 9-7 on Friday, making for a rough week.

Comet pitcher Nolan Smith struck out three over four innings.

Joe Bembenek led with three hits while Collin Monroe, Brady Tyree, Alex Bielfeldt and Landon Jankus contributed two hits each. Also hitting for RCHS were Cameron Smith, Landon Robinson and Luca Trucano.

Edged by Bobcats

The Comets fell to Beecher 4-3 on Thursday. Joe Bembenek was solid on the mound, striking out three and allowing four earned runs in 6 innings of work. Landon Robinson fired a perfect frame in relief. Landon Jankus paced the offense with three hits. Bembenek, Bielfeldt, Trucano (2 RBI), and Brady Tyree added a hit apiece.

Second effort at home

The Comets scored 7 unanswered runs in the final 2 innings, but came up just short, falling to Manteno 8-7 at home on Tuesday.

Brady Tyree allowed 2 ER over 4 IP, while Dom Eddy K'd 3 and allowed 0 ER in 3 innings of relief. Cameron Smith, Joe Stellano, and Alex Bielfeldt had 2 hits each, while Joe Bembenek, Landon Jankus, Luca Trucano, and Eddy had a hit apiece.

Reed-Custer started the week at Manteno on Monday, losing a heart-break in the eighth inning 7-6.

The Comets (5-7 overall, 0-4 in the conference) play a double-header at Oakwood Saturday. On Monday they will host Peotone.

Walk off win for the Lady Comets

Reed-Custer took a 1-0 walk-off victory in the eighth innings against Woodland on Wednesday.

Addison Brown had nine strikeouts in 8 innings. Addison Hartman went 2-for-4 with two singles. Jessica Janopolous hit a double. Reese Brown drew in the winning run with a double.

Manteno leads the conference with their 16-0 record, 7-0 in ICE, yet the Lady Comets were on the threshold of handing them their first loss last Tuesday.

It ended up that Reed-Custer (8-5 overall, 1-5 in conference) lost to them 10-9.

Mya Beard went 3-for-3 with 1 RBI. Amber Syc hit a double, two singles and finished with two RBIs. Hartman had 3 RBIs.

The Lady Comets lost to Manteno 12-6 while hosting the Panthers.

On Friday they lost to Streator 4-2 and on Monday at Herscher they fell 12-4 after leading 5-1 in the fourth.

Reed-Custer travels to Marquette Academy on Friday and will host Peotone on Monday.



Photo by Zandie Sims

REED-CUSTER JUNIOR Brady Tyree fields a grounder and throws to first to get the Manteno hitter out on Tuesday.

RC soccer team forces shootout with Manteno

The Reed-Custer varsity soccer team lost to Manteno in a shootout, 3-1. In the first half both teams scored two goals and in the second both scored one goal each. Pushing the teams into a shootout. Manteno was able to get three while Reed-Custer only scored one giving Manteno the win.

Last Monday the Comets defeated Plano 6-2 at home. Their overall record is 2-6-1 and 1-2 conference.

RCHS freshman Aurora Haake led the team offensively with three goals and one assist. Peyton Schipiour, Natalie Flores and Izzy Toller each had one goal. Giuliana Meister had one assist. Abigail Koonce had 21 steals.

Margaret Dockery played goalie for the Lady Comets and had 13 saves.

The Lady Comets will play Wednesday at Herscher, Thursday host Peotone and April 25 host Coal City at 6:30 p.m.



Photo by Zandie Sims

HUSTLING TO THE BALL during last week's home match is Lady Comet Hailey Compton.



NICE BASS—Bret Cavanaugh, Alex Bielfeldt and Ryan Cavanaugh hold the largemouth bass they caught on Saturday to place them 10th out of 83 competing boats.

RC anglers finish in top 10

Reed-Custer High School junior Alex Bielfeldt and senior Bret Cavanaugh, along with their boat captain Ryan Cavanaugh, traveled this past weekend to Newton Lake to fish an Illinois Coaches and Student State Tournament Trail tournament.

They finished 10th out of an 83-boat field, weighing in 16 lbs and 4oz, with a big bass of 5 lbs 7 oz.

The two anglers will continue to follow the tournament trail next weekend on their home lake the Braidwood Cooling Lake on Saturday,

April 20 and will travel to Fox Chain of Lakes on Sunday, April 21.

The team is currently sitting in 5th in the Northern Division, and 2nd in the Wild Card Division. They both are members of the Reed-Custer Casting Comets.



Photo by Zandie Sims

OUT IN FRONT of the Manteno defender is Reed-Custer's Izzy Toller.