



Photos of the Reed-Custer Class of 2025 graduates featured inside!



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WEDNESDAY, MAY 7, 2025 | A FREE PRESS NEWSPAPER • (815) 476-7966

Car thieves caught hiding inside garbage can

On April 30, at approximately 7 p.m., Grundy County deputies received a notification through a flock LPR camera of a stolen vehicle in the area of Lorenzo Road and Interstate 55. As deputies and officers from the Wilmington Police Dept. arrived at the Petro gas station, the stolen vehicle was observed pulling out of the gas station.

A traffic stop of the vehicle was attempted, but the vehicle failed to yield, and a pursuit ensued west-bound on Lorenzo Road and entered Grundy County.

The pursuit continued south on Dresden Road, entering Coal City village limits, where deputies lost visual contact of the vehicle. A short time later, the

2025 Mazda entered as stolen from Council Bluff, Iowa, was located unoccupied on S. First Avenue in a wooded area.

Deputies and officers with the Coal City Police Dept. conducted an extensive search of the area using canines and drones, but no offenders were located. Information gathered during the investigation led deputies to believe the driver of the vehicle was Robert Shelton White, 53, of Iowa.

An unknown white female was believed to be a passenger in the vehicle. White is a registered sex offender from Iowa and held an arrest warrant out of Council Bluffs, IA, for vehicle theft. White also has an extensive criminal history from several states.

The search for the



KATELYN ELAINE BOREN



ROBERT SHELTON WHITE

occupants was called off at approximately 11:30 p.m.

On May 1, a Coal City police officer was dispatched to a residence on Campbell Drive in Richards

Crossing shortly after 6 a.m. for a report of a stolen garbage can. The resident provided video surveillance footage to the responding officer of two subjects tak-

ing the garbage can around 2 a.m.

Deputies and Coal City police believed the subjects seen in the video taking the garbage can, were subjects wanted from the stolen vehicle.

That led law enforcement to believe the subjects were still in the area and were using the garbage can to shield themselves from the elements. Deputies and officers focused on a search area in the northwest portion of Richards Crossing, north of Spring road, which is heavily wooded.

At approximately 10 a.m., a garbage can lying on its side was spotted in the woods and two subjects were found hiding inside the can. Both followed commands given by

deputies and were taken into custody. These were determined to be the same subjects who had fled from the stolen vehicle.

A key to the stolen vehicle was found in White's possession. He is charged with possession of a stolen motor vehicle, aggravated fleeing/eluding a peace officer, driving while license revoked, obstructing a peace officer, and a warrant from Iowa for vehicle theft.

White is being held in the Grundy County Jail awaiting extradition to the state of Iowa.

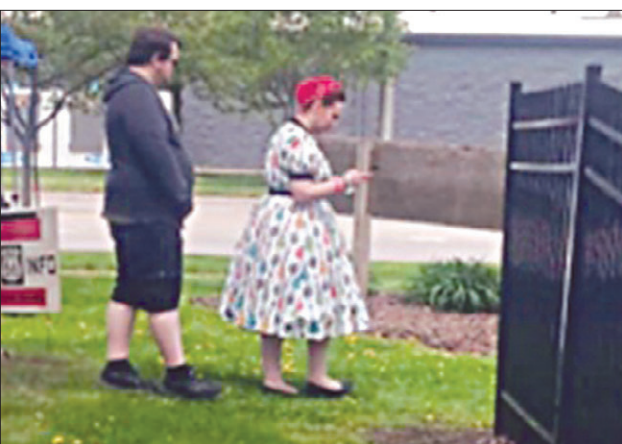
The passenger in the vehicle, Katelyn Elaine Boren, 26, of Iowa, was charged with obstructing a peace officer. She was issued a Notice to Appear and released from custody.



LOCALS AND VISITORS check out classic cars at the car show held during the Red Carpet Corridor celebration



THE RUSTY NUTZ Car Club hosted a car show on Saturday, May 3, at the Red Carpet Corridor celebration in Braidwood.



A FEW VISITORS got into the heart and soul of the Red Carpet Corridor celebration, sporting outfits from the 1950s.

City rolls out the Red Carpet



A CLASSIC BUICK on display at the car show held during the Red Carpet Corridor celebration



THE BRAIDWOOD LIONS provide information to visitors on May 3 during the Red Carpet Corridor celebration



ALL VARIETIES OF visitors dropped by Braidwood with their classic and unique vehicles, including this veteran van sporting a "crashed airplane."

Photos by Rose Panieri



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World War II veteran to be laid to rest after 80 years MIA

BY ROSE PANIERI
STAFF WRITER

On Friday, U.S. Army Private James C. Loyd, will return home after 80 long years.

A gathering for family and friends will be held on May 15, at Baskerville Funeral Home in Wilmington, Illinois, beginning at 10:30 a.m., followed by a solemn procession to Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood at 11:30 a.m., where he will be laid to rest with funerary honors.

Today, Loyd's immediate family—his parents and siblings—have passed away. However, his legacy continues through several nieces and nephews, including James McDowell of The Netherlands and Janice McDowell Dale of Valparaiso, IN.

Nephew James McDowell remembers the families' memories of Loyd though he was too young to know his uncle.

"The military would have sent me to the funeral," McDowell said. "However, I am living in the Netherlands and have had some medical issues. That is why I am unable to attend."

McDowell's sister, Janice Dale of Valparaiso, IN, is only about two hours away, and will be there to say a formal farewell to Loyd.

Finally coming home
After 80 years Loyd will finally return to American soil. He will be honorably received at Chicago Midway Airport on May 9, with planeside honors at 2:40 p.m.

Though Dale hadn't been born when the family learned Loyd was missing in action, she learned about him through family.

"The family talked about him, but usually when we weren't in the room," Dale said. "I clearly remember my mom telling me that my grandmother never gave up hope that he would come home one day—that he would be found alive."

One of 11 children
James C. Loyd was born on Nov. 11, 1924, in Brilliant, AL. He was one of 11 children born to John Elbert and Pearlle Loyd.

Among his siblings: Edward, Dorothy, Mary, Euil, John, Carrie, Yvonne, Erma, Kathleen and Roger, his older brother Edward and sisters Dorothy and Mary knew him best.

Though Wilmington is 610 miles from Brilliant, AL, Loyd will be laid to rest in Illinois. Dale explained why Loyd will be interred in Illinois

"We moved to Wilmington for my dad's job in the late 50s, maybe 1959," Dale said. "We have a very strong connection to Wilmington, and it seems right that he be laid to rest here."

Over There
According to a press release from the Illinois chapter of Rolling Thunder, Inc., at the age of 18, Loyd enlisted in the Army on May 15, 1943. He was assigned to Company "F," 2nd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division, known for its distinguished and valorous service across multiple campaigns during the war.

In January 1944, Loyd served on the front lines in Italy as the allies fought to advance from the Anzio beachhead towards Rome. On Jan. 31, 1944, his unit encountered heavy enemy resistance.

Following the battle, no further trace of him was found.

Loyd remained listed as Missing in Action (MIA) through February 1, 1945, and was officially presumed dead on April 19, 1945, under the provisions of the Missing Persons Act.

"He was listed as Missing in Action, at first," Dale said. "In the late 40s or early 50s, they officially pronounced him dead, but unfortunately, not recovered."

Posthumous honors
In the fall of 1944, his family was given a box containing Loyd's personal effects: A New Testament, prayer book, sewing kit, and nail file.

In March, Loyd was posthumously awarded military honors in recognition of his courage and sacrifice, including the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, Army Good Conduct Medal, the European-African-Middle



Courtesy Photo

For his bravery and service, Private Loyd was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, Army Good Conduct Medal, the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with Bronze Stars, the World War II Victory Medal, the Combat Infantry Badge, and the Honorable Service Lapel Button

Eastern Campaign Medal with Bronze Stars, the World War II Victory Medal, the Combat Infantry Badge, and the Honorable Service Lapel Button.

Buried in Italy
Following the end of the war, the American Graves Registration Command made efforts to locate and recover missing American veterans.

According to Rolling Thunder, Inc., in 1945, remains were recovered

near Ponte Rotto, near where Loyd had last been seen. At the time, due to limited identification methods, the remains could not be conclusively linked to him and were buried at the Sicily-Rome American Cemetery in Nettuno, Italy.

Decades later, a historian with the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) revisited the case. Noticing the potential connection between the unidentified

remains and Private Loyd, the DPAA disinterred the remains in September 2021. With DNA analysis, the remains were positively identified as belonging to Loyd on March 14, 2024.

After more than 80 years he had been found.

Arriving home
After arriving home on May 9, Baskerville Funeral Home of Wilmington will handle all arrangements.

"James [McDowell] and I talked about where we would want him buried," Dale said. "We couldn't have picked a better place to handle the arrangements than Baskerville."

A gathering for family and friends will be held at 10:30 a.m. May 15, 2025, at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 E. Kahler Road.

Though she now lives in Indiana, Dale feels Loyd belongs as close as possible to remaining family.

"My three brothers and I grew up in Wilmington, graduated from high school, and got married in Wilmington," Dale said. "There were lots of things we could have done. We could have gone with Arlington National Cemetery. But, for as many people as connected with us—my whole family and other cousins to attend—we chose Abraham Lincoln. It's a beautiful cemetery. It's a national cemetery, and it's all military. It seems like

the right choice."

Rest in Peace
After 80 years, Loyd will finally be home. He will be laid to rest among other veterans, many of whom gave their lives to protect our freedom.

"My grandmother never lost hope that J.C. would return home," Dale said. "He's finally coming home for good."

In Italy where Loyd's remains had been buried pending identification, his name is inscribed on the Walls of the Missing at Sicily-Rome American Cemetery, alongside thousands of others who never returned home.

A rosette was finally placed next to his name, signifying he has finally gone home.

Services
Family and friends will gather at 10:30 a.m. at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 East Kahler Road in Wilmington, Illinois. A funeral procession will depart at 11:30 a.m. for Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood, Illinois.

Full military honors and committal services will be conducted at 12:00 p.m.

Fellow veterans, service members, and all members of the community are invited to join in honoring the service of U.S. Army Private James C. Loyd.

Beware of knock-off Rolex watches, licenses

According to the Chicago Office of Public Affairs, April, Chicago U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers stationed at the International Mail Facility, the Express Consignment Operations hub, the Cargo Examination Station, and Chicago O'Hare International Airport intercepted 145 shipments of counterfeit watches and 340 shipments containing counterfeit driver's licenses.

All 485 shipments came from Hong Kong and China. In total CBP officers seized 516 counterfeit watches bearing the logos of Rolex, Patek Philippe, Cartier, Omega, Audemars Piguet, and others. The items were deemed to be counterfeit by CBP's Centers of Excellence and Expertise, the agency's trade experts, and if genuine, would have had a combined Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price over \$9.22 million.

"Intellectual property theft threatens America's economic vitality

and funds criminal activities as well as organized crime," said LaFonda D. Sutton-Burke, Director of Field Operations, Chicago Field Office. "Our employees are dedicated to protecting private industry and consumers by removing these kinds of goods from our commerce."

The rapid growth of e-commerce enables consumers to search for and easily purchase millions of products through online vendors, but this easy access gives counterfeit and pirated goods more ways to enter the U.S. economy. U.S. consumers spend more than \$100 billion every year on intellectual property rights (IPR) infringing goods, falling victim to approximately 20 percent of the counterfeits that are illegally sold worldwide.

CBP officers also stopped 340 shipments of counterfeit driver's licenses in April. In total, they seized 4,345 counterfeit licenses destined to locations across the U.S.

Counterfeit documents are fake documents that have the appearance of legal documentation but are not issued by a legitimate organization or government agency and are not recognized in the United States as official travel or identification instruments. Only two companies have authorization by the U.S. Department of State to print international driver's licenses in the United States: The American Automobile Association (AAA) or American Automobile Touring Alliance (AATA).

"These counterfeit driver's licenses can lead to disastrous consequences," said Michael Pfeiffer, Area



Courtesy photo

COUNTERFEIT ROLEX WATCHES are being sneaked through Customs from China.

Port Director, Chicago. "Foreign Terrorist Organizations, criminal organizations, and persons involved in fraud schemes use these counterfeit IDs to avoid attracting attention to their illegal activities. Our CBP officers were able to identify these very realistic counterfeits and stop them from reaching their destinations."

Trade in counterfeit and pirated goods threatens America's innovation

economy, the competitiveness of our businesses, the livelihoods of U.S. workers, and, in some cases, national security and the health and safety of consumers. To combat the entry of counterfeit and pirated goods into America, CBP targets and seizes imports of counterfeit and pirated goods and enforces exclusion orders on patent-infringing and other IPR violative goods.

Attorney Wysocki files Carlino estate claim

PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF MARTHA L. CARLINO Deceased;
No. 2025PR211

CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given to creditors of the death of Martha L. Carlino. Letters of Office were issued to Joseph P. DeLara whose address is 18 W. Andy Ct., Plainfield, IL 60544 as Independent Executor, whose attorney of record is Meents Law, P.C., 1861 Black Road, Joliet, Illinois 60435.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Circuit Clerk's Office, Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before the 7th day of November, 2025 if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the clerk must be mailed or delivered by claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

Marilyn L. Wysocki
For the Estate of Martha L. Carlino
Deceased

BY: Marilyn L. Wysocki
1861 Black Road
Joliet, IL 60435
815-725-8000
Published in the Braidwood Journal, Wednesday, May 7, 14 and 21, 2025.

Attorney Wysocki files Domanus estate claim

PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF MARY I. DOMANUS Deceased;
No. 2025PR129

CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given to creditors of the death of Mary I. Domanus. Letters of Office were issued to Vickie Domanus whose address is 22329 S. River Rd., Shorewood, IL 60404 as Independent Executor, whose attorney of record is Meents Law, P.C., 1861 Black Road, Joliet, Illinois 60435.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Circuit Clerk's Office, Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before the 7th day of November, 2025 if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the clerk must be mailed or delivered by claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

Marilyn L. Wysocki
For the Estate of Mary I. Domanus
Deceased

BY: Marilyn L. Wysocki
1861 Black Road
Joliet, IL 60435
815-725-8000
Published in the Braidwood Journal, Wednesday, May 7, 14 and 21, 2025.

Tax Deed filed on two W. Main Street parcels

PUBLIC NOTICE

TAX DEED NO.: 2025TX000106
FILED: 04/28/25
TAKE NOTICE

TO: ANNETTE PARKER, WILL COUNTY CLERK; NICHOLAS ALLEN; RAMESH BHATIA; OCCUPANT; TONIA GIBSON A/K/A TONIA ALLEN; UNKNOWN OWNERS OR PARTIES INTERESTED; AND NONRECORD CLAIMANTS.

This is NOTICE of the filing of the Petition for Tax Deed on the following described property:

PARCEL 1: THE WEST 23 FEET OF LOT 1 IN BLOCK 46 IN CHICAGO AND WILMINGTON COAL COMPANY'S SUBDIVISION IN THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 8, TOWNSHIP 32 NORTH, RANGE 9 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED JANUARY 20, 1872 IN PLAT BOOK 1 PART 1 PAGE 65 AS DOCUMENT NO. 83116 EXCEPT THE COAL AND OTHER MINERALS BENEATH THE SURFACE TOGETHER WITH THE RIGHT TO MINE AND REMOVE THE SAME IN WILL COUNTY ILLINOIS.

PARCEL 2: THE EAST 95 FEET OF THE WEST 118 FEET OF LOT 1 IN BLOCK 46 IN CHICAGO AND WILMINGTON COAL COMPANY'S SUBDIVISION IN THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 8, TOWNSHIP 32 NORTH, RANGE 9 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED JANUARY 20, 1872 IN PLAT BOOK 1 PART 1 PAGE 65 AS DOCUMENT NO. 83116 EXCEPT THE COAL AND OTHER MINERALS BENEATH THE SURFACE TOGETHER WITH THE RIGHT TO MINE AND REMOVE THE SAME IN WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

Parcel Index Number 02-24-08-306-055-0000
On September 4, 2025 at 9:15 a.m., Courtroom 904 the Petitioner intends to make application for an order on the petition that a Tax Deed be issued. The real estate was sold on December 5, 2022 for general taxes of the year 2021. The period of redemption will expire August 29, 2025.

Heather Ottenfeld, Attorney for Petitioner
(847) 721-4996
Cert. # 21-02696
Published in the Braidwood Journal on Wednesday, May 7, 14 and 21, 2025.

Godley Park District files Budget & Appropriation ordinance

PUBLIC NOTICE

LEGAL NOTICE & PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
DATE, TIME AND PLACE
OF MEETINGS
IN ACCORDANCE WITH
(30 ILCS 120/202)

A Public Hearing concerning the Tentative Combined Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for the Godley Park District for the fiscal year beginning May 1, 2025 and ending on April 30, 2026 will be held at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at the Godley Park District Community Center, 500 South Kankakee Street, Godley, Illinois.

The Annual meeting of the Park Board for the fiscal year beginning May 1, 2025, will be held on May 13, 2025, immediately following the B&A Public Hearing.

All meetings take place at the Godley Park District Community Center, 500 South Kankakee Street, Godley, Illinois 60407.

/s/ Darrell Schott
Secretary
Godley Park District
Board of Commissioners
Published in the Braidwood Journal, May 7, 2025.



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PERSONAL INJURY

Block, Klukas & Manzella & Shell, P.C.

Attorneys at Law

Michael D. Block • Elizabeth A. Klukas • Thomas J. Manzella
Bryan L. Shell • Aaron B. Morrow • Kyler W. Juckins

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Eric D. Fisher, publisher

Recipes For Good Health

With all the doctors, clinics, health food stores, and advice in the media about what is good for us and what is not, you would think that our generation thinks more about their health than those hardy folk of the 19th century. But this is not the case. It was ever present on their mind. Remember that incurable diseases were rampant, and the average life span was quite short because of it.

Most medicines in the drug store were a combination of narcotics and alcohol. They made you feel better, but did little to cure the disease. The exception to this rule was a soap made from pine tar. It was packaged under the name "Grandpa's Pine Tar Soap" or "Packer's Pine Tar Soap." It cured most skin diseases such as psoriasis and acne, it cured dried scalp itch and dandruff, it killed bed bugs and fleas on contact, and it disinfected open wounds and helped with the healing process. To this end, it was used on people and animals alike with the same good results.

This soap was made until the early 1970's when the FDA said there was no proof that it cured these things and ordered the makers to remove the pine tar. I have made pine tar soap and can vouch for its effectiveness.

Other additives, which



Sandy Vasko

were added to soap to increase their healing power was oatmeal, rye flour, and rice flour. All of these additives also work quite well against a lot of skin diseases. Cucumbers were added to soap to fade skin pigment such as freckles. One book published in 1868 proposed the theory that freckles were nothing more than spots of rust from the iron in the blood leaking out through the pores.

A book published in 1833 gives general maxims for health. "Rise early, eat simple food, and take plenty of exercise. Let not children be dressed in tight clothes. Avoid the necessity of a physician, but if you find yourself really ill, have nothing to do with quacks or quack medicine. Keep hair clean, washing does not injure hair as is generally supposed. Do not sleep with hair braided or frizzed. Do not make children cross-eyed by having hair hang about their foreheads, where they see it continually."

Another from the same era gives advice on what to do if you are struck by lightning, however it seems a bit puzzling to me. "For a couple of hours shower in cold water. In case there is still no sign of life, add a cupful of salt and continue for another hour."

Another 1833 volume

gives several good uses for earwax. "It prevents pain from injury by nail or skewer, also prevents cracked lips when used faithfully on a daily basis." If anyone tries this, let me know how it works.

The following bits of advice are from various sources. I do not recommend them or endorse them in any way, but I find them most interesting. For bed bug poison; scotch snuff mixed with soft soap, to cure tape worms chew pumpkin seeds before bed, for a prick with a pin or a slight cut, nothing stops bleeding better than old cobwebs compressed into a lump and applied to the wound.

A plaster for wounds or cuts can be made from the inside lining of a freshly broken eggshell, if applied immediately. For frosted feet, dip the feet in water, dry with a coarse towel, then put immediately into a pail of brine brought from the pickle tub. For corns bind on thick slices of lemon, to prevent the hair from coming out bathe your head in salt water.

Simple things that we take for granted were not invented yet, such as toothpaste. The following is a recipe for homemade tooth powder. "Take pulverized chalk, and twice as much charcoal; make very fine, and add castile soap suds and spirits of camphor to make a thick paste. Apply with the finger and brush."

Our last cure is one for diarrhea. This was a very worrisome problem, as if not cured quickly, dehydra-

tion can occur, especially in children. The recommended cure was blackberry wine, blackberry tea, or blackberries themselves. This recipe for blackberry wine is closest to what they would have made in early pioneer days.

Put two gallons fresh picked blackberries in a crock and cover with water. Mash and stir well several times during the day. By nightfall, strain into a large container and add three and one-half cups sugar to each gallon of juice. Dissolve one-half package yeast in one-quarter cup water and add to juice/sugar mixture and stir well. Ferment until it stops working and then put in jugs and cover tops with a cloth. Let continue to work in a warm place until bubbles cease to rise. When completely fermented, seal, and drink the following spring.

Our last recipe for Cherry Bounce does not really cure anything except sobriety, but it is one I have used and enjoy, in moderation of course.

Take one-half gallon wild or tame cherries, and put in a five-gallon crock. Add the same amount of water and one pound of sugar. Mash well. Add one quart of brandy and let it set covered for about four months, mashing and stirring with a wooden spoon from time to time. Strain seeds and pulp, and pour liquid into jars, seal, and let rest another month, then sip slowly.

Fossil Ridge Library to host musical journey program

Fossil Ridge Public Library will host a lively musical journey through the golden era of country and western swing on. Experience the fast swing fiddling and entertaining stories of Wade Ray, a child prodigy turned national radio star, as musician and historian Dennis Stroughmatt brings his mentor's legacy to life.

"Our library has been fortunate to host various musical programs over the years, each offering our patrons a chance to experience new and unique music they may not have heard before," says Katelynn Clark, the Head of Adult/Teen Services at Fossil Ridge. "Every performance has broadened our community's musical horizons from contemporary music by Chris Vallillo about the rural American Midwest to folk music about Illinois by Bucky Halker. We're thrilled to continue this tradition with 'Play That Hot Fiddle,' bringing the artistry of fiddle music to our audience."

This presentation will be held on Wednesday, May 14 at the Fossil Ridge Public Library in Braidwood from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Presenting the fast swing fiddling and

humorous stories of his mentor, Wade Ray, Dennis Stroughmatt will lead audiences through the early years of Old-Time Radio and share how music brought America through the Great Depression, World War II, and beyond. This presentation will accompany a rare video of Wade Ray and personal memorabilia from the Wade Ray collection.

This event is co-presented by the Illinois Humanities Road Scholars Speakers Bureau. Road Scholar speakers travel throughout Illinois, sharing free, dynamic presentations about literature, philosophy, theater, local history, film, music, politics, and more at no cost to host organizations. The program enables local nonprofit organizations to present free-admission cultural programs to their communities.

The event is free and open to all audiences. To register to attend this event, please visit the Play That Hot Fiddle event page on our website at fossil-ridge.org or contact our Head of Adult/Teen Services, Katelynn Clark, at kclark@fossil-ridge.org or 815-458-2187 ext: 112.



Courtesy photo

RCMS NAMED STUDENTS of the Month winners for the month of April. The characteristic trait that was focused on was friendship (front, from left) Nick Chew (sixth grade), Brandy Bragg (8th), Kamryn Hutman (8th), Lucy Esparza (7th), Emma Hertz (7th), Tinley Bernico (6th) and Ella Povalish (6th). Back row: Josh Reyes (8th), Sam Crotty (8th), Mary Foley (8th), Harland Nelson (6th), Marshall Gee (7th) and Hunter Duerig (7th).



Courtesy photo

RCHS STUDENTS of the month for April were chosen by their teachers (from left) Chandler Lowe (Senior), Hailey Praner (Sr.), Eddie Bryan (Fr.), Abigail Solis (Jr.), Alex Bielfeldt (Sr.), Kamryn Wilkey (Fr.), Devin Baltrus (Sr.), Peyton Schipour (So.), and Hailey Compton (So.).



Courtesy photo

CONGRATULATIONS TO the RCMS ACE winners for the month of April (from left) Chayse Sterling (eighth grade), Isaac Canchola (6th), Finnley Wood (7th), Jemma Devries (6th), Kamryn Hutman (8th) and Neveah Hartley (6th).

Expect increase in counterfeit items

BY ROSE PANIERI
STAFF WRITER

According to Glitz, a publication dedicated to the global economy, China is mulling giving free rein to counterfeiters, especially those that target U.S. luxury brands, in retaliation for the "Trump Tariffs."

The question is might counterfeit become a new weapon in the trade war between China and the United States?

Under pressure from the U.S., China committed to better protect industrial secrets, pressuring corporations like Alibaba to work harder to detect and remove counterfeit prod-

ucts. In light of tariffs placed on Chinese goods, some speculate that China is retaliating by opening the floodgates to counterfeiters and those who will share the "dirty little secrets" about luxury items that manufacturers claim are made in the United States, but are actually produced in China.

In addition, a social media blitz erupted on Chinese platforms as creators and influencers expose American brands that claim "Made in USA" while mass-producing goods in China.

The internet has lately become overwhelmed with

Chinese TikTok videos showing factory workers revealing the origin of big-name items such as Coach and Levi Jeans, all supposedly American-made.

The following items are most frequently counterfeited: Pirated books from Amazon, Nike, Adidas, UGG and Crocs footwear, luxury handbags, fake controlled substances, and Mercedes Benz products.

China remains the epicenter of the global counterfeit industry.

In the end, it comes down to caveat emptor, or let the buyer beware. If you see a Rolex for \$500, it's probably fake.

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/decorate

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>.

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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.

Blago did some good

WILMINGTON—People love to talk about what crooked politician former governor Blagojevich was. Well if it wasn't for him I would not been able to have an operation back in 2002 when I found a lump because he put a program through for women who didn't have insurance that they could get mammograms and pap smears. So in a way he possibly saved my life. Just remember former Governor Ryan was far more of a crook than Blagojevich was and he was a Republican not a Democrat.

Not out front

BRAIDWOOD—Isn't there a law in this town against leaving your boat and camper parked in your front yard? I'm tired of looking at my neighbor's house with the camper out front, hooked up to electricity, and I believe they're renting it out. We need an ordinance preventing this.

Gambling fate

BRAIDWOOD—I think Putin and Trump are doing like in the movie *The Deer Hunter*, when our soldiers were captured and forced to play Russian Roulette while the Viet Cong were gambling on our fate. You think they would want world peace.

Trump gets an F

BRAIDWOOD—Nobody's surprised that airlines are canceling flights due to the economy but when candy bar sales have dropped due to anxiety, that's jarring. And today I saw a bumper sticker which stated "We the people have had enough." Trump has taken our nation, a country once proudly described as "a light shining on a hill" and trashed it beyond recognition. His declaration that "I run the country and the world" is evidence of his egomaniacal idiosyncrasies that need to be cut down to size considering that 45% of Americans, almost half, give him the failing grade of "F" for job performance after the first 100 days. As Trump bellows "Drill, baby, drill" and calls for the return of dirty coal, he degrades our beautiful land into a trash heap of deregulation where oil barons and smokestacks spew out filth while China is the one designing the technology to create clean and cheap energy leaving us behind in the dust. Meanwhile Trump's Cabinet grovel like the cowards they are and Republicans in both chambers on Capitol Hill are afraid of their own shadows. On the other side Dem Senators are shouting out against Project 2025 for 25 hours at a time, their rallies are held to overflow crowds and people are filling the streets with rage. Americans are fighting mad with good reason while Trump tells reporters he is enjoying his second term. We the people are taking to the streets to spoil each and every day of the Trump news cycle.

Human violence

SHADOW LAKES—I'm calling about an article in the Sound Off. The article is titled beyond comprehension. Well first off there is no such thing as gun violence. A gun is an inanimant object just like an automobile which can be used to kill people. It is not gun violence it is human violence. The article goes on to talk about the shooting at Florida State Univ. in Tallahassee. Well CEO gun profits are not in the question that is protected by the PLCCA that is if you don't know or are uneducated. Gun violence is not the number one killer in kids and teens, it is human violence. Maybe you can comprehend that. Also and article titled Fascism is upon us. Whoever called this in or wrote this in, they're saying that Trump has ignored court rulings. Well how many does this person know of that Biden ignored also? I guess it's tit for tat. And as far as guns go, the second amendment is

the only amendment that you need special attention through the government to use. No other amendment has that. Dan Hill

Inciting riots

COAL CITY—The governor of Illinois was on the news again and he has been saying the Democrats must fight against every bit of President Trumps agendas and that they must have mass revolts against the Republicans. Isn't the governor inciting riots? The governor is also refusing to honor the laws of the U.S.A. by aiding and protection individuals in the U.S.A. illegally. Which is a felony in criminal activity. So tell me why the governor of Illinois is still allowed to be in office when he has violated his oath of office to protect the lives of the American citizens and he has also violated the laws of the U.S.A. by giving tax payers funds to individuals that are not American citizens. Any other American citizen would be put behind bars for aiding criminal activity so why is the governor of Illinois not behind bars?

The laughing stock

COAL CTY—We are the laughing stock of the world. Trump dons his ringmaster's hat to hold a circus of one ring after another of multiple fraud. One of his offers is to invite the top 220 meme coin investors to dinner and therefore give them access to favors. This is quid pro quo and glaring corruption in addition to the daily corruption Trump commits. But the crypto grift doesn't end there as billions pour into his coffers from crypto investments which are known for their cozy compatibility with crookery. Moreover that's only one of the many disingenuous reasons Trump wanted to be president. The people will never let him forget that he was found guilty on 34 felony counts nor that he was indicted on four criminal counts. But running for another term helped him to smudge those stains and emboldens him to project those crimes onto others as he tears our nation down to the level of a tin pan dictatorship. I'm no longer proud to consider myself an American citizen because of the banana republic Trump has made of our once proud nation. We are now the laughing-stock of the world because of Trump.

They won't come back

WILMINGTON—Now that we're finally getting rid of Elon the demon, we find that we have 9,000 fewer federal workers and we're spending more rather than less. Too bad Trump doesn't have the smarts of the Clinton-Gore administration which respected the federal workers for their "honesty and intelligence" documenting the entire process of streamlining bureaucracy into a book. Clinton not only balanced the budget but had a surplus to partially pay the national debt from 1998-2001. And according to Clinton the purpose of the President is to guarantee the welfare of the people including their happiness. In contrast, Trump's Secretary of the OMB and author of Project 2025, Russell Vought, stated that the purpose of Trump's cruelty is to make federal employees so miserable that they won't want to come to work and therefore will gladly accept being fired. This is against every theory of good management and is absolute evidence that Trump and his Cabinet are a cruel and nasty bunch who do not have the management skills to lead the 340 million people of America including children and especially children who once benefited from Headstart which has now been terminated.

100-day disaster

WILMINGTON—I love it when Trumpers say Trump has done everything he promised he would do. So he promised to wreck the stock market after Biden brought it to record heights? So he promised to send U.S. citizens to foreign pris-



ons without due process? So he ended the Ukraine War in 1 day? So he brought down eggs and gasoline prices? Not in Illinois he hasn't. So he promised to ignore Supreme Court rulings because they questioned his many executive orders? The only thing he said he would do that is true so far is that he would be a dictator on day one. But he lied when he said for only one day. It has been over 100 days and counting.

Restoring pride

WILMINGTON—Under four years of Joe Biden every speech was telling us how bad America is. We are racist, sexist, homophobic and xenophobic. Our numbers in the military and police were at all time lows. Now under Trump in the first 100 days people are joining the military and police at record numbers. Why? Because it's ok to be proud of America again.

When cruelty rules

WILMINGTON—The bully Trump lashes out and freedom of the press gets whacked like NPR and PBS did just recently. These two reputable media companies got defunded but why? It appears that NPR and PBS didn't stroke Trump's ego to the extent that Trump wanted, expected and demanded just as Trump's Cabinet must praise him with precious words and sweet phrases which the microphones of the press pick up and we the public overhear. It makes us realize that Trump is sick, Trump is weak, Trump is a coward. And all his cruel behavior is a coverup for his inadequacies. Is it possible that professional attention would calm Trump down and thereby Trump's violations against the Constitution could be avoided? Likewise medical help might relieve Trump's anger against the world, preventing deadly clashes and promoting peace. A disturbed personality like Trump could create horrific world events as we have witnessed in the past century for which we have paid dearly in treasure and sadly in blood.

Either way we pay

We've had immigration laws and quotas in this country since 1875. Administration after administration couldn't fix the problem. I'm not taking the time to do the math. It's a lot of years. To think our guy or gal is the one that's going to fix it I think you probably are going to end up disappointed. It's a good talking point though. I've read Benjamin Franklin's autobiography a few times and the two points I took away are: One, it wasn't only England's taxes that were harming the colonies it was the leaders of

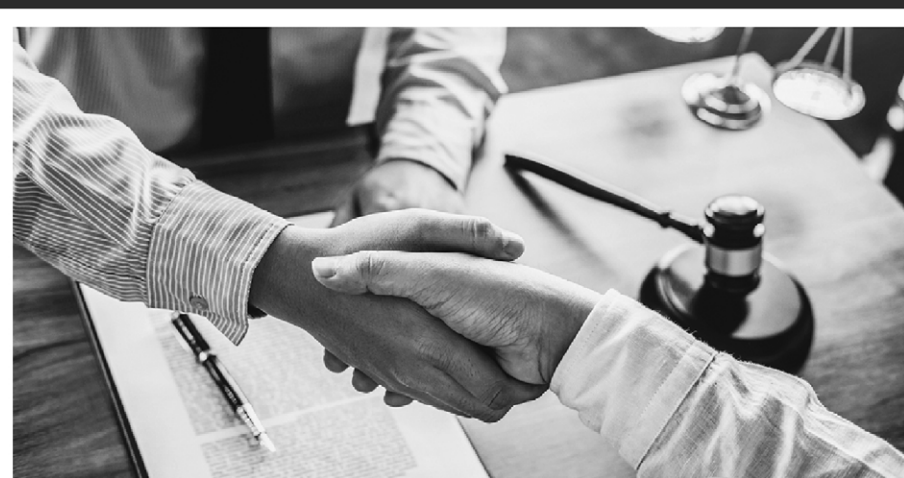
the colonies taxing their own people, on top of England's and two, every politician convinces themselves that what's good for them is good for the whole country. I don't care how my ancestors got here. I just know that I have what I have because they did get here. My understanding is they came through Ellis Island. But good gosh who's gonna pay for that these days? Only taxes on taxes. Either way we pay. Your guy or gal is not going to solve the problem.

Deporter in chief

SHADOW LAKES—All the criticism Trump has gotten, and of course Musk, for wanting DOGE, but yet Obama earned the nickname Deporter in Chief for eliminating 5.2 million illegal immigrants out of the US in his first term. Then there was his campaign to cut whites which targeted more than 33 billion in taxpayer funded expenditures. Kind of the same thing as Trump's department of government efficiency. But 16 years earlier in 1995 Putin symbolized 337,000 federal jobs he was cutting by brandishing a giant check made out to the American taxpayers in the amount of \$7.7 billion and according to what I've read in polls the most popular Democrats were Bill Clinton and Barack Obama so tell me all of you Democrats out there what do you think of Trump's operations now? Senator Elizabeth Warren has been one of the loudest voices in the Democrat battle cry that the department of government efficiency had Elon Musk was not elected and yet Warren herself has been an unelected official appointed to some congressional panel to oversee federal government spending. Dan Hill

Support a kid for Bible school

The Coal City United Methodist Church, at 6805 E. McArdle Road, invites all kids entering first to fifth grades to join them for "Road Trip" Vacation Bible School, June 16-19 from 9 a.m. to noon. Adult, middle school, and high school volunteers are also needed. Registration for students and volunteers is online at vbspro.events/p/e1b37a. Kids go home with a sack lunch every day. You can sponsor a child or student leader for \$30, which provides a t-shirt, Bible stories, games, crafts, lunch and more! For any questions, please call the church office at 815-634-8670. Registration deadline is June 1, so be sure to register early.



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You better keep up

MOTHER OF 10—Imagine being a mother of 10 little goslings all at once. It's a full-time job for this Canada goose couple as they try to keep their 10 little ones (two weren't keeping up with the rest of the flock and are out of the photo) out of harm's way. On this Mother's Day, Sunday, May 11, take a drive through the island parks in Wilmington for a better appreciation of what Mother Nature provides as there are at least four pairs of geese raising goslings. Happy Mother's day to all moms.

Photo by Eric Fisher

Another week of stagnant gas prices

Average gasoline prices in Illinois have fallen 5.3 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.34/g, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,378 stations in Illinois.

Prices in Illinois are 15.0 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 53.4 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has increased 0.2 cents in the last week and stands at \$3.501 per gallon.

In Wilmington, Mohsen has the lowest prices in the area at \$3.16/g. Shell is charging \$3.24.

Braidwood is running \$3.29/g across the board, and Coal City is right at \$3.45/g.

Morris gas ranges from \$3.14/g, all the way up to #3.29/g at Amoco.

Bourbonnais gas is \$3.12/g at Gulf, up to \$3.29/g at Gas N Wash.

"Last week was another mixed bag at the pump for many Americans, but there may be some promising short-term news from OPEC, which has agreed to increase oil production starting in June," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy.

"Here in the U.S., slightly more than half of the states saw gas prices rise, while many others saw modest declines. We continued to see price cycling in states prone to such movements, including

much of the Great Lakes region.

"However, the most notable development is OPEC's decision to raise production next month, as oil prices hover near their lowest levels since the pandemic. While gasoline inventories have been tightening due to ongoing refinery maintenance in

response to lower oil, refinery output is expected to rise soon. As maintenance wraps up, we could see an increase in gasoline supply and a national average that may soon dip below \$3 per gallon."

The lowest price in the state Monday was \$2.61/g while the highest was \$4.49/g.

Take a book club hike

The Forest Preserve District of Will County is hosting "These Books Are Made for Walkin'" on Monday, May 13 from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Four Rivers Environmental Education Center, Channahon.

This nature-themed book club, in partnership with Three Rivers Public Library in Channahon, allows participants to discuss a book of the month while strolling the trails. Ages 14 or older; free. Register by May 11.

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Left to right: Samantha Olson, Kelly Olson, Dr. Garrett B. Smith, Grace Smith, Sherry Yakima, Dayna Vargocko. Not pictured: Alea Vargocko and Sara Daniels

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U.S. still an egg exporter

Despite the domestic shortages, the U.S. remains a net exporter of table eggs. In January and February 2025, the country imported 57.4 million eggs while exporting 176 million.

At the same time the average price of large, grade-A eggs reached \$6.227 in March, up 5.60% from the previous month and 108.12% higher than in March 2024.

Pritzker tries to rally “do-nothing” Democrats

During a rip-roaring speech in New Hampshire last week, Gov. JB Pritzker called for mass national protests and “disruption,” assailed “do-nothing” Democrats for their “simpering timidity” and labeled President Donald Trump a “madman” who cannot be reasoned with.

The Jewish Ukrainian-American governor said of Trump: “Stop tearing down the Constitution in the name of my ancestors. Do not claim that your authoritarian power grabs are about antisemitism. When you destroy social justice, you are disparaging the very foundation of Judaism.”

“These Republicans cannot know a moment of peace,” Pritzker said.

President Donald Trump’s deputy chief of staff Stephen Miller told reporters that the line “clearly could be construed as inciting violence.”

The president’s son, Donald Trump Jr., tweeted at the governor: “Are you trying to inspire a 3rd assassination attempt on my dad? Two wasn’t enough for you?”

Illinois Republican Party chair Kathy Salvi



Rich Miller

claimed Pritzker was “calling for political violence against Republicans” during his speech.

Fox News host Sean Hannity jumped into the fray, claiming the governor, “all but threatened half the country with violence.”

But here’s the rest of Pritzker’s paragraph: “They must understand that we will fight their cruelty with every megaphone and microphone that we have. We must castigate them on the soap box and then punish them at the ballot box.”

Pritzker called the Republican accusations “ridiculous,” and continued: “I called for people to take out their megaphones and their microphones, to stand up on soap boxes and get to the ballot box in order to defeat the people who are trying to take so many things away from the American people. That has nothing to do with violence.”

Basically, Pritzker was the Republican outrage of the day. It’s all pretty standard stuff.

The Pritzker folks appeared to be unfazed and even found it kind of amusing, with one calling the developments, “a mas-

ter class in the right-wing echo chamber.”

As for the rest of us, we should probably just learn to get used to this. We’re in for about three or four more years of this stuff if Pritzker runs for reelection and then campaigns for president.

Mention to anyone near Pritzker that it sure looks like he’s setting up a presidential bid and they will tell you he’s simply trying to rally the party and the nation against Trump. His folks will also correctly remind you that the 2028 election is years away and that the 2026 midterms are the next real concern.

But it’s obvious that he can be fighting in the here and now and positioning the party for 2026 and also be trying to set himself for a 2028 bid.

Whatever the case, I only care about whether he’s doing the job he was twice elected to do. I was born here and have lived in Illinois all but a few years of my life, and I plan to be a resident for the rest of my life as well.

So far, Pritzker seems to be keeping up the pace of his state public events. And his agencies, while far from great, are not falling into further disrepair.

He’s made some poll-friendly proposals the past year or so, which a few have claimed are explained by his grand ambitions. But, c’mon. Politicians love to

push ideas that poll well.

The billionaire also has access to a fleet of jets, so he can zoom back and forth to national events in about the same time that it would take us mere mortals to drive from Chicago to Springfield during rush hour.

And a Sunday event in another state is hardly the end of the world.

But if Pritzker’s governance does start slipping because he’s running for higher office, I pledge to let my opinion be known. I will not stand for it. This state is far too important and its position has long been far too precarious to sacrifice it on the altar of national ambition. This ain’t Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton running for president.

Arkansas could’ve slid off a cliff and nobody would’ve cared, because it was mostly already there.

And if he decides to run for reelection, he absolutely must choose a running mate who could step into the position if, by chance, Pritzker actually wins the nation’s top job. He also needs to make sure he has staffers in place who can keep the government running while his top staffers are directing his national efforts.

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

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Joliet Slammers announce nine fan giveaway for 2025

The Joliet Slammers are proud to announce a full lineup of 2025 fan giveaways, bringing more fun to the Slammers game day experience than ever before.

The Slammers’ 2025 season will begin on Friday, May 9 against the Schaumburg Boomers with the home opener and Fireworks Night. Gates will open at 5:35pm, with first pitch at 6:35pm.

Giveaways during the Slammers 2025 season include:

- May 10: Magnet Schedule Presented by Advent - You will never miss a Slammers home game again! The first 1,500 fans will receive a 2025 Magnet Schedule presented by Advent.

- May 11: Little Potted Trees Presented by Channahon Baseball - Help the Slammers and Channahon Baseball plant 400 trees this Mother’s Day.

- May 22: Wooden Train Whistles Presented by BNSF Railway - All aboard!

The first 600 fans through the gates will receive a wooden whistle courtesy of BNSF Railway.

- June 17: Italian Flags Presented by American Italian Cultural Society - The first 1,200 fans will receive an Italian Flag to fly all game long as we celebrate Italian culture.

- June 26: Bill Murray Bobblehead Presented by D’Arcy Motors - Add to your memorabilia and join us for Ghostbusters Night where the first 1,000 fans through the gates will receive a Bill Murray bobblehead presented by D’Arcy Motors.

- August 2: Adjustable Hat Presented by Illinois Bone and Joint Institute - Leave your ballcap at home because you will be one of the first 1,000 fans rocking this exclusive giveaway at the game!

- August 13: Lunch Box Presented by Ecolab - Celebrating back to school with a lunch box giveaway! The first 1,000 kids to join us for Slammers Back to

School presented by Ecolab will get their very own Slammers lunch box.

- August 28: Slammers Baseball Cards Presented by Dr. Pepper - Score a free set of limited-edition baseball cards. Only available to the first 500 fans through the gates!

- August 30: JL Bird Bobblehead Presented by Ecolab - Honor the spirits with our vibrant Día de los Muertos inspired JL Bird

Bobblehead - 1,000 fans to receive this giveaway. All promotion dates and giveaways are subject to change.

All ticket plans, groups, suites and single game tickets are available for the 2025 season. To see the full 2025 Schedule, information on ticket packages, and more, visit www.jolietsslammers.com or call 815-722-2287.

Methodist church to host blood drive

The Coal City United Methodist Church, located at 6805 E. McArdle Road, will hold a Community Blood Drive in their fellowship hall with Versiti Blood Center on Tuesday, June 3, from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

To register a preferred time, please contact Karen Hart at 708-217-5808 or

register online at Versiti.org/il.

Walk-ins are welcome, but appointments are recommended. Be sure to bring a photo ID, drink plenty of water, and eat a healthy meal before donating. Please consider donating blood and help save a life.

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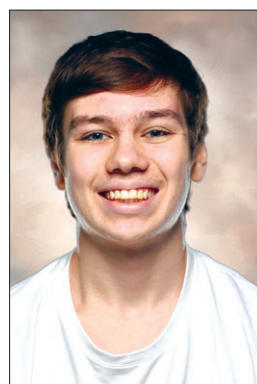
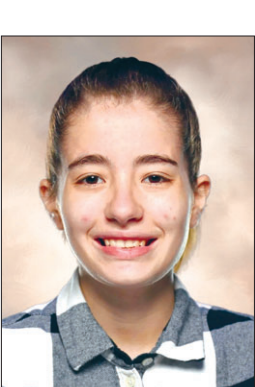
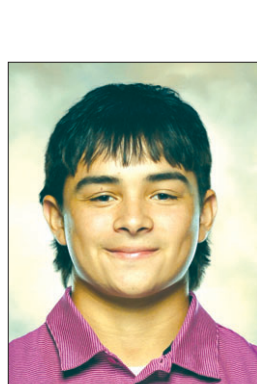
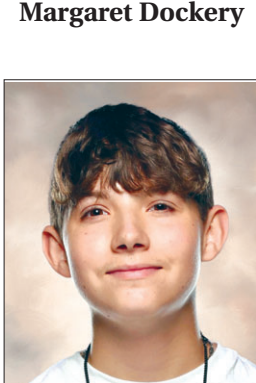
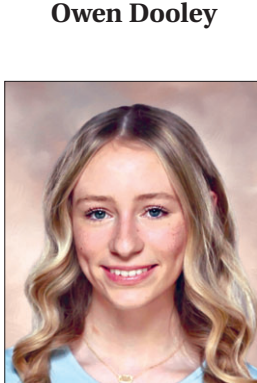
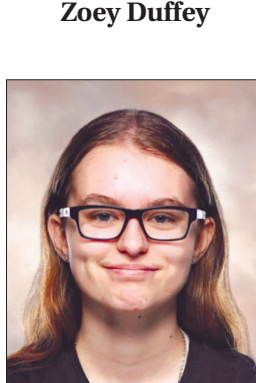
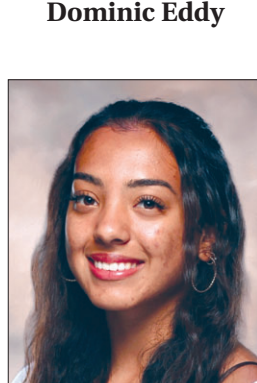
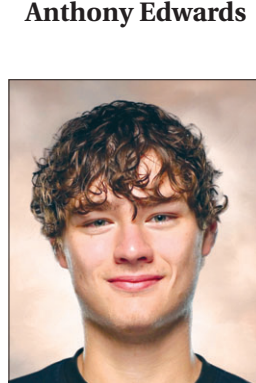
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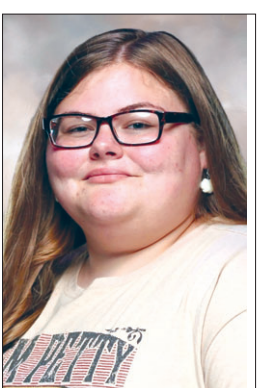
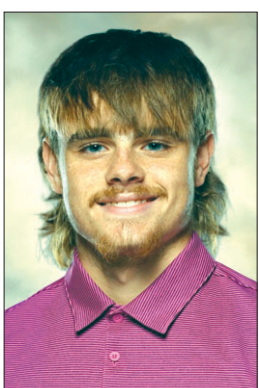
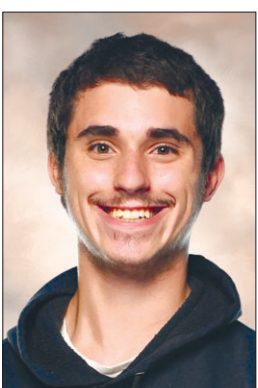
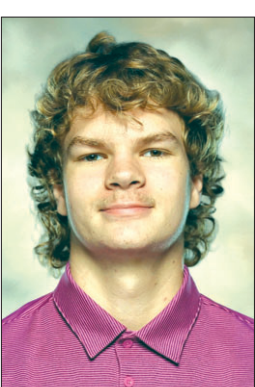
Reed-Custer High School Class of 2025

 Octavio Acosta	 Aydin Alaimo	 Chase Anderson	 Eduardo Angulo	 Giovanni Baldo	 Devin Baltrus	 Andrew Banach
 Lillian Basgen	 Joseph Bembenek	 Dakota Bicking	 Alexander Bielfeldt	 Addison Brown	 Madelyn Brown	 Holly Brumfield
 Liliana Cardenas	 Hailie Carpenter	 Austin Casares	 Haley Clark	 Michelle Contreras	 Wyatt Crater	 Codie Danczyk
 Josilyn Davis	 Margaret Dockery	 Owen Dooley	 Zoey Duffey	 Dominic Eddy	 Anthony Edwards	 Jeremy Eggleston
 Drew Emanuelson	 Brayden Esparza	 Olivia Esparza	 Dakota Evans	 Natalie Flores	 Joshua Garabedian	 William Garcia

These merchants congratulate the Reed-Custer High School Class of 2025

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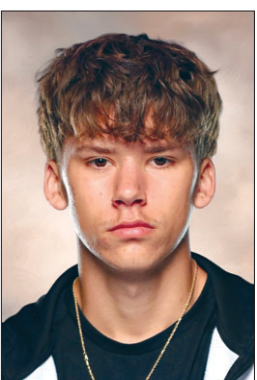
Reed-Custer High School Class of 2025

 Camryn Garrelts	 Kelsiee Gordon	 Leah Grace	 Alice Gruber	 Addison Hartman	 Kyle Highland	 Payton Isaac
 Collin Jankus	 Carter Jones	 Halayna Keymon	 Abigail Koonce	 Jack Krall	 Meghan Lamping	 Deric Lang
 Logan Leonard-Linkus	 Brianna Lestina	 Storme Lipinski	 Katelynn Loveland	 Chandler Lowe	 Anthony Matke	 Olivia McLaughlin
 Parker Michalec	 Collin Monroe	 Dallas Mueller	 Colin Neu	 Spencer Newbrough	 Robert Olmstead	 Emma O'Neill
 Justin Osborne	 Colton Peal	 Clayton Perkins	 Kaylei Potoski	 Cody Praner	 Hailey Praner	 Jacob Price

These merchants congratulate the Reed-Custer High School Class of 2025

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 Brady Shultz	 Carter Slager	 Nolan Smith	 Kara Steffes	 Breanna Thompson	 Lucas Thompson	 Luca Trucano
 Brady Tyree	 Ava Van Duyne	 Cameron Wallace	 Jady Walsh	 Quinn Walsh	 Tyler Weathersby	 Emily Wietting
 Katelyn Wietting	 Jaidan Wilber	 Emma Wilson	COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES FOR THE CLASS OF 2025 WILL BE SUNDAY, MAY 18 AT 2:00 P.M. IN THE RCHS GYMNASIUM			

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RCHS ADDISON BROWN won I.C.E. Media Specialty Awards in both Ceramics and Craft categories.

RCHS art students win All Conference awards

Reed-Custer High School students have the opportunity to explore their creative side in the art classroom with teachers Ms. Jessica Baron and Ms. Jenna Watkins.

Not only do students get to express their ideas through art, but they also learn valuable critical thinking skills through hands-on projects and class routines. Courses such as drawing, photography, painting, ceramics, and sculpture provide a wide array of choices when it comes to art electives.

Reed-Custer High School art students have participated in multiple shows and competitions over the course of the 2024-2025 school year.

These shows include the Joliet Junior College High School Art Competition, University of St. Francis Illinois High

School Art Exhibition, Lewis University High School Exhibition, Chicagoland 4x5 at Oswego High School, Riverside Healthcare's Art 4 Heart Competition, Exhibit Art Center High School Art Show, the I.C.E. Conference Art Portfolio and Media Specialty Competition, Fossil Ridge Library and Reed-Custer District Art Show and the TREP (Three Rivers Education Partnership) safety poster competition.

This year, Reed-Custer competed in the annual I.C.E. (Illinois Central Eight) Conference Art Portfolio and Media Specialty competition on April 16 hosted at Coal City High School.

Students from all eight conference high schools displayed hundreds of pieces of artwork to compete for all-conference awards.

RCHS Art students Meghan Lamping and Jaidan Wilber were All-Conference portfolio winners at this year's competition.

Media specialty awards went to the following students: Addison Brown won in ceramics and craft, Brock Billingsley won in printmaking, Ana Downing won in photography, and Skylar Zebell won in drawing color.

Meghan Lamping, a Reed-Custer senior and advanced art student, submitted a large acrylic painting for the Will County Regional Office of Education's art scholarship program. Meghan's painting won 3rd place and a \$250 scholarship. Meghan's acrylic painting will be on display at the Will County ROE office through March of 2026.

The Fossil Ridge Library and Reed-Custer K-



RCHS ART STUDENT Meghan Lamping (left) won a scholarship from the Regional Office of Education in Will County for her acrylic painting that will remain on display at the ROE until March of 2026. She got to see it on display along with RCHS art instructor Ms. Jenna Watkins.

12 art teachers have teamed up this year to host our annual district wide art show at the library which concluded on Sunday. Almost a thousand pieces of art were displayed and juried by guest judges.



RCHS JAIDAN WILBER was selected as an I.C.E. Portfolio All-Conference Artist medalist



RCHS SKYLAR ZEBELL won an I.C.E. Media Specialty Award in Drawing Color.



RCHS BROCK BILLINGSLEY won an I.C.E. Media Specialty Award in Printmaking.



RCHS MEGHAN LAMPING was selected as an I.C.E. Portfolio All-Conference Artist medalist.



RCHS ANA DOWNING won an I.C.E. Media Specialty Award in Photography.

OBITUARIES

Sally A. D'Orazio

COAL CITY—Sally A. D'Orazio, 90, resident of Coal City, formerly of Rockdale, passed away Monday, April 28, 2025, at Ascension St. Joseph in Joliet, surrounded by her loving family.

She was born May 27, 1934, in Munising, MI, the daughter of the late Herbert and Frances (nee Stimac) Blank. Sally grew up on the family farm outside of Star Siding/Shingleton, MI, and graduated from Munising Middle High School. After graduation, she migrated to Joliet to live with her Aunt Mary. She worked as a secretary at Al Baskin's Clothing Store, where she met her husband, Roger. They resided in Rockdale, IL, for over 60 years, where they raised their family and enjoyed making many friends. She recently relocated to Coal City and continued to make more friends and acquaintances.

Sally liked to be social and kept busy as a volunteer with St. Joseph Hospital in Joliet and as a member of the Red Hat Society. She was an experienced quilter and enjoyed sharing her craft. Growing heirloom seed vegetables and flowers was a favorite spring and summer hobby, and she maintained many houseplants, with her favorite being African violets. She adored animals and would care for the many outside cats, squirrels, and any other creatures who would find their way into her garden.

Sally had a quick wit and a playful spirit that never faded. Whether challenging her loved ones to a round of Rummikub or a game of cards, she brought laughter and warmth to every moment. Her mind was as bright as her

smile, and she left a trail of joy, kindness, and unforgettable memories with everyone lucky enough to be part of her life.

She is survived by her two sons, Roger (Elaine) D'Orazio and Terrence (Barbara) D'Orazio; grandchildren: Roger (Lisa) D'Orazio, Allison (Tim Zlomie) D'Orazio, Ryan (Debbie) D'Orazio, Bernard (Jenna) D'Orazio, Gary (Lesley) D'Orazio, Terrance (Beth) D'Orazio Jr., and Gina (Michael) Wix; great-grandchildren: Brody, Emma and Mason D'Orazio; Sienna Ruffatto, Oliver, Graham and Knox D'Orazio; Beckham and Bianca D'Orazio, William, Matthew, Madelyn, and Katelyn D'Orazio; Joshua and Abby D'Orazio, Hunter and Ava Wix; brother, James Blank and sisters: Loretta Reff, Deanna Boyak and Annetta (Jerry) VanLandschoot. Many nieces, nephews, cousins, dear friends, and Red Hat Ladies also survive.

She was preceded in death by her husband of over 42 years, Roger D'Orazio and her parents.

Services for Sally A. D'Orazio were held privately by her family, and she was entombed at Woodlawn Memorial Park, Joliet.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to SNIP Society NFP, 2201 Glenwood Ave, Joliet, IL 60435 or to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation.

Please visit her Memorial Tribute at www.fredcdames.com, where you can share a favorite memory or leave an online condolence.

Fred C. Dames Funeral Home in Morris was in charge of arrangements.

Tracy Jones

BRAIDWOOD—Tracy Ann Less Jones, 54, of Braidwood, and formerly of Morris, passed away tragically on May 1, 2025, as the result of a motor vehicle accident.

Born Aug. 24, 1970, in Ottawa, Tracy was a daughter of Deborah Ann (Strong) Watters, of Plainfield and the late Richard Lee Less. She spent her early years in Ottawa before moving to Morris, where she graduated from Morris High School with the class of 1988.

Following high school, Tracy pursued her passion for beauty and creativity by attending Professional's Choice Hair Design Academy. She worked as a hairdresser in the Joliet area, where she made lasting relationships and touched lives with her warmth and artistic eye. Eventually, she dedicated herself to raising her family, a role she embraced wholeheartedly.

Never one to stop learning or serving others, Tracy later attended Kankakee Community College to earn her nursing degree. As a Registered Nurse, she found her calling at the Illinois Veterans Home in Manteno, where she cared for Veterans with unwavering compassion and dedication for the past 17 years.

Tracy was a woman of many passions—an avid attendee of Dynamic Fitness in Coal City, a lover of music and concerts, and a free spirit who enjoyed yoga, Pilates, essential oils, and spiritual rituals like saging. Her artistic soul was evident in her painting, photography, and home decorating, all of which showcased her impeccable taste and eye for beauty.

Tracy had a deep love for the sun, travel, white wine, and her beloved dog, Bo. She was a gentle spirit with a fierce heart—kind, thoughtful, strong, and an advocate for others, especially the patients under her care. A devoted mother and grandmother, nothing brought her more joy than being present for her children's and grandchildren's milestones. Her loyalty to her family was unwavering, and she was always there, cheering from the sidelines, camera in hand, heart full of pride.

Above all, Tracy will be remembered



as a nurturer, a true caregiver, and a friend to all. Her memory will live on in the lives she touched, the family she loved so fiercely, and the legacy of compassion and creativity she leaves behind.

Survivors include her mother and step-father, Deborah and Tony Watters; step-mother, Jean Less, of Ottawa; three children: Molly Jones (Danny Perry), of Custer Park and Samuel Jones (Sydney Hernandez) and Joshua (Hailey) Jones, both of Wilmington; four grandchildren: Payton, Chloe, Walker and River; siblings: Christine (Dan) Flaherty, of Plainfield; Kirk Less, of Buchanan, MI; Jennifer (Travis) Atkinson, of Billings, MT; Jaimie Brewer, of Lander, WY; Jackie Watters, of Wilmington and Nikki Bleyle, of Momence, IL; nieces and nephews: Fiona, Sean, Caesar, Kaiti, Caleb, Kora, Connor, Crestin and Charlee; aunts and uncles: Lynnette Kubly, of Plainfield; Jay (Sue) Less and Frank (the late Sue) Less, both of Ottawa and Wally (Tracy) Less, of Tarpon Springs, FL; numerous cousins, including her special cousin, Amy Kubly, and her former husband and father of her children, Darrin Jones, of Wilmington, as well as canine companion, Bo.

Tracy was preceded in death by her father, Richard Less; grandparents: Linnett "L.W." and Dorothy Strong, Oscar and Shirley Less, and Dr. James and Dr. Barbara Watters, and niece, Grace Flaherty.

Cremation rites were accorded. She was laid to rest in Mt. Olivet Catholic Cemetery in Wilmington.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Tracy's memory to her family for distribution to charities which were near and dear to Tracy's heart.

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

Cremation services and memorial arrangements were made under the direction and care of Reeves, Fruland and Baskerville Funeral Homes and Crematory.

St. Rose graduate receives World Award

Alicia Hobbs Levi, a graduate of former St. Rose Elementary School in Wilmington and Joliet Catholic Academy, recently accepted the World Literacy Award for Reading is Fundamental's Contribution to Literacy at the world conference held in Oxford, England.

She is the daughter of Sandra Hobbs Galyon of Wilmington.

Alicia has served as the President and CEO of Reading is Fundamental since 2016. Prior to that she was Vice President of Education for PBS. She has a strong belief of the



ALICIA HOBBS

importance of book choice and access. RIF has given 422 million books to over 129 million children.

Alicia was also honored by JCA at this year's Hall of Champions event at the Jacob Henry Mansion in Joliet for her career in promoting literacy. Six graduates were recognized for their accomplishments. In the group was Raymond Fonck, another St. Rose grad, who was a University of Wisconsin professor of nuclear engineering and applied science.

Fossil Ridge Library News

Adult Programs
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.

Tuesday, May 13-Well-Read Book Club, 1-2 p.m. Dive into thought-provoking reads and engaging discussions with the Well-Read Book Club. We'll explore books that challenge your perspectives each month and ignite meaningful conversations. Join us and connect with fellow book lovers. May's title: The Forgotten Bookshop of Paris by Daisy Wood. Copies are available at the front desk or online

in our digital consortium.

Wednesday, May 14-Play That Hot Fiddle with Dennis Strongmatt, 6-7:30 p.m. Born in 1916 in southern Indiana from a southeastern Illinois family, the child prodigy fiddler and singer Wade Ray developed into one of the most endearing entertainers in country and western swing music.

Children Programs
Monday, May 12-Kids Can Cook: Lasagna 5:30-6:30 p.m. This program teaches children in 1st-5th grade essential food preparation and cooking skills while introducing them to the joys of nutritious and delicious food. Registration is required, with a maximum of 20 children.

Tuesday, May 13-Play-Doh Playdates, 10:30-11 a.m. Join us for a Play-Doh workshop. Display your creativity using our Play-

Doh and tools. For children aged 2-6.

Wednesday, May 14-Chess Club for all ages, 5-7 p.m. The Fossil Ridge Public Library is hosting a chess club! This club is a drop-in session, and members can attend at leisure to learn or enhance their skills and play against other players. All ages are welcome.

Thursday, May 15-Toddler Time, 10-11 a.m. We welcome toddlers and their caregivers to join us weekly to explore various toys and sensory materials. Toddlers can enhance their gross and fine motor skills, social interaction, and language skills. Caregivers must accompany their little ones throughout the program.

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

MVK senior citizens agree to playing more games of Bingo

Thirty-two MVK Senior Citizens met at the Mazon American Legion on April 15, at noon for dinner catered by The Upper Crust through the Community Nutrition Network which was delicious. People who play Euchre arrived at 10:30 and played till the meal arrived.

The meeting was brought to order at 12:45 by President Beth Burns who led the pledge to the flag. Prayer was given before the meal by Secretary Nancy Johnson. We had a moment of silence.

Greg Mialkowski from The Gardens at Park Pointe gave a short talk about their activities. He is also on the radio station 103.1 on

Monday mornings Business Spotlight.

Secretary Nancy Johnson read the minutes from last month and they stand approved as read.

There were four members present with April birthdays so we all sang Happy Birthday to them.

Treasurer Shirley Petersen gave her report with a balance of \$830.86. A motion to accept was given by Joe, second by Betty, motion passed.

Business: Carol Clemens made a motion to play 10 games and one coverall of Bingo instead of 5 games since several members who enjoy Bingo come from farther away and want to make the after-

noon worth their time. After a discussion and positive voting results, this will take effect in May since the Bingo board has to be reprogrammed.

Beth Burns talked shortly about the Red Carpet Route 66 extravaganza in May.

Door prizes were won by Kay Jensen, Jan Alsbury, and Nancy Burchfield.

Bingo games were held after the meeting.

Our next meeting will be May 20, 2025 with a noon, meal before the meeting.

A motion to adjourn was given by Nancy, second by Shirley, motion passed.

Recognition for Coach Lockwood



IN JANUARY THE Illinois High School Track and Cross Country Coaches Association inducted Coach Todd Lockwood (center) into the Hall of Fame. Coach Lockwood has been coaching track for 45 years as head coach at the Middle School level, an assistant coach at the High School level, he was named Assistant Coach of the Year in 2002, and he has been a volunteer at both Wilmington High School and Middle School for 12 years! Included in his 4 1/2 decades of coaching is 35 years at Reed-Custer. The Wilmington Track program is grateful and lucky to have Lockwood coaching our track athletes, and is honored and proud to congratulate him on his well deserved Hall of Fame Induction. Todd was joined by his family, including wife Ruth, and their two sons, on Tuesday.

Tiffany a happy recipient of trophy



Chamber photo

TIFFANY LOCKWOOD (right) at Whitmore Ace Hardware in Wilmington receives the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce Employee of the Month Trophy. Her cheerful disposition earned her a nomination from a patron of Ace Hardware and friend of Melissa's Closet. Presenting the trophy is chamber ambassador Wendy Hill from the Wilmington Coalition for a Healthy Community who added "This is always fun to present the trophy and recipients are usually surprised. But Ms. Tiffany was particularly happy and already showing the trophy to customers in line.

Trump's budget cuts affect U.S. national parks

Dear EarthTalk: How have Trump's budget cuts affected U.S. national parks and can we expect widespread closures during the busy summer season?

-- Mary Paterson, Greenwich, CT

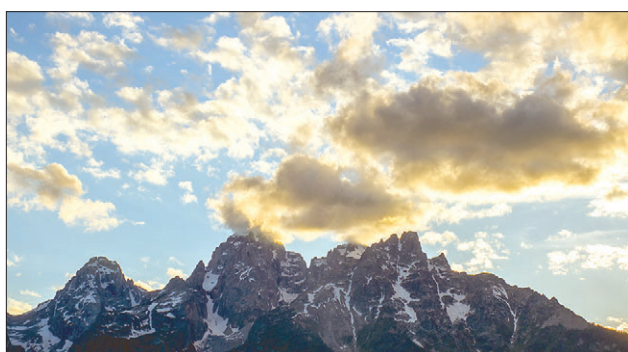
EARTH TALK

Questions & Answers About Our Environment

America's national parks welcome millions of visitors per year, some 331.9 million in 2024. And parks offer more than just scenery. The 63 American national parks are vital to conservation and local economies.

The National Park Service (NPS) is responsible for the sites, from larger parks like Yosemite to smaller sites. However, the NPS heavily relies on funding from the federal government. Trump's federal budget cuts included significant cuts to the Department of Interior, which oversees the NPS.

Trump heavily reduced NPS funding despite Congress having not approved all of it. For example, NPS has struggled heavily with maintenance costs, such as road and trail repairs and upkeep at visitor centers. Furthermore, the deferred maintenance backlog for NPS was over



U.S. NATIONAL PARKS, like the Grand Tetons pictured here, are facing severe budget cuts thanks to Trump administration mania over cost cutting.

\$23 billion as of 2023. Reductions in the budget also led to staff cuts and hiring freezes, leading to a smaller number of people who could support the parks and tourists.

Many national parks sponsor environmental initiatives, but these have had to be scaled back due to the budget cuts.

Theresa Pierno, the CEO and president of the National Parks Conservation Association, said, "This budget doesn't value our parks, and instead presents cuts that would be deeply damaging to them," in response to the Trump Administration's FY2018 budget.

Staff shortage from budget cuts means fewer rangers, programs and activities available for tourists. Many basic services, like trash collection, restroom cleaning and trail maintenance, have been delayed in many parks due to this issue.

Trails, campgrounds and visitor centers in a few parks were even closed temporarily due to a lack of park staff. Parks with a high visitor volume became overcrowded, leading to environmental damage, safety issues and a less satisfying and peaceful experience for visitors.

While no major national parks shut their doors completely, many smaller parks were especially vulnerable to the cuts. The reduced funding meant these parks had shorter operational hours and a reduced visiting season, impacting the communities in the area that rely on money generated by tourism. Phil Francis, chair of the Coalition to Protect America's National Parks, believes that "this financial challenge, combined with increasing use of the parks and recent policy changes, greatly challenges the ability of the NPS to meet its fundamental mission of

resource protection and visitor enjoyment."

Many see these cuts as having long-lasting consequences for the future of America's national parks. Future administrations face the issue of creating a sustainable budget for national parks. Most important, public advocacy through organizations such as the National Park Foundation and the National Parks Conservation Association will continue to play a large role in protecting our national parks for decades to come.

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Plant, bake sale Saturday

The Morris Area Garden Club (MAGC) will hold a plant, gift and bake sale on Saturday, May 10 from 8 a.m. to noon in the VFW Hall, 309 McKinley St. (corner of McKinley and Rt. 47), Morris.

Proceeds will be used for MAGC's scholarship fund. For sale will be garden plants, decorated cups and saucers with planted succulents and other

plants, decorated milkglass vases, and a bake sale!

One stop shopping for Mom and/or yourself!

MAGC has delighted people for more than 15 years. Members and guests meet on the third Wednesday from February to November. The next meeting will be Wednesday, May 21, 2025 at 6 p.m. in the Morris Area Public Library, 604 Liberty

Street.

Featured speaker will be Kim Goodwin, Bailey Nurseries Territory Sales Representative, presenting, "Hardy Rock Star Plants," versatile, aesthetically appealing woodies for a wide array of landscapes.

Questions? Email MA GardenClub@gmail.com. Follow or contact the club on Facebook at Morris Area Garden Club.

Morris Hospital offering Heartsaver CPR training

Morris Hospital & Healthcare Centers is offering the American Heart Association's Heartsaver CPR AED & First Aid Training course for the general public on Monday, May 19, from 4-8 p.m. at

Shabbona School, 725 School St., Morris.

The course is for individuals interested in learning skills that could save the life of a loved one, friend, co-worker, or community member.

Participants will learn the skills needed to perform high quality CPR, proper use of an automated external defibrillator (AED), relief of foreign-body airway obstruction, and basic first aid. The cost is \$110 and includes American Heart Association materials.

In 2025, Morris Hospital will also be offering the Heartsaver CPR, AED and First class on August 19 and November 18.

Register online at www.morrishospital.org/events. For more information, call 815-705-7360.

Health care closer to home.



Take a look at all that's available at the Morris Hospital Diamond-Coal City Campus!

• Walk-in convenient care 7 days a week

• Family Medicine, Internal Medicine

• Obstetrics & Gynecology

• Orthopedic Surgery

• Pediatrics

• Physical & Occupational Therapy

• X-Ray, Ultrasound, Bone Density, Mammography, CT

• Laboratory

• Occupational Medicine

Visit morrishospital.org/dcc or call 815-634-3500.





MORRIS HOSPITAL
DIAMOND-COAL CITY
CAMPUS

1450 E. Division Street, Diamond

MAY EVENTS AT TUFFY'S

Thurs., May 15

38TH ANNIVERSARY

Come in and see the old man!

Sat., May 17, starts 8:03pm



**\$5 off ticket price if purchased by 4pm on May 16.
SEATING STARTS AT 7PM, SHOW STARTS AT 8:03PM

NEW BAND for Tuffy's

Sat., May 24, 8pm-12am

DON'T MATTER TO ME

CLASSIC ROCK AND ROLL



WILMINGTON, IL

Like us on!



Check out our website

A Class Act

Wilmington's Neighborhood Drinking Establishment

1099 S. Water St. (Rt. 102) Wilmington, IL 60481

815.476.2700

2025

First Baptist Church of Coal City

2nd Annual

Cruising for Christ

Car Show

2025

Sunday, May 18 • 12:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Prizes for Best of Show People's Choice and Best of Show Exhibitor's Choice.

For Car show questions, contact Sam Scott Payne on Facebook. \$20 entry fee.

4470 E. Rt. 113, Coal City, IL

1 mile west of Coal City High School

• Serving Lunch

• Silent Auction

• Bake Sale

• Praise Music

We have lots of great items, including Dollywood Tickets!





OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD
A PROJECT OF SAMARITAN'S PURSE

100% of all donations will go towards FBC Coal City's mission to send 500 shoe boxes to children in need across the world through Operation Christmas Child.

CRUISE ON OVER

Help us spread joy one gift at a time!

Will, Grundy County fairgrounds receive grants for exhibit upgrades

For the eighth year, Compeer Financial is helping county fairs across the Upper Midwest improve facilities and attendee experiences through its Fund for Rural America, the Farm Credit cooperative's giving program.

In Illinois, 21 fair organizations will each receive up to \$4,000 to support their fairground projects.

In total, Compeer Financial is awarding \$242,000 to 61 county fairs across Illinois, Minnesota

and Wisconsin for a wide range of repairs and upgrades through this year's County Fair Facility Upgrade Grant Program.

"County fairs are a summer highlight for families involved in agriculture and living in rural communities," said Karen Schieler, manager of corporate giving at Compeer Financial.

"These grants help fair organizers enhance the experience for exhibitors and visitors by funding essential updates to buildings and grounds. Fair

organizers work tirelessly to ensure a positive, memorable event each year, and we're proud to support their efforts."

Two of the 21 organizations in Illinois earning a County Fair Facility Upgrade Grant include: Grundy County Agricultural District Fair: Concrete and hog pens and Will County Fair Association: Replacing posts and plywood in the horse barn.

Learn more about native shade plants

The Forest Preserve is hosting "Adopt a Native Plant - Shade" on Friday, May 16 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Four Rivers Environmental Education Center, Channahon.

Learn about shade-loving native plants and adopt three to take home. Ideal for those looking to transform shaded yards. Ages 16 or older; \$5 per person. Register by May 14.

Grundy Senior Expo open to all seniors

The 3rd annual Senior Expo hosted by the Grundy County Health Department will be held Wednesday, May 21 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Jennifer's Garden Banquet, 555 Gore Rd., Morris.

Over 1,000 people were in attendance last year as the agency celebrated seniors by offering a fun-filled day with Bingo, prizes, senior service vendors, lunch, music and educational seminars.

This event is completely free for all seniors. GTS will be providing free rides for those who wish to attend. People can register on Eventbrite or call 815-941-3404.

CLASSIFIEDS

CLASSIFIED DEADLINES

Pre-payment required for all classified ads unless customer has a pre established business account

Deadlines
Classified Display
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

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

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

Timeless Home Renovations
Specializing in Flooring, Trim, Tile, Bathrooms, Kitchens, Basements and More. Inquiries email: MIKE @ TIME - LESSHOME.ONMI-CROSOFT.COM
MIKE: 815-351-8736

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

WANTED

HAY
4 acres mixed hay, red white clover & grass. Wilmington area. 815-476-9601.

WANTED

SCRAP METAL
• Farm Machinery
• Garden Tractors
• Snowmobiles
• Appliances
• Anything Metal

Free pickup 7 days
815-210-8819

STORAGE

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

FOR FREE

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

GARAGE SALE

Coal City - 175 W Fox Street. Friday, May 9, 8am-4pm and Saturday, May 10, 8am-1pm. This is the one! Pedestal table/4 chairs, 1 leaf. Cabela's tent/canopy, sleeping bags, 2 excellent vacuums and much more. ca19

GARAGE SALE

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, sweatshirts, 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

GARAGE SALE

Lake Shannon Multi-Family Garage Sales
Saturday, May 17 8:00am to 4:00pm
18530 W 3000N Rd, Reddick

HELP WANTED

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

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

Illinois Department of Transportation Public Comment

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is currently engaged in engineering and environmental studies for the improvement of IL 53 from Patterson Road to Mills Road, in the City of Joliet, Will County. The general scope of work for this improvement is anticipated to consist of intersection improvements for safety and traffic operations, drainage improvements, and pedestrian and bicyclist accommodations. IDOT is seeking public comments on impacts the IL 53 project will have on Nowell Park owned and operated by the Joliet Park District.

Nowell Park is protected under federal regulations originally enacted as Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, which protect public parks, recreation areas, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges, as well as public or private historical sites. IDOT anticipates a *de minimis* impact finding for Nowell Park, based on the determination that the project will not adversely affect the features, attributes, or activities qualifying the property for protection under Section 4(f).

The project will impact 0.34 acres of Nowell Park for construction of a new shared-use path, a path connecting the new shared-use path to the park's existing path, intersection improvements, and drainage improvements. Documentation of this proposed action and its impacts, including avoidance, minimization, mitigation, or enhancement measures, will be available at the following locations:

DATE: May 7, 2025 to June 6, 2025
TIME: 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, Monday thru Friday
PLACE: Illinois Department of Transportation Bureau of Programming – 4th Floor
201 West Center Court
Schaumburg, IL 60196

DATE: May 7, 2025 to June 6, 2025
TIME: 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, Monday thru Friday
PLACE: Joliet Park District
3000 W. Jefferson Street
Joliet, IL 60435

An electronic version of this documentation is available on the IDOT website on the Section 4(f) tab at <https://idot.illinois.gov/transportation-system/environment/section-4f-documents.html>. Written comments can be submitted at the IDOT office, mailed to the IDOT office, or sent electronically to the above referenced website. Comments received by June 6, 2025 will become part of the public record.

This comment period will be accessible to people with disabilities. Anyone needing special assistance including Spanish interpretation should contact Corey Smith, P.E. at (847) 705-4103.

All correspondence regarding this project should be sent to:

Illinois Department of Transportation
201 W. Center Court
Schaumburg, IL 60196-1096
Attn: Bureau of Programming
Corey Smith, P.E. / (Corey.Smith@Illinois.gov)

LOST & FOUND

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

SERVICE & REPAIRS

Pro Lawn Solutions LLC
Comprehensive lawn care services including mowing, weed/mosquito/pest control, fertilization, mulching, and much more! Fully Insured! For a free quote call or text 815-651-1963 cc19-22

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6								
	2						5	
		4			8			
		2			1			4
5	6						3	8
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CLUES ACROSS

- Herring-like fish
- Perform on stage
- Soda
- Small growth
- In support of
- Step taken when walking
- Hollyhocks
- Returned material authorization (abbr.)
- Feel pain
- San Diego ballplayer
- Inches per minute (abbr.)
- Fat from a pig's abdomen
- Create again
- Honors once more
- Thin coating of gold
- Welsh river
- Japanese novelist Mizumura
- Husks of corn
- Green vegetable
- Showing guilt
- Soldier
- Photographers
- Language spoken in Nigeria
- Mimic
- Expressed pleasure
- Ancient Greek sophist
- Beverage container
- Night monkey genus
- Lace bugs
- Hogshead (abbr.)

CLUES DOWN

- A place to unwind
- Helped (archaic)
- Razorbill genus
- Bleached
- Continent
- Fruit preserved in syrup
- Impediment to one's freedom
- Nocturnal rodents
- Earthy pigment
- Relieved oneself
- Golf score
- Tech hub __ Alto
- Sportscaster Andrews
- Records electric currents
- Popular Hitchcock film
- Revolutions per minute
- NY Giants legend
- Sports radio host Patrick
- When you hope to get somewhere
- French seaport
- Thai river
- Rocker's accessory
- Extra charge
- Influential American president
- Pain in the head
- Great Plains people
- Consumed
- Soluble ribonucleic acid
- Improves
- Secret clique
- Behind the stern of a ship
- Dough made from corn flour
- Fallow deer
- Swiss river
- Grayish white
- Engrave
- College's Blue Devils
- Midway between south and south-east

FACE PAINTING

FREE ENTRY

Grundy Area FFA Alumni & Supporters BBQ AT THE BARN

May 10, 2025 | Coal City Middle School Parking Lot
3 pm - 7 pm

SWING BY FOR DINNER AND DESSERT! EVERY ORDER HELPS SUPPORT THE ANDREW KRULL MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND!

INCLUDING GAVC FFA
RSVP HERE

SHOPPING VENDORS

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



Photo by Eric Fisher
REED-CUSTER's Harlee Liebermann kicks the ball on the bounce while defending against Coal City on Thursday.



Photo by Eric Fisher
RCHS NATALIE FLORES takes control of the ball during Thursday's game against Coal City. Reed-Custer lost 2-1.

Lady Comets look to avenge Coal City in the regional

The Reed-Custer soccer team scored first against Coal City on Thursday when Hailey Compton turned an assist from Aurora Haake into a goal.

But their lead didn't last in the first half when Coal City's Kylee Kennell responded with a goal to tie it up 1-1 at the half.

Kennell then found the back of the net again for a go-ahead goal and the eventual 2-1 win.

The lost dropped the Lady Comets to

7-5 overall, 3-3 in the conference.

They host Lisle on Thursday and Morris on Friday for what will be senior night at 5:30 p.m.

Then it's on to the Manteno Regional as the #3 seed Comets take on #5 Beecher at 6:30 p.m. on May 16. A win will advance them to the regional championship at 5 p.m. May 20 against either Coal City (#2) or Manteno (#7). The regional champions will enter the Coal City sectional May 23.

Comets surprise the Coalers in the 10th

The battle between Reed-Custer and Coal City baseball teams went into extra innings on Monday when the Comets scored two runs in the top of the 10th to celebrate a 3-1 victory.

The game was tied 1-1 when Alex Bielfeldt singled scoring two runs. Relief pitcher Matt Kuban then finished off the Coalers in the bottom of the frame to seal the win. He threw 2

2/3 innings of scoreless ball for Reed-Custer, surrendering two hits while striking out three and walking none.

Pitching was top-notch on both sides as the game remained scoreless through four innings. In the bottom of the fifth Coal City's Gavin Berger singled in a run to give his team the lead.

But the Comets never gave up, scoring the tying

run in the top of the seventh thanks to a single by Joe Bembenek to center field.

Bielfeldt finished with two RBIs while Landen Robinson led the Comets with two hits in three at-bats and stole two bases.

The Coalers amassed 11 hits, led by Lance Cuddy who went 3-for-5. Berger ended up 2-for-5 while Donnie Ladas and Ethan Olson collected multiple hits.

Bielfeldt started on the mound for the Comets, lasting 7 1/3 innings, allowing nine hits, one run, while striking out five and walking three.

The Coalers started with A.J. Wills on the mound for 6 2/3 innings. He gave up four hits, one runs while walking four and striking out five.

It was the fourth win in a row for the Comets as they improve to 13-10 overall, 4-7 in the conference.

On Wednesday they shutout Mومence 13-0 in five innings by stringing together 12 hits including five doubles.

Bielfeldt paced the offense with three hits in three at-bats. Recording two hits each were Bembenek, Robinson and Thomas Emery. Brady Tyree, Luca Trucano and Kaiden Klein each contributed hits.

Senior Jacob Reardon threw two innings of no-hit baseball, giving up no runs while striking out three. Klein finished the final three innings with only one hit allowed while walking two and striking out three.

On Tuesday the Comets trailed 1-0 in the first to Peotone before answering with one run in the bottom of the frame.

They took a 2-1 lead in the bottom of the third which would have been enough to win. But they added insurance runs to win it 5-1.

Tyree went 2-for-3 for two RBIs while Robinson smashed a triple. Bielfeldt, Collin Monroe and Reardon also tallied hits.

Bembenek pitched the victory in 3.1 innings, giving up two hits, one run, four walks and four strike outs. Robinson came on for 3.2 innings of scoreless baseball with no hits while walking three and striking out eight.

The Comets defeated Peotone they day before 12-1.

On Friday they travel to Seneca and then Saturday play at St. Joes Ogden in a game against Galesburg and then the hosts. They return home Monday to face Lisle.



Photo by Miley Morris
RCHS ALEX BIELFELDT throws to first during a home game against Mومence. Bielfeldt went 3-for-3 at bat with one RBI.

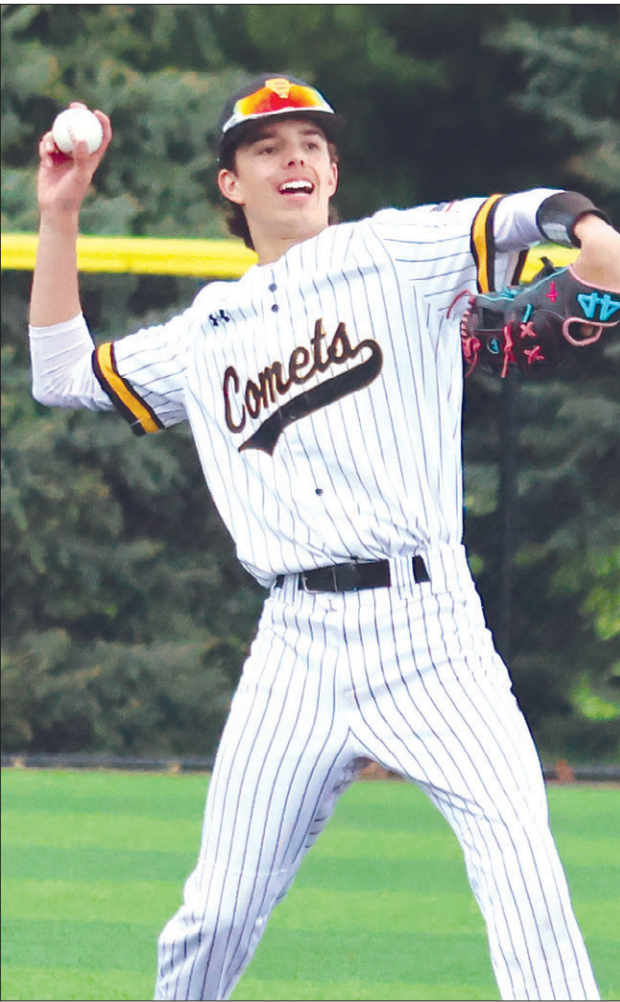


Photo by Miley Morris
RCHS NOLAN SMITH makes a catch against Mومence during Wednesday's game. The Comets travel to Seneca on Friday.

Lady Comets have a rough week

The Lady Comet softball team needed more timely hitting on Thursday when they left too many batters stranded on base.

Reed-Custer even had help from visiting Streator who had four errors but still won 8-5.

The Bulldogs scored two runs in the first, three in the second and one in the third to take a 6-1 lead. The Lady Comets fought back in the sixth with a rule and added two more in the seventh before the visitors put a stop to it.

Recording two hits each were Lady Comets Kamryn Wilkey, Caysie Esparza and Amber Syc. Kirstin Klein hit an RBI double while Mackenzie Foote and Adalyn Steichen both singled.

The Lady Comets ran the bases well with eight stolen bases including three for Syc, two for Wilkey and one each by Addison Hartman, Foote, and Esparza.

Sophia Moyers pitched five innings, giving up seven hits and five runs (4 earned) while walking two and striking out seven. Steichen threw two innings with five hits and three runs allowed.

Reed-Custer struggled against Peotone as they scored only one run during two games against the Blue Devils.

On Tuesday the Lady Comets lost 3-1, getting their lone run in the bottom of the final inning off a home run by Syc.

The other two hits for

Reed-Custer were contributed by Foote and Klein.

Steichen pitched the loss over seven innings, getting tagged for eight hits and three runs (two earned) while walking four and striking out two.

On Monday the 3-0 shutout by the Blue Devils resulted after RCHS struggled with five errors.

Syc tried to spark the Lady Comets with a triple but was unable to reach home. She also had a single while Steichen had the only other hit.

Reed-Custer's record before playing Coal City Monday and Tuesday was 9-11. On Thursday they travel to Morris before hosting Lisle on Monday in the first of two games.