



RCHS student earns national award

Comets kick off the season in full force



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Shadow Lakes resident petitions city for policing help

BY MARNEY SIMON
EDITOR

A Shadow Lakes resident is asking the city of Braidwood and the Braidwood Police Department to step in to help relieve some traffic issues inside the gated community.

On Aug. 22, Fred Miller approached the City Council with a request for a traffic enforcement agreement between the city and the Shadow Lakes Home Owners Association (HOA).

Miller, who is not a member of the HOA board, said conditions on

the roads in Shadow Lakes have become dangerous for the residents of the community.

"A serious speeding problem has been a continuous and on-going issue within the Shadow Lakes Community in Braidwood," Miller said. "Over the years, residents have offered suggestions to the Home Owners Association to address these issues, but no effective measures were implemented and their concerns have been repeatedly brushed aside."

Miller said that he contacted the HOA in July asking that the HOA and

the city consider a traffic enforcement agreement.

By state law, a municipality can enter into an agreement with entities such as hospitals, churches, HOAs, shopping centers, and apartment complex owners for regulation of traffic on those private grounds.

Shadow Lakes was chartered as a gated community with private roads, meaning the city of Braidwood does not own the streets inside the community. The homeowners, via HOA dues, pay for maintenance and snow removal of their streets, and have their own private enforcement

patrols for speeding or other traffic violations.

Per state law, if an agreement were made, the BPD would be empowered to "regulate the parking of automobiles and the traffic" inside Shadow Lakes, and to erect stop signs, flashing signals, and enforce traffic regulations. The city would also be able to ask for financial compensation from the HOA for such assistance.

Miller said after getting no response from the HOA on his proposal, and after being offered a sit-down meeting with city officials, he

opted to bring it up during public comment at the most recent City Council meeting.

"Through the Freedom of Information Act, the electronic speed monitoring report which was conducted over the 4th of July weekend by the Braidwood Police Department was released on the 28th of July," Miller said. "Copies of the report were emailed to the City of Braidwood and Shadow Lakes HOA, which conclusively documented that severe speeding issues had been identified. On the

SEE HOA, PAGE 2

Reed-Custer prepares annual budget

BY MARNEY SIMON
EDITOR

The Reed-Custer School District has outlined its spending plans for the next year.

On Aug. 16, the members of the Reed-Custer School District Board of Education approved the tentative budget for the 2024 fiscal year (FY24), which began on July 1 and runs through June 30, 2024.

The budget outlines a total of \$30.7 million in expenditures across all funds in FY24, and \$31.8 million in revenues.

In individual funds, spending for the current fiscal year shapes up as follows:

- Education - \$24.3 million, including \$1.9 million in payments for the elementary school construction
- Operations and Maintenance - \$3.6 million
- Transportation - \$1.6 million

The \$1.9 million for the RCES payment was authorized by the board as a transfer from the Educational Fund to the Debt Service Fund

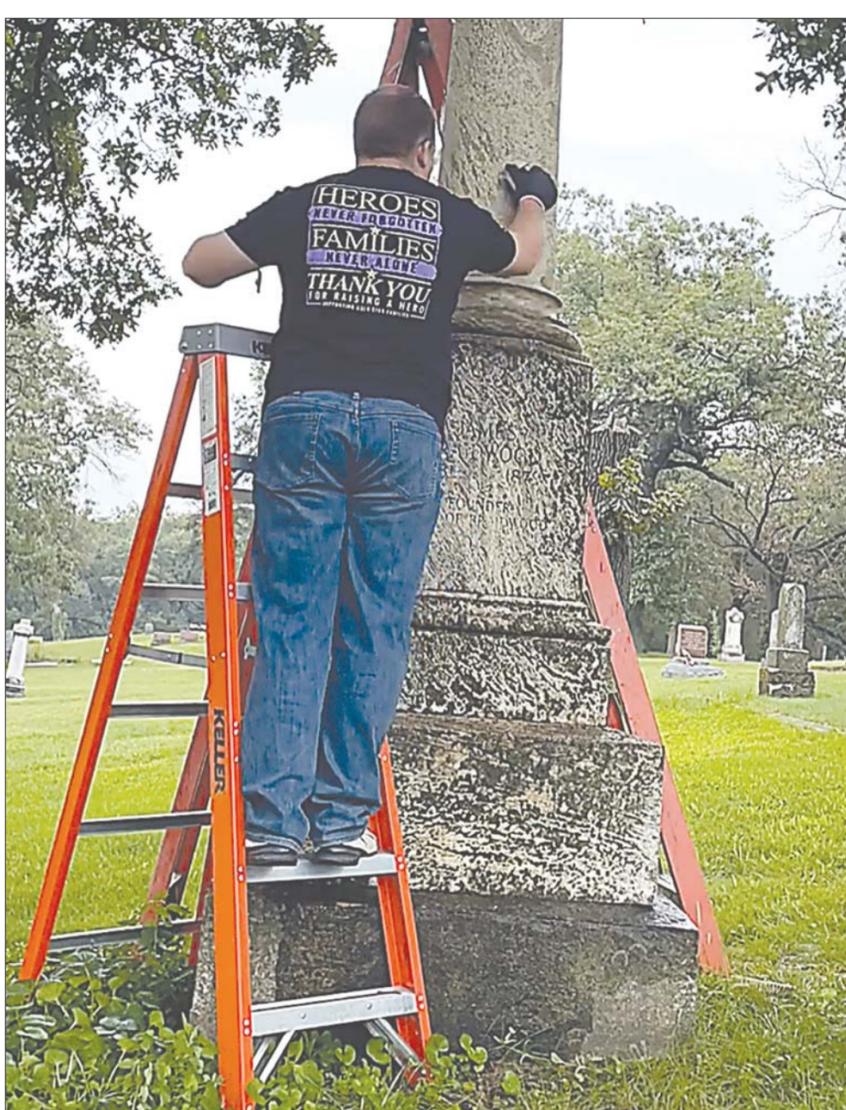
The budget is currently available for review at the district's administration offices, and will be formally adopted during the regular board meeting in September.

Meanwhile, Superintendent Mark Mitchell informed the board of new rules regarding financial reporting to the state.

Under newly enacted state law, districts that do not receive federal impact aid funding must annually calculate their operational funds' cash reserve balances and compare them with the district's average annual expenditures.

The district must then annually present a written report covering the annual average expenditures of its operational funds for the previous three fiscal years at a

SEE SCHOOL, PAGE 2



Courtesy photos

BRAIDWOOD RESIDENT ADAM BEATY carefully cleans the gravestone of James Braidwood, the namesake of the city of Braidwood. A civil engineer and mining boss, Braidwood died in 1879 and is buried at Oakwood Cemetery.

New life for Braidwood headstone

BY MARNEY SIMON
EDITOR

Turn the clock back 175 years, and the landscape in southern Will County was quite different, both literally and figuratively.

In the 1850s, settlement of the area was gradual, with farmers unlikely to pick the region and its sandy meadows as their first choice to call home.

But things changed when coal was discovered in 1864.

"The news of the discovery of a workable vein of bituminous coal so near to Chicago, the metropolis of the Great Lakes region spread so rapidly and far, attracting the first hundreds of experienced coal miners from Pennsylvania, then thousands from such foreign countries as Canada, England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Belgium, France, Italy,

Germany, Austria, Poland and Bohemia," wrote MJ Donna in his 1957 book, *The Braidwood Story*.

While early settlers included James Cunnea, William Higgins, Frank and Thomas O'Reilly, William Smith, Patrick and James Dwyer, William Sterritt, Timothy Keane, and William Keever, it was Scottish-born civil engineer and mine owner James Braidwood who would become the namesake for the city of Braidwood when it was founded in 1865, and later incorporated in 1873.

A mining expert, Braidwood bossed the sinking of the B and C mines for the Chicago and Wilmington Coal Company.

After his passing in 1879, Braidwood was buried at Oakwood Cemetery on Essex Road, where his grave has gone unnoticed by the

SEE GRAVE, PAGE 2

Town Hall meeting focuses on youth alcohol use

BY MARNEY SIMON
EDITOR

Members of the community gathered together at Wilmington City Hall on Aug. 24, for a frank talk about alcohol and how it affects teens.

The Town Hall meeting was sponsored by the Wilmington Coalition for a Healthy Community, and attracted residents looking to find the best ways to help local youth, as well as their families, understand the dangers that exist with underage alcohol use and misuse.

The discussion got a Major League boost, thanks to panelist Scott Spiezio. The Morris native and two-time World Series Champion spoke to those in attendance about how alcohol, and later cocaine, affected his life and his career in the Big Leagues.

Spiezio, who was drafted by the Oakland As in 1993 and later went on to win two World Series rings, one with Anaheim and one with St. Louis, said he

didn't drink much as a teen or early in his career, when he was focused hard on getting to the next level.

But, he said, peer pressure as his career grew to cut loose and have drinks with his friends and teammates set the groundwork for future issues. He said that while he continued being active in his church and community, a spinal injury in spring training one left him temporarily sidelined.

"I fell into depression," he said. "Instead of dealing with it in a way that was healthy, I dealt with it by saying, well, if I go out and I'm hungover or something, that's not going to affect my play. So, I started going to try and make friends in the wrong places, on the road, at bars. One thing led to another, I remember I was sipping a beer and I didn't like it, but someone [suggested a mixed drink], so I choked one down and after two or three days in a row, I started liking

SEE TOWN HALL, PAGE 2

Talks continue over Custer, Braidwood IGA

STAFF REPORT

The Custer Fire Protection District (CFPD) will continue talks about a potential Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the Braidwood Fire Protection District for services.

But if and when that plan will ever materialize is still up in the air.

The CFPD met on Aug. 23, where newly appointed members Dan Rozak and Ryan Shorkey were sworn in. The pair will fill two vacancies left after two previous board members departed over residency issues.

During that meeting, the board announced that the CFPD's ambulance passed its inspection at the state level. The next step is training for staff before the ambulance can go live.

Information posted to the public following the meeting noted that the board unanimously agreed to continue

talks with Braidwood regarding the proposed IGA, and a full board special meeting is being planned.

A date for that meeting has not yet been announced.

The draft IGA proposal would turn fire services in Custer Township over to Braidwood.

Highlights of the proposal include Custer turning over operations to Braidwood, and in return Braidwood would intend to man the firehouse on Route 113.

Custer would liquidate all its assets other than the firehouse and ambulance, and Braidwood would take over those operations fully.

The full text of the draft can be found on CFPD website, www.custerfpd.org.





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Grave

present day occupants of the town bearing his name as the years have passed.

Earlier this month, Braidwood resident Adam Beaty, who operates The Memorial Guardian, a headstone and monument restoration service, went on a mission to spruce up the founding father's gravestone.

"While I have always wanted to sink my brushes into that monument, it has been on the back burner for some time," Beaty said of the effort. "I was approached by Mayor Hart who was contacted by a concerned citizen, Elizabeth Bunting-Dixon, regarding the dismal condition of the headstone. They deserve the credit for bringing this project back into the spotlight."

Bunting-Dixon had been visiting the cemetery one day with family when she noticed Braidwood's grave in a state of wear and neglect.

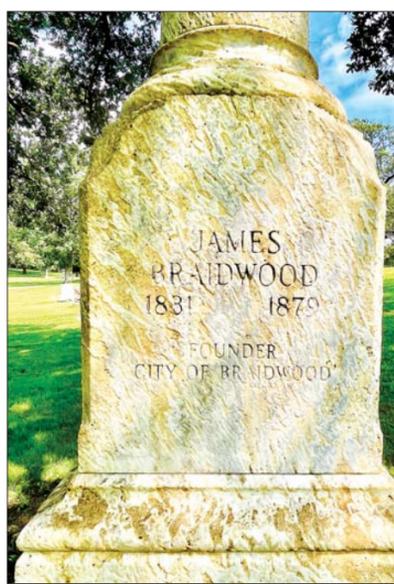
Once the project was turned over to Beaty, there was a lot of work to do before the stone was even touched.

"The process begins with a lot of planning," he said. "This includes going to the monument, taking a series of photos, figuring out what materials will be needed and how much. This particular monument came with safety issues as it rests on a bit of a pitch. Once cleaning was underway this project took 6 hours to complete but the results were well worth it!"

Now with years of wear washed away and the headstone restored, residents can read the monument stone clearly, which is etched with Braidwood's name, years of birth and death, and the simple inscription, "Founder, City of Braidwood."

Beaty said keeping headstones in good shape is important for several reasons, the first and foremost being to keep those monuments as historical records.

"No matter the size, they stand to remind us of all those who came before us," Beaty said. "It's said that a person dies twice. Once when they stop breathing and again when their name is spoken



BEFORE AND AFTER - After a careful scrubbing, the inscription on James Braidwood's headstone is visible once again. The restoration also renewed the brightness in the stone.

for the last time. In caring for headstones and monuments we can ensure one's immortality and stave off that second death."

Beaty also said that monuments and headstones are also a deep investment, costing families anywhere from several hundred to several thousand dollars to erect.

"Without proper care, nature can do a number on these stones and suddenly your investment to remember your loved one is reduced to an illegible stone that is no more meaningful than your average garden gnome," he said.

Beaty said the process of restoring headstones and monuments is his passion, and he makes sure to learn something about the people represented by the graves and monuments he restores.

He also said the most difficult part of any job is dealing with his own quest for perfection, as he works meticulously to make sure what he leaves behind is the best representation of how any particular monument can expect to look after all these years.

"It is fascinating to me and it motivates me to do the best job I can knowing that person, along with all their memories, life experiences good or bad, is resting just beneath my feet," Beaty said. "The most enjoyable part of the job is knowing I'm preserving someone's legacy. I'm preserving a loved one's memory. I'm protecting the historical record. Especially when it comes to veterans memorials. I am making sure that the soldier's contribution or ultimate sacrifice is never lost. Their efforts to preserve and protect our freedoms should never be in vain. Every soldier's story goes beyond their service, but when their name is etched in stone the very least we can do is make sure their sacrifice is never erased by nature, neglect, or policy."

Beaty has worked on several local headstone projects, and last year he cleaned and restored the Diamond Mine Disaster monument on Coal City Road in Diamond.

Beaty's projects can be viewed on his Facebook page, "The Memorial Guardian."

Town Hall

it."

Spiezio said his poor decision making spiraled from there, as well as his need for more and more alcohol.

His drinking eventually led to the collapse of his marriage, affected how often he could see his children, and even though he had returned to the field by this point, his career was starting to tank.

"I had four of my best years in Anaheim, and all of a sudden I had two of my worst years," he said. "I had the best family life and the best group of friends both during my career while I was playing and in the off season in Morris. But, things just started crumbling, and as things started crumbling I just depended on drugs and alcohol even more."

Spiezio said in 2006, when he played with the Cardinals, he often drank and used cocaine the night prior to each game.

"I had formed a habit, and I didn't think I could live without it. It was a constant battle," Spiezio said. "It slowly tore me down physically, I was on the DL a lot [in 2007]. I was in the hospital too many times that year. And eventually it just got too much for the Cardinals to bear."

Spiezio said he also became belligerent about his problem, refusing to admit there was anything wrong, even after those issues were revealed publicly by way of a newspaper article.

Once things went public, Spiezio was released from the Cardinals. He said he went to rehab several times before he was able to finally move forward.

"I couldn't admit that I was powerless to alcohol," he said. "So, for me to get past the first step in AA is, you have to admit you're powerless. And I struggled."

But, finally, therapy, rehab, faith, and family helped him through. After 10 years of rehab stints and hundreds of hours of therapy, Spiezio has



TWO TIME WORLD Series winner and Morris native Scott Spiezio discusses his addiction to alcohol during a special Town Hall meeting on Aug. 24, hosted by the Wilmington Coalition for a Healthy Community.

been sober since April 2018.

"I don't think I could have gotten sober without the help of true friends who, at the time, knew me better than I knew myself," Spiezio said. "I kind of get emotional about it, but I went through some crazy times that I never would have thought would happen to me... You think you're not hurting anybody, but you're hurting everybody, and yourself."

Wilmington Police Department Sergeant Karl Jurgens spoke to those at the Town Hall about how people have an idea in their head of what underage drinking looks like, but it's usually wrong.

"When you think of underage drinking you sometimes think of big parties, raging parties and a bunch of kids running around and a keg," Jurgens said. "In my experience it doesn't happen that often, especially here in town."

Jurgens said most underage drinking is happening quietly and behind closed doors. And, a big factor is parents who contribute by supplying alcohol, usually with the misguided thought process that it's better to provide than to not know what those kids are up to.

Jurgens said there are

serious consequences for adults to provide alcohol to those under the age of 21.

"There are a lot of parents out there who get wrapped up in their kids' lives," Jurgens said. "They want to be accepted, they want to be the cool parent... But it is a big deal."

Parents who are found to have furnished alcohol to those under 21 can be charged with a felony in Illinois, Jurgens noted.

Panelists also included some tough facts about alcohol and teens, including how the average teen's likelihood to engage in risky behaviors can snowball.

"Adolescents are risk takers naturally," explained Stacey Mispagel, a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC) who works with 515 Fitness. "If you think about when you were young, think about the things that we did that probably were not the best ideas... But, risk taking can provide incredible opportunities to learn how to do things, doing things on your own. It makes us grow personally. But, it's also vulnerable in short term and in long term negative effects."

According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 34.4% of youth 12-20 have reported using alcohol at least once.

"Although adolescents tend to drink less than adults do, when they do drink, they binge drink," Mispagel said.

According to the 2021 National Survey of Drug Use, 3.2 million youth ages 12-20 have reported binge drinking over the past 30 days.

Nationally, one in six youth are binge drinkers.

Underage drinking also contributes to one in four car accidents that involve teens.

Alcohol affects the brain, including memory, problem solving and decision making, and can affect the mental health of youth. Alcohol can also contribute to physical changes, including deterioration of appearance, and can lead to social and relationship issues.

Drinking also increases the chances of teens becoming the victim of sexual assault, and is associated with increased risk of depression and anxiety.

The forum also discussed five tips for helping youth navigate decision making when it comes to alcohol use, including:

- Teach positive coping skills
- Educate teens on mental health and wellness
- Encourage mind and body wellness
- Communicate openly and often
- Let teens know that help is available if they need it

"We encourage parents to talk early and often," said panelist Dr. Breanna Perry, MD, from Riverside Health. "You really want to create that bond with your kids so they come to you if they do have issues. Establish your expectations and rules, and stay consistent, work with other parents, work with your community, and never provide alcohol for somebody else's child."

Resources for parents and teens, including the Text-A-Tip hotline for youth, can be found on the coalition's website, www.wilmington-coalition.org, as well as on the Wilmington and Braidwood coalition Facebook pages.

Spiezio said he was grateful for organizations like WCHC, and its partners the Braidwood Area Healthy Community Coalition, 515 Fitness and Riverside Health for helping to educate the public with forums like the one held this month.

"I wish I had something like this when I was younger," Spiezio said. "Hopefully, kids will get wind of it and pay more attention to it than I did when I was younger. I just thought that I'd never have a problem. Other people had problems, not me."

HOA

7th of August a productive conversation was held with the Braidwood Police Chief, but despite the lengthy discussion and sincere hopes for betterment, the problem continues to remain."

Miller said the current HOA has failed the residents of Shadow Lakes by not working harder to create an agreement with the city, which is why he opted to approach the city himself. Miller also contends that the security personnel hired by the HOA for traffic enforcement inside the community "are untrained and have proven to be completely ineffective in protecting the community that they are paid by the residents to serve."

Miller went on to say that as taxpayers in Braidwood, the residents of Shadow Lakes deserve better.

"The safety of Shadow Lakes residents, especially the children, handicapped, senior citizens, pedestrians and residents walking their pets, should most certainly be given utmost priority to ensure that they are not endangered," he said.

"Daily, the residents traverse very narrow unlit streets, without sidewalks and guiderails, which are surrounded by deep water and are confronted by all types of motorized and non-motorized vehicles operating at documented speeds up to 40 mph. The posted speed limit is 10 mph. This problem can no longer be conveniently ignored, swept under a rug

or wished away."

Mike Tomasek, who formerly served as the board president in Shadow Lakes, also spoke at the meeting, noting that the city and the Shadow Lakes HOA had previously considered a similar agreement, but ultimately Tomasek said the agreement was unacceptable due to financial concessions the HOA would need to make in order to pay the city for those services.

"Also the fact that we are private, our streets are private, we're a private association. Our streets are not part of the city," Tomasek said, adding that he also understands the frustration and thinks it would be appropriate to have a discussion with the city on the matter.

"We have mechanisms in place to enforce speeding rules," Tomasek said. "There have been fines issued in the past. I'm sure that [the current board] is on top of it. But, this is something that can be reconsidered. The conversation might be useful to have, but you just have to keep in mind that the streets are privately owned by the Shadow Lakes Association."

As the issue was brought to the city under public comment, there was no action taken at the meeting.

City leaders said due to the private nature of the HOA, at this point in time, the city is unable to enter into any agreement. City leaders also said that their discussions with the HOA have indicated that the HOA knows about the issue and is working to address it.

School

board meeting.

"Under the new law, school districts must calculate the annual average expenditures in their operational funds (education, transportation and operations and maintenance) for the previous three fiscal years using the amounts reported in the district's most recently audited annual financial reports," Mitchell wrote in his administrator's report. "If the combined cash reserve balances exceed 2.5 times the annual average expenditures, the school board must adopt and file with the State Board of Education by Dec. 31 a 'written operational funds reserve reduction plan to reduce, within 3 years, the district's combined cash reserve balance of its operational funds to an amount at or below 2.5 times' the 3-year average annual expenditures. The State Board shall post any operational funds reserve reduction plans received on the State Board's website."

According to Mitchell's report, the average annual expenditures of FY20, FY21 and FY22 total \$27.1 million, the combined total of the education, operations and maintenance, and transportation funds.

The total fund balance for FY22, the last audited year, was \$31.7 million, far below the balance limit of \$67.9 million that would require the creation of a reduction plan.

Mitchell said those cash balances are used like a savings account. The superintendent said the district aims to have 12-15 months of funding available in their coffers for long term planning needs.

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Eric D. Fisher, publisher
 Marney Simon, editor

PERSONAL INJURY

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

Attorneys at Law

Michael D. Block • Elizabeth A. Klukas • Thomas J. Manzella
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WORKERS COMPENSATION

Two Braidwood miners worked for reform

Although most miners of early Braidwood continued mining until they died or were too injured to work, some of them made it up and out of the mine. Today we look at William Steen and Samuel Drew, both made a difference to their community.



TIME WAS...
Sandy Vasko

Samuel Drew was the son of a mine operator in Staffordshire, England. He began working in the mines of England at the age of thirteen. When his father's mine was flooded out, they family moved to Braidwood for a new start. He and his father and brother were given a room to work together, and he continued mining for some years.

Samuel went to night school, but he wasn't satisfied with the pace of his learning, so borrowed books and took them into the mine with him, reading them at breaks by lantern light. In 1886 he left the mine to go to a school of shorthand and telegraphy in Janesville, Wisconsin.

Six months later, his father was injured, so Samuel returned to Braidwood to take his father's place in the mine until his father was recovered enough to return. Samuel then attended business school, becoming a court reporter.

Samuel still wasn't satisfied, so he moved to Joliet and studied law under the firm Haley and O'Donnell. Both of

these lawyers were former Braidwood men. He eventually went into practice on his own. In 1898 he was elected to the state legislature. He was put on the committees on elections, mines and mining, judicial department and practice, judiciary, and canal and river improvement.

His most important contribution was in the field of mining laws. He was instrumental in passing a bill that made it unlawful to import men under false pretenses, or use deceptive advertising to lure miners to work in the mines. This was a very important bill to Braidwood. Many times, the coal companies would go to Europe to lure men to come to work, telling them of the fortunes to be made, the easy working conditions and the high wages they would get. Once the immigrants came, it was too late to go back.

Our second man is William Steen. William's father James, was from Johnstone, Renfrewshire, Scotland. He brought the family to America in 1865, settling in Pennsylvania where he worked in the mines at Pottsville. William was fifteen when he arrived here. He also worked in the mines.

Beginning as a slate picker, he gradually worked his way up until he became a full

practical miner. William moved on to Stark County, Ohio, and in 1869 married Mary Robertson. In search of something better he brought his family to Braidwood in 1870.

At first, he was a miner, working at several different shafts, for several companies. By this means he worked his way up in pay, and in the community. He involved himself in politics immediately, and worked for the incorporation of Braidwood. From 1873 to 1877 he served as an alderman, in 1877 he was elected City Clerk, and was mentioned as a candidate for mayor.

In 1882 Steen retired from mining, preferring instead to make his money above ground. He purchased an insurance and real estate business, which he ran until 1898, when he became postmaster. From 1885 to 1889 he served as mayor, after which he was elected city attorney.

During the same time, he joined many fraternal and benevolent organizations. He was an executive officer and royal chief of the order of Scottish Clans, served in the International Order of Odd Fellows, chancellor and deputy chancellor of the Knights of Pythias Lodge, warden at the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, and district secretary for the Miners' Union.

He was a sought-after speaker, giving speeches at every 4th of July, Memorial Day, convention and gather-

ing.

His real contribution came in 1895 when he was elected to the state legislature. There he was a pro-labor advocate, serving as chairman of the House Committee on Mines and Mining. It was here that he was the most eloquent.

Having worked his way up from poverty to influence, starting in the mines, he knew the horrors and hazards of mining, especially to young children. During his second term he served as chairman of the house Industrial Committee where he introduced a child labor law. It provided that children under 14 could not work in the mines. Furthermore, it provided that truant officers work hand in hand with mine inspectors to make sure these children were also attending school.

The bill did not pass until 1903, but was one of the first in the country to address this issued. Unfortunately, it was found that most children returned to the mines one month after their fourteenth birthday.

In 1898 he was appointed to his last official job, postmaster of Braidwood, which he held for two terms. He continued in the insurance business until his death in 1930. In his lifetime he saw the changes that he worked for, come to fruition. Children no longer spent their time earning a living, but in learning to make a living.

Fossil Ridge Library News

Month long event: In honor of National Library Card Sign Up Month, all of September each child checkout will receive a raffle ticket to enter for a chance to be a librarian for the day. Winner will be drawn in October with the award scheduled sometime in November.

Adult programs
Sept. 7-Well Read Book Club, 6-7 p.m. The Well-Read book club meets to discuss memoirs, biographies, true crime, or a book selected by one of the members. Copies of monthly book selections are available for checkout at the front desk.

Teen programs
Sept. 5-Teen Bonfire and Ride, 5-9 p.m. Join us for a relaxing ride with Dettmering Performance Horses. It's a great opportunity to enjoy the beautiful scenery and spend time with our amazing horses. After the ride, we'll have a quiet bonfire under the stars.

Sept. 12-Drawing optical illusions with Dan Laib. 6-7:30 p.m. Are you sure you can believe your eyes? We'll spend some time talking

about what an optical illusion is, and we'll see that they are everywhere around us. You'll be let in on the secrets of many 2-D and 3-D optical illusions.

Family Programs
Sept. 1-Outdoor Movie Night. The Super Mario Bros. Movie (2023, rated PG). 8-10:30 p.m. Join us for an outdoor viewing of The Super Mario Bros. Movie. Light refreshments will be served. Don't forget your chair or blankets. This free event is sponsored in part by the Braidwood Police Department.

Child Programs
Sept. 11, 18, 25-Book Buddies, 4-4:30 p.m. Bring your sibling, caregiver, friend, or favorite stuffed animal and spend quiet time reading together to help you gain confidence in your reading skills.

Sept. 11-Kids Corner, 5:30-6 p.m. Join us Monday evenings for stories, games and the occasional craft. This program is for Kinder-3rd grade.

Registration is required for all programs. For more information call 815-458-2187 or e-mail help@fossil-ridge.org.

County work on West River Road lands Wilmington a bill

BY MARNEY SIMON
EDITOR

The city of Wilmington will pay nearly \$350,000 for a project that city officials aren't too keen on.

On Aug. 15, the City Council approved an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) for proposed improvements on West River Road.

The Will County Department of Transportation is reconstructing West River Road from Route 53 to Coal City Road, despite the fact that the road was recently resurfaced.

Because the project will impact the city's sidewalks and water lines that fall in that area, the city is responsible for replacement.

"It's a county road, we have a water main alongside it," Public Works Director James Gretencord explained. "They want to widen it and when they do so they want to put our main under their road... The price is for approximately 1,000 feet of 12-inch water main, to route it."

While the city has argued to the county that the project is a financial burden on Wilmington, according to the staff report, the county engineer "maintains that this is a priority project for the County and that they [are] proceeding with the project. They did offer to spread the city's portion of the cost over a period of five years."

Members of the City Council expressed frustration at the project. However, it could have been worse.

"Initially, the cost of this was 100% on the city," Mayor Ben Dietz explained. "But after some negotiation with the county... the county adopted a new program where they are now paying for the sidewalks which lowered some of the costs. The county is also paying some of the improvement costs. So, it came down from, we were budgeting about \$780,000 to \$800,000 was going to be our cost. And now we're down to \$350,000, which they're allowing us to repay at no interest for five years."

Dietz did note that while the county is paying for the sidewalk installation, that sidewalk won't connect to anything.

The council voted 6-1 to approve the IGA, with Alderman Todd Holmes voting no. Alderman Leslie Allred was absent.

The total cost of the project is \$347,184.

The estimated start date for the project is January 2024, with an estimated duration of 12 months from start to completion. During construction, the road will be open with intermittent lane closures.

Will County DOT has an interactive map of construction projects available at www.will-county.gov, by clicking County Offices, then the Economic Development tab and scrolling to "division of transportation."

Kulach earns national award RCMS welcomes new students



CONGRATULATIONS to Caroline Kulach, a Reed-Custer High School senior, who received the National Rural and Small Town Award from the College Board! The award is based on a GPA of 3.5 or higher and outstanding performance on PSAT or AP exams.

Reed-Custer Middle School is excited to welcome new students into the school district.

The RCMS Student Council members hosted a "New Student Breakfast" on Monday, Aug. 28, to welcome the new students to the building.

They enjoyed a donut breakfast, while listening to talks given by the Principal, School Counselor and Social Worker. Student Council members discussed opportunities to join various clubs, sports and activities available at RCMS.

The breakfast was a great way for students to meet and mingle with other new students as well as the student council members.

RCMS welcomes the following new Panthers: Lucas Bradley, Leland Dropps, Ryan Haake, Kennedy Hartley, Isabella Ilkanic, Taylor Kroehler, Marlene Ontiveros, Isabella Padilla, Michael Perveiler, Jason Rivas-Turner, Adali Simpson, Baylee Souri, and Micah Tolstyck.

Beaty announces candidacy for State Representative

Reed Township Trustee and Braidwood Police Officer Adam Beaty announced on Aug. 22 that he is officially launching his campaign for Illinois State Representative in the 80th District.

In the course of his public service, especially over the past few years, Adam has heard the extensive discontent from Illinoisans about the state of affairs within our state. From the SAFE-T Act to the increased effort to remove the influence of parents from the classroom, Adam knows that we can and must do better.

Adam plans to take these critical issues, among others, as well as the voices of the residents of the 80th District to Springfield to ensure they are heard with unmistakable clarity. Adam plans to focus on

three key issues; crime, education, and belief.

On crime, over the past 5 years, Illinoisans have seen a shift in policy that increasingly makes the victims the criminals and the criminals the victims. Illinois needs to have a more realistic approach to crime by empowering citizens and bridging the gap between communities and law enforcement rather than widen it. On education, as a father to a daughter affected by Autism, Adam knows the critical importance of parental choice within the classroom. As parents we always want what is best for our children. Its time for parents to tell schools what to teach, not the other way around.

Finally, the issue of belief. Adam wants to begin to restore

faith and integrity in Springfield. Some have said it's a tall order and Illinois is too far gone. However, Adam seeks to empower Illinoisans.

"We the people," don't realize how much power we truly have until we collectively speak in a volume that cannot go unheard. Adam Beaty is the candidate that will place the people of Illinois back into the driver's seat toward a better future.

Illinois is a beautiful state with tremendous potential. It's time to unlock that potential and bring people and businesses back to Illinois. Adam is ready to be that incredibly passionate leader and confident voice that we need in Springfield.

Mosquitoes test positive for West Nile Virus

The Grundy County Health Department recently collected mosquitoes in the villages of Coal City and Channahon that tested positive for West Nile Virus.

These are the second batch of mosquitoes to test positive in Grundy County this year.

Although summer is wrapping up, the Grundy County Health Department encourages everyone to take steps toward avoiding West Nile Virus or other mosquito-borne viruses. To minimize risks, follow the Illinois Department of Public Health's recommended practices—reduce, repel and report.

Reduce exposure by avoiding the outdoors when mosquitoes are more active, especially between dusk and dawn.

Make sure doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or other openings. And eliminate all sources of standing water where mosquitoes can breed. Repel mosquitoes outdoors by wearing shoes and socks, long pants and a long sleeved shirt.

Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) recommends applying insect repellent that contains DEET, Picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR 3535, according to label instructions. Consult a physician before using repellents on infants, and report areas of stagnant water in ditches and yards that may produce mosquitoes to whomever handles mosquito control activities in your area.

Attorney Meents files Hasselbring 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
ZELMA E. HASSELBRING, Deceased;
No. 2023PR404

CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given of the death of Zelma E. Hasselbring, Letters of Office as Independent Executor was issued on August 8, 2023, to David H. Hasselbring, whose address is 954 W. Bergera Road, Braidwood, Illinois 60408; whose attorney is Meents Law, P.C., 25158 W. Eames Street, Unit A, Channahon, Illinois 60410. Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before February 15, 2024, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a Claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

E-filing is now mandatory with limited exemptions. To e-file, you must first create an account with an e-filing service provider. Visit <http://efile.illinoiscourts.gov/> service-providers.htm to learn more and to select a service provider. If you need additional help or have trouble e-filing, visit <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/faq/gethelp.asp> or talk with your local circuit clerk's office. If you cannot e-file, you may be able to get an exemption that allows you to file in-person or by mail. Ask your circuit clerk for more information or visit www.illinoislegalsaid.org.

David H. Hasselbring
Independent Executor of the Estate
of Zelma E. Hasselbring, Deceased
Frank J. Meents
Fisher Meents LLC
25158 West Eames Street, Unit A
Channahon, Illinois 60410
Telephone: (815)534-9515
Facsimile: (815)534-9516
Attorney Code: 06298859
E-mail: frank@fishermeents.com

Published in the Braidwood Journal on Wednesday, Aug. 16, 23 and 30, 2023.

Sheriff's sale of 491 North Walker Street

PUBLIC NOTICE

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

STATE OF ILLINOIS)
COUNTY OF WILL) SS.

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

Nationstar Mortgage LLC d/b/a Mr. Cooper, Plaintiff,
vs.
Jeffrey Deale; Angela Deale Defendant.
No. 22 FC 0864

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE

Public notice is hereby given that pursuant to a judgment entered in the above cause on the 27th day of June, 2023, MIKE KELLEY, Sheriff of Will County, Illinois, will on Thursday, the 7th day of September, 2023, commencing at 12:00 o'clock noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 904, Joliet, IL 60432, sell at public auction to the highest and best bidder or bidders the following-described real estate:

THAT PART OF LOT 2 IN BLOCK 25 OF THE CHICAGO & WILMINGTON COAL COMPANY SUBDIVISION, BEING A SUBDIVISION IN THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 8, TOWNSHIP 32 NORTH, RANGE 9 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN LYING WEST OF THE EAST 222.00 FEET THEREOF, (AS MEASURED ON THE NORTH AND SOUTH LINES) AND LYING EAST OF THE WEST 75.00 FEET THEREOF (AS MEASURED ON THE NORTH AND SOUTH LINES), ALSO EXCEPT THE COAL AND OTHER MINERALS BENEATH THE SURFACE WITH THE RIGHT TO MINE AND REMOVE THE SAME, ALL LOCATED IN WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

Commonly known as: 491 North Walker St., Braidwood, IL 60408

Description of Improvements: The property is a single family. The property has a three car garage. The garage is detached. The exterior is vinyl siding. The color is gray. The gas is off. The water is off. The property does not have a fence. The property is vacant.

P.I.N.: 02-24-08-105-016-0000

THAT PART OF LOT 2 IN BLOCK 25 OF THE CHICAGO & WILMINGTON COAL COMPANY SUBDIVISION, BEING A SUBDIVISION IN THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 8, TOWNSHIP 32 NORTH, RANGE 9 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN LYING WEST OF THE EAST 222.00 FEET THEREOF, (AS MEASURED ON THE NORTH AND SOUTH LINES) AND LYING EAST OF THE WEST 75.00 FEET THEREOF (AS MEASURED ON THE NORTH AND SOUTH LINES), ALSO EXCEPT THE COAL AND OTHER MINERALS BENEATH THE SURFACE WITH THE RIGHT TO MINE AND REMOVE THE SAME, ALL LOCATED IN WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

P.I.N.: 02-24-08-105-016-0000

Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County.

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

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

FOR INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

MCCALLA RAYMER LEIBERT PIERCE
1 N. Dearborn Suite 1300
Chicago, Illinois 60602
P: 312-346-9088
MIKE KELLEY
Sheriff of Will County
Published in the Braidwood Journal on Wednesday, Aug. 16, 23 and 30, 2023.

Free Press Newspapers readers

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To voice your opinion 24 hours a day, go to www.freepressnewspapers.com or call 815-634-0317

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Small town's best

COAL CITY— Record breaking heat and humidity on Aug. 24th. I get a call from my neighbor that her air conditioning isn't working. After checking it out it is determined that it is shot. A quick trip to Menards to pick up a new one. The old one is a heavy 220v window unit in an upstairs window. While I had the new unit in the back of my truck a Coal City policeman (Officer Roth) stopped and offered to help install the unit. The driver of one of those prime delivery vans also saw what was going on and stopped to help. (I did not catch his name) We got the unit installed and cooling. Without their help I could not have got the 120-pound unit upstairs. Thanks to both of you guys. Jerry Micetich.

His interference

WILMINGTON—I don't agree with Trump on anything but he is correct about election interference - his 2020 election interference! Anybody with half a brain knows that asking for 11,780 votes in Georgia to win the state is election interference. Does this guy think we are all that stupid? Wait! Never mind.

Killing hours

SHADOW LAKES—Chicago aldermen are asking gang bangers to only shoot at each other after dark so kids don't get killed. Think about this, it's like establishing designated killing hours. Life in a Democrat-run city. Eddie

One sided approach

CUSTER PARK—It's nice to see that whoever is running the Custer Fire Protection District Facebook page has turned off the ability of followers to comment on their posts. Residents have been asking a lot of questions lately that the page administrator obviously doesn't want to answer. They have also been deleting questions and comments recently which have obviously struck a nerve. Nice way to limit the voice of the residents and make the situation seem very one sided.

Taxpayer waste

DIAMOND—Our president has been selling the fencing that was left to finish the border wall for scrap material. He had holes cut into the wall for antelope to go through. Which means that the Democrats will never protect the American citizens while AOC and the rest of the squad in Washington, D.C. have paid over a million dollars for private security above the cost of the taxpayers paid security. These same people do not want American citizens to have the ability to protect themselves. Our president is also planning on sending financial aid to China because China is having financial problems. It looks like our president enjoys wasting taxpayers funds but who is really running the U.S.A.?

Asking for trouble

COAL CITY— It was stated by a Chicago lawmaker that they wanted the gangs to only shoot off their guns at night. This is one more elected intelligence that seems to have the brains of a broken blister that must not have removed all the water on their brains. The left-over was a demented idea instead of putting the gangs behind bars they used an idiotic idea of catch and release. But these are not fish you throw back in the water so they will swim away. Gang members being released back into the streets will only cause more destruction. There are elected government employees that do not seem to have the intelligence of a dried turnip.

Let's speak up

WILMINGTON—There's a string of people speaking up finally. I was born and raised in this town where parents, teachers and government employees supply alcohol, tobacco and drugs to minors while the high school turns a blind eye so they can win a state championship.

Crazy ideas

COAL CITY—I am continually amazed at how totally ignorant and stupid, crazy liberal dems are. Just when you think it can't get any crazier, here comes Mayor Brandon Johnson suing car makers and blaming them for making their cars so easy to steal. Don't put the criminals in jail, we'll sue Kia and Hyundai. With that kind of progressive thinking he should start suing all the stores for making it so easy to drive a car through doors or windows to loot the place. He should also start blaming all the shooting victims for getting in the way of the bullets. In the wrong place at wrong time. Shame on them women sitting at a ball game minding their own business, they should have stayed home to watch the Sox. But it's not limited to just this crazy state. Oh no. We have the Dept. of Justice suing the state of Texas for putting up a water barrier in the Rio Grande. It makes it too hard for illegal aliens to get to the U.S. Don't close the border. Oh no. The DOJ is also suing Space X for discrimination to illegal aliens, for not hiring them. First they're illegal aliens, second they're not rocket scientists. NASA can't even hire anyone who is not a citizen of this country. Then there's governor Pugsly. It's bad enough that the state reps passed a bill to allow migrants to become cops, but Pugsly signed it into law. Now that's how you defund the cops. But Pugsly wasn't done. Oh no, he signed three different spending measures for the massive influx of illegals being shipped to Illinois, 12,000 illegals so far in one year. There's small towns in Texas that get that many in one day. So Pugsly wants to spend a total of \$695,000,000 on 12,000 illegals. That's a lot of zeros for 12,000 people who never paid any taxes and aren't U.S. citizens. That's going to put quite a dent in all the free stuff, on what the crazy liberal dems want to give out. KL

Overgrown with weeds

BRAIDWOOD—I went to the Mount Olivet Cemetery in Braidwood to visit my loved ones. To my surprise the beautiful green grass is gone and is replaced with foot high weeds in some areas, headstones are completely overgrown and covered by weeds. I make monthly donations to the cemetery maintenance fund to help with the upkeep. Where has all this money been going because is surely is not going to the upkeep of the cemetery.

Bloodbath

WILMINGTON—It seems that dictator Putin wins only by dirty deeds. Putin's former food chef and hatchet man, Prigozhin, recently turned against Putin and is now buried under the rubble of a plane crash which makes everyone consider the poisonings, the shootings and the falls from windows of tall buildings which previous Putin enemies have suffered. And yet Trump, MAGA and Republican Party bigshots have turned a blind eye to the carnage in Putin's wake, singing high praise to Russia's 'man without a face' who, like Trump, is a man without a soul. Does our country want to be in league with Putin, the ghoul of the globe? Yes, yes and yes declare Trump, MAGA and right-wingers in America who are doing their best to destroy democracy in our land of the free and home of the brave. Irene

Check with Bloomington

BRACEVILLE—To the one wanting to house illegals in St. Rose. I suggest you ask Bloomington how well it worked out with the west side Section 8 that the east side voted for. Start by taking in a few to your home and show us how it's done. Or are you like Martha's Vineyard? Grand ideas, just not in my back yard. Seen it before.

Take a seat

BRAIDWOOD—To those of you that like to stand along the fencing in front of the bleachers to watch the football game, the fans sitting on the bottom rows would like to watch the



game too. Please take a seat. There is ample seating in the bleachers where you can see the game.

FYI

DIAMOND— "Those who vote decide nothing. Those who count the votes decide everything." Joseph Stalin

Telling the ugly

BRAIDWOOD—When it comes to tampering with voting machines, creating fake electors and calling the Secretary of State of Georgia to beg and plead, beseech and mooch for 11,000 additional votes, former President Trump and his cabal of MAGA cohorts were craftsmen in crime in the 2020 election. Now at last the indictments reveal it. Furthermore Trump's presidency was 4 years of scandal one day after another where amid the chaos Trump stole taxpayers money and quietly slipped it into his pocket; when he pledged his allegiance to foreigners such as Russia and the Saudis; where his lies accumulated into a snowball of 30,000 over 4 years. Enough and no more. C.D.

Be mindful of spending

DIAMOND—After Bud Lite plasters Dylan Mulvaney's face on a can of their beer, product sales dropped by 28.5% and the market value tanked by \$27 billion as of July 1. Target began selling T-shirts and onesies with messages like "Ask me about my pronouns" shortly followed full out large store rainbow ads in the children's clothing department that targeted little girl's swimsuits fashioned with little "tuck in spots" for little boys wishing to be little girls. Target sales dropped by billions within weeks. Kohl's followed in Target's footsteps by selling pride onesies for babies. Americans are pushing back against the radical sexual ideologies the Left has been selling their families. Chic-fil-A has caved to pressures and even hired a VP touting the LGBTQ ideology of diversity, equity and inclusion within corporations. Just a few weeks ago I saw a TV commercial where Dylan Mulvaney and Tony the Tiger danced around for Kellogg's frosted flakes. The very next Frosted Flakes commercials introduced several new fruit flavored Frosted Flakes without Dylan and Tony anywhere in sight. Kellogg's is apparently exploiting the fact that children choose and consume the most cereal. Fortunately General Mills, Post, Quaker and Best Choice and others still make family friendly cereals that do not as yet exploit children. I have heard that Cracker Barrel has gone pride. I will sadly miss Cracker Barrel. It was one of my favorites. At this point families are asking hard questions. What can we do? Can my small voice and household spending even make a difference? Each of us will personally give an account and answer to the Lord for how we live our lives including how we spend our money. This is an issue of stewardship so follow God's leading. The big question you need to ask yourself is: "Am I going to give my money to those who actively undermine my Biblical values?" Sharon

Americans in debt

COAL CITY—Read American's credit card balances are now above \$1 trillion for the first time according to the New York Federal Reserve. And also Mexico now takes in \$60 billion-plus a year in remittances from Mexican American workers in the United States sending money to family in Mexico while the Mexican Drug Cartels take over the southern border crisis and USA with drugs and guns.

Deserve what they get

MORRIS—Over the past year 100,000 illegal migrants have been sent to New York City. They have spent over \$1 billion housing, feeding illegals in office buildings, hotels, tents, parking lots and former jails. The mayor pleads for federal help. Hundreds are sleeping on the sidewalks. Texas is going through the same thing. That same mayor told President Donald Trump when he attacked President Trump's immigration policies, "Immigrants are always

welcome in New York City." Same for Governor Pritzker and 1,000 Chicago illegals arriving weekly. With your sanctuary city and state you deserve everything you're getting. The old Democrat Party is gone off the rails. Many relatives of die hard Democrats are no longer Democrats.

Nine is enough

DIAMOND—The left was able for decades to get through the courts, including the Supreme Court, what it couldn't get through Congress. Now Liberals are trying to subvert the legitimacy of the Supreme Court because it contains the majority of justices committed to the constitution and the rule of law. As the justices prepared to rule on a Louisiana abortion law, Senator Chuck Schumer stood in front of the Supreme Court and declared that justices Brett Kavanaugh and Neil Gorsuch had "released the worldwind" and would "pay the price." He warned that they wouldn't "know what hit them" if they went forward with "these awful decisions." It is clear Mr. Schumer meant what he said next came a push for court packing by both legislation and President Biden's presidential commission on court reform. Liberal activists called for term limits for Supreme Court justices. They protested outside the justices' homes after the Dobbs decision leaked and the potential assassin was taken into custody when targeting Justice Kavanaugh near his home. The left hasn't always had such disregard for the integrity of the courts. When Joe Biden was a Senatorial candidate he said "I would not get into court packing . . . we begin to lose any credibility the court has at all. It was a bonehead idea . . . It was a terrible, terrible mistake to make." Senator Dick Durbin, Senate Judiciary Committee Chair said, "seventy five years ago we went through this . . . and I think congress was correct in stopping this." Senator Pat Leahy, former Senator President Pro Tempore said, "the judiciary committee once stood against court packing scheme that would have eroded judicial independence. That was a proud moment." Senator Diane Feinstein stated, "the current number of judges on the Supreme Court is appropriate." The late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg stated, "nine seems to be a good number. It's been that way for a long time. . . I think it was bad idea when President Franklin Roosevelt tried to pack the court." The leftist calling for court packing are far out of step of the American people. A recent poll revealed only 26% of voters thought more than nine justices should serve on the Supreme Court while 74% wanted the court to remain at nine justices. Sharon

Communism over freedom

MORRIS—First the Clinton foundation received money with no money paid on taxes when Russia was allowed to purchase our uranium. Now our president has finished the job by declaring over one million acres of land around the Grand Canyon as an historical site. Which means no more drilling there for our uranium that is used for medical and other purposes. So we have to purchase from Russia but isn't that strange we buy our own uranium from Russia while the president is allowing Chinese companies to buy our agriculture land so our food can be controlled by China. No more fossil fuels, no more uranium for medical care and our land be given to a foreign country with an overflow of migrants in the U.S.A. that receive more consideration and money than the American citizens. Congratulations to the Democratic voters you have chosen communism over freedom. How is your bank account now that you have helped to sell out the U.S.A. and helped the public servants fill their bank accounts with tax payers funds. The American citizens could become instinct if our Democratic leaders continue to have their way. A very interesting word is treason.

Letter to the Editor

Trump must be held accountable

Dear Editor:

The evidence contained in the most recent indictments against Donald Trump should disturb every American. Trump threatened the very bedrock of American democracy.

Knowing he lost the 2020 presidential election, Trump cooked up numerous illegal schemes to stay in power. He deliberately spread disinformation about the 2020 election, then used those lies to pressure state officials in Georgia and other swing states to overturn the will of voters, including by asking the Georgia secretary of state to "find 11,780 votes." He and his cronies leaned on everyone they could to carry out their

plans, including former Vice President Pence, who refused.

When they couldn't steal the presidency through phony paperwork or throwing out votes, they rioted on our nation's Capitol in an attempt to stop the election from being certified.

These crimes are too serious to be ignored. That's why two separate grand juries of everyday Americans, one in Washington D.C. and one in Georgia, have now issued two separate indictments of Donald Trump for his efforts to overturn the will of voters. These are the most serious indictments thus far because they deal with a conspiracy to overturn the foundation of our democracy: The vote of the

American people.

We, the American people, choose our leaders, not the other way around. When we go to cast our ballots, we should be confident that our vote will be counted, no matter our political party. We shouldn't have to worry about power-hungry officials throwing out votes that they don't like to try and keep control.

Trump must be held accountable for his crimes, just like anyone else would be, and our elected officials must allow a trial to proceed without political interference.

Sincerely,
Candiss Haymes
60416

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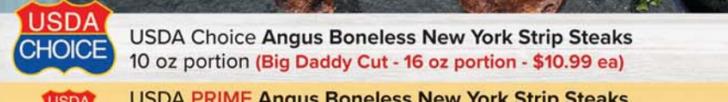
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\$4.99 LB



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Pritzker playing both sides on vetoed nuclear plant bill

Gov. JB Pritzker has taken some heat for vetoing legislation to eliminate the state's decades-old moratorium on constructing new nuclear power reactors.

Pritzker was asked about the topic again last week and he said he would sign a version of the bill if it limited new construction to only what are called Small Modular Reactors (SMRs).

"Small Modular Reactors are very beneficial," Pritzker told reporters, noting that the technology wasn't yet ready to deploy. "They do seem to work very well, and they do seem to be safe, but they're going to be several years of testing yet ahead," he said.

Asked how he could be

confident of stopping a veto override, he said many legislators didn't know that the bill had been changed. "In the last week, things go very quickly," Gov. Pritzker said about the end of spring legislative sessions. "It isn't known to every legislator that an amendment actually made a major change, not just a minor change."

But legislators who shepherded the bill through the General Assembly have taken umbrage with the governor's claim, noting that nine days



CAPITOL FACTS

Rich Miller

passed between the final amendment's introduction and the House's floor vote. They also claimed they worked the final bill hard, and members were fully aware of what was going on.

Senate Bill 76 as originally introduced by Sen. Sue Rezin (R-Morris) would've opened the door specifically to SMRs. Pritzker indicated last week he would've signed something similar to that bill into law had it not been so significantly changed. "I believe strongly that we should bring Small

Modular Reactors to Illinois," he claimed.

But Sen. Rezin then amended her bill to delete her previous SMR regulatory language and limited it to merely deleting the state's longstanding nuclear moratorium language. Rezin's bill was further amended in the House by Rep. Lance Yednock (D-Ottawa) to add in language requiring that all new nuclear plants be an "advanced nuclear reactor" as defined in federal law.

The governor claims drafting it that way would open the door to large-scale nuclear power plants, which he opposes. Others hotly dispute this notion, including Sen. Rezin.

The problem for Pritzker is that the bill passed the House with a strong, bipartisan majority of 84 votes, which is far more than the 71 needed to override his veto. The Senate, on the other hand, voted 36-14 to concur on Yednock's amendment, the bare minimum needed for an override.

Sen. Rezin told a local radio station last week that House Speaker Chris Welch, "has indicated he will not be calling the bill." Pritzker's veto message declared he vetoed the bill, "at the request of the leadership team of the Speaker of the House and advocates."

But the House Speaker himself has made no such public comments on the legislation, and a Welch spokesperson told me, "We're going to put this to the caucus before any decision is made for an override."

"The amendment in the House was in direct response to concerns expressed by the governor, so this really came out of left field for everyone," Senate Republican Leader John Curran told a reporter last week. Others have claimed the same thing.

But a review of email messages between the bill's sponsors and others show only one from the governor's office, and that email was a simple thanks for giving the office a heads up

about Rep. Yednock's House amendment.

"Senator Rezin and I spoke with the governor in the spring," said Rep. Yednock. "He said he was supportive of nuclear. I can't say there was more than that."

Sen. Rezin (R-Morris) said she and Yednock met with the governor for half an hour in the spring and the governor said he agreed with the concept of lifting the moratorium to make way for Small Modular Reactors.

Some of the nuclear energy proponents I've spoken with do seem to realize that if the governor successfully stops a veto override, their issue may stall out and even disappear.

The governor does appear to be playing both sides on this

topic. The House Speaker's staff, after all, was involved with the amendment's drafting, so proponents believe the governor was looped in all along. Some environmentalists don't want anything to do with any nuclear restart, small or large. So, the governor can appease them with the veto, but still publicly claim to be on the side of a zero carbon energy source.

If he is bluffing, nuke proponents should call it, run a new bill that makes their intentions clear and put it on his desk.

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

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Mr. and Mrs. Gerald James

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James celebrate 60th wedding anniversary

Gerald and Darlene James, of 505 Becky Lane, Wilmington, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Aug. 3, 2023.

Gerald and the former Darlene Reardanz were married Aug. 3, 1963 at the United Methodist Church of Braceville. They are currently members of Zion Lutheran Church in Bonfield.

A celebration with immediate family was held at the Bennett-Curtis House in Grant Park, IL on July 23, hosted by Addie Dennis and James

and Christine Dooley.

James retired from Caterpillar, Inc. in 1999 and Darlene retired as a nuclear/refinery security officer in 2010.

They are the parents of Gerald W. James Jr. (deceased), wife, Susan James, of West Virginia; Kenneth James and wife Ann, of Breese, IL; Christine Dooley and husband, James, of Manhattan, IL and Addie Dennis and husband, Matt Dennis (deceased) of Braidwood. The couple also has six grandchildren.

Kankakee River State Park's Chippewa campground reopens

The Kankakee River State Park's popular Chippewa campground 16 miles south of Wilmington on Illinois 102 reopened to visitors on Monday after being closed since 2015.

"Reopening this campground has been a long time coming, and I am thrilled that we've reached this moment," said Illinois Department of Natural Resources Director Natalie Phelps Finnie. "Campers who enjoy the Chippewa campground have been waiting patiently for it to reopen, and our staff is excited to welcome them there in time for Labor Day weekend and fall foliage season."

The campground has 98 total campsites, which are available by reservation only. Reservations can be made at

<https://exploremoreil.com>.

IDNR is seeking a campground host for the site. Anyone interested can call the park office at 815-933-1383 or email the site superintendent at stacey.johnson@illinois.gov.

"I have worked tirelessly over the past couple years to get Chippewa campground back open," said State Senator Patrick Joyce (D-Essex), who is an advocate for outdoor recreational opportunities and whose district includes Kankakee River State Park.

"We still need campground hosts to make this work, so please don't hesitate to reach out if you are interested."

The Chippewa campground closed at the end of the fall 2015 camping season after a pump broke in the 1,700-foot

well that serves the campground. The well provides water for drinking, bathing, cleaning and more. The project included construction of a new facility to treat water on site and other improvements.

Construction was completed in August 2022; however, the campground could not be reopened until staff received passing water samples from the well. The testing process takes about a month at a time. Staff received a series of passing samples in late July and early August of this year. Public health inspectors visited the site this week and issued necessary permits for it to reopen.

Kankakee River State Park attracts more than 1 million visitors annually.

Veterans picnic in Coal City

Operation Firm Handshake will celebrate a decade of bringing Illinois veterans together.

The organization hosts the state's largest free veterans picnic and this year's event will take place on Saturday, Sept. 9, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Coal City Area Club, 1500 N. Broadway.

The event will include a pig roast, entertainment, displays, a bean bag tournament, door prizes and a raffle.

This free event is open to all veterans and active duty service personnel and their families.

Questions can be directed to operationfirmhandshake1@outlook.com or call Max Valdez at 815-791-7978 or Scott Sines at 630-327-2061.

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<p>Jim Beam Bourbon \$100 OFF 750ml \$200 OFF 1.75L</p>	<div style="background-color: yellow; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>LIL VEGAS 6 Machines Private Room COME TRY YOUR LUCK!</p> <p><small>Must be 21 yrs or Older</small></p> </div>

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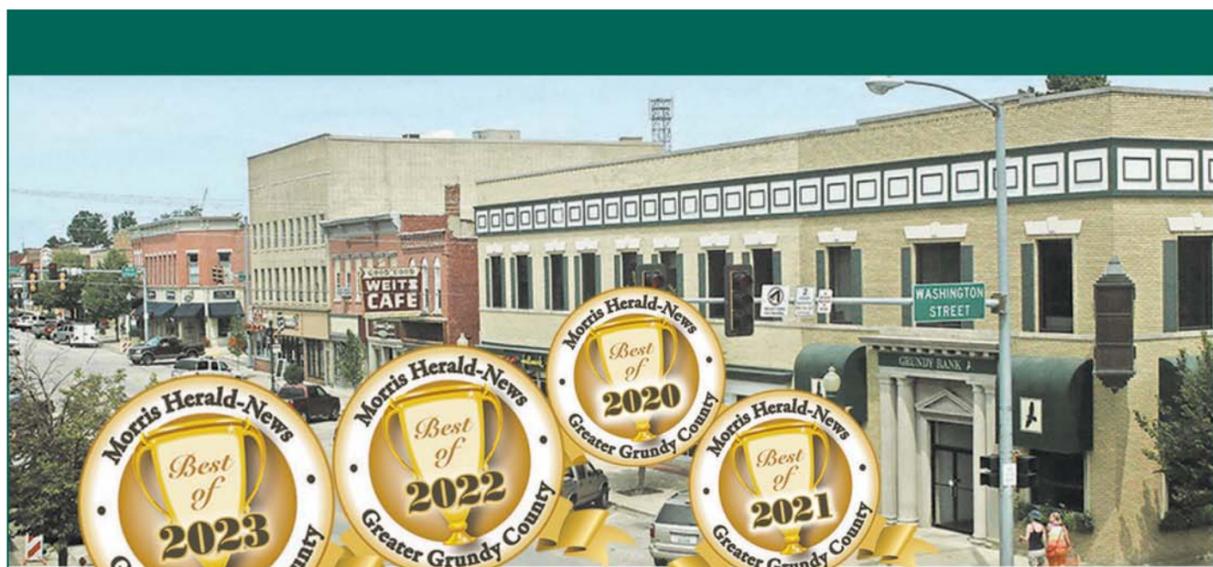
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OBITUARIES

Norma Baker

MANHATTAN—Norma "Jean" Baker (nee Hidlebaugh), 93, passed away unexpectedly at her home on Monday, Aug. 21, 2023.

Jean was born in Metcalf, IL. She was a Wilmington High School Graduate and went on to become an L.P.N. through the Joliet Township Nurses Training program. Jean and James married on Aug. 20, 1950. Jean worked for Silver Cross Hospital, Joliet and Bensenville Nursing Home in Peotone. Jean was a lifetime member of Faith Connection of Wilton Center formerly known as Wilton Center Federated Church in Wilton Center where she held several offices. She was also a member of the Will County Farm Bureau where she served as the Illinois State Representative for several years. Jean also served as an election judge in her precinct for a number of years. Jean had a large social circle; she was a part of the Mr. & Mrs. Euchre Club and Manhattan Alley Cats Bowling League.

She also enjoyed crocheting, traveling, gardening and collecting recipes to name a few. A fond family memory was the many family fishing trips to Minnesota and in her latter years, with her husband and her daughter Karen. Jean also truly embraced the farmer's wife role, always having meals prepared or bringing food out to the fields. A dessert was always ready at the end of a long day. Jean was a loving wife, mother, grandmother, great grandmother and friend and she will be dearly missed. The family would like to extend a sincere thank you to Karen for the years of love, support and caregiving she has shown mom.



She is survived by her children: Kenneth (Robin) Baker, James (Mary) Baker III, Nancy (John) Long and Karen Baker; grandchildren: Amy (Aaron) Mashburn, Benjamin (Katie) Baker, Sarah Hooper, Gina (Rob) Miller, Lisa (David) Kochanowicz, David Baker, Ashley (Mia) Harrier, Kara Ridner, Rebecca Harvell, Dan (Katie) Long, Kristin (Jason) Barnett; great-grandchildren: Madelyn, Victoria, Joshua, Noah, Ada, Elijah, Zoe, Oliver, Killian, Rune, Azalea, Jade, Nolan, Hannah, Haley, Brooklyn, Johnny, Mykinley, Bradie and Madison, special friend Deanna Wollek, numerous nieces and nephews, her faithful canine companions "Jay" and "Coco" and her singing canary "Sunny."

She was preceded in death by her parents, Sylvester and Zelma Hidlebaugh; husband, James H. Baker (2012); daughter, Debra Harrier; grandson, Joshua Baker; siblings: Virgil Hidlebaugh, Reba Bennett, Treva Friddle and Marcella Nicholson.

Funeral services were held on Monday, Aug. 28, 2023 at Faith Connection of Wilton Center (WCFC). Pastor Zach Dyrda officiated. Interment at Wilton Cemetery immediately followed.

Donations to Manhattan Fire Department, P.O. Box 65, Manhattan, IL 60442 or to Faith Connection of Wilton Center, 14101 West Joliet Rd., Manhattan, IL 60442 would be appreciated.

Arrangements were entrusted to Forsythe Gould Funeral Home, 507 S. State St., Manhattan, www.forysthegouldfh.com.

Debbie Plese

WILMINGTON—Debbie Plese, 71, of Wilmington, passed away peacefully on Sunday, Aug. 27, 2023 at her home.

Born Aug. 8, 1952 in Kankakee, Debra Sue was a daughter of Paul and Doris (Jones) Jacobsen. She was raised and educated in Mokenca, IL and graduated from Mokenca High School with the class of 1970. Debbie worked as a real estate agent in Oak Brook before gaining employment with Lewis University in Romeoville, where she retired as a benefits specialist in Human Resources following 25 years of service. On May 21, 1988, Debbie married James Anthony Plese in St. Rose Catholic Church in Wilmington, and together they made a home and raised their son in Wilmington.

Debbie enjoyed craft shows and collecting. She also cherished family trips to the cabin in Minnesota and vacations to Florida. She was a gracious host, who loved family gatherings and was instrumental in so many holiday parties, including the annual 4th of July bash. Debbie will be most remembered for "doing it all." She worked, raised her son, meticulously maintained the family home, and above all was a loving and dedicated mother and wife.

Survivors include her loving husband, Jim; son and daughter-in-law, Josh and Kimberly Plese, of Bourbonnais; two grandchildren, Knox and Tenley; one brother, Don (Heidi) Jacobsen, of Arizona and numerous brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, nieces, nephews and cousins including: Ray Jacobsen, of Mokenca; Judy Yott, of Manteno; Delaine Jacobsen, of Arizona and second cousins, Shelly and Brenda.



Debbie was preceded in death by her parents, Paul and Doris Jacobsen; father-in-law and mother-in-law, Jim and Donita Plese; sister-in-law, Suzy Rhodes and many aunts, uncles and cousins.

The family will receive friends for a visitation at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 E. Kahler Rd. in Wilmington on Thursday, Aug. 31, 2023 from 4 to 8 p.m.

Funeral services will follow Friday, Sept. 1, 2023 at 10 a.m. in St. Rose Catholic Church, 604 S. Kankakee St. in Wilmington. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated with Reverend Sebastian Gargol presiding.

Burial will be in Mount Olivet Catholic Cemetery in Wilmington.

Pallbearers and honorary pallbearers will be: Josh Plese, Wayne Morris, Al Ward, Ray Jacobsen, Jack Plese, Bob Rink, Alex Rink, Don Jacobsen, and Knox and Tenley Plese.

The family wishes to extend heartfelt gratitude to Dianne Schaal whose friendship and extraordinary care for Debbie will never be forgotten.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Debbie's memory to St. Rose Catholic Church or to Uplifted Care Hospice.

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

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

William Strawson

WILMINGTON—William "Bill" Strawson, 63, of Wilmington, passed away Wednesday, Aug. 23, 2023 at Citadel Care in Bourbonnais.

Born May 3, 1960 in Joliet, William Arthur was a son of Arthur and Claire (Audette) Strawson. He was raised in Wilmington and graduated from Manteno High School with the class of 1978. On Aug. 31, 1985, Bill married Ann Lang at Shepherd of the Hill Lutheran Church in Lockport, and together they made their home and raised their family in rural Wilmington.

He was a truck driver with Central Illinois Transportation in Kankakee, but his lifelong passion was farming and raising Black Angus Cattle. Bill was an active participant of the Manteno FFA agricultural cooperative, both the Illinois Beef Association and the American Angus Association, the Will County Farm Bureau, and the Wesley 4-H Hustlers. He understood that cattle farming was not just a profession, but a way of life that he was proud to be a part of and share with his family.

Bill always looked forward to fair season, giving him the opportunity to show his cattle and spend time with friends, especially "Fair Elle." He was also a member of St. Rose Catholic Church and took pleasure in Professional Bull Riding and playing Solitaire. Bill was an avid Chicago Cubs fan and had a sharp wit, rarely left without a quick one liner or comeback. He was a kind man who loved his family dearly, as well as his surrogate grandchildren Hayden and Brian, and was so looking forward to becoming a grandpa this Fall.

Survivors include his wife of 37 years, Ann Strawson, of Wilmington; two sons, Kyle Strawson (Jess Veenstra), of Wilmington and



Justin (Emma) Strawson, of Kankakee, who are expecting Bill's first grandchild in November; one brother, Ron (Eileen) Strawson, of Kankakee; his mother-in-law, Joan Lang, of Mokena, IL and his sister-in-law, Cindy O'Dea, of Orland Park, IL and many nieces and nephews.

Bill was preceded in death by his parents, and his father-in-law, Kenneth Lang.

Visitation and video tribute Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023 at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 East Kahler Road, in Wilmington from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Funeral services were held on Wednesday, Aug. 30, 2023 at Saint Rose of Lima Catholic Church in Wilmington. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated by Reverend Sebastian Gargol and assisted by Deacon Jay Plese. Burial followed at Wesley Cemetery in Rural Wilmington.

Pallbearers were Kyle Strawson, Justin Strawson, Jerry Jackson, Jerry Lorenz, Kevin Fregeau, John Smith, Dave McMurtry, and Jim Plese.

Those who wish to view Bill's funeral services virtually may join a livestream which can be found on Bill's memorial page.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Bill's memory to Uplifted Care Hospice in Bourbonnais, IL or to a FFA or 4-H Club of the donor's choosing.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guest book, upload photographs, and share Bill's memorial page via social media.

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

Gary Hish

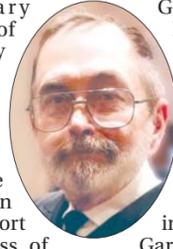
WILMINGTON—Gary Wayne Hish, 82, of Wilmington, passed away Saturday, Aug. 26, 2023 at the Illinois Veterans Home in Manteno, IL.

Born Nov. 22, 1940 in Centralia, IL, Gary was the son of Luther Elvin and Blanche Mary (Stybr) Hish. He attended Ludwig Grade School in Lockport and graduated from Lockport Township High School with the class of 1958. Following high school, Gary attended Joliet Junior College where he earned his associates degree in 1962. He went on to enter into the United States Navy in 1964, where he made his career for the following 26 years as a Submarine Missile Tech.

On July 6, 1969, Gary married the love of his life, Julianne Jackson in St. Liborius Church in Steger, and together they made a home and raised their daughter. Following his retirement from the Navy, Gary gained employment with the United States Postal Service, where he worked in maintenance on the North Shore, and later relocated to Wilmington in 2006.

A life member of both the Veterans of Foreign Wars and National Rifle Association, Gary enjoyed reading, fishing, his guns and anything John Wayne. He took pleasure reading, particularly Wild West literary works by Louis Lamour, loved his trucks, and was a fan of professional football. Gary will be remembered as a quiet man with an immense sense of humor, who knew how to use it strategically.

Survivors include his loving wife, Julianne; daughter and son-in-law, Marnie and Jonathan Jones, of Wilmington; two granddaughters,



Grace and Tracy; one uncle and aunt, Donald and Velda Hish, of Bloomington; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, Dave Czys, of Wilmington; Mary Ellen Rivero, of Prescott, AZ; Francine Jackson, of Denver, CO; Terrence (Helen) Jackson, of Glenview, IL and Timothy (Michelle) Jackson, of Ashville, NC; numerous nieces and nephews, as well as cousins, including his cousin, Bernard Vigna, of Gardner, and his son, Dean who is his Godson.

Gary was preceded in death by his parents, Luther and Blanche, and one sister, Gale Czys.

The family will receive friends for a visitation at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 E. Kahler Rd. in Wilmington on Wednesday, Aug. 30, 2023 between the hours of 4 and 8 p.m. Funeral services will follow Thursday morning, Aug. 31, 2023 at 10:30 a.m. in the funeral home.

Burial with full military honors will be in Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery, Elwood.

Pallbearers will be: Jonathan Jones, Mark Czys, Bret Czys, Brendan Czys, Evan Czys and Blain Czys.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Gary's memory to the Illinois Veterans Home Volunteer Services, 1 Veterans Way in Manteno, IL.

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

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

John Tira Sr.

SAN DIEGO, CA—John Martin Tira Sr., 73, passed away on Aug. 22, 2023, surrounded by his family in San Diego, CA.

John was born to John and Mary (Galbraith) on July 14, 1950 in Joliet. He grew up in Coal City, where he attended Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic School with his brothers, Jim and Ray and sister, Marilyn and later graduated from Coal City High School. John, along with his best friend and brother, Jim, attended Illinois State University and later Lewis University College of Law. John and Jim then returned to Coal City where they practiced law together for nearly 40 years, and where he enjoyed lunch with Jim, Marilyn, Ray and his parents for much of his adult life.

John is survived by his four boys: Patrick (Sarah), John (Tara), Daniel (Megan) and Michael (Kathryn); five grandchildren: Patch, Rusty, Alice, Kaia and Claire and with two more grandsons set to arrive this fall, and his brother, Jim, and his sister, Marilyn.

John is predeceased by his parents, John and Mary; his brother, Raymond and many other close relatives and good friends.

A lawyer by trade but a father first, John lived for his four boys. They meant everything to him, and he to them. When he was not changing diapers, coaching basketball at St. Pat's, golfing with his boys, shooting the breeze at Menards, or touring baseball stadiums across the country, he was teaching and showing them how to be good husbands and fathers. Those life lessons included the mantra that you "meet the same people going up the ladder as you do going down it," meaning that you treat everyone you meet with a warm smile, a firm handshake, and above all else, kindness and respect.

John loved a cold beer over good conversation with his friends and family - preferably an ice-cold High Life with a dash of salt. There were so many good times: playing with his kids in the



Sugar Creek yard, enjoying the summers and celebrating family events at the Coal City Area Club, swimming with his sons in the Abbey Wood pool, meeting his good friend, Fran Jones for pizza at Cemenos, vacationing on the shores of St. Pete Beach, joining his sons and their friends at Richard's Bar in Chicago, and barbecuing on Patrick's backyard deck in San Diego. His boys will forever cherish all of these wonderful memories.

In his later years, John battled the effects of two strokes and advanced Parkinson's disease. While his body did not always cooperate, his spirit remained undeterred. He never lost his sense of humor and generously flashed his charming smile. John to his friends, Dad to his boys, and Nono to his grandchildren, he will be deeply missed. For a man that always said to "hit it, and hit it hard," he certainly did just that.

The family would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the doctors, nurses, and caretakers at St. Paul's PACE, St. Paul's Villa, and Sunset Cliffs Elder Care, and to Jim Blackburn and Julie Lanagan, Jackie Jones and John Brimble, Pat Krakar, Marilyn Hook and Marla O'Keefe, and the many others who made regular visits to San Diego to see him or faithfully called to check in on him, and especially to Patrick, Sarah, Michael, and Kathryn, who poured their hearts and souls into our Dad's care and wellbeing after he moved to San Diego.

A Celebration of Life will be held next spring in Illinois after John's newest grandsons arrive. And in lieu of flowers or donations, please take a minute to call your parents, kiss your spouse, hug your kids, and pray for your loved ones that have passed away.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guestbook at www.ferrarifuneral.com.

Ferrari Funeral Services of Coal City are entrusted with local arrangements.

Diane Washburn

MORRIS—Diane D. Washburn, 66, of Morris, passed away gracefully, following a courageous battle with ovarian cancer, on Tuesday, Aug. 22, 2023 at her home surrounded by family.

Born June 29, 1957 in Morris, Diane Dolores was a daughter of Norman and Rose Edith (Vogel) Ziegler. She was raised in Morris; attended Morris High School, where she was involved with the Prisms, and graduated with the class of 1975. She attended Joliet Junior College, and went on to make her career with the Morris Daily Herald for 33 1/2 years.

Diane was an active and devoted member of First Christian Church in Morris, where she assisted in the nursery; she cherished being a part of the Meal Ministry for Families in Crisis; participated and volunteered for the Morris Cruise Night, and belonged to the Morris Country Club.

One who loved to remain active, Diane played pickleball and enjoyed being a part of her yoga group, the Ladies of Yoga Island. Together with this group they were able to spread love through helping worthy causes, even throughout the pandemic. Diane loved to cook and bake, and enjoyed gathering together with friends for Kringle parties; hosting cookouts and coordinating their annual pig roast. She also valued the simple moments of spending time on the swing with Mark and taking 'Sunday Funday' hotrod drives.

Great times were had through vast travels, and Diane's heart was full when traveling with family and being with her grandsons. Whether it be to Pigeon Forge, Mexico, Hawaii, Branson, Grand Cayman, Las Vegas or snowmobile trips during the winter months, a priceless collection of memories were made, and will forever be cherished.

Above all, family was of utmost importance to Diane. Nothing gave her greater joy than sharing a meal with those she loved, and being together during special times such as the holidays.

Remembered as a fun and happy soul,



Diane leaves a legacy of being a caring and loving person. Where her kindness impacted so many, may her memory continue to live on in the hearts of all who knew and loved her.

Survivors include her loving husband, Mark Washburn, who she married Oct. 25, 2003; one daughter and son-in-law, Karen and Chase Olson, of Morris; two grandsons, Cody and Evan Olson; one brother, Ronald Ziegler, of Morris; two sisters, Pamela (John) McNabb, of Morris and Angela (William) Walsh, of Verona; nieces and nephews: Brenda (Jeff) Edwards, Tim (Jerri) Ziegler, Chris Ziegler (fiancée - Jillian), John Jr. (Alana) McNabb, Aaron (Addie) McNabb, Sarah (Cecil Cicirello) McNabb, Pete (Mandi) McNabb and Abby (John) Savore; numerous great-nieces and great-nephews; her aunt, Dolores Schoenhoff, of Effingham, IL; sister-in-law, Gayle (Rich) Winsor and brother-in-law, Dick Washburn, both of Arkansas; her former husband and the father of her daughter, Timothy Airney, of Channahon, and numerous cousins, as well as friends.

Diane was preceded in death by her parents and two sisters-in-law: Janet Ziegler and Helen Washburn.

Funeral services were held at First Christian Church on Monday, Aug. 28, 2023. Pastor Scott Zorn officiated, and burial was in Evergreen Cemetery, Morris.

Pallbearers were: Chase Olson, Bruce Erickson, Rance Welsh, Herb Wyeth, Lee Fatlan, Bob Steele, Denny Peters and Ron Ziegler.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Diane's memory to Grundy Community Lending Closet; First Christian Church of Morris or Meal Ministry for Families in Crisis.

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

Funeral services and arrangements were made under the direction and care of Reeves Funeral Homes, Ltd. in Morris.

Registration opens for TaTa Trot

In October 2009, a group of local women participating in a cancer walk discussed holding a walk of their own and one year later they hosted the first TaTa Trot.

The 5K run/walk was created to raise breast cancer awareness and provide breast cancer care.

On Oct. 8, the 14th annual TaTa Trot 5K run/walk will step off from Carbon Hill Park, 800 W. Lacey St. Participants will be led out on

the 3.1 mile course at 10 a.m. Registration will begin at 8 a.m.

Proceeds from the run/walk, raffles, donations and sponsorships will benefit Riverside Medical Cancer Foundation for breast cancer care for patients in the community.

A registration form is available online at www.eventbrite.com. The cost to participate is \$30 in advance.

Univ. of St. Francis announces dean's list

The University of St. Francis (USF) congratulates the following students who have been named to the dean's list for the spring 2023 semester. Students who have attained a gpa of 3.5 or higher at the end of a semester are named to the Dean's List.

Local students include: Peyton Garrelts, Joel Hunt, Marissa Kavanaugh and Vanessa

McLean, of Braidwood; Clayton Hannig, Haley Long and Bethany Nicola, of Coal City; Savannah Jacobs and Stephanie Wold, of Diamond; Abigail Lab, of Elwood; Sarah Maxard, of Gardner and Cameron Holman, Benjamin Kreitz, Dylan Spangler and Jason Tatera, all of Wilmington.

OBITUARIES

Dwayne Bawcum

BRAIDWOOD—Dwayne Bawcum, 66, of Braidwood, passed away Friday, Aug. 25, 2023 at his home.

Born on May 12, 1957 in Palo Heights, IL, he was the son of Autry and Joyce (nee Rigby) Bawcum. On Feb. 2, 2010 he married Sandra Wheat in Joliet. Dwayne was a member of Island City Baptist Church and enjoyed fishing, gardening and being outdoors.

Surviving are his wife, Sandra Bawcum; daughter, Bobbie Jo Bawcum; sister, Adrienne Bacavis; as well as several nieces, nephews and cousins.

Preceding him in death were his parents



and brother, Autry Lee Bawcum.

Cremation rites will be accorded and a memorial will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers memorial may be directed to the American Kidney Foundation.

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

Arrangements have been entrusted to R.W. Patterson Funeral Home and Crematory.

Adam D. Rodriguez

MORRIS—Adam D. Rodriguez, “A-Rod,” 39, of Morris, passed away unexpectedly at his home on Wednesday, Aug. 23, 2023.

He was born in Joliet on Oct. 21, 1983 to Alfie R. and Karyn (nee McCarthy) Rodriguez. Adam was educated in Coal City, graduating from Coal City High School. He was a devoted dad to his son, Brayden, and they enjoyed their time bonding together at Brayden’s sports and activities. Adam was a lifelong fan of the Chicago White Sox. Known as “A-Rod” to his friends, he has left plenty memories of good times with them. Adam will be especially missed by his Dad, Alfie.

Adam is survived by his father, Alfie Rodriguez, of Morris; his son, Brayden; his aunts: Kim McCarthy and Erin McCarthy, both of Arizona; Mary (Dennis) McMullen, of



Colorado; Bea (Patrick) Boland, of Florida and Rita (Don) McFarland, of Indiana; his uncles: Pat (Rhonda) McCarthy, of Arizona; Shawn (Marlene) McCarthy, of California and Shannon (Kathy) McCarthy, of Lockport. Also surviving are numerous cousins.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Karyn Rodriguez, in July of 2022, his grandparents and several aunts and uncles.

Cremation rites have been accorded. There will be no services.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guestbook at www.ferrarifuneral.com

Ferrari Funeral Services of Coal City are entrusted with arrangements.

55th class reunion for WHS graduates

The WHS 55th class reunion will be held Saturday, Sept. 23, at Haydens Crossing, 107 N. Water St., at 5:30 p.m. You will be responsible for your drinks and if interested in eating, they have a restaurant on the other side.

This is Homecoming weekend and the football game will be on Friday night. The varsity game should start around 7 p.m.

If you would like your information added to our 55th

class reunion booklet, please email Marilyn Matlock at mmatlock6549@gmail.com and she will send you the questionnaire. This information must be returned by Aug. 15.

If you are in contact with other classmates that won't see article, please pass along this information.

Musicians invited to Circle jam

There will be a circle jam Saturday, Sept. 9, from 5 to 8 p.m. in the hall under the water tower at the Godley Park District, 500 S. Kankakee Street, Godley.

Bring your instrument and play, sing or just enjoy.

The free event is open to everyone including musicians and listeners. Donations will be accepted.

Circle jams are social hours featuring a mix of music from classic country to bluegrass and more. For more information call Randy Kiefling at 815-237-8139 or 815-210-8563.

Illinois home sales down considerably compared to same time last year

BY KEVIN BESSLER
THE CENTER SQUARE

The once red hot Illinois housing market continues to cool off.

According to data released by Illinois Realtors, home sales in July were down 21.4% compared to the same period last year.

Daniel McMillan, head of the Stuart Handler Department of Real Estate at the University of Illinois at Chicago, said there is one major factor that has affected sales.

“I think the main culprit for this is really just the fact that interest rates have stayed high and you had this long period of really low interest rates, so you have a lot of homeowners who are sitting on fairly low interest rates and they are reluctant to put their

house on the market,” McMillan said.

Available housing inventory in July 2023 totaled 19,432 homes for sale, a 34.7% decrease from 29,774 homes on the market in July 2022.

As a result of low inventories, buyers are now looking at new construction. Sales of newly constructed homes nationwide were up 4.4% in July from the month before, and up over 31% from a year ago. The spike in sales indicates that buyers are still eager to buy homes, despite steep borrowing costs and elevated prices.

In Illinois, the statewide median price of \$285,000 was 5.6% higher than it was last year at this time. The median price of a home in the Chicago Metro Area in July 2023 was \$340,000, up 5.3% from \$323,000 in July 2022.

“Our forecasts indicate that prices will continue to decline over the next three months, although they will remain higher than at this time last year,” McMillan said.

Where interest rates go is anyone's guess. Based on Freddie Mac data, the monthly average commitment rate for a 30-year, fixed-rate mortgage was 6.84% in July 2023, up slightly from the previous month's 6.71%.

Sarah Ware, president of the Chicago Association of Realtors, said there are several factors affecting the housing market this time of year.

“We're seeing buyers and sellers in a holding pattern due to student loan payments restarting, the school year beginning and a workforce returning to their offices,” she said in a statement.

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

APARTMENTS FOR RENT

2 bedroom apartment. 465 N. School Street in Diamond. Ground level, appliances included. Sewer, water, garbage included. \$1,025 a month plus \$1,025 security. 815-478-5448. cc35-38

Coal City - 2 BR, washer/dryer hookup. No pets. \$850/month, \$1,200 security deposit. Tenant pays utilities. References needed. Call and leave a message at 815-365-2829. cc32-35

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2 Bedroom Duplex Ranch Style. Only 2 units per building. 1/2 mile from I-55 in (Diamond, IL) Attached garage, backyard. Oak cabinets, concrete drive, washer & dryer hook-up. All maintenance included. \$1,050.00 per month plus all utilities. Available 9/1/23. No Smoking or Pets & Year Lease. 815-351-2494 cr32-35

FOR FREE

Granny Smith apples, Hintze Road, Wilmington. 815-476-7414. fr35-36

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Shop for rent in Gardner, IL. Complete with air compressor, hoist for up to 7,000 lbs. Two year lease only. Interested calls only. \$650 a month. Call 815-557-4010. cc32-35

GARAGE SALE

Braidwood - 141 S. Office Street. Friday, Saturday & Sunday, September 1, 2, 3 from 8AM-3PM. Tools, Hot Wheels, furniture. cc35

Braidwood - 159 W. Reed Street. Thursday, Friday & Saturday, September 7, 8 & 9 from 8:30AM-3PM. Moving Sale, including lots of Christmas. ca35-36

Shadow Lakes Annual Flea Market and yard sale Non Residents invited Labor Day Weekend Sat., Sept. 2 8am-3pm Entrance only Gate 3 off Navy road. Maps available at gates and pavilion. For info: 815-458-3647. (No entry after 2 p.m.) ch34-35

HELP WANTED

Looking for an experienced handyman, no contractors, who have remodeling experience. Painting, hanging cabinets, laying floors & carpet, etc. \$25/hr for 8 hrs. Willing to work with a flexible schedule. Call or text 618-380-6031. cc33-36

LOST & FOUND

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

MISCELLANEOUS

Appliances for sale. Double oven \$200, over oven microwave \$25, dishwasher \$50. All are white and in good condition. 815-302-1460. ck35

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

MOTORCYCLES

2004 Harley-Davidson Sportster 1200 Custom. 29,121 miles. Many after market parts. \$5,500 obo. 815-955-2216. ca35-36



REAL ESTATE

SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE of 491 North Walker Street, Braidwood, IL 60408 (The property is a single family. The property has a three car garage. The garage is detached. The exterior is vinyl siding. The color is gray. The gas is off. The water is off. The property does not have a fence. The property is vacant.) On the 7th day of September, 2023 to be held at 12:00 noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 904, Joliet, IL 60432, under Case Title: **Nationstar Mortgage LLC d/b/a Mr. Cooper Plaintiff V. Jeffrey Deale; Angela Deale Defendant. Case No. 22 FC 0864** in the Circuit Court of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, Will County, Illinois. Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County. Contact: **MCCALLA RAYMER LEIBERT PIERCE 1 N. Dearborn Suite 1300 Chicago, Illinois 60602 P: 312-346-9088 F:** Published in the Free Press Newspapers on Wed., August 16, 23 & 30, 2023

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Reduce fishing license fees for first timers signed into law

State Rep. Bob Rita has a new solution in Illinois law for anyone interested in fishing across the state but not so sure about paying the license fee. Rita, D-Blue Island, this year led the push for House Bill 2317. The bill significantly reduces the license fee for sport fishing or spearing for anyone 26 years old and older wanting to fish here. The bill passed the Illinois House and Senate earlier this spring and was recently signed into law. Today, Illinois residents who want to fish pay \$14.50 for an annual license if they are between 16 and 64 years old. Veterans and seniors get discounts off those fees. Non-residents pay \$31 for an annual license, or \$15 for a three-day license. As of Jan. 1, 2024 under the new law, the fees will drop

to a one-time annual fee of \$5 for Illinois residents, and \$10 for non-residents. Those qualifying for the new discount must be 26 or older and have not purchased a fishing license in the last 10 years. The new law is modeled after a successful program in Wisconsin to encourage more fishing license sales. "We hope that this legislation will encourage a new generation of anglers to pick up a fishing pole for the first time and discover the beautiful spaces Illinois has to offer," said Eliot Clay, State Programs Director for the Illinois Environmental Council. Original estimates found thousands of people could possibly take advantage of the new fishing license fee discounts.

Sensory Sundays coming to Four Rivers

The Forest Preserve District of Will County is offering Sensory Sundays program Sept 3 and Oct. 1 from 11 a.m.-noon, at the Four Rivers Environmental Education Center, Channahon. Experience the exhibits and trails of Four Rivers on your own terms. This independent program is for guests with sensory-processing needs, social anxiety, or post-traumatic stress disorder. Buddy bags, noise-canceling headphones and handheld audio units will be available for use. Staff will be on hand to help. Free, all ages. Register by the Saturday before each program.

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Cheval files petition for adoption

PUBLIC NOTICE

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

IN THE ADOPTION OF: **LISA CHEVAL, Petitioner and Plenary Guardian, Plaintiffs, vs. RAFAEL CEJA, Natural Father, and JESSICA M. CHEVAL, Natural Mother, and JOSEPH R. CEJA, SOFIA M. CEJA, and ANTHONY J. CEJA, minor children sought to be adopted, Defendants.**
Case No. 2023 AD86

ADOPTION NOTICE
To: Jessica M. Cheval, last known address 18423 Butterfield Blvd., Morgan Hill, CA. 95037 Rafael Ceja, last known address, 3930 West 84th Place, Chicago, Illinois 60629. Unknown Fathers and All Who It May Concern.

Take notice that a Petition under the Juvenile Court Act was filed on 20th day of July, 2023 in the Twelfth Judicial Circuit of Will County, Illinois, for the adoption of the following named children Joseph R. Ceja, Sofia M. Ceja and Anthony J. Ceja.

Now therefore unless you Jessica M. Cheval, Rafael Ceja, Unknown Father and all whom it may concern, file your answer to the Petition in said suit or otherwise file your appearance therein, in the Circuit Court of Will County, Room 2, of the River Valley Justice Center, at 3208 West McDonough Street, in the City of Joliet, Illinois, on or before September 16, 2023, a default may be entered against you after that day and a Judgement entered in accordance with the prayer of said Petition.
JENNIFER M. LYNCH

BY: Jennifer M. Lynch
1861 Black Road
Joliet, IL 60435
815-725-8000
Atty No.: 06275404
Published in the Free Press Advocate, Wednesday, Aug. 16, 23, and 30, 2023.

Attorney Lynch files Russ 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
GENEVIEVE RUSS, Deceased;
No. 23PR395

CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given to creditors of the death of Genevieve Russ. Letters of Office were issued to Mark Hayes whose address is 129 Oakwood Drive, Bolingbrook, Illinois 60440 as Independent Administrator whose attorney of record is Jennifer M. Lynch of June, Prodehl, Renzi & Lynch, L.L.C., 1861 Black Road, Joliet, Illinois 60435.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Circuit Clerk's Office, Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before the 16th day of February, 2024, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. 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.

Jennifer M. Lynch
Deceased
For the Estate of Genevieve Russ,

BY: Jennifer M. Lynch
1861 Black Road
Joliet, IL 60435
815-725-8000
Atty No.: 06275404
Published in the Free Press Advocate, Wednesday, Aug. 16, 23 and 30, 2023.

Attorney Lynch files Russ 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
PAULINE RUSS, Deceased;
No. 23PR393

CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given to creditors of the death of Pauline Russ. Letters of Office were issued to Mark Hayes whose address is 129 Oakwood Drive, Bolingbrook, Illinois 60440 as Independent Administrator whose attorney of record is Jennifer M. Lynch of June, Prodehl, Renzi & Lynch, L.L.C., 1861 Black Road, Joliet, Illinois 60435.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Circuit Clerk's Office, Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before the 16th day of February, 2024, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. 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.

Jennifer M. Lynch
Deceased
For the Estate of Pauline Russ,

BY: Jennifer M. Lynch
1861 Black Road
Joliet, IL 60435
815-725-8000
Atty No.: 06275404
Published in the Free Press Advocate, Wednesday, Aug. 16, 23 and 30, 2023.

Attorney Lynch files Ferguson 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
DANIEL J. FERGUSON, Deceased;
No. 23PR466

CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given to creditors of the death of Daniel J. Ferguson. Letters of Office were issued to Mary Ferguson whose address is 25262 Forest Edge Drive, Channahon, IL 60410 as Independent Administrator whose attorney of record is Jennifer M. Lynch of June, Prodehl, Renzi & Lynch, L.L.C., 1861 Black Road, Joliet, Illinois 60435.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Circuit Clerk's Office, Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before the 16th day of February, 2024, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. 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.

Jennifer M. Lynch
Deceased
For the Estate of Daniel J. Ferguson,

BY: Jennifer M. Lynch
1861 Black Road
Joliet, IL 60435
815-725-8000
Atty No.: 06275404
Published in the Free Press Advocate, Wednesday, Aug. 16, 23 and 30, 2023.

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

SUDOKU - Here's how it works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14			15						16			
17			18						19			
20		21					22					
23				24	25					26	27	
	28			29				30				
31	32			33		34	35	36			37	
38			39	40						41		
42			43					44	45			
46	47	48				49			50			
51			52	53	54				55		56	57
		58						59				
60	61					62	63			64		
65				66						67		
68				69							70	

CLUES ACROSS

1. Midway between east and southeast
4. At right angles to a ship's length
9. William Penn's business partner
14. ___ de plume
15. Accomplished soccer coach
16. Bone cavities
17. ___ juris: independent
18. Popular Philly sandwich
20. Northern Ireland county
22. Performing artist
23. S S S
24. Lacks flavor
28. Commercials
29. Anno Domini (in the year of Our Lord)
30. Qatar's capital
31. Indigenous peoples of Alberta
33. Popular footwear
37. Indicates position
38. Anglican cathedral
39. Aircraft part
41. Before
42. Blood group
43. Secretary organ
44. Fencing swords
46. The small projection of a mammary gland
49. Technological advancement
50. Male parent
51. Dissociable
55. More cold
58. Cape Verde Islands capital
59. Blood disorder
60. Creative
64. Sun up in New York
65. Made angry
66. Relieves
67. Brooklyn hoopster
68. Seasonings
69. Movable barriers
70. Attempt

CLUES DOWN

1. Occur as a result of
2. Spiritual essences
3. Representative
4. Entering
5. Nobel Prize-winning physicist
6. Midway between northeast and east
7. Consumed
8. Tablelands
9. Kids' craft accessory
10. Not known
11. Sound directed through two or more speakers
12. A major division of geological time
13. Wild ox
19. Shock treatment
21. Turner and Lasso are two
24. Genus of flowering plants
25. Relating to ductless glands
26. Stock certificate
27. Satisfies
31. Places to enjoy a rest
32. Edward ___, author and writer
34. "___ but goodie"
35. One hundredth of a liter
36. Shabbiness
40. TV personality Roker
41. Triangular upper part of a building
45. Speed at which you move
47. Offend
48. A reference point to shoot at
52. Forays
53. Biblical city
54. Blatted
56. Northern sea duck
57. Shabby (slang)
59. Allege
60. Tax collector
61. Whereabouts unknown
62. Chinese philosophical principle
63. Indicates equal

☼ ☽ ☾ ☿ ♋ ♌ ♍ ♎ ♏ ♐ ♑ ♒ ♓ ♔ ♕ ♖ ♗ ♘ ♙ ♚ ♛ ♜ ♝ ♞ ♟ ♠ ♡ ♢ ♣ ♤ ♥ ♦ ♧ ♨ ♩ ♪ ♫ ♬ ♭ ♮ ♯ ♺ ♻ ♼ ♽ ♾ ♿

CRYPTO FUN

☼ ☽ ☾ ☿ ♋ ♌ ♍ ♎ ♏ ♐ ♑ ♒ ♓ ♔ ♕ ♖ ♗ ♘ ♙ ♚ ♛ ♜ ♝ ♞ ♟ ♠ ♡ ♢ ♣ ♤ ♥ ♦ ♧ ♨ ♩ ♪ ♫ ♬ ♭ ♮ ♯ ♺ ♻ ♼ ♽ ♾ ♿

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to camping.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 9 = T)

A. 9 6 7 9
Clue: Camping shelter

B. 8 24 23 2 9 5 24 7
Clue: Spot on map

C. 1 6 2 14
Clue: Equipment

D. 24 13 6 14 7 5 1 3 9
Clue: Lasting one evening

Answers: A. tent B. location C. gear D. overnight

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to camping.

HITPC

Answer: Pitch

Guess Who?

I am a comedic actress born in Massachusetts on August 28, 1961. I was a member of an improv group before becoming a star of TV and film. I'm known for roles in "Legally Blonde" and "The White Lotus."

Answer: Jennifer Coolidge

CAMPSITE WORD SEARCH

U L U S C A R A B I N E R W S P C G F H
L A U E Y I Y W G T S D A O M W N R T Y
T Y O R L T D U C T I N D E R I M O A V
N P S O F C Y A Y C P U L W S U M U Z R
E I A M V L M O L P Y A L H T N N N G O
T P O S I P L M P B S T S E K A T S D T I
C M S N E N K I N D L I N G G D V G C H W
O O E R G S L E E P I N G B A G U O C H
E S W P S G C D P E Z A L B V K S V W H
M A P B P W D A N D E U G V T C R E D S
O P S O O O D E N U R R B C O A A R N P
D A V I T Y M H K O O I D S C P V B H M
L D S O N A C U V I P R B V F Y T I P I
H W M L R L B A L P P Y G W M A S L K G
A A S F W B F L M E A V C P O D P L K R
L M A I R R Z D E P O K S D M N K Y E B
Y L D Y Z B K I U H I G P F V A S C A A
R U V E R I F P M A C N D R W K C A K G
E E W Y Z P P K G C O U G B W T N T G
W C M Z T O Z W H I K E R L H W E V D A

WORDS

A-FRAME
BILLY CAN
BLAZE
CAMPER
CAMPFIRE
CAMPGROUND
CANOPY
CARABINER
COWBOY CAMPING
DAYPACK
DOME
FLY
GROUND COVER
GUYLINES
HIKE
KINDLING
PAD
POTABLE
SLEEPING BAG
SMORES
SNOWBIRD
STAKES
TENT
TINDER

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

Build a Bug offered for youngsters

The Forest Preserve of Will County is hosting Build a Bug program on Saturday, Sept. 9 at Four Rivers Environmental Education Center, Channahon from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Construct a critter from provided materials. Choose from a diverse group of animals. Examples will be available along with fun bug facts. Free, all ages.

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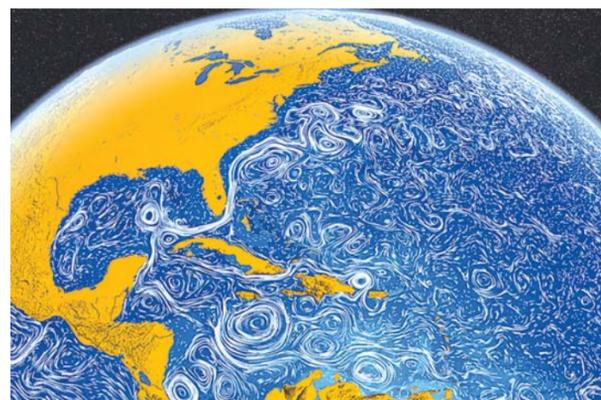
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Concerns over the collapse of the Gulf Stream

EARTH TALK

Questions & Answers
About Our Environment



Dear EarthTalk: Could the supposedly imminent collapse of the Gulf Stream cause another ice age?

-- B.L., San Francisco, CA
The Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC)-aka the "Gulf Stream"-is a vital system of ocean currents, driven by temperature and salinity disparities at various locales and depths.

Warm surface waters are propelled poleward by winds and tides. At the poles, the water cools, forming ice crystals devoid of salt and nutrients. The denser salt and nutrients sink to the cooler waters below, while warmer, less dense waters rise.

This transports warmth and nutrients to the coasts of Africa and the Americas. In essence, the AMOC serves as a conveyor belt that transports nutrients and heat all around the globe.

Why are people worried about a Gulf Stream collapse? Rising global temperatures cause rapid melting of polar ice caps, introducing non-saline water. This dilutes deep currents, weakens AMOC's upwelling, and disrupts circulation. Freshwater doesn't sink rapidly, leading to a "traffic jam." University College London researcher David Thornalley reports that the AMOC is at its weakest point in 1,600 years.

The future of AMOC is debated. Some predict it will halt; others foresee a slowdown. Some believe the point-of-no-return will come in 2025 while optimists believe we

NASA's computer generated view of the gulf stream.

have until 2095 to stabilize the situation. Regardless, scientists have reached a consensus on the consequences of melting polar ice.

The U.S. East Coast will certainly experience flooding and cooling. The Gulf Stream brings warm waters along the east coast of North America. If it stops completely, the East Coast may experience a 9°F cooldown within a decade. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) estimates that water levels are rising at a rate of one inch every three years.

Between now and 2050, coastal sea levels are projected to rise one to four feet.

Areas like Miami, New Orleans, Atlantic City, Manhattan, Long Island, San Francisco, San Diego and Honolulu could face severe infrastructure damage from flooding. This is not a global-scale Ice Age, but it certainly implicates grave repercussions.

Areas in Africa and Asia will grapple with drought. The AMOC brings monsoonal rainfall to areas in West Africa and South Asia. Without this circulation, countries such as Sudan, Senegal, India and Thailand will encounter drought. The supply of freshwater for human activities and agriculture will be jeopardized.

The Amazon Rainforest may transform into a savanna. The AMOC brings rainfall to the Amazon Rainforest. Without this precipitation, Harvard researchers hypothesize that this tropical forest may transition into a dry savanna. The Amazon would absorb less carbon dioxide and produce less oxygen.

In addition, the over three million Amazon species will struggle to survive.

Biodiversity in aquatic ecosystems will decline. The AMOC transports nutrients and oxygen. Without the circulating presence of these organic materials, populations of life forms on all tiers of the food chain will most likely dwindle.

Though neither the collapse of the Gulf Stream nor a modern-day Ice Age are guaranteed, the declining rate of the AMOC poses serious threats to our current way of life and the survival of other organisms around the globe. Reining in carbon emissions at home and around the globe is our only hope of avoiding this among many cataclysmic natural disasters in the years to come.

EarthTalk® is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit EarthTalk. Send questions to: question@earth-talk.org.

Spend the day with the Goose Lake Prairie Partners.
Bring lawn chairs, blankets, bug spray, sun hats and enjoy the day!

25th Annual Prairie Day - September 16, 2023

Prairie Grove Picnic Area at Goose Lake State Natural Area
5010 North Jugtown Road, Morris, IL 60450
From 10 A.M. to 3 P.M.

Sponsored by Constellation
Assisted by the Goose Lake Prairie Partners and the GLPSNA Staff.

Events of the Day - 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

- Illinois Conservation Police Wildlife Mobile Exhibit with Conservation Police Officer assisting.
- Jackie & Gerrik Grove presenting Animal Rescue & Rehab.
- Louis P. Aiello, Jr. presenting the American Indian Traveling Exhibit.
- Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie Staff presenting Program Information on Midewin.
- Falcon Show and Tell, with Richard Escutia.
- Prairie Wagon Rides and Walks with Chris Danek and Tom Williams. (Must have free tickets from the ticket agent.)
- 4-H Youth Development

Special Performers

- Bill Bradley - Coal Black Exotics - Reptiles. 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
- Nick Bartholomew - Illinois Storm Chasers. 12 Noon - 1:30 p.m.
- Bob Wilkens with T.E.A.C.H. Outdoors teaching casting instruction for children of all ages. 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. or longer, if needed.

Park Amenities

- The Prairie Partner Gift Shop and Food Tents (Brats, Hot Dogs, & Hamburgers.) will be available.
- The Jug Town Picnic Area, Butterfly Barn, Park Trails will be available.
- The New Children's Educational Center in the Prairie Grove Picnic Area will be open.

Visit gooselakeprairie.org and [Goose Lake Prairie Partner's Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/gooselakeprairie) for more information.

A Raffle for the Birds.

- "A Birder's Pack" raffle will be held at 2:30 p.m. in the Gift Shop tent. Raffle tickets are \$1.00 each and six for \$5.00. Tickets sales in the Gift Shop.
- Winner may pick up The Birder's Pack prize after the 2:30 p.m. drawing. The Pack must be picked up by September 30th or another winner will be drawn.

NOTE: Cragg Cabin Will Not be open but take a peek in the windows. The Visitor Center is closed indefinitely.



"Prairie Wagon Ride."
"Falcon Show & Tell with Richard Escutia."



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There is Free Parking in the Prairie Grove Picnic Area!!!

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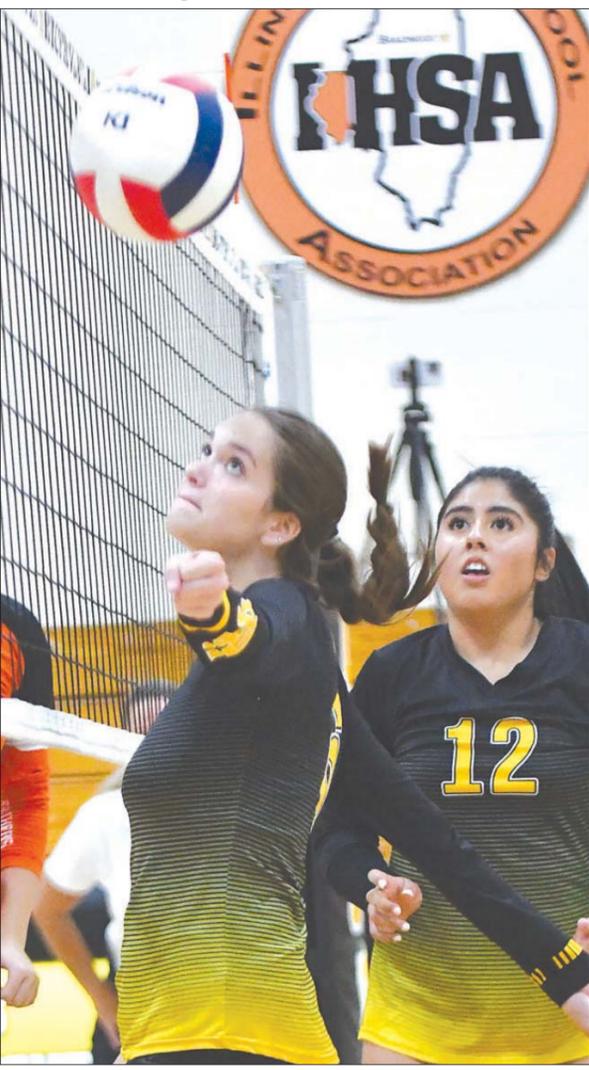
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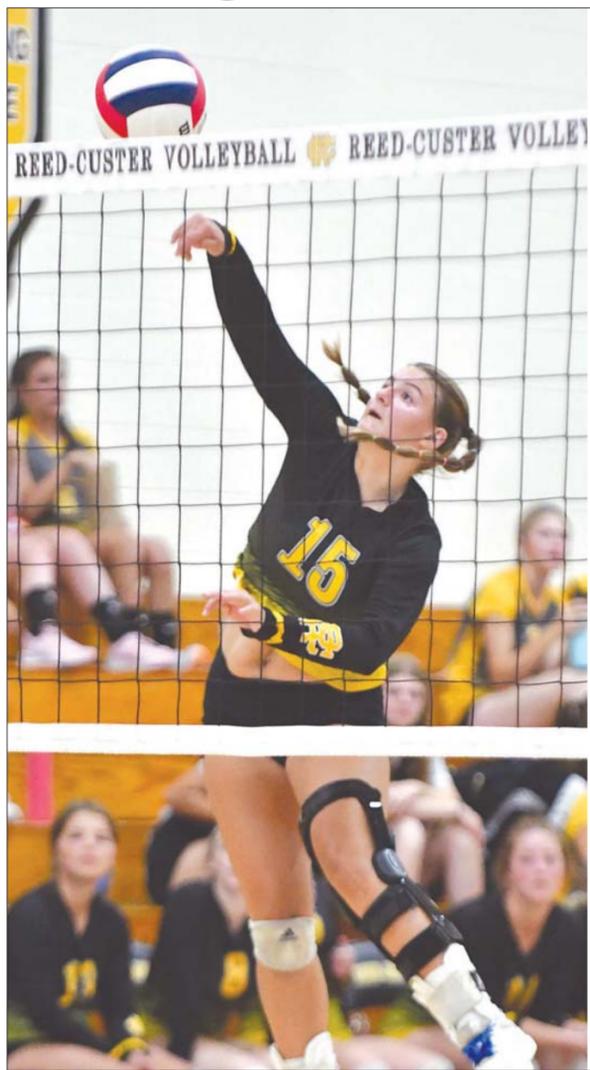
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COMET SPORTS

Lady Comets bring their skills to the net



A QUICK HIT - Reed-Custer senior Kaylee Tribble gets a left hand on the ball to get it over the net. Nearby to assist is teammate Adilene Fierro.



FIRING A KILL for the varsity Lady Comets is Payton Isaac, a junior middle hitter.



RIGHT SIDE HITTER Kara Steffes fires a kill for the Lady Comets while winning at home.

Fishing pays for Casting Comets

The Reed-Custer Casting Comets, which include Madysen Meyers, Brock Billingsley, Ethan Furlan, Lorne Wilkins, Micah Crisp, Jacob Price, Alex Bielfeldt and Bret Cavanaugh, all contributed to the success of this weekend's tournaments at Cal-Sag/Calumet Lake and Des Plaines/Kankakee River.

It is not easy fishing all weekend when you need to get up at 2 a.m. and 3 a.m., but the Comets did and landed success both days.

The first highlight came on Saturday at Cal-Sag/Calumet Lake with a 3-pound, 15-ounce largemouth bass caught by Lorne Wilkins and awarded him the "Big Bass" award for the day.

In addition with his partner angler Ethan Furlan, they took home first place for "Biggest total weight" at 11 pounds, 14 ounces. This was followed by Cavanaugh and Bielfeldt who came in 19th with a weight of 8 pounds, .03 ounces. Meyers and Billingsley finished in 21st place with a weight of 7 pounds, 15 ounces. Great fishing out of a field of 43 boats.

Sunday resulted in another top 10 place for the Casting Comets, on the DesPlaines/Kankakee River with Cavanaugh and Bielfeldt taking home 8th place with a weigh-in of 8 pounds, 1 ounce. This was followed by Crisp and Price who came in 24th with a weight of 5lb. .01oz, Meyers and Billingsley came in 34th with a weight of 3 pounds, 6 ounces, and Furlan and Wilkins placed 50th with a weight of 1lb. .04oz. Again, great fishing out of a field of 62 boats!!

There is amazing dedication and effort from all our anglers; Madysen Meyers, Brock Billingsley, Ethan Furlan, Lorne Wilkins, Micah Crisp and Jacob Price, Bret Cavanaugh and Alex Bielfeldt. Great Job Team!!

Lastly but certainly not least, Thank you to our amazing Coaches (Pete Banach, Mark Stewart, Tony Tessone, Ryan Cavanaugh and Bill Howell), and our parents as we hosted the Saturday Cal-Sag tournament. Then on Sunday, Mrs. Tonya Cavanaugh went with Ryan Cavanaugh in the dawn of light on the Des-Plaines/Kankakee and took many pictures for us!!

FIRST PLACE and Big Bass Award were captured by members of the Reed-Custer Casting Comets on Saturday. Awarded a \$215 scholarship check for first place were (from left) coach Tony Tessone, Ethan Furlan and Lorne Wilkins who caught the biggest bass of the day.



CASTING COMETS Madysen Meyers and Brock Billingsley finished in 21st place with a weight of 7 pounds, 15 ounces.



CASTING COMETS Micah Crisp and Jacob Price hold their catch while entering their weigh in with coach Bill Howell.



SUNDAY SMALLIES —Casting Comets Bret Cavanaugh, Alex Bielfeldt and coach Mark Stewart display their catch of 8 pounds, 1 ounce while fishing the Kankakee River Sunday, good enough for 8th place.



DOUBLE DEFENSE—The Lady Comets Emma Wilson (left) and Beth Crater converge onto the ball during last week's home victory.

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New-look Comets blitz Elmwood Park

BY JIM SHELDON
SPORTS

Sometimes all you need is an opportunity. Senior Rex Pfeifer made the most of his first start at running back, scoring a school-record five touchdowns in the first half as Reed-Custer scored 35 second-quarter points, and rolled Elmwood Park, 63-14 in the season opener Friday in front of the home faithful.

"We figured they would come out swinging with a new coach and plus we graduated a lot of guys and had pieces to replace. It was a little different than what we were accustomed to," said head coach Gavin Johnston.

"It was hot. It was muggy. We had some guys getting tired, going down with cramps."

After their first possession ended in a turnover on a bad snap, it was the R-C defense that stepped up, forcing Elmwood Park to go backwards.

Pfeifer then broke loose for an 18 yd TD run with 4:38 left in the first.

Special teams made their mark next as sophomore Kris Budick blocked a Tiger punt. One play later, Pfeifer cashed in from four yards for a 14-0 advantage.

"We talk about how special teams are really important and it definitely got the ball rolling for us. It could be anybody on the team and in that situation, it was Budick in his first varsity game."

"He came off the left edge, did a great job and got his hands on it, setting us up on the next play for another Pfeifer touchdown."

Elmwood Park would respond though with a long pass play setting up a eight yard touchdown run, snapping a scoreless streak of 105 minutes against the Comets. The extra point missed and R-C took a 14-6 lead to the second quarter.

From there, it was all Comets. Pfeifer scored on runs of 10 and one yard, respectively for a 27-6 lead with 4:40 left in the half. Big play on the fourth TD drive was a 46 yard pass from Jacob Reardon to Collin Monroe.

"About the middle of the second quarter, we really found our stride. Once our kids got



Photo by Angela Rose

HERE COME THE COMETS! Reed-Custer fans were on their feet Friday when the Comets came out of the helmet all fired up for the season opener against Elmwood Park. The Comets scored easily, winning 63-14 starting the count for how many year's team can win in a row. Charging onto the field are Comets Lorne Wilkins (63), Cooper Smith (8) and Rex Pfeifer (15). See sports for a complete story and more photos.

the momentum, they just get rolling with it so that was really good to see," Johnston said.

Elmwood Park would find the endzone again, this time on a 34 yard touchdown pass. The two-point conversion cut their deficit to 27-14.

Just 27 seconds later, Reardon broke away for a 46 yd run and scored from a yard out on the next play. Travis Bohac ran in the two-point conversion for a 35-14 lead.

After a Tiger three-and-out, it was Pfeifer

for a fifth time. His two-yard run extended the lead to 28. The senior finished with 93 yards on 14 carries and his record five touchdowns.

"A couple of years ago, we tried to track down stats and records because we didn't know where they were so we just started taking on our own and we think it's a single game record as well. He actually had a sixth called back right before half."

"A really strong showing from Rex and also a testament to our offensive line being able to

pave the way for him."

Just before half, it was Landen Robinson's turn to get in on the fun as he scored from six yards out.

Early in the third, Reardon faked the hand-off and went 46 yards untouched to start the running clock.

In his first start, Reardon rushed for 142 yards on six carries and was 3-for-5 passing for 56 yards.

"You really can't ask for more from a kid making his first varsity start at quarterback replacing Jake McPherson. That's pretty tough shoes to fill."

"On top of that, he had a death in his family and was at a funeral earlier Friday so it was probably an emotional day for him as well. It was really cool to see him perform the way he did. Not many 16 or 17 year old kids can be dealing with that and still go out there and perform the way he did."

"It was cool to see him step up and lead the offense the way we needed him to. Our supporting cast made it much easier for him to have a great game as well."

R-C outgained Elmwood Park 463-151 with 407 yards coming on the ground. Budick wrapped up his debut with a six yard touchdown run and finished with four carries for 21 yards.

Robinson had 60 yards on four rushes and Dominic Eddy also recorded a 60 yard run. Travis Bohac tallied 21 yards on four carries and had an eight yard reception and Joe Bembenek added a three yard run.

Defensively, the Comets completely shut down the Elmwood Park rushing attack, holding them to just three yards.

"Matt Gereaux and Jeremy Eggleston were flying all over the field and had multiple sacks. They really stood out. Bembenek had an interception and did a really good job at corner."

"On one of their touchdown passes, we actually had a hand on it and it tipped over our head and into the receiver's hands. It was a really good showing to to shut down the run. In high school football, if you can't stop the run, you're not going to win the game."

The Comets play at Johnsbury on Friday.



Photo by Angela Rose

ON DEFENSE for the Reed-Custer is senior Travis Bohac who pushes the Elmwood Park rusher out of bounds.



Photo by Angela Rose

RUNNING THE BALL for the varsity Comets on Friday is junior Landen Robinson.



Photo by Angela Rose

FUTURE COMETS — Young boys and girls come running out of the helmet on Friday when Reed-Custer hosted Elmwood Park for the season opener. The Jr. Comet cheerleaders, players and coaches were invited to feel the thrill of running onto the field.



Photo by Angela Rose

ANOTHER TOUCHDOWN—The Comets come off the field after scoring in the fourth period and taking a 63-14 lead on Friday. Providing a helmet bump to Kris Budick (10) ran it in from 6 yards out is Joe Bembenek (85).

The Comets head on the road for 'measuring stick' game

BY JIM SHELDON
SPORTS

When you make back-to-back quarterfinals appearances, it can be hard finding a team who wants to play you.

With the Arcola contract ended, Reed-Custer will travel to Johnsbury (1-0), a team that advanced to the second round of the Class 4A playoffs last year and went 23-2 overall from 2016-17.

The Skyhawks defeated Woodstock North 25-12 last week.

"A few years ago, they really had it rolling. They had some nice talent coming through. A couple teams in the conference have played them in recent years, but they are kind of similar to us, a spread team that graduated a ton of talent," said Johnston.

"They do have a returning junior quarterback in Anthony Bravieri who threw for about 20 touchdowns last year. He's about 6'4", 6'5". They're pretty big and are going to

try to load the box."

Johnsbury played at Wilmington in 2021 and lost 28-13. They also played Coal City in the playoffs in 2018 and were defeated 33-14. They play in the Kishwaukee River Blue conference with former I-8 members Plano and Sandwich.

"It will be a great test before we head into conference play. If we want to be the team that we are capable of being this year, this is a good stepping stone and measuring stick for us."

"We got pretty tired on Friday. Luckily, we didn't have to play a full four quarters. I think the kids will be back in their normal routine."

This starts a stretch of three of four on the road for R-C with only next week's Homecoming game against Peotone in front of the home faithful.

The sophomore game will kickoff at 5 p.m. with the varsity contest to follow at approximately 7 p.m.