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Vol. 67, Issue 18
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BRAIDWOOD JOURNAL.com

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 2025

A FREE PRESS NEWSPAPER • (815) 476-7966

Council terminates Altiery in his new position

Altiery warns he may take legal action

BY ROSE PANIERI
STAFF WRITER

Former Braidwood City Administrator Tony Altiery started his new job as Supervisor of Public Property and Supervisor of Streets and Public Improvement on Monday, but by that evening his employment with the city was terminated.

Braidwood Mayor Todd Lyons called for a special meeting Monday, at 5:30 p.m. to appoint two new members to the zoning board.

"I'm excited about the two appointees for the zoning board," Lyons said. "It's important that we get that filled because there's a lot going on. We just want to make

sure we have enough members to run a meeting."

Among the meeting's agenda items was a motion to terminate Altiery's employment. Like the council meetings on April 8 and April 22, it was a full house. Many in attendance supported Altiery, with public comments comprising a considerable portion of the meeting.

Former Finance and Accounts Commissioner Kimberly Earling was the first to speak up, reminding the council of two past wrongful termination lawsuits against the city, and warned of yet another suit by Altiery.

She also urged the council not to strip the power of commissioners by making the termination a mayoral decision.

"I ask that everyone on this board think long and hard about your morals and values, and what is right for our city," Earling said. "Not an abuse of power or personal vendetta, as all of our past

administrations have done."

Speaker Charles Booth spoke in favor of terminating Altiery's employment, accusing Altiery of posting property tax information on Facebook, and dubious business practices. He also offered advice.

"I'm also requesting an ordinance regarding city vehicles--official use only, no personal use," Booth said. "I don't want to sit there and have to pay gas money for them to go on trips and stuff."

Altiery spoke on his own behalf, citing constitutional protection afforded to public employees, stating he would utilize all "legal rights and remedies under state and federal law" to fight an action that is "retaliatory, politically motivated, procedurally defective, or otherwise unlawful. Should any inverse employment action be taken, I will respond through all available administrative and traditional channels," Altiery said. "I trust the city council will carefully consider the legal and ethical implications

of any employment decision in this case."

When public comments were concluded, Commissioner Warren Wietting made a motion to go into executive session to discuss the issue of Altiery's proposed termination. When the council returned, the motion to terminate Altiery was approved by 3-2 majority. Lyons, Elizabeth Dixon and James Mikel voted in favor of the termination. Wietting and Dale Walsh voted no.

On April 8, the members of the former city council considered a motion by Commissioners Wietting and Walsh to hire Altiery as Supervisor of Public Property and Streets and Supervisor of Public Improvement.

Despite protests from more than 100 residents who attended the meeting, the motion passed. Mayor Karen Hart, Wietting, Walsh, Ron Wilczak voted to hire

SEE SPECIAL MEETING PAGE 2



Photos by Rose Panieri

NEW BRAIDWOOD MAYOR Todd Lyons is sworn in by Judge Jessica Colon-Sayre (left), an Associate Judge on the 12th Judicial Circuit of Will County during the April 22 Braidwood City Council meeting.

New mayor, commissioners sworn in

BY ROSE PANIERI
STAFF WRITER

Braidwood's new mayor Todd Lyons and two new commissioners, Elizabeth Dixon, Commissioner of Accounts and Finance, and James "Moose" Mikel, Commissioner of Public Health and Safety, were sworn during the April 22 Braidwood City Council meeting to considerable applause by residents who packed city hall.

Lyons won the mayoral race against incumbent Karen Hart, nabbing 982 of 1,276 votes during the April 1 election.

For the seat of Commissioner of Accounts and Finance, Dixon ousted incumbent Kimberly Earling, receiving 72 percent of total votes.

Mikel toppled incumbent Ron Wilczak for the seat of Commissioner of Public Health and Safety, attracting 77 percent of total

votes.

Each was sworn in by Judge Jessica Colon-Sayre, an Associate Judge on the 12th Judicial Circuit of Will County.

"I'm honored, and I am grateful," Lyons said to attendees who packed the council chambers. "I really appreciate the support that I have received through my campaign."

Lyons assured the public that he will be working for residents of Braidwood.

"Most people know how to get a hold of me, they know where I live," Lyons said. "I'll be here a lot. I am semi-retired, so I'll be available."

Despite a heated and controversial campaign battle, Lyons reassured residents of cooperation and harmony among members of the city council.

"I have talked to Dale [Walsh Commissioner of Streets and Public

Improvement], and Warren [Wietting, Commissioner of Public Buildings and Property]," Lyons said. "And we're just going to work together. We're on the same page. We all feel pretty good about it."

Among Lyons's first orders of business will be finding a city administrator to replace Tony Altiery, who resigned on April 16, and hiring a new police chief to replace Brett Goodwin who resigned April 17.

"These two key roles will help us shape our future, and together we'll build a stronger and brighter future for Braidwood," Lyons said.

Outgoing mayor Karen Hart and Ron Wilczak wished the new members of the city council well.

"It was an honor to be your mayor for two years. And I wish the incoming mayor and the commissioners all the best," Hart said. "I'm sure they will see great prosperity."

Council accepts Altiery's resignation as city administrator

BY ROSE PANIERI
STAFF WRITER

Braidwood's City Administrator Tony Altiery resigned from his position on Wednesday, April 16.

The city council passed a motion on April 22 to accept it while paying out retirement/resignation benefits to Altiery, as well as to Braidwood Police Chief Brett Goodwin and police officer Timothy Henson. The total payout was \$91,620.28.

Altiery said he will begin his new position with the city as Supervisor of Public Property and Streets and Public Improvement on Monday, April 28.

"I have a lot of ideas on how to save the city 20 to 30 percent on road projects," Altiery said. "I will be the person who sets up plans for the day, like calling J.U.L.I.E. and getting things set up so we can get things

done immediately each day instead of getting bogged down in making calls and things like that."

Audit costs and information

During the meeting the council approved an ordinance authorizing the city to execute an agreement between Braidwood and WIPFLI, LLP, regarding an annual audit for the fiscal year ending April 30.

After being available for public inspection with the city clerk for at least a week prior to the date of the proposed ordinance, the city commissioners agreed to a fee of \$45,000 for financial audit, \$4,000 for yellow book audit, and \$2,500 for a consolidated year-end financial report, if applicable.

Flock camera purchase

The council approved an agreement between the

SEE CITY COUNCIL PAGE 2

Braidwood to roll out the Red Carpet this weekend

BY ROSE PANIERI
STAFF WRITER

Our unseasonably cool spring is about to get even cooler, but in a really good way.

The 18th Annual Illinois Route 66 Red Carpet Corridor is happening Saturday and Sunday, and towns along Route 66 are in high gear planning festivities for locals, visitors, and tourists.

The two-day festival centers on good, old fashion family fun on the Mother Road, Route 66. The 100-mile trek, from Joliet Historical Museum to Bloomington, features everything from full-blown festivals to craft

fairs, motorcycle and car shows, live entertainment, and plenty of Americana-style treats from old fashion diners.

If you're looking for an adventure, Red Carpet Corridor is 100 miles of fun and pleasant surprises.

Wilmington

With the return of Wilmington's most renowned resident, the Gemini Giant, expect a rousing welcome and a celebratory mood on the South Island park.

SEE RED CARPET PAGE 2

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Special meeting, continued from page 1

Altiery for the position. Commissioner Kimberly Earling voted against the motion.

Department heads ordinance

In a related move, a motion to approve amending sections of the Braidwood Code of Ordinance pertaining to department heads was also considered.

"Except as otherwise specifically provided for by ordinance, City Council shall have the right and power to appoint and discharge the heads of all departments."

The approval of the motion also gives the mayor the power to appoint and supervise the work of the city clerk, city attorney, city administrator, city engineer, chief of police, members of the board of fire and police commissioners, zoning board of appeals, and the planning commission, as well as zoning officer, code inspectors, public affairs and public relations, and economic development.

With regard to duties carried out by commissioners, the following item will be deleted: "Appoint, with the advice and consent of the city council, the supervisor of streets and public improvements and such manager(s) as the city council may provide for in the annual budget."

Another amendment involves the job description for Supervisor of Streets and Public Improvements. Item No. 2 will be deleted. It reads: "Receiving written daily and weekly duties from the Commissioner of Streets and Public Improvements, enforcing the daily and weekly duties and preparing and enforcing the work schedule."

Again, the motion was approved by Lyons, Dixon, and Mikel, with Wietting and Walsh rejecting it.

Plan Commission

The majority approved the mayor's appointment of Tyler Geiss and Nicholas Stewert as members of the City of Braidwood Plan Commission Board. Lyons, Mikel, and Dixon voted to approve the appointments, Walsh voted "no" and Wietting abstained, commenting that he had only heard about the proposed appointments Friday.

Walsh, too, expressed concern about the scheduling of the special meeting.

"I don't know who initiated this meeting because I wasn't notified," Walsh said.

Before adjournment, Lyons spoke briefly, stating representatives from a proposed data center being built near Kennedy Road and I-55 may attend the May 13 city council meeting.

City Council, continued from page 1

city of Braidwood and Flock Group, Inc., for more license plate reading cameras.

Flock Group, Inc. sells automated license plate recognition, video surveillance, and gunfire locator systems used by the Braidwood Police Department. The total cost is \$18,975.

"We have eight Flock cameras," Commissioner Ron Wilczak said. "We'll be buying three more for the east side of town."

All town clean-up

City Clerk Sarah Weaver reminded residents that the city's trash/recycling provider, LRS, will conduct a seasonal clean up Monday and Tuesday, May 5-6 (whichever day your trash is normally collected).

Residents will be able to throw away bulk items including mattresses, box springs, small furniture, chairs, sofas, love seats, section couch sections, toys, bicycles, construction debris, plumbing fixtures, water softeners, lumber, and vehicle parts.

Mattresses and box springs must be wrapped in plastic, and carpets and lumber must be no longer than 4-feet long by 2-feet wide.

Electronics, household hazardous waste, and landscape waste are not accepted.

Ensure all items are placed by curbside by 6 a.m. on the date your garbage is normally collected.

Weaver acknowledged issues that recently led to trash and recyclable not being picked up as scheduled. If your trash is not collected, you may report it via the link on the city's website, www.braidwood.il.us, or call city hall at (815) 458-2333.

"There is a link on our website," Weaver said. "If your garbage is ever missed, just go on there and put in your name in your address."

Tasers and related equipment

The council authorized the purchase of tasers and body cameras for Braidwood Police Department through Axon for a total cost of \$93,996. It will include taser bundles, body cameras and related supplies.

Police union agreement

The council approved a memorandum of understanding between Braidwood and the Metropolitan Alliance of Police to be effective from May 1, 2023 through April 30, 2026. The memorandum of understanding includes all full-time peace officers employed by the city of Braidwood in the rank of sergeant.

Street work

Commissioner Dale Walsh reported that city crews will soon be re-paving Third Street, Stacy Court, and the entrance of Comet Estates.

Commissioner Warren Wietting thanked city crews for going above and beyond the call of duty after a vehicle hit and damaged a fire hydrant near Top Fuel Saloon.

Police report

Commissioner Ron Wilczak commended retiring police chief Brett Goodwin for dedicating more than 24 years to the Braidwood Police Department. He also commended all Braidwood police officers.

Wilczak provided police department statistics from March 18 through April 1:

Total calls: 287, case reports: 23, arrests: 4, total charges: 6, traffic stops: 84 with 13 citations and 59 warnings. There were two semi-trailer truck violations and five parking tickets issued.

Paying bills

The council approved payment of bills in the amount of \$165,999.76, and payment of payroll for \$93,899.32.

Reed-Custer School Dist. to hold meeting for district's plans on special education

Odom Racing files as new business

PUBLIC NOTICE

Assumed Name
Publication Notice

Certificate 35307 was filed in the office of the County Clerk of Will County on April 9, 2025 wherein the business firm of Odom Racing, located at 410 N. Center St., Braidwood, IL 60408 was registered; that the true or real name or names of the person or persons owning the business, with their respective post office address(es), is/are as follows: Kristine Odom and John Preisler 410 N. Center St. Braidwood, IL 60408

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and Official Seal at my office in Joliet, Illinois, this 3rd of April, 2025.

Kristen Mace
Notary Public

Published in the Braidwood Journal on Wednesday, April 23, 30 and May 7, 2025.

Red Carpet, continued from page 1

Don't miss the Red Carpet Kickoff show at Wilmington's Mar Theater. Think of it as a prelude to the weekend celebration.

On Friday, May 2, Mar Theater will feature "Recycler," a ZZ Top Tribute starring Tim Placher, David and Doug Francis, Kevin McCammon and special guest, Alex Hoffer. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and tickets are \$10. Concessions and a cash bar will be available.

Starting at 9 a.m. Saturday, scope out bargains galore at the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce's two-block long flea market. Over 60 vendors are expected to set up in the downtown district for the annual craft and flea market. Stop at the Chamber tent near 220 Water St. for this year's RCC giveaway, a custom Wilmington coaster. Each of 15 towns will be handing out coasters (while supplies last) so stop in each town for a commemorative set.

Food vendors, entertainment by the Route 66 Band, and mobile racing challenges will be held until 4 p.m.

On Sunday, enjoy the Wine Art & Beer Faire from noon to 6 p.m. at South Island Park. The event, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Wilmington, will feature music by the world-renowned "Nevly Brothers," a rock 'n' roll tribute, playing classics from Elvis to the Beatles.

There will be an art show, food trucks, wine and beer tasting, games,

raffles and more. Of course, the Gemini Giant will be on hand for photo opportunities.

The Landing Pad Souvenir Shop, featuring Gemini Giant memorabilia, at 110 S. Park St. will be open and handing out the Wilmington giveaway on Sunday.

"One of the gotta-have items will be the official Gemini Giant Bobblehead," Wilmington mayor Ben Dietz said.

Braidwood

On Saturday and Sunday, the Braidwood Lions Club is in charge, with most events happening on Front Street, with vendors hawking everything from homemade delicacies to Route 66 antiques and memorabilia. The Lions Information Booth near the Braidwood Zoo, featuring animal sculptures by late artist, Jack Barker, is headquarters for the festival.

Enjoy a car show and music in the Polk-A-Dot Drive-In lot, and while you're at it, enjoy Americana dining at the retro restaurant. Photo ops with Elvis, Betty Boop, and Superman, the Blues Brothers lend a quirky touch to the day.

Just over the tracks, west on Main Street, visit the Braidwood Historical Museum to browse the museum's Route 66 exhibit.

For information call (815) 791-8093.

Elwood

The village will host a craft fair from 8 a.m. to noon on Saturday. On both

Saturday and Sunday, enjoy an antique tractor exhibit. Enjoy a self-guided tour at Mississippi Avenue and Douglas Street. Featured are exhibits of Rosie the Riveter, a statue of a munitions worker, and original Route 66 pavement. Commemorative giveaways will be distributed while supplies last.

For information, call (815) 423-5011.

Godley

On Saturday, visit the Route 66 Mining Museum at 150 Kankakee Road, for a fascinating look at the influence coal mining had on Route 66 communities. There is also fascinating information about fossil finds in slag heaps. There will also be giveaways and a Toys for Tots drive Saturday and Sunday at the iconic Stumble Inn. For information call (815) 458-2222.

Braceville

Drop by Braceville City Hall at S. Mitchell Street and Illinois 53 for a bake sale by the United Methodist Church on Saturday. Stick around for a Junk in the Trunk sale in the parking lot. Call (815) 237-8655.

Gardner

The tiny village of Gardner puts on quite an extravaganza during the Red Carpet Corridor celebration.

On Saturday, enjoy the Scapegoats Car Show in the Depot Street parking lot from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday. Do the Jailhouse Rock with Elvis impersonator Hugo Collins at the

gazebo.

On Sunday, head on out to the tractor show at the Depot Street parking lot fro 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

On both days, meet and greet with the mayor at the two-cell jail where you can score this year's giveaway.

Gardner Lions will sell root beer floats and pork chop sandwiches starting at 10 a.m. at the Streetcar Diner. Stop at The Shop for a free Route 66 collectible pin, enjoy CiCi & Lala's sidewalk sale and a craft show hosted by Creative Gems from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. For information, call (815) 237-2592.

Origins of Red Carpet Corridor

The Red Carpet Corridor is a 100-mile Route 66 linear museum and festival in Illinois, beginning in Joliet and ending in Bloomington.

The first event was held in May, 2007, which has grown exponentially over the ensuing 18 years, with travelers undertaking a self-guided tour through 15 communities along the Mother Road.

The earliest event organizers included John Weiss, a Route 66 expert and preservationist, and Ellie Alexander, the city of Pontiac's tourism director.

Today, Liz Vincent, the current tourism director of Pontiac is involved in the organization of the event.

For additional information about Red Carpet Corridor, its history and significance, visit ilroute66carpetcorridor.com

Landing Pad opening Thursday

The grand opening of The Landing Pad, a Route 66-themed souvenir shop located just steps away from the new home of the world-famous Gemini Giant, is this week.

The Landing Pad souvenir shop opens for the season on Thursday, May 1 and will operate Thursday-Monday from noon-6 p.m. through November.

The Landing Pad's opening coincides with the 18th Annual Red Carpet Corridor Festival, taking place Saturday and Sunday, May 3-4 in 15 communities along Route 66 from Joliet to Bloomington.

The Landing Pad gift shop is designed to be a must-stop destination for Route 66 travelers and nostalgia lovers alike. The shop will offer a collection of one-of-a-kind collectibles, souvenirs, and memorabilia that capture the spirit of the Mother Road and celebrate this legendary stretch of American history.

"We are excited to be able to meet and welcome all our Route 66 visitors, local and from afar, with a smile and help make their trip as memorable as possible! We can't wait to see you there!" said Kirsten Van Dwyne, Executive Director of Wilmington Park District.

The park district is working with Heritage Corridor Destinations, Joliet Area Historical Museum and the City of Wilmington in opening the shop.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held on Thursday, May 22 at 11 a.m., followed by a festive celebration featuring food for purchase, music, and family-friendly entertainment.

"We are thrilled to be part of such an iconic piece of Americana as the Gemini Giant," said Robert Navarro, President and CEO of Heritage Corridor Destinations. "Not only were we able to save the Giant, but now with The Landing Pad, we're giving travelers some mementos to take with them to remember their travels on the Mother Road. It's a testament to the strong community spirit of Wilmington and the surrounding area."

Wilmington Island Park District, Joliet Area Historical Museum, Heritage Corridor Destinations, and more organizations will be on site on Saturday, May 3



Photo by Eric Fisher

THE LANDING PAD will make its Route 66 debut on Thursday at 110 S Park Street in Wilmington. The Route 66-themed souvenir shop is just a few steps away from the new home for the Gemini Giant.

and Thursday, May 22 to provide resources and information regarding upcoming events and more exciting things to do in the region.

"From the moment we began formal conversations to acquire the Gemini Giant in 2022, Joliet Area Historical Museum sought to be a dependable community partner to the residents of Wilmington and ensure the Gemini Giant was held in the public trust," said Greg Peerbolte, Chief Executive Officer of the Joliet Area Historical Museum.

"Our hope is that the Gemini Giant and The Landing Pad go well beyond providing a simple 'photo op' by branding the

First One Hundred Miles region as a premier Route 66 travel experience. We fully anticipate benefiting regional economic development, supporting jobs in

the tourism and hospitality sectors and, most importantly, supporting our region's small business with visitors from around the world."

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The Braidwood Journal
USPS No. 550-940

Published weekly, 52 times a year, on Wednesdays by
G-W COMMUNICATIONS, INC.,
111 S. Water St., Wilmington, IL 60481
Periodicals postage paid at
Wilmington, Illinois

Postmaster:

Send address changes to:
The Braidwood Journal,
111 S. Water St., Wilmington IL 60481

Subscription rates: \$46 Grundy & Will counties; \$53 other Illinois counties and \$60 out of state

G.W. Communications, Inc publishes the weekly subscription newspapers named The Free Press Advocate, The Braidwood Journal and The Coal City Courant.

Advertising and Business Offices:

- 111 South Water St., Wilmington, IL 60481 (815) 476-7966
- 271 South Broadway, Coal City, IL 60416 (815) 634-0315

Deadline for The Free Press Advocate, Braidwood Journal and Coal City Courant

Display Advertising: Friday, noon
News and Classified Advertising: Monday, noon

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Eric D. Fisher, publisher

Alexander Patterson, a self-made man

In Braidwood history, many names came and went, mostly never recorded, and now entirely forgotten. But the name Patterson has lived on. Today we look at the first man to carry that name in Braidwood.

Alexander Patterson was born on June 5, 1828 in Fifeshire, Scotland to James and Christina Patterson. His father was a coal miner and at the age of 9 he descended into the mines himself. Although this seems like quite a young age to go to work, it was not unusual. Young boys, though not as strong as their fathers, could squeeze into tight places. And in most cases the family simply needed the money.



TIME WAS....
Sandy Vasko

At the age of 24 he immigrated to the U. S., landing in New York, but quickly going to coal fields of Pennsylvania. He remained there two years; in 1856 he got gold fever and went to find his fortune in California. The great California gold rush of 1849 was still going; Alexander, unlike most, actually did find gold and did well. In two and a half years he was able to mine enough gold to purchase a farm back in Illinois.

Patterson purchased a farm in DeKalb County. The 1860 census says that at the time he was worth \$1,600 (about \$56,850 today.) But it seems farming wasn't for him, five years later he moved to Morris to become a coal miner once more. But he

also knew from experience that coal miners rarely become wealthy, so he also purchased a brick-making machine that could turn out 25,000 bricks per day. His brickyard produced bricks for many of the earliest structures in Morris and surrounding countryside.

In 1872 the family moved to Braidwood, entering into the livery and feed business, first with a partner, McKinley, and then with his son J. W. Two years later he also started into the furniture business. George Woodruff, in his History of Will County, says that it was the largest store in Braidwood, being 22 feet by 80 feet and two stories high. Woodruff also says that his livery business always had ten to fourteen horses available with carriages and buggies to match. And of course, in those days, furniture merchants were also the local undertaker, providing horses and hearses

for funerals.

Patterson's funeral business was not without danger. We read of one incident in March of 1878, "On the night of the 21st, about 11 o'clock, some forty colored people were going home from the dance, and the noise they made could be heard for miles - singing and yelling at the top of their voices and pushing off every white man they came in contact with. This same crowd met A. and J. W. Patterson, who were coming from the house of Alex. Barrowman, with the remains of a murdered man and as they were passing, one of the crowd fired off a revolver in the face of Jas. Patterson, and others said, "shoot them," "push them in the ditch," etc. This sort of street etiquette must be stopped." We have an idea about how popular "Sandy" Patterson was from an article in the June 29, 1875 Wilmington

Advocate. We read, "The fair and festival now in progress in Braidwood is said to be very successful, financially, notwithstanding the tightness of the money market. On yesterday we took a hurried observation through the hall and found a profusion of good things on all sides, embracing trinkets in fabrics, albums, pictures, and fancy good generally. The vote on the gold-headed cane, seemed closely contested and pretty evenly divided between Dr. LeCaron and a Mr. Patterson - representative men of new and old Braidwood. The festival will close tonight with a grand ball and oyster supper."

It seems that everyone attending the festival voted on the most popular guy in town, and that a gold-headed cane was to be awarded to the winner. Dr. LeCaron won the vote, but no one

wanted Sandy Patterson to feel bad, so another cane was donated to the cause with this inscription on it, "Donated to Alexander Patterson, as a popular candidate at the Catholic Fair. Braidwood 1875."

Also, in 1875 Patterson ran for school board and was defeated, a few months later ran for Mayor of Braidwood and was also defeated, this time by only twenty votes to Goodrich. He ran on the labor reform ticket, which was roundly defeated at almost every position. Labor reform, meant that he was for higher wages and better working conditions for the coal miners. Hard to believe that in Braidwood, those ideas would be defeated.

The Patterson family had a few set backs, but through the decades has managed to remain in Braidwood, serving the community, much the way old Sandy Patterson did.

Lardi elected to honor society

Hallie Lardi, of Custer Park, was recently elected to membership into The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation's oldest and most selective all-discipline collegiate honor society, at University of Illinois At Urbana-Champaign.

Lardi is among approximately 20,000 students, faculty, professional staff and alumni to be initiated into Phi Kappa Phi each year. Membership is by invitation only and requires nomination and approval by a chapter. Only the top 10 percent of seniors and 7.5 percent of juniors are eligible for membership.



REED-CUSTER HIGH SCHOOL
HOME OF THE COMETS

TEACHER OF THE MONTH

APRIL 2025

"So funny"
"Best teacher"
"Cares about us"
"Intelligent"
"Excited he retires the same year I graduate"



MR. BUTCH STAFFORD

CONGRATULATIONS TO the RCHS April Teacher of the Month, as voted on by the student body, Butch Stafford! Students had the following comments to share about Mr. Stafford: "So funny, best teacher, cares about us, intelligent, and excited he is retiring the same year I graduate." Mr. Stafford, who is in his 31st year at RCHS, teaches World History, and has previously coached football and basketball.



SENIOR SPOTLIGHT
REED-CUSTER HIGH SCHOOL
WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE



Collin Jankus

APRIL 2025

Collin Jankus deserving of Senior Spotlight

The Senior Spotlight winner for the month of April is Collin Jankus. Collin is the son of Steve and Marysa Jankus.

During his high school career, Collin was involved in Madrigals, Fall Play, Choir, Solo and Ensemble, Pep Band, Marching Band, Student Council, Math Team, Academic Challenge Team and Yearbook Staff.

He was also a member of Basketball team, Baseball team and was named ICE All-Academic Basketball. Additionally, he was a participant in the ICE Leadership Conference, the HOBY Leadership Conference, American Legion Boys State, a Student of the Month, in SSA, in the ICE Choir, and was on the Honor Roll.

His future plans are to attend Olivet Nazarene University and obtain a degree in Education.

Here are a few thoughts from Collin's teachers.

Mr. Frieders says that Collin is "an admirable person who never fails to brighten the room with his humor and personality. He's a hard worker in and out of the classroom. You always see Collin at sporting and other extracurricular events, supporting his classmates."

Mrs. Arseneau loves Collin's "smile and energy that he brings to a room! He is a student that can work with anyone, and is happy to do so! I am so excited that Collin has decided to pursue education. He will be such a light for his students, helping them feel excited to come to school and learn every day!"

Mrs. Meyr thinks that Collin is "a student who possesses great character and humility. He is respectful, kind, and outgoing. He has a tremendous work ethic and is a terrific role model for others. His smile radiates in the hallways, and I rarely see him without that smile. Congratulations, Collin, on this honor."

Mrs. Lee believes that Collin "is a very kind, mature young man. He is the first to volunteer to help out and always follows through. Collin always has a smile on his face and goes out of his way to be kind to others. He has been a great part of our student council, we will miss all of his fun ideas and help!"

Mrs. Terry appreciates that Collin "is one of the kindest students I have ever had in my classroom. He has the ability to make almost anyone smile. I can't wait to hear about his future success as a teacher."

Ms. Chinski acknowledges that Collin "has a great personality and is a positive influence on others. He is always willing to jump in to help when asked and approaches things with energy and humor. He is also extremely smart!"

Mrs. Rankin thinks that Collin is "a great kid who always has a positive attitude. He's a hard worker who embraces everything he does with enthusiasm and a smile on his face."

Mr. Mangan remarks that "we often say that students 'lead by example,' but I think that applies to Collin better than most. He's not one to seek outward praise, but despite

that, Collin is always doing the right thing at the right time. He's been exceptionally dedicated to Choir and Madrigals all four years of high school. H

He understands that work and persistence is what leads to success. He has risen to many challenges and has on each occasion, exceeded expectations. His attitude and outlook will take him far after high school."

Mr. Kristofer says that his "favorite thing about Collin is his involvement in school activities between photography, sports and more. Collin's positivity is also one of his strongest attributes, always coming in with a great attitude. His work ethic, positive attitude and perseverance I know will take him to great places in life."

Ms. Mountain appreciates that Collin is "a great student! He comes in to class daily ready to learn and is involved in so much! I can always count on him to be his best!"

Mrs. Redwitz says that "from freshmen year through now, Collin's kind heart has also shown through. He was in our COVID lunch group, and he always helped out! He'd clean tables, return lunch trays, or just have something nice to say. He thinks about others and always tries to make the best decisions. He was chosen by the staff to attend the HOBY Leadership Camp after sophomore year. He is always smiling and always says hello. He is a great young adult!"

As a final thought, Collin's advice to younger

students is, "Success is not the absence of failure, but the ability to rise every time you fall. Every setback is a setup for a comeback; embrace your failures, learn from them, and let them propel you forward."

On behalf of the teachers and staff at RCHS, we would like to congratulate Collin Jankus as the April winner of the Senior Spotlight.

Immaculate Conception Church to host Trivia Night

Grab your friends and family put together an 8-person team or come alone for our annual Trivia Night on Saturday, May 10 at the Immaculate Conception Church in Braidwood.

Admission is \$10 per person or \$60 per table which includes trivia, prizes and light appetizers. Feel free to bring your own snacks and drinks.

This year's theme is decades night. Teams are encouraged to dress/deco-

rate their table. Theme is for decorative purposes only and will not indicate trivia questions.

Doors open at 6 p.m., games begin at 6:30 p.m. in Fr. White Hall, 110 S. School St., Braidwood.

For more information and registration contact Sara at 815-341-5946 or <http://www.icparishbraidwood.com/trivia-night>.

This is an over 18 event.

Fossil Ridge Public Library to host R-C student art show

The Reed-Custer Student Art Show will be displayed at the Fossil Ridge Public Library during library hours through Sunday, May 4. Visit the library to view all the fantastic works of art made by Reed-Custer students.

Join us on Sunday, May 4, for the K-5 artist reception from 10 a.m. to noon or our 6-12 artist reception from 12:30 to 2 p.m. to celebrate Reed-Custer School District student artists.

Fossil Ridge Library News

Adult Programs

Monday, May 5-Fiction Addiction Book Club. 5:30-6:30 p.m. The book club meets monthly 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 at the front desk for checkout. All readers are welcome to join. May's Title: The Book of Lost Names by Kristin Harmel.

Friday, May 9-Trivia Night, 6-8 p.m. at Gardner American Legion, 426 Industry Ave., Gardner. Join

Ms. Quiz as she tests you and your team on all kinds of knowledge. Prizes will be awarded. Alcohol can be purchased at the American Legion. Food may be brought into the establishment. Please register in teams of 5-8 people.

Teen and Tween Programs

Wednesday, April 30-Sunday, May 4-2025 Reed-Custer Student Art Show.

Children Programs

Registration is required for all programs. For more information call 815-458-2187.



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It's made up

SHADOW LAKES—The reason that none of these people that are supposedly defrauding Social Security are getting arrested is because they don't exist. This is all made up. This is how this administration is gonna justify firing and cutting spending on the Social Security fund. They have to give people a reason to do these things even though it's all made up.

Enforce the laws

COAL CITY—What will it take to make you people wake up? If someone enters this country illegally they are not a immigrant, asylum seeker, refugee, or other name given to them. They came here the wrong way, they don't deserve anything from us. No aid of any kind, such as shelter, food, health services, clothes or money. Every cent spent on these people should have been spent on Veterans and the homeless already here. Worst of all illegals break the law, and elected nitwits like Pritzker, Johnson, Durbin and Biden look the other way and say you can't deport them. B.S. yeah Braidwood your hero Biden was in contempt for every court ruling he ignored, such as immigration, student loan forgiveness. Another Braidwood, how does looking over the gun policies of Biden make Trump responsible for the shooting at FSU? Are you insane? You also say Biden passed great gun laws, well Chicago and Illinois have the most gun laws but the highest gun violence. How can that be? Maybe if nitwits like Johnson, Pritzker and Foxx enforced the laws we have there would be less violence. kl

Dragging us backward

WILMINGTON—Midwest is lucky, so far. With the sad passing of the people's Pope, he left us with the advice to address climate change despite Trump's deliberate attempt to destroy the planet just for spite. But then again Trump is determined to destroy everything about America; the Constitution, the economy, our human melting pot and our worldwide alliances established since WWII. The dollar is crumbling, consumer confidence is plummeting, tourism from abroad is tumbling and investors worldwide no longer consider the U.S. a safe haven for investment putting recession on the horizon. As Trump drags us backward, China forges full steam ahead making advances with clean energy technology which is increasingly cheaper while Trump is taking us backwards to dirty coal. Remember the Los Angeles fires and the unpredictable hurricanes causing insurance companies to refuse doing business in some parts of the country? Due to the chemistry and physics that produce costly climate disasters, it's imperative to believe the scientists and ignore Trump. We have been fortunate concerning the weather in the middle of the country but I remember well the summers of 1988-90 when the Midwest had the U.S. record-breaking drought costing \$55 billion. It could happen again.

Don't believe him

SHADOW LAKES—If Gov. Pritzker really wants to bring back an illegal gang banger, why not go on a hunger strike. Then I would really believe him but it would have to be for more than a few hours.

Better places

WILMINGTON—Great job on last weeks solar farm reply. I can't agree more. If a farmer wants to sell off fertile farm ground to a solar business they should ask the question, who owns and operates it. Don't think too hard on it. We all know who wants those precious acres. Get the dollar signs out of your mind and think about what you're doing to the community. After all, the solar panels are not truly

the answer to power demands. It's only a guise to tie property up and control the market over time. As stated last week as far as solar panels put them over Walmart parking lots, Big box stores, buildings, maybe even interstate roadways where you have even miles of sweet free solar power. Sounds like common sense to me. Excellent read last week! Thank you.

The grocery tax

WILMINGTON—I would like to thank and commend Aldermen Smith, Holmes and Knight for voting against the grocery tax in Wilmington. And I think it was inappropriate for the aldermen who was just appointed to vote. She should of abstained based on the fact that she had no time for an informed vote. Then the vote would of been four yes, three no and one abstained. I will not do my grocery shopping in Wilmington. For the past year I've been going to Kroger and they are very reasonable in their prices. If I'm close to a Walmart and need food I will go into a Walmart. If I'm in the Coal City, Diamond area and need something I will go into Jewel and like many people I will definitely be going to Aldi when that gets built. But I will no longer do any grocery shopping in Wilmington. People are struggling in this town, if they weren't we wouldn't have to have Kuzmas giving people food. I think it was very mean of the council to vote this grocery tax in and I commend the three alderman for standing their ground and not voting yes.

Breaking the law

SHADOW LAKES—Breaking the law. To whoever is in Shadow lakes complaining maybe she needed a little trim. Oh what the heck does it really hurt to get out the scissors and cut a little trim of a hair. My goodness it would be so awful to live out there with all the rules, regulations and the cry babies. Wow, have a nice day.

An eyesore

COAL CITY—What's with the abandon house on N. Fifth Ave. The gutters have fallen off, air conditioner hanging out of the window, all kinds of mess in the yard. There is a camper in the back yard that hasn't been moved for years. Raccoons are believed to be living in it. A neighbor said she found a dead rat and was guessing it lost it's battle with the raccoons. The garage roof caved in and was subsequently removed it was full of raccoons too. It's an eyesore and a cesspool for wildlife activity and pulling down property taxes in the surroundings. I've inquired numerous times but as with our village fathers has fallen on deaf ears.

Clowns in Springfield

DIAMOND—The state of Illinois is fighting to save transgender males in women's sports. All this shows is that Illinois has some individuals in Springfield that have a definite problem with their gray matter that can only be described as a short circuit of the electrical impulses in their brain and they should immediately resign. If they do not know the difference between males and females how can they possibly know the difference between legal and illegal which has also been proven how the elected individuals in Springfield only know how to protect crime while they're pushing the status of a sanctuary state to give away tax dollars to non U.S. citizens. The public servants in Springfield Illinois seem to work for crime not the law.

They will come for us

BRAIDWOOD—First Trump's men knocked on the doors of children's schools who fortunately wouldn't let them in. Then they came for citizens who had an opinion of their own and used this as an excuse to take the citizens away. Then they came for government workers and took their jobs away. Then they came

Sound-Off is a 24-hour phone line provided to give readers a chance to voice their opinions.

The Free Press Newspapers reserves the right to edit remarks for taste, length, personal attacks, racism, threatening, calls for boycotts and libel.

The comments stated are the opinions and ideas of the callers and not that of the newspaper.

Information may not constitute the actual events or facts of a particular topic.

Submissions by email to: courant@fpnusa.com with "soundoff" in the subject line or visit www.freepressnewspapers.com, or call 815-634-0317. Please state the town in which you are calling from or in regards to. Mail comments to Sound-Off, 271 S. Broadway, Coal City, IL 60416 or 111 S. Water St., Wilmington, IL 60481. There can be only one submission of 250 words or less per person during any given week.



"FIRST IT WAS COVID, THEN IMMIGRATION, THEN TARIFFS... NOW HE'S PREPARING TO BE AN ONLINE EXPERT ON SELECTING A NEW POPE."

for immigrants and took them away to die in prison despite objections from judges. Then they came for the judges and detained them. And throughout this time Trump's men not only broke the law but put the lives of soldiers in harm's way by refusing to follow the rules. And during this time Trump's promises were broken causing people to lose their investments and causing prices to increase due to tariffs. But Trump refused to correct his unconstitutional behavior. Does Trump think he is king? He is not king at all but a man who, during the election campaign, declared himself to be our dictator which is forbidden by the Constitution.

It's who you know

BRAIDWOOD—It's nice to see that our new Mayor has decided to continue with the good old boys tradition of nepotism in our local government. His first appointments to the Planning & Zoning Board include a family member of our new Public Health & Safety Commissioner, and a family member of an employee in city hall. Why couldn't he have asked for anyone that was interested to send in an application? Him and his truth seeking posse about demolished city hall after the position of public works supervisor was not advertised before being filled. Why is it ok now, but was so bad then?

In your head

WILMINGTON—Remember Penthouse forum were people sent in their fantasies? Now soundoff is like that but it's about Trump. I get it, it's hard to think when you have both Trump and Musk living in your head.

What the last guy did

DIAMOND—A writer stated last week that "The American people have had it with the incompetence, corruption, and stupidity they are seeing in evidence every day" from Trump. We survived through four years of it recently so why stop now? Trump is doing just as good of a job at those items as the last guy did. Then they went on to say that the Supreme Court had issued rulings which Trump ignores. Oh, you mean like when the Supreme Court told Biden his student loan forgiveness is not allowed but he did it anyway? I have a friend who survived a battle with cancer and was left with devastating hospital bills that he will never pay off. He didn't sign on the dotted line asking for cancer. Why can't his debt be forgiven? Then there is the extreme cruelty to Kilmer Garcia. That is a sad story and I feel for the guy. Although, if Biden did not leave the back door open and let everyone in that Trump inherited the job to clean

up mistakes like that would have never happened.

Set the example

BRAIDWOOD—Hey Braidwood.... It must now be legal to drive your golf cart down Main Street. If Mayor Lyons can do it, so can we. If you ever get a ticket just go see him and ask him to cancel it out because he set the example on Sunday.

Collect them all

WILMINGTON—I really wish that the Wilmington Township road commissioner would go through town and pick up his campaign signs. I'm really sick of looking at them.

Shop for value

WILMINGTON—Regarding the grocery tax editorial, all the towns around us are keeping the grocery tax. Pritzker wanted to do away with it because it didn't effect state revenues. It went to municipalities. It makes him look good, It's easy for him to make points for the next presidential election. As for bringing people in to shop for groceries because you don't have the tax, let's face it, that's not going to happen. With gas at \$3.25 a gallon you would need to buy \$325 just to break even on a gallon driving from other towns. If people are on SNAP benefits, the old food stamps, they are not charged tax anyway. What would make people spend more at the grocery store is to have a Starbucks or a Dunkin' in the store. Jewel's Starbucks is always busy. To increase foot traffic you need to offer something that someone doesn't have and have to go to your business to get it and you could lower your prices one percent and be a hero. Your revenues will go up with value.

More important things

We moan, gripe and complain about trains, dogs, smoke, yards, cars parking, etc., all petty, trivial things. My question is what do the people in the war, floods, fires, tornados and gang situations complain about?

Trash talking

BRAIDWOOD—I like Braidwood. What I don't like is the people throwing their trash out of their car. The side of the road and/or our yards are not your trash can. I just picked up a 30 gallon bag of trash. That was just in front of four houses. Please stop littering the streets.

What a situation

WILMINGTON—Our mayor and city council should thank the Braidwood City Council for all the screw-ups they have going on. It's making Wilmington's council look half-way decent.

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New efforts to restore wild salmon

Dear EarthTalk: What's up with efforts to restore wild salmon to the U.S. West?

- J.D. via email

EARTH TALK

Questions & Answers About Our Environment

Over the past century, wild salmon populations on the U.S. West Coast have declined drastically. In Washington State alone, salmon populations have dropped to as little as five to 10 percent of their historical numbers, according to the Recreation and Conservation Office.

In response, efforts to restore them have ramped up as concerns grow about their survival.

Salmon play a crucial role in the environment, supporting ecosystems, fishing industries and Indigenous communities that have depended on them for centuries. But between habitat destruction, overfishing and climate change, the numbers really took a hit.

In recent years, there's been a big push to restore

them, with new projects and funding, though overall progress has been inconsistent in certain areas.

One of the biggest problems is that salmon habitats have changed over time. Dams block their migration routes, making it harder for them to reach the places where they spawn. Some projects, such as those on California's Yuba River, are working on removing barriers or building special passages so salmon can get through easier.

Another issue is water temperature-rivers are getting too warm because of climate change and salmon need cold water to survive. In some areas people have been planting more trees along riverbanks to help provide more shade but it's a slow process. Plus, erosion causes too much dirt in the water which can end up burying salmon eggs before they can hatch.

There's been a lot more funding lately to help salmon recover, but this isn't a new effort. Since the 1990s, billions of dollars have been invested in salmon restoration across the Pacific Northwest, with funding from federal, state and tribal governments.

In 2023, the U.S. Congress allocated an addi-



2025 WAS A record year for chum salmon returning to Piper Creek in Seattle.

tional \$60 million to support restoration projects, with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) leading multi-agency federal efforts to improve wild salmon populations. Some hatcheries are also stepping in, raising salmon to release into the wild, though some scientists worry that hatchery fish might not act like real wild salmon and could mess with natural populations.

But even with all these efforts, salmon still have a lot of problems. Climate change is making rivers drier in some places and

flooding in others, which totally throws off their migration. Plus, there's still a debate over whether big dams should be taken down to let salmon move freely again. Meanwhile, predators like sea lions have been snatching up more salmon lately, making it even harder for the fish to bounce back.

To help, check to see if seafood is sustainably caught, support policies that protect salmon, and volunteer for local conservation projects. And of course, tackling climate change matters, because without fixing bigger envi-

ronmental issues, salmon recovery will be an uphill battle. There's a long way to go, but with enough effort, wild salmon could still make a comeback.

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Forest Preserve photo

WEEKLY BIRD VIEWING programs at Lake Renwick Heron Rookery begin May 3 and run through Aug. 9. This is the only way to see the birds while the preserve is closed for nesting season. Lake Renwick Rookery is located off Highway 30 in Plainfield.

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988 is a confidential lifeline and available 24/7. If you or someone you know is struggling with thoughts of suicide or facing a mental health or substance use crisis, help is just a call or text away.

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The feds need to build a better case

As you likely know by now, a federal jury deadlocked last week on all three corruption charges against Sen. Emil Jones, III (D-Chicago). U.S. District Judge Andrea Wood declared a mistrial after polling individual jurors and arriving at the conclusion that they could not possibly reach a verdict.

When you think of the Chicago US Attorney's legendary Public Corruption & Organized Crime Unit, the thing that immediately comes to mind is its hugely successful conviction rate – mid-to-high 90 percentile. But the unit has run into some serious trouble lately.

In the past seven months, the US Attorney's office has prosecuted 37 public corruption charges against four defendants – former AT&T President Paul La Schiazza, accused of bribing former House Speaker Michael Madigan; Madigan himself; Madigan's top adviser Mike McClain and Sen. Jones.

The juries in those trials voted to acquit on 7 charges (all Madigan) and deadlocked on another 20 charges.

Just 10 of those 37 charges have so far resulted in guilty verdicts (all Madigan), for a paltry 27 percent initial conviction rate - or 25 percent if you're only counting the number of defendants.

Some of these charges could be prosecuted again, of course, and La Schiazza is scheduled for a retrial in early June. But an initial 27 percent conviction rate demands some serious introspection from the FBI



and the US Attorney's office. They obviously need to build better cases and then more competently prosecute them.

Like the La Schiazza case, the charges against Sen. Jones seemed to be too much

The prosecution's star witness, its mole Maani, bragged to the jury that he had been bribing politicians since his 20s, and told the jury that he gave \$23,000 cash to a suburban mayor via one of the most influential Democratic attorneys in Cook County (neither of them have ever been charged). The alleged cash-giveaway was intended to show Maani's "appreciation."

Maani was probably not the best witness, to say the least, particularly since the G had no other real evidence indicating a pattern of corruption by Sen. Jones. The feds have never said why they chose to target Jones.

The overtly familiar, late-night phone texting evidence the feds introduced between Jones and his former male intern appeared, in my opinion, to try and out the Senator as

gay and seemed like a tactic from a dark, bygone era.

Even so, as Judge Wood rightly reminded Sen. Jones at the end of the proceedings last week, he was not acquitted. His bond terms are still in place. The feds could come at him again in a new trial.

But before the US Attorney's office makes its decision about whether to retry Jones or not, the top brass needs to figure out why they have had such a miserably low initial conviction rate lately.

I want as many public corruption convictions as possible. Lock them up if they truly deserve it. But confidence is undermined when the conviction rate falls so low.

Do better, please.

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

Thank You

Our Caring Closet would like to express our sincerest appreciation to everyone who attended "Our Couture Closet". The event helped raise much needed funds to help Our Caring Closet continue to provide aid to many in the area.

We would also like to thank our sponsors; Chic, Geek and Antique, Lionsmark Auction Company, First Christian Church, The Wilmington Rotary, The Free Press Newspapers, Eaton & Schultz Insurance Group and Robert Bolsier Country Financial, along with all of the generous local businesses that donated items towards the auction. We are overwhelmed with the support this great community has shown and helped make "Our Couture Closet" a success!

Baptist church to host Alzheimer's caregiver support group

If you or someone you know is caring for a loved one with memory problems, you are invited to attend a caregivers support group that meets the second Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. at the First Baptist Church of Coal City, 4470 E. Route 113 in Coal City.

This meeting is for caregivers only. For additional information, please contact Becky Halderson at 815-791-2658.

Alzheimer's caregiver support groups have many benefits for both caregivers and patients. Caregiving takes a heavy toll on the caregivers' mental and physical health and the health of the patient with

dementia is directly related to the health of his or her caregiver: the healthier the caregiver, the healthier the patient, and vice versa.

Support group participants, value support groups as a place to learn more factual information about dementia. Increased education about dementia makes caregivers more effective: they are better able to respond to patients' needs when they understand and can anticipate them.

Furthermore caregiver depression decreases as caregiver education about dementia increases, and when caregiver depression decreases, patient outcomes improve.

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To qualify, the applicant must be:

- Member of St. Rose Parish, Wilmington, IL.
- Presently attending a Catholic school or registered to attend a Catholic school for fall 2025.

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Save the date for WHS 50th reunion

The WHS Class of '75 will hold their 50-year class reunion at the Wilmington VFW on July 19, at 6:30 pm. All classmates, spouse/guest are invited to attend. There will be a program and a dinner with cash bar.

Ongoing updates are available on the Wilmington High School Class of '75 Facebook page.

The evening before, July 18, there will be an informal get-together at Haydens Crossing at 7 p.m.

Other events are being planned including a tour of the current WHS building. Other WHS classes are invited to stop in.

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Gas prices bouncing around

Despite hope for cheaper gas, average gasoline prices in Illinois have risen 6.3 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.39/g, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,378 stations in Illinois.

Prices in Illinois are 4.1 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 54.1 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has decreased 2.0 cents in the last week and stands at \$3.49 per gallon.

Wilmington gas will cost less than neighboring towns, with Mohsen charging \$3.16/g up to \$3.24/g at Shell.

Braidwood's prices are steeper, with all stations charging at least \$3.49/g.

Coal City is also higher with gas ranging from \$3.29/g at BP up to \$3.49/g at Gas N Wash.

You won't save much in Morris, with gas ranging from \$3.29/g at Pilot, up to \$3.45/g at BP. If you happen

to travel to Bourbonnais, it might be worth your while to fill up, with gas ranging from \$3.12/g up to \$3.39/g at Casey's.

"Average gasoline prices in the U.S. have been volatile over the past week, with roughly half of the 50 states seeing prices decline while the other half experienced increases," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy.

"Oil prices, which had fallen into the \$50 per barrel range at the height of Trump's trade war, have since rallied and are now holding in the low \$60s, leading to rising gas prices in some states. For now, I expect the national average to bounce around in the \$3.10 to \$3.20 per gallon range over the coming week.

The lowest price in the state Sunday was \$2.52/g while the highest was \$4.49/g.

Morris Hospital to host community blood drive

Morris Hospital is hosting a blood drive in cooperation with Versiti Blood Center on Tuesday, May 6, from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. in Conference Rooms 2 & 3 on the lower level of the hospital, 150 W. High Street in Morris.

Those who donate will be helping replenish the local blood supply as Versiti supplies blood products for Morris Hospital. All blood types are needed.

Blood donors must be age 17 or older, weigh at least 110 pounds, be in good health and free from cold or flu symptoms on the day of donation. In Illinois, 16-year-olds may

donate with written approval from a parent or guardian.

The entire process for donating blood takes about 1 hour, including registration, a brief medical screening, blood collection and refreshments. Donors should bring a photo ID with proof of age. Those planning to donate should eat a healthy meal and drink plenty of water before donating.

To schedule an appointment, call Morris Hospital at 815-705-7386 or go to morrishospital.org/events and select Donate Blood. Walk-ins are welcome.

Report a pothole

Hit any potholes lately? Then you may want to input 1-800-452-4368 into your phone because IDOT will be out filling these rough spots on state highways and interstates.

Maintenance crews are patrolling and repairing potholes on state highways and interstates.

Drivers need to slow down, use caution and move over for workers. Non-emergency patching operations usually take place during nonpeak travel periods and often require temporary lane closures.

Again the number is 1-800-452-IDOT(4368).

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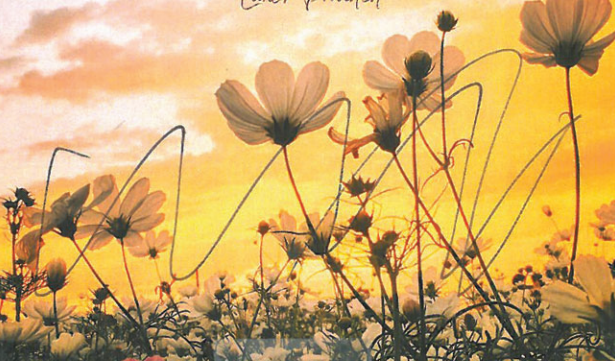
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Rotary Club of Wilmington



OBITUARIES

Sandra Cerny

COAL CITY—Sandra Sue Cerny, 87, of Coal City and formerly of Cocoa, FL, passed away Sunday, April 27, 2025 at Goldwater Care in Pontiac, IL.

Born on April 5, 1938, in Lawrenceville, IL, Sandra Sue was a daughter of William Patten and Hazel (Greenlee) Blackburn. At the age of 12, her family moved to Wilmington after the sudden loss of her father. She went on to graduate from Wilmington High School with the class of 1956. On June 23, 1957, Sandra married Anton Cerny in the Methodist Church in Wilmington and together they made their home and raised their family in Carbon Hill.

Sandra found joy in many creative pursuits, especially painting, quilting, and sewing. She was known for her loving heart, gentle spirit, and unwavering kindness. Her greatest joy came from spending time with her beloved grandchildren and great-grandchildren, whom she adored deeply. Sandra also treasured the time she shared with Anton in Cocoa Beach, FL, where they made their home together in the warm and welcoming Canaveral Grove Community.

Survivors include her three children: Cindia (Kim) Brackett, of Coal City; Tammy (Kevin) Christian, of Morris and Lori Lancaster, of Carbon Hill; grandchildren: Raymond (Lisa) Brackett and Brandy (Dan) Krug, both of Coal City; Burgundy



(John) Johnson, of Braceville; Christopher (Julie) Christian, of Plattville; Daniel Christian (Kendra), of Marseilles; Mindy (Edward) Londeau, of Port Richey, FL; Michael Anton II Cerny, Lora Mae Cerny, Tiffany Lancaster and Whitney Lancaster, all of Carbon Hill; great-grandchildren: Cody (Gina) and Jacob (Leah) Krug, Camron, Peyton and Dylan Carpenter, John Johnson II, Rhylan Brackett, MacKenzie, Mason and Bryce Christian, Maggie and Gianna Londeau, Lilyana Cerny, Layla and Roy Jr. Marsh, Amelia and Nora Lancaster; one sister-in-law, Marcia Togliatto, of Diamond and two nieces.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Anton; son, Michael Anton; son-in-law, Eddie Lancaster and two great-grandchildren, Reese and Raygan Brackett.

Per Sandra's wishes, cremation rites have been accorded, and there will be a private family memorial. She will be inurned in Lawrenceville, IL at a later date.

Family and friends may sign the guest book, upload photographs or share Sandra's memorial page online through social media by logging onto: www.ReevesFuneral.com.

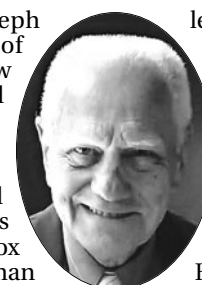
Cremation services and arrangements have been made under the direction and care of Reeves Funeral Homes, Ltd. in Coal City.

Henry Jessen III

WILMINGTON—Henry Joseph Jessen III, "Hank," 84, of Wilmington, formerly of New Lenox and Manhattan, passed away Monday, April 28, 2025 at his home.

Born Sept. 17, 1940 in Joliet, Hank was a son of Henry Jr. and Anna (Derwood) Jessen. He was raised and educated in New Lenox and was part of the first freshman class at New Lenox High School, where he graduated from with the class of 1958. Hank was a gifted high school basketball player, being recognized as an All-State selection two years and was selected to the 1958 All Chicago Tribune List. He continued to play basketball at Joliet Junior College where he was awarded and athletic scholarship.

Hank worked for Caterpillar Tractor Company in Joliet in the engineering department, securing two patents with his hydraulic designer classification. He then entered the insurance profession, owning and operating Jessen Insurance Agency in Wilmington for over 35 years, helping countless families insure and protect their needs and properties. Hank was a proud member of the National Rifle Association and the National Horseshoe Pitching Association. Horseshoes was one of his favorite pastimes, winning several tournaments and being ranked 2nd in the Class A Illinois State Tournament. He retired from pitching horseshoes due to injury, but he also took great pleasure in fishing and col-



lecting model railroads.

Hank was a respected businessman, beloved personality, and a devoted husband, father, and grandfather who left a lasting impression on the Wilmington community and all who knew him.

Survivors include five children: Kimberly Schleeter, Kristi Hornyak, Kevin Jessen, Christina Likens and James Crichton; as well as numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren; eight brothers and numerous nieces and nephews; and his dear friends: Norma and John Howe, of Hartwell, GA.

Hank was preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Rennae (Smith) Jessen, who he married on June 2, 1977; one great-grandson, two nephews, and his long time friend, Leon Hays.

Per Hank's wishes, cremation rites are being accorded and a private graveside service will be held at Oakwood Cemetery in Wilmington where he will be laid to rest with his wife.

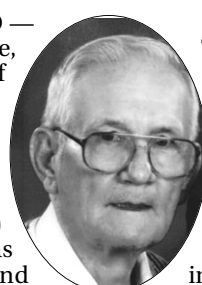
Family and friends are encouraged to log onto www.BaskervilleFuneral.com to sign the guest book, upload photographs and to share Hank's memorial page via social media.

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

Harold Touvelle

BRAIDWOOD—Harold Donald Touvelle, "Hike," 95, of Braidwood, passed away April 25, 2025 at Lightway's Hospice in Joliet.

Born Dec. 21, 1929 in Braidwood, he was the son of Lorene and Mary (nee Kratochvil) Touvelle. Harold retired as Superintendent at Diamond International in Wilmington. He was a veteran of the United States Army and served overseas in the Korean War. During his service Harold received a Letter of Appreciation Brigadier General Mercer C. Walter, USA Commanding Officer for his competence, initiative and dependability displayed during his time of duty. He was a member of Wilmington VFW Post #5422 and the Immaculate Conception Church in Braidwood. Harold enjoyed golfing and fishing in his free time.



Surviving are one son, Steve Touvelle, of Braidwood; granddaughter, Jennifer Touvelle; step-daughter, Linda Barnhart, of Dyer, IN and brother, James Touvelle, of Parachute, CO.

Preceding him in death were his parents; wife, Reva Marie (nee Dennison) Touvelle; son, Gary Touvelle; daughter, Jill in infancy; son, Brian in infancy and sister, Dorothy Mulligan.

Cremation rites have been accorded. Inurnment will be private at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery.

For more information and to visit his online guestbook please log on to www.rwpattersonfuneralhomes.com or find them on Facebook.

R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory, 401 E. Main St., Braidwood is entrusted with arrangements.

Noah Yates

GARDNER—Noah Nathaniel Yates, 33, of Gardner and formerly of Manteno and Braidwood, passed away unexpectedly and was received into the arms of Jesus our Lord and Savior. Noah was a Christian and loved the Lord with all his heart.

Born Dec. 18, 1991, in Joliet, Noah was a son of Larry and Jean (Janulis) Yates, of Springville, TN. He spent his early years in Braidwood, where he attended Reed Custer Schools and played football, before moving to Manteno where he received various accolades being a part of the Manteno High School football team; was on the track team and was elected 2010 senior prom king prior to his graduation.

Noah was a dedicated diesel mechanic, currently employed with Con Global at the Intermodal in Elwood, IL. He was a proud member of the Local #150 Operating Engineers; was actively involved in his community through the Braidwood Recreation Club, which was one of his favorite places where he had a great love of fishing, and was a member of the First Christian Church in Wilmington.

A gifted artist, Noah expressed himself through drawing and painting, often bringing beauty and meaning to those around him through his work. His creativity extended into music. He was a talented pianist, guitarist and drummer. He shared his love of music by playing in the praise band at his church, where his presence and passion uplifted many.

Noah also had a great love for gaming,



a hobby through which he connected with friends and found joy in storytelling and strategy. Noah was very charismatic, caring and compassionate, and loved making people laugh. He was loved by all, and his memory will be cherished by his family, friends, and all who had the pleasure of knowing him.

Survivors include his parents, Larry and Jean Yates; siblings: Brandon Yates, Kristina Demere and Tara Yates; niece, Jeanette Demere; paternal grandmother, Lorna Zemar (Jim Zemar), and several aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Noah was preceded in death by his grandparents: Charles Sr. and Marian Janulis; Larry Yates Sr. and step grandpa Robert Maier Sr.; uncle, Rob Maier Jr. and cousins Jennafir Weir and Mike Flores, as well as his beloved dog, Rigby.

Cremation rites have been accorded, and the family is planning a celebration of Noah's life for a later date.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Noah's memory to the Alpha Omega Ministry, 13070 HWY 69A, P.O.Box 174, Big Sandy, TN 38221.

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

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

Beverly Treadman

WILMINGTON—Beverly Darlene Treadman, 84 of Wilmington, passed away peacefully at her home on Wednesday morning, April 23, 2025.

Born on Sept. 1, 1940, in Browning, IL, Beverly was a daughter of Herschel and Mildred (Rittenhouse) Bollinger. She was raised with strong values and a deep appreciation for family and community in the heart of Schuyler County.

On Feb. 1, 1958, Beverly married Lawrence Joseph Treadman, at St. Rose Catholic Church in Wilmington. Together, they built a beautiful life, raising their family with love and dedication in the town they would call home for decades.

Bev was a hardworking and determined woman who was dedicated to her family and the home. She spent part of her career working for UniRoyal at the Joliet Army Ammunition Plant and later joined Johnson & Johnson Personal Products in Wilmington. She was a member of St. Rose Church and enjoyed belonging to the Braidwood Recreation Club.

Outside of work, Beverly had many passions. She found joy in playing golf, crafting, and sharing sweet moments, quite literally, through her love of candy-making. She touched many lives with her warmth, creativity, and generosity.

More than anything, Beverly treasured her role as a Grammy. She adored her grandchildren and great grandchildren and poured her heart into every moment she spent with them. Her bond with each was special, and she held a deep and abiding love for them all, including Kaelen Kelly.

Beverly will be remembered for her enduring strength, her kind spirit, and the love she so freely gave to those around her. She leaves behind a legacy of grace, resilience, and heartfelt memories that will be cherished by all who knew her.

Survivors include her four children:



Deborah Treadman of Kankakee, Karen (Jay) Friedenberg of Bolingbrook, and Susan (Mitchell) Lyday and Jeff (Carol) Treadman both of Wilmington; four grandchildren: Abigail Friedenberg, Max (Macy) Lyday, Allison (Josh) Strohm and Jeff C. Treadman; three great-grandchildren: Lexi, Natalie and Mason Strohm, and siblings: Wayne (the late Dee) Bollinger, Linda (Paul) Booth, Patsy (the late Jim) Self, Larry (the late Arletta) Bollinger, Sue (Dave) Dotzert, Paul (Sandy) Bollinger and Charles (LuAnn) Bollinger, as well as numerous cousins, nieces and nephews.

Bev was preceded in death by her parents; one son, Anthony; husband, Larry (2017); her grandson, Matthew Lyday (2021); two sisters, Juanita Bollinger in infancy and Marianne (Ken) Agans, and one brother, Leo (Donna) Bollinger.

Visitation will be held on Monday, April 28, 2025 from 9:00 a.m. until time of funeral service 11:00 a.m. at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 East Kahler Road in Wilmington. Deacon Milt Leppert will preside. Burial will follow in Mount Olivet Catholic Cemetery in Wilmington, where she will be laid to rest with her late husband Larry and son, Anthony.

Pallbearers will be: Jeff D. Treadman, Mitchell Lyday, Jay Friedenberg, Jeff C. Treadman and Josh Strohm.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Bev's memory to Kuzma Care Cottage, 635 S. Main Street, Wilmington, Illinois 60481

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

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

Henry Miner Sr.



GARDNER—Henry Miner Sr., "Bill," 78, of Gardner, formerly of Joliet, passed away Thursday, April 24, 2025 in his home.

Born April 17, 1947 in Joliet, Henry William was raised in Joliet and attended Joliet West High School where he graduated with the class of 1965. He began his career with Caterpillar in Joliet until he was selected into military service. Bill served honorably in the United States Army where he was stationed in Germany until his discharge. On June 13, 1970, he married Carol Ann Webb in Joliet where they made their home until 1979 when they relocated to Gardner where they raised their children.

Bill rejoined Caterpillar after his military service and was employed as a machinist until he retired after 32 years of service. He and Carol enjoyed going on trips, especially to Las Vegas where they enjoyed trying their luck in the casinos. Bill was a Harley Davidson enthusiast, looking forward to any opportunity to go for a ride on his bike. His family is what mattered most to him, making sure to make almost every event his grandchildren were involved in, and he will be missed dearly by those who loved him.

Survivors include his two children: Tonya (Darrin) Fisher and Henry



(Michelle) Miner Jr., both of Gardner; five grandchildren: Joshua (Ashley) Davidson, Jack (Jen) Davidson, Tanner (fiancé: Alyssa Hayward) Fisher, Riley (fiancé: Kaylee Gelsthorpe) Miner, and Delaney (fiancé: Eric Meaker) Miner; three great-grandchildren: Savannah Granger and Davina and Leon Davidson, with one more expected; two sisters-in-law: Deb (Bob) Burns, of Port Charlotte, FL and Cheryl (Steve) Krouse, of Ottawa and several nieces and nephews.

Bill was preceded in death by his loving adoptive parents: Frances and Dewey Boswell, and his biological mother, Maude (Waters) Miner and his wife, Carol Ann Miner.

Per Bill's wishes, cremation rites are being accorded and there will be no services at this time.

In lieu of flowers, memorials in Bill's memory may be made to Lightways Hospice in Joliet.

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

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

Shedding light on solar panel contracts

BY PHYLLIS COULTER
FARMWEEK

Allan Delphi, a LaSalle County farmer and landowner, felt the heat of the sun shining on him when making decisions that would affect him, his children, grandchildren and possibly others who work his land in the future.

"I have had five solar companies approach me. Each one told me what they would do for me. I even had one more today," he said while attending a recent farmland owners conference in Oglesby.

At the event, sponsored by the University of Illinois Extension at Illinois Valley Community College, he gathered more information. Delphi said he is thankful that the responsibility of making the decision isn't his alone. He has involved family members, a lawyer and his support team.

Delphi told FarmWeek he's learned a lot during the process, studying the easements, learning about equipment and construction and details about decommissioning.

"I'm in my 70s. This project will last at least 40 years," he said of the care he is taking for his three sons and five grandchildren.

The company they have chosen practices agri-

voltaics, the dual use of land for solar energy production and agriculture. They will likely graze sheep initially, but more research

is being done on short corn varieties and other crops that might be compatible with the solar system, said Delphi, who likes the idea of the contracted land still being used for farming.

During his presentation, Garrett Thalgott, assistant general counsel for Illinois Farm Bureau, emphasized the importance of asking questions and having a good team when considering signing a solar project contract.

Insurance is something to consider. It is important to discuss a solar contract with your insurance company and attorney and see what is covered by the energy company and what changes might need to be made to the farmer's or landowner's policy.

Also, be sure to look at the acreage guarantees. It's important to know if five or 50 acres are guaranteed to be involved in the contract.

In terms of compensation for land rented, it is important for landowners to have an escalation provision, so the rental price keeps up with rising rates of rent over the next 50 years, the IFB attorney told FarmWeek.

Thalgott agreed it is important to be clear on the details of decommissioning when in some cases it won't happen for as many as 60 years. The energy company might be sold by then and other generations might be farming.

Some landowners may be against putting solar farms on agricultural land,

but eminent domain is not available to solar developers. The landowner has the right to choose what is right for his farming operation for the future and how to use his or her property rights, Thalgott told FarmWeek.

Mary Ludwig, an attorney and partner with Johnson & Taylor in Pontiac, compared property rights to a "bundle of sticks." That bundle includes air, water and mineral rights in the present and future, she told landowners at the conference.

As for solar and wind contracts, Ludwig offered many of the same cautions as the IFB counsel. She said to make sure attorney fees are considered in the contract costs to understand the contract length and provisions of decommissioning.

"About one-third of landowners receive a letter from an energy company," Elizabeth Strom, an Accredited Farm Manager and vice president of Murray Wise Associates LLC in Champaign told landowners in attendance.

"Before you sign, make sure you fully understand the contract," Strom said.

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

Will County launching pre-apprenticeship program

HIRE360, in partnership with the Will County Executive Office, is launching the first Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program in Will County, set to begin on May 5.

The nine-week program is designed to strengthen the construction workforce pipeline by preparing individuals for entry into registered union apprenticeship programs.

As part of the program, participants will complete structured training and receive industry-recognized credentials, including OSHA-10 and CPR.

They will also take part in site visits to registered apprenticeship programs and preparation for entry assessments, with a stipend provided for the duration of the training.

Individuals who successfully complete the program will have the opportunity to obtain additional free certifications. HIRE360's goal is to improve their skills and careers by providing them with useful credentials at no extra cost.

"This program creates real, lasting pathways into the construction industry," said Jay Rowell, Executive Director

of HIRE360. "By combining classroom instruction, hands-on experience, and direct access to union apprenticeships, we're not just preparing people for jobs, we're setting them on a path to lifelong careers. Through industry-recognized certifications, skill-building, and strong relationships with contractors and mentors, participants leave this program ready to succeed."

Since launching in 2021, the program has enrolled more than 2,000 individuals across Illinois. According to the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, which funds the program, approximately 80 percent of participants complete the program, and over half advance into registered apprenticeships.

Eligible applicants must be Illinois residents, 18 years or older, with a high school diploma, GED, or HiSET. The program provides access to construction training and prepares participants for future workforce demands.

For more information or to register visit: www.hire360chicago.com/will_county_il_works.

Projected budgets show soybeans more profitable than corn

BY RHIANNON BRANCH FARMWEEK

While the national consensus points to better corn returns compared to soybeans this season, that might not be the case for farmers in the No. 1 soybean producing state.

USDA's prospective plantings report predicted a 5% increase in corn acres and 4% decrease in soybean acres in the U.S. this planting season.

"I would note that much of the increase in corn acres is happening in the Great Plains and the western Corn Belt in states like Iowa and Nebraska and less so in the eastern Corn Belt," University of Illinois ag economist Gary Schnitkey told FarmWeek.

The acreage shift in Illinois is projected to be lighter with 3% fewer soybean acres and 3% more corn acres.

But while market movements in recent months have generally favored corn, Schnitkey said projected per-acre returns continue to favor soybeans across regions of Illinois.

The U of I farmdoc team's projected soybean return advantage of \$39 per acre in central Illinois for 2025 is based on projected cash prices of \$4.10 per bushel for corn and \$10 for soybeans.

Projected soybean returns also exceed corn returns by \$47 per acre in northern Illinois and \$14 per acre in southern Illinois, according to farmdoc's updated budgets.

"Part of that is due to cost increases and specifically nitrogen costs having a pretty big impact on corn," Schnitkey said.

Soybean yields are also higher in Illinois compared to states further west, which helps the local soybean balance sheet.

"We've had such an increase in soybean yields

over time that soybeans stack in there pretty well with corn," Schnitkey said.

But, with most inputs purchased and planting season underway, significant adjustments to acreage decisions aren't likely in the weeks ahead. However, spring weather and planting conditions, along with ongoing market developments, will continue to be monitored as those factors have the potential to cause smaller shifts in planted acreage.

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

Forest Preserve hosting photo contest

The Forest Preserve of Will County is hosting Where Feathers Meet the Flash Photo Contest from 8 a.m. - sunset, May 1-31, McKinley Woods - Kerry Sheridan Grove, Channahon.

Celebrate migratory bird season with the annual bird photography competition for all ages. Submit your photo of a wild bird taken at McKinley Woods for a chance to win a gift certificate for the Cornell

Lab Bird Academy and bird-feeding supplies from Wild Birds Unlimited of Joliet.

Visit Four Rivers Environmental Education Center, Channahon, to check out recent sightings and find top photo spots. Register your photo using the QR codes at the visitor center and along the trails. Ages 17 and younger (junior edition) or 18 and older (adult edition); free.

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Fridays - 5 p.m.
Classified Word Ads
Mondays - noon

The Free Press Newspapers will be responsible for the first incorrect insertion, and its liabilities shall be limited to the price on one insertion. The Free Press Newspapers reserves the right to classify correctly, edit, reject or cancel any advertisement at any time in accordance with its policy. All ads must be checked for errors the first week of publication by the advertiser.

Cost
Line Ads are up to 30 words (20¢ for each word over 30)
1 wk.- \$17; 2 wks.- \$21;
3 wks.- \$25; 4 wks.- \$29*
\$1.00 Extra per line for bold or caps on classified
*plus .0399% with credit card

Phone (815) 476-7966 or (815) 634-0315 for details.

The Braidwood Journal — The Coal City Courant — The Free Press Advocate

GARAGE SALES

MULTI-FAMILY GARAGE SALE ***525 E Campbell Dr., Coal City**, Wed., Thur., & Fri., May 7, 8 & 9, 8am-3pm, Sat., May 10, 8am-noon. Houseware, house decor, Christmas, lots of shoes of all sizes, dresses, books, puzzles, & pool floats. CLOTHES—ladies & juniors - size 0-18, maternity size small, mens-size S-4XL. Newborn-2T baby boy clothes. Tons of screen prints (new/unused), vinyl, other craft items. Brand new hand towels, washcloths, & other items, all priced to sell! 50% off most items on Saturday! PJ CUSTOMS-shirts and crafts. Brand new tanks, t-shirts, and some long sleeves for \$3/each. cc18-19

GARAGE SALES

Wilmington - 817 Mae Street. Thursday, Friday and Saturday, May 1, 2, 3 from 8am-3pm. Fishing gear, tools, household items, some furniture and clothes. ca18

GARAGE SALES

Wilmington - 846 Ridge St. Thurs. & Fri., May 1 & 2, 8am-2pm and Sat., May 3, 8am-noon. Camping, hunting, fishing and gun stuff. Brand new men's work shoes, backpack with frame, books, household, bread maker, crafts and craft supplies. Dresser. Antique and modern tools, misc electrical, plumbing and hardware. Beer making kit, hand-made white oak wagon. Vintage men's leather jacket. Computer monitors, program CDs/DVDs, etc. Lots more, something for everyone. cc18

GARAGE SALES

Coal City - 95 W. Division St., Thurs., Fri. & Sat., May 8, 9, 10 from 8am-3pm. Big Sale: Lots of stuff to look at and get. We have alot of clothes, women's, petite and men's, no children's. Winter coats, sweaters, sweat-shirts, winter clothes and summer clothes. Old books, knick-knacks, exercise equipment, Christmas decorations, costumes jewelry, bedding, blankets, pillows, etc. Come and see and purchase. Need to get rid of it all. cc18-19

HELP WANTED

Lifeguards needed at local sportsmen's club in Wilmington. Must be certified or able to become certified. Please send inquiries to wcsc1946@gmail.com or call the office at 815-476-6561. ch18-22

HELP WANTED

Will County Sportsmen's Club is looking for a part-time office employee. Must have experience with Micro-soft Office, POS systems, and phone etiquette. Please send inquiries to wcsc1946@gmail.com or call the office at 815-476-6561. ch18-22

Wilmington, IL area. Shooting and throwing ducks & pheasants; operating a 4-wheeler; maintaining training equipment. Lake maintenance; mowing & weeding grass; driving tractor. Mechanical ability would be a plus. Hard work, fair pay, year round employment. Call Lisa at 815-302-8810. cc17-19

FOR FREE

Full size gray sofa. Electric reclining foot and head. USB ports, everything works. 815-476-2972. fr18-19

PETS

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

SERVICE & REPAIRS

Mike Collins Roofing, re-shingles and gutter cleaning, aluminum gutter screen, no repair to small or too big. Free roof inspection. Low prices. Lic #104.007296 Ask for Mike at 815-730-1303. ck47-20

A Thousand Words Photography

385 N. Second Ave. Coal City
Mandy Eaton
815-791-2913

SERVICE & REPAIRS

GOT GRASS Lawn Care
Jim Baudino
815-342-6394
cc11-26

Timeless Home Renovations

Specializing in Flooring, Trim, Tile, Bathrooms, Kitchens, Basements and More. Inquiries email: MIKE@TIME-LESSHOME.ONMICROSOFT.COM
MIKE: 815-351-8736 ca18-21

STORAGE

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

WANTED

WANTED SCRAP METAL

- Farm Machinery
- Garden Tractors
- Snowmobiles
- Appliances
- Anything Metal

Free pickup 7 days
815-210-8819

						2			
		8	3			1			
						8	4	7	
					8	9			
		4	6		7	3	8		
					4				
		3			1	5	7		4
	1					6	9		3
6					4				1

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52	53	54				55				56		57	58	59
60					61				62		63			
64					65						66			
67					68						69			

CLUES ACROSS

- McCarthy acolyte Roy
- Ancient Korean chiefdoms
- Not soft
- Jai ____, sport
- Philosophy
- Do what you're told
- Gaffe
- Widely known and esteemed
- Amusement park attraction
- Popular comic strip Viking
- Usually has a lid
- American sportscaster
- Lung fibrosis
- General's assistant (abbr.)
- Pouch
- Upset
- Partner to hem
- Astronomy unit of distance
- Witch
- Gradually disappear
- Regions
- Possesses
- Body parts
- A way to comprehend
- Defraud
- Sandwich type
- Expression of disap-

pointment

- Popular Dodge truck model
- The 17th letter of the Greek alphabet
- Soviet Socialist Republic
- Songs to a beloved
- Custom
- Partner to cheese
- West Indies trees
- Member of a Semitic people
- Plant that originated vegetatively

CLUES DOWN

- Currency
- Ceramic jar
- Reagan's Secretary of money
- Ethiopian river
- Excessive fluid accumulation in tissues
- Acquire by one's efforts
- Irish goddess
- Hungarian village
- Cereal grasses

State

- God worshipped in Kanesh
- One thousand cubic feet (abbr.)
- Semitic
- About blood
- Benign tumors
- Move one's head
- Hours (Spanish)
- Hebrew calendar month
- Advise someone
- Colors clothes
- The sun does it
- Concealed
- City of Angels hoops team (abbr.)
- Droop
- Away from one another
- Challenges
- A harsh scraping sound
- Attaches to a wall
- Capital of Ethiopia: Ababa
- German river
- Disappointed
- Star Wars character Solo
- Supervises flying
- Not mass-produced
- Nonsense
- Automobile
- Hogshead (abbr.)
- Soak in water
- Flower cluster
- Romanian city
- A parent is often one
- Fencing sword
- Body part
- Region
- Farm building
- Ali's surname at birth
- Waxy bird beak covering
- Stiff bristles
- VCR button
- Small amount

PUZZLE ANSWERS

1	2	8	3	4	7	6	9	9
3	9	6	9	2	8	7	1	4
4	9	7	5	1	6	3	8	2
6	1	5	4	3	2	9	7	8
2	8	3	7	5	9	4	6	1
7	4	9	6	8	1	2	3	5
9	7	4	8	6	5	1	2	3
5	6	1	2	9	3	8	4	7
8	3	2	1	7	4	5	9	6

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S	O	N	V	H		S	V	H		S	V	E	V	H
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CRAFT AND FLEA Market

One of the biggest stops of the Red Carpet Corridor Festival!

Stop by the Chamber tent to pick up your giveaway item

MAY 3 9A-4P

North Water St
Wilmington IL 60481

WILMINGTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VENDORS APPLY AT
WILMINGTONILCHAMBER.ORG/REDCARPET

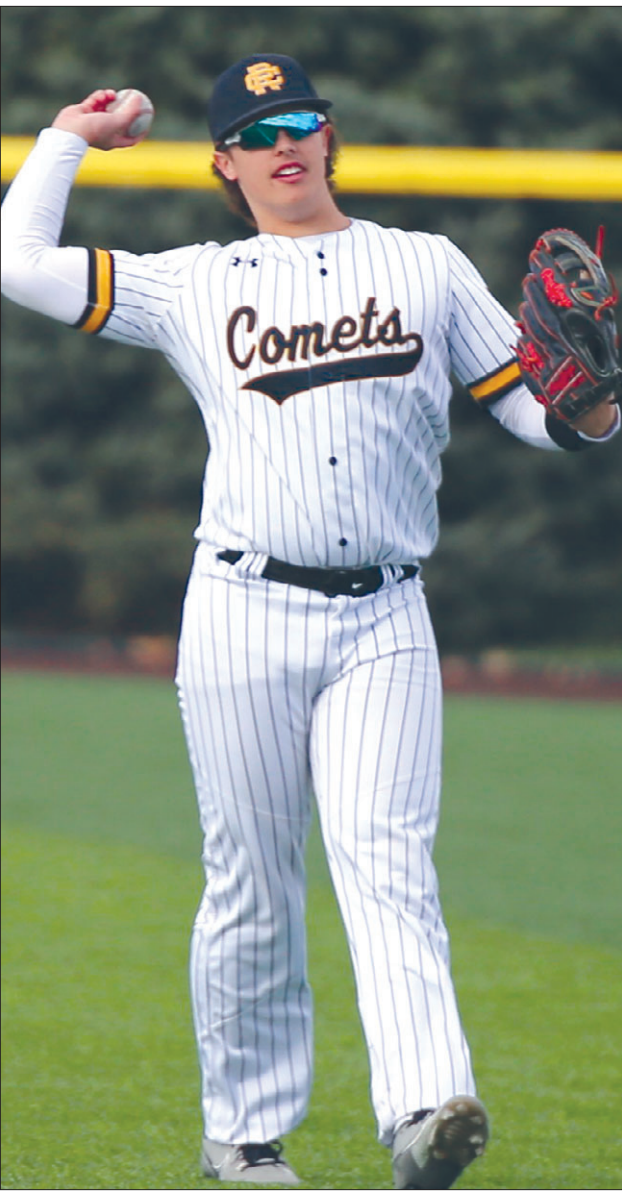


Photo by Miley Morris

REED-CUSTER SENIOR Luca Trucano throws the ball in after making a catch in the outfield.

Comets get back to business at Peotone

After losing three in a row, the Reed-Custer varsity baseball team uprighted things on Monday, defeating Peotone 12-1 in five innings.

The Comets scored two runs their first time up, added three more runs in the second and then erupted for seven runs in the third to end the game early.

Landen Robinson collected three hits in three at-bats, hitting a double and two singles. Alex Bielfeldt, (2 RBIs), Thomas Emery (2 RBIs) and Joe Bembenek (two hits) each hit a double. Jacob Reardon and Brady Tyree had RBI singles.

Bielfeldt pitched the win, giving up three hits, one runs, one walk and six strike outs over five innings.

The Comets (10-10 overall) lost 9-2 to Beecher on Wednesday.

The hosting Bobcats scored five runs in the first inning which set the tone the rest of the game. Reed-Custer was held scoreless until the top of the sixth inning when they got their two runs.

The Comets gathered seven runs while giving up 10 hits and three errors.

Emery finished with a home run and a double for one RBI. Hitting doubles

were Alex Fierro and Robinson.

Nolan Smith pitched the loss, giving up eight hits, seven runs, one walk and one strike out over 4.1 innings. Dhane Debelak came on in relief, allowing two runs, two hits, one walk and one strikeout over 1.2 innings.

Earlier in the week they suffered 14-10, 11-1 losses to Herscher.

Tuesday's contest was highlighted by home runs hit by Bembenek (3-for-5) and Robinson (2 RBIs, 2 walks). Emery and Bielfeldt had two hits each.

Reardon started on the mound, allowing one hit, six runs (1 earned), four walks and four strikeouts over 1.1 innings. Bembenek pitched 3.2 innings with nine hits, six runs, two walks and three strikeouts.

On Monday the Comets had just three hits in the 11-1 loss to Herscher.

Robinson hit a triple while Fierro and Kaiden Klein singled.

Bielfeldt went 5.1 innings with 12 hits and 10 runs allowed while striking out five.

Reed-Custer hosts Mommence Wednesday before traveling to Coal City Monday.

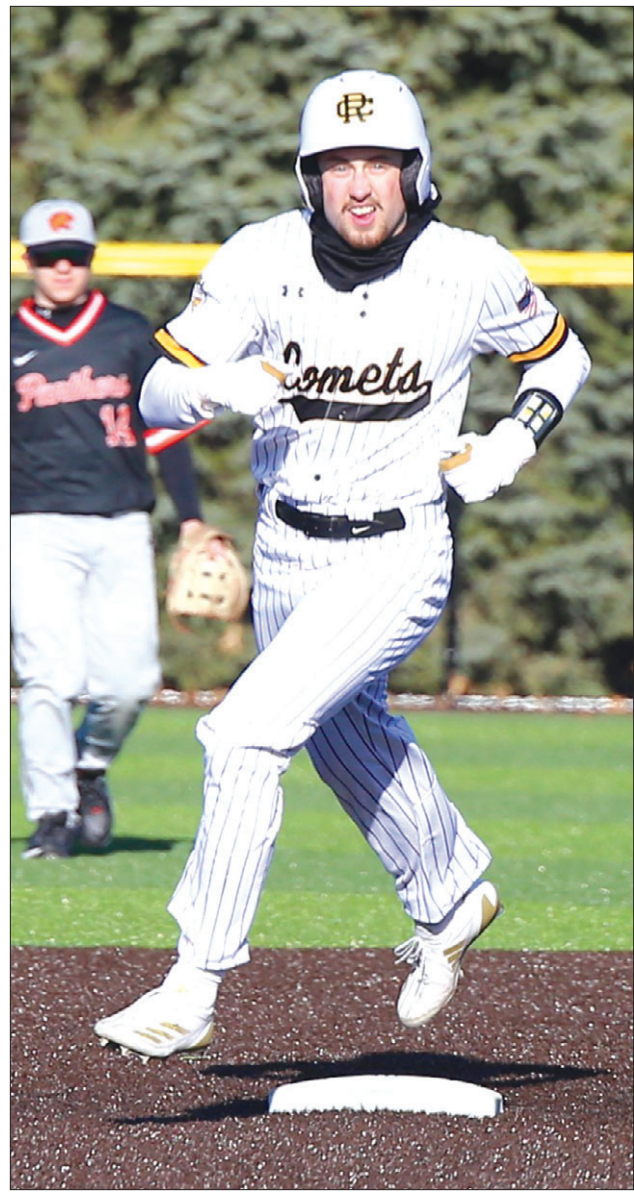


Photo by Miley Morris

ALL SMILES from RCHS Landen Robinson after hitting a home run against Gardner-South Wilmington.

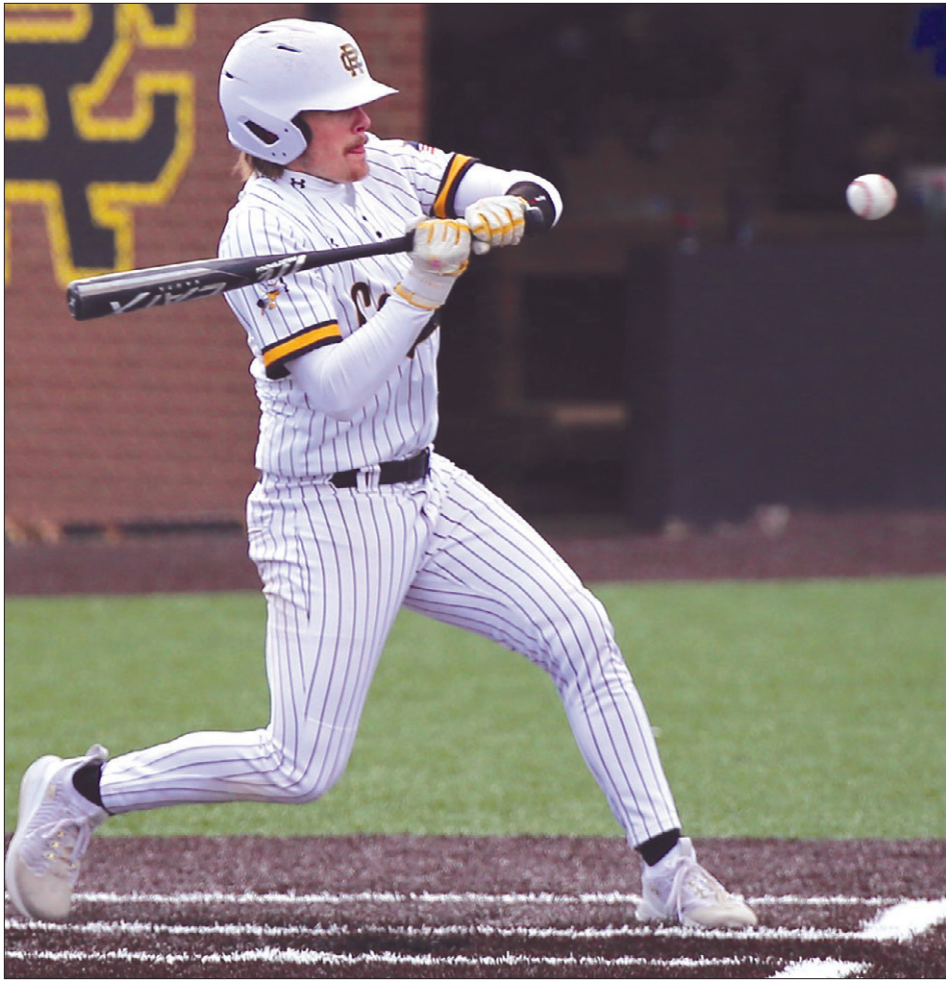


Photo by Miley Morris

COMET SENIOR Collin Monroe holds off on a high pitch.

Comet kickers romp Indian Creek

The Reed-Custer soccer team won 7-2 over Indian Creek (Shabbona, IL) in a non conference match April 21.

The Lady Comets were up 2-1 at half-time and came out for five more goals in the second to send the Timberwolves home defeated.

Junior Gwen Stewart had a stellar night, kicking in four goals while assisting with another. Aurora Haake scored two

goals while dishing out three assists. Hailey Compton scored a goal and delivered two assists.

Reed-Custer lost 8-1 to Herscher at home on Wednesday and the fell 6-1 to Peotone on Thursday.

Next up will be a 6 p.m. Thursday contest at Coal City (9-4-1) before hosting Bishop McNamara Monday.



Photo by Miley Morris

CLEARING THE HURDLE in the 100m for first place is Lady Comet Alyssa Wollenzein.



Photo by Miley Morris

OUT IN FRONT for the Reed-Custer 4x100 relay team is Jesse Tresouthick who crossed the finish line first.



Photo by Miley Morris

THE REED-CUSTER boys won the 4x400 relay with Vincent Bollino making the handoff to Jayden Bustos.



Photo by Miley Morris

SETTING A personal record in the 200M dash is Reed-Custer's Lily Castleberry (left).