



Shop Local. Eat Local. Support Local.

Thurs., Sept 17 | 5-8pm
Historic Downtown Wilmington



\$1.50
Vol. 68, Issue 37
1 section • 12 pages
Not over 75% advertising
www.braidwoodjournal.com

BRAIDWOOD JOURNAL.com

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2026

A FREE PRESS NEWSPAPER • (815) 476-7966

126 acres in Custer Township to become new preserve

The Forest Preserve of District Will County announced Friday it has purchased 126 acres of land in Custer Township that will be known as Horse Creek Preserve – Kang Woodland.

"It's exciting to create a new preserve after almost 100 years and 24,000 acres under our belt," said Forest Preserve Executive Director Tracy Chapman. "Horse Creek is the defining natural feature of the property. It serves as an important waterway and habitat corridor, making the decision to name the site Horse Creek Preserve a pretty easy one."

This land was first purchased and preserved by a Chicago couple who dedicated decades to protecting the property, beginning in the 1980s.

Dr. Shin Theke Kang and his wife, Tae Sue Kang, reforested some of the agricultural portions of the property to complement the legacy trees, including one bur oak thought to be hundreds of years old, that had been growing along Horse Creek.

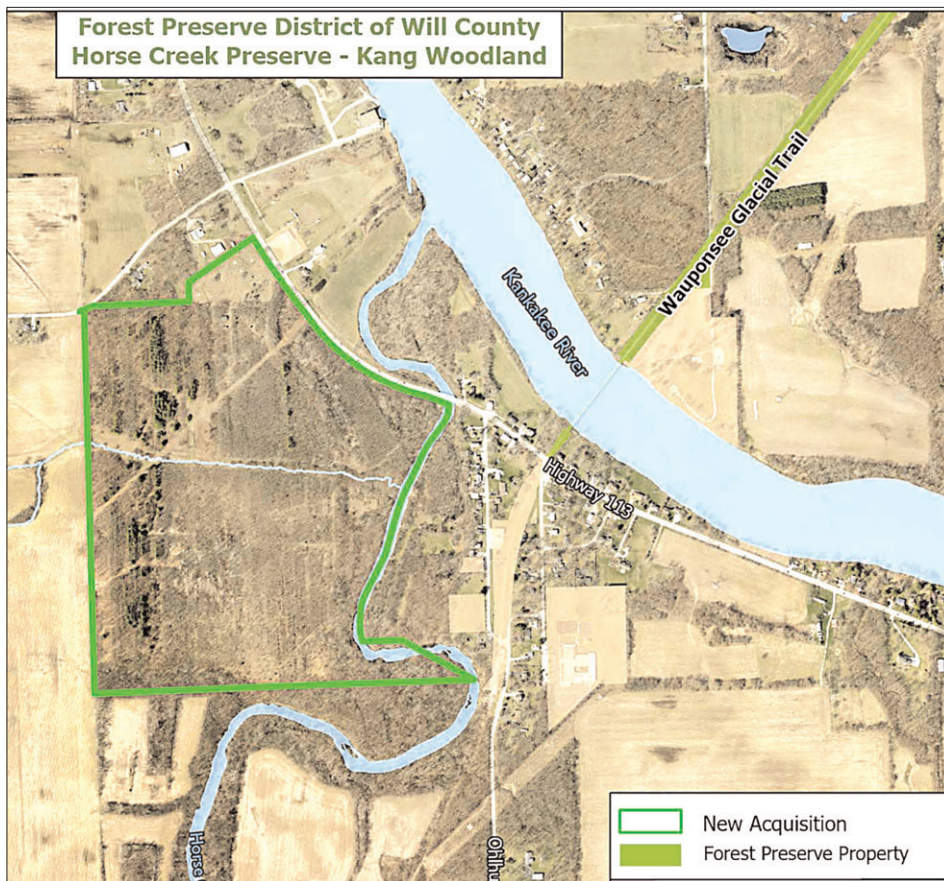
The Kangs hired a company to plant 40,000 trees, and many of those survived even without irrigation.

The parcel is now home to more than 32,000 black walnut, oak, maple, ash, pine and cherry trees. The family has documented a robust list of wildlife, including the yellow-billed cuckoo, slender glass lizard, white-tailed deer, bald eagle, wild turkey, ring-necked pheasant, red fox, native songbirds such as warblers, thrushes and vireos, and pollinators in the woodland edge and riparian (water's edge) zones.

High-quality habitat

The purchase is part of the Forest Preserve's \$50 million 2025-2030 Capital Improvement Program, which has dedicated funds to acquisition, restoration and preserve improvements. So far, 902 acres have been purchased, including the Horse Creek land, bringing the total acreage the District owns, manages and leases to 24,228.

"Horse Creek is a beautiful stream with high-quality aquatic habitat that



Map courtesy Forest Preserve District of Will County

THE AREA HIGHLIGHTED in green shows the 126 acres of land recently purchased in Custer Township by the Forest Preserve District of Will County that will be known as Horse Creek Preserve-Kang Woodland.

flows into the Kankakee River," said Juli Mason, director of conservation programs for the District. "There are numerous records of rare fish, mussels, and other aquatic wildlife in the vicinity."

The property protects important natural resources, especially the area along the creek, and it has tremendous restora-

tion potential, she added.

"By conserving this section of Horse Creek and its surrounding corridor, we are helping protect water quality, aquatic habitat and the wildlife that depends on the connection between Horse Creek and the Kankakee River," she said.

The parcel's proximity to the southern

terminus of the Wauponsee Glacial Trail also made it an enticing purchase, said Colleen Novander, the Forest Preserve District's director of planning and land preservation.

"Our first acquisition in the Horse Creek watershed provides an exciting opportunity to expand recreational opportunities in southern Will County," she said. "The property has the potential to support an internal trail system and associated amenities while also providing an opportunity to extend the Wauponsee Glacial Trail south of Route 113. Ultimately, we envision this property serving as an important southern access point and connection to the broader trail network."

'In my heart'

The Kangs, who reforested a portion of the land, now live in California. Their daughter, Mae Kang, responded to questions via email about the history of the land. She said she talked to her dad recently about what motivated him to reforest the property.

"At 90 years old, his answer was much simpler and more personal than I expected," she said. "He said, 'Because land and trees go together.' He told me that whenever he owned land, he planted trees. When I asked him why, he said, 'I planted the trees because that was my heart.'"

Her dad devoted his professional career to the study of ancient civilizations and languages, and he served as curator of the World Heritage Museum at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign.

"He taught Sumerian, Babylonian and the ancient near Eastern history and worked directly with ancient cuneiform tablets – clay documents written thousands of years ago in Mesopotamia," Mae said.

Her mother, Tae Sue, who was the steady support behind her father, founded a Korean American Senior Center in Chicago, which continues today as the Hanul Family Alliance. She also served as president of the Coalition of Limited

SEE PRESERVE PAGE 2

Braidwood officials talk about how Flock cameras keep community safe

BY ROSE PANIERI
STAFF WRITER

Though not officially listed on the city council agenda, Flock cameras are a hot topic, and Braidwood officials couldn't help but broach the subject at the Sept. 8 meeting.

Commissioner Dale Walsh recently attended a presentation on Flock Safety cameras in neighboring Wilmington which prompted The discussion among Braidwood officials.

The Sept. 2 meeting at Wilmington City Hall was led by Phil Arnold, a former Wilmington and Shorewood police chief who now works for Flock Safety, headquartered in Atlanta, GA.

Walsh said the meeting drew significant public interest, with more than 50 people in attendance asking questions about how the cameras operate and exactly what information is collected.

"The main concerns were what did they take pictures of," Walsh told the council.

According to Walsh, the cameras function similarly to license plate readers already used on Illinois tollways. He said the system captures images of vehicle license plates but does not identify vehicle occupants.

"It's just a shot of the back of the vehicle with the license plate," Walsh said. "You can't see any individuals around it."

Walsh addressed concerns that information collected by the system could be shared with federal immigration authorities.

"They do not — and the State of Illinois will not let them — share any information with ICE," Walsh said.

Misuse of technology

Another topic discussed during the Wilmington meeting involved safeguards designed to prevent misuse of the technology by law enforcement officers. Walsh said presenters emphasized that monitoring systems are in place to identify improper searches and that authorities take abuse allegations seriously.

"There are safeguards in place to red flag any misuse," Walsh said.

Walsh noted that police officers attending the meeting described how the cameras have assisted criminal investigations and helped locate missing people. He cited information presented at the meeting indicating that approximately 10,000 missing individuals were located last year with assistance from the Flock camera network.

"It was a very informative meeting," Walsh said. "People asked good questions."

Walsh suggested that Braidwood consider hosting a similar public information session for residents interested in learning more about the technology.

Protecting residents

Mayor Todd Lyons concurred, stating that Braidwood's decision to install Flock cameras was driven by public safety concerns rather than an effort to monitor residents.

"When we first got presented with it, the intent was to protect our citizens, not catch our citizens," Lyons said.

The mayor explained that the city installed cameras at key entry and exit points after concerns about criminal activity near Interstate 55 and local businesses.

"We had some smash-and-grabs out by the interstate in our gas stations, and then they were coming off the interstate and going into our residential area," Lyons said.

Lyons said city officials consulted with other law enforcement agencies before purchasing the system and learned that similar technology had helped solve serious crimes, including homicide investigations.

"It was sold to me that it was a no-brainer that we'd get some cameras at our entrances," he said.

The mayor acknowledged recent media attention surrounding alleged misuse of automated license plate reader systems by some officers elsewhere in the country, but said policies and oversight measures have improved significantly since the technology was first introduced.

"There are a lot of positive things using these plate readers," Lyons said. "It's not a big deal until it saves a life or solves something important, a missing child. Then we're going to be grateful that we have it."

Check and balance

Eric Allen, Chief of the Braidwood Police Department told the council that the department has adopted Illinois best-practice policies governing use of the system and has implemented multiple safeguards to detect improper activity.

Officials said searches require a

SEE FLOCK PAGE 2

City approves demolition of Main Street lot

BY ROSE PANIERI
STAFF WRITER

A long-vacant property at 585 W. Main St. is slated for demolition after city officials selected the lowest responsible bid for the project, advancing efforts to remove what has been deemed a dangerous structure.

The Braidwood City Council approved Resolution 2026-09 authorizing a demolition contract for the property.

City Engineer Sean Kelly told the council that two bids were received. The low bid came from McPherson Masonry in the amount of \$14,500, while a proposal from Lee Werner Excavating totaled \$29,820, more than double the McPherson bid.

"We reviewed both bids on it," Kelly said. "The low bid was provided by Mr. McPherson. The amount of \$14,500."

Kelly explained that the demolition project consists of three primary components: Removal of trees and brush, demolition of the structure itself, and disposal of building materials.

One issue reviewed

during the bid evaluation involved asbestos-containing materials at the site. Kelly said McPherson did not include a separate charge for asbestos removal because the materials are considered non-friable asbestos and can be accepted at the contractor's disposal facility under existing procedures.

"He talked to his dumpers dumping everything. There is no special requirement provided because it's going to be non-friable asbestos," Kelly said. "It's actually going to be properly dumped and disposed of to begin with. There was no cost for that to him, so he did not charge that to the city."

As a result, the bid tabulation included line items for clearing trees and brush and demolishing the structure, but no separate asbestos-removal cost.

Kelly also noted that the city's Public Works Department will remove the building foundation following demolition of the structure, helping reduce project costs.



FALL INTO SAVINGS!

SALE VALID
9/17-9/23/26
Coal City, Braidwood
& Wilmington
CHECK OUT OUR
WEEKLY AD
@BERKOTFOODS.COM

USDA Choice
Angus Tender
Steak
Medallions

BOGO FREE!

Single: \$16.99/lb

DIGITAL COUPON

\$3.99
EA
LIMIT 4
LIMIT 1 OFFER*
Price without coupon: \$6.99

Chilean 3lb Bagged Halos

DIGITAL COUPON

\$8.99
EA
LIMIT 1
LIMIT 1 OFFER*
Price without coupon: \$11.99

Frito-Lay
Variety Pack
18 ct.

Preserve, continued from page 1

English Speaking Elderly.

"She devoted much of her life to advocating for older immigrants who faced language and cultural barriers in accessing health care, social services and community support," Mae said.

Dedication to stewardship

Mae said her parents' careers looked different, but they complemented each other.

"My father recovering and translating voices from thousands of years ago, and my mother helping immigrant elders have a voice in their own time. But both were acts of stewardship across generations."

That same dedication to stewardship led them to plant the trees at Horse Creek.

"The extraordinary part is what happened afterward," Mae said. "There was no irrigation infrastructure supporting the plantation. The trees had to establish themselves under the natural hydrologic conditions of the Horse Creek floodplain."

As the Kangs aged and relocated, they decided the Horse Creek land should be sold. The fate of the property was important to the family.

"Because after nearly half a century, we realized we were no longer deciding simply what should happen to a piece of family real estate," Mae said. "We were deciding what should happen to an ecosystem and to a piece of our parents' life's work."

Knowing the land is now a forest preserve feels like the proper outcome, she said.

"My father spent his career preserving the meaning of the past. My mother spent hers strengthening community in the present. Together, they created and cared for a landscape that can now be protected for the future."

Mae said she keeps going back to her dad saying he had the trees planted on the land because of what was in his heart.

"What began in his heart became a forest," she said. "Now, as Kang Woodland, that forest can become a permanent public legacy."

Flock, continued from page 1

documented reason, such as a traffic investigation, robbery investigation or other legitimate law enforcement purpose. Audit trails and automated alerts are used to identify unusual patterns that may indicate misuse.

Allen emphasized that data collected by the system is automatically deleted after 30 days unless it becomes part of an active investigation.

"So if we have an investigation that gets reported to the police department, it has to be within 30 days," Allen said during the discussion.

Officials acknowledged that some cases of misuse have occurred nationally but stressed that such incidents represent a very small fraction of the hundreds of thousands of officers using the technology.

According to police officials, community feedback in Braidwood has generally been supportive.

"I haven't experienced much pushback from our community," Allen said. "The community has been pretty supportive."

The council indicated it may consider hosting a future public information meeting to provide residents with additional information and answer questions about the city's Flock camera system.

In the absence of Commissioner James Mikel, Mayor Todd Lyons provided an update on recent police department activity and code enforcement efforts.

Covering the period from Aug. 25 through Sept. 7, Lyons reported that the Braidwood Police Department responded to 309 calls for service and completed 29 case reports.

During that same period, officers made seven arrests involving a total of 11 charges. Police also conducted 145 traffic stops, resulting in 36 citations and numerous written warnings. Five ordinance citations were also issued.

Lyons highlighted the city's ongoing efforts to address abandoned and inoperable vehicles through code enforcement. During the reporting period, two vehicles were brought into compliance by property owners without the need for towing or impoundment.

Dog Park project up for bids in Braidwood

PUBLIC NOTICE

Braidwood Dog Park

The City of Braidwood does hereby invite sealed bids for the Braidwood Dog Park project. Work will include earthwork operations, utilities, asphalt paving, concrete walks and paving, site furnishings, fencing, landscaping, signage, prefabricated park structures, and a drinking fountain.

Project manuals, including bid form and specifications, and construction documents are available after September 14, 2026, available from Accurate Repro, Inc., 2368 Corporate Lane, Naperville, IL 60563, 630-428-4433, www.rviplanroom.com. A non-refundable fee equal to Accurate Repro, Inc.'s charge for printing or digital download of the documents will be charged for each requested bid package.

Bids will be accepted at the City of Braidwood, 141 West Main Street, Braidwood, Illinois 60408, during regular office hours. All bids must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked with the Contractor's name and address, and "Bid for Braidwood Dog Park," on the face of the envelope. Bids must be received no later than 11:00AM October 5, 2026, and will be opened publicly at that time. All bidders will be required to submit Bid Security in the form of a Bid Bond, Certified Check, Cashier's Check in the amount of 10% of the Base Bid, payable to the City of Braidwood.

The City of Braidwood reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, parts of any and all proposals, or to waive technical errors or omissions in submitted proposals. No submitted bid may be withdrawn until a period of ninety (90) days after the bid opening date, without written consent of the City of Braidwood. The City of Braidwood encourages minority business firms to submit bids on this project and the success-ful contract bidder to utilize minority businesses as sub-contractors for supplies, equipment, services, and construction.

Questions should be directed to Mike Wood, RVI Planning + Landscape Architecture at (331) 229-5422, mwood@rviplanning.com.

Published in the Braidwood Journal on Wednesday, September 9 and 16, 2026.

Godley Park District seeks bids from contractors for Splash Pad Project

PUBLIC NOTICE

INVITATION TO BID GODLEY PARK DISTRICT SPLASH PAD PROJECT

Notice is hereby given that the Godley Park District is accepting sealed bids from interested contractors for the Splash Pad Project.

Commencing September 14, 2026, prospective bidders may obtain an electronic copy of the Bid Documents by contacting Todd Gereaux, M Gingerich Gereaux & Associates, 815-939-4921, tgereaux@mg2a.com. Hard copies of the Bid Documents will also be available at the of office of M Gingerich Gereaux & Associates, 240 N Industrial Drive, Bradley, IL 60915.

Sealed bids for this Project will be received until 10:00 a.m. on October 16, 2026, at the offices M Gingerich Gereaux & Associates, 240 North Industrial Drive, Bradley, IL 60915. Immediately thereafter, bids will be publicly opened and read aloud at the offices M Gingerich Gereaux & Associates, 240 North Industrial Drive, Bradley, IL 60915. Bids must be submitted in duplicate in a sealed envelope, labeled "Godley Park District Splash Pad," and with the bidders Name and Address.

The Godley Park District Board of Park Commissioners reserves the right to waive all technicalities, to accept or reject any or all bids, to accept only portions of a bid and reject the remainder without disclosure for any reason. Failure to make such a disclosure will not result in accrual of any right, claim or cause of action by a bidder against the Godley Park District.

Bids shall not include federal excise tax or state sales tax for materials and equipment to be incorporated in, or fully consumed in the performance of, the work. An Exemption Certificate will be furnished by the Godley Park District at the request of the bidder, for use in connection with this Project only.

The Work of this Project is subject to the Illinois Prevailing Wage Act, 820 ILCS 130/0.01 et seq. A prevailing wage determination has been made by the Illinois Department of Labor for public works projects in Will County. The Contract entered into for the Work will be drawn in compliance with said law and proposals should be prepared accordingly and provide for payment of all laborers, workmen, and mechanics needed to perform the work at no less than the prevailing rate of wages (or the prevailing rate for legal holiday and overtime work) foreach craft, type of worker, or mechanic.

All bid proposals must be accompanied by a bid bond or bank cashier's check payable to the Godley Park District for ten percent (10%) of the amount of the bid as provided in the Instructions to Bidders. No proposals or bids will be considered unless accompanied by such bond or check.

The Contractor selected will also be required to comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, rules, regulations and executive orders including but not limited to those pertaining to equal employment opportunity.

Ken Sorensen, Executive Director

Godley Park District

Published in the Braidwood Journal on Wed., Sept. 16, 2026.

Freak tornado over the cooling lake

BY ROSE PANIERI
STAFF WRITER

Mother Nature sent a reminder that even though we're entering the autumn season, she's still in charge, when a brief tornado formed over the cooling lake at the Braidwood Station power plant on Thursday, Sept. 10.

The National Weather Service (NWS) confirmed the event after reviewing photos and videos of the circulation, which developed at about 3:40 p.m. Meteorologists classified it as an inland waterspout, a type of tornado that forms over an inland body of

water.

The waterspout remained over the plant's cooling lake and caused no reported damage or injuries.

The preliminary survey found that the circulation lasted about three minutes, traveled roughly 0.32 miles and reached an estimated maximum width of about 10 yards. The NWS placed the event approximately two miles southeast of Godley in Will County, while noting that the exact track and location are approximate.

The tornado was given a preliminary EF-U rating, meaning its strength could not be determined.

Tornado ratings are generally based on damage, and because the circulation remained over water without producing apparent damage, there was not enough evidence to assign a conventional EF0-to-EF5 rating.

The unusual weather event developed as atmospheric conditions in the area were favorable for funnel clouds.

Funnel clouds are rotating columns of air that extend downward from a thunderstorm but do not necessarily reach the ground. The NWS said they typically extend only a few hundred feet from the cloud base and often dissipate within minutes.

pate within minutes.

While Thursday's conditions were not favorable for strong, damaging tornadoes, funnel clouds can occasionally reach the surface and produce weak tornadoes with little or no damage, according to the weather service.

The Braidwood Generating Station, operated by Constellation Energy, has two nuclear reactors and is located near Braceville in Will County.

The NWS said its findings are preliminary and could be revised as additional information becomes available.

City gets update on dog park plans

BY ROSE PANIERI
STAFF WRITER

Plans for Braidwood's proposed dog park continue to advance, with city officials scheduled to meet with the Braidwood Park District to review the project's concept plan.

City Manager Steve Gulden informed the council of the meeting scheduled later in the week. Gulden, as well as Commissioner Liz Dixon and an engineering representative were expected to attend.

According to Gulden, the meeting will focus on reviewing the proposed design and answering questions from park district representatives and the public.

"We're going to have our engineer there," Gulden said. "He'll be describing what's being done and what's being designed with respect to the dog park, hopefully answer any questions."

If no significant changes are requested to the concept plan, Gulden said the city intends to follow the same bidding schedule being used for the Town Center project.

Problem property

In other business, Gulden provided an update on a residence in the 300 block of W. Mitchell St., where city officials recently intervened due to unsafe living conditions.

The city had previously ordered the occupants to vacate the property because of severe structural issues, including the absence of a roof and significant damage to an exterior wall. Gulden said the residents have since relocated to the home of a family member in Braidwood.

After the move, members of the police department and code enforcement staff entered the structure to inspect conditions inside.

"If anybody questioned themselves if we made the right decision, we made the absolute right decision in trying to get these individuals to relocate," Gulden said.

Stating the conditions inside the home were "indescribable," Gulden credited city staff, Police Chief Eric Allen, and Code Enforcement with helping protect the residents from potentially life-threatening circumstances.

BY ROSE PANIERI
STAFF WRITER

Work on the City of Braidwood's Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant standby generator replacement project is moving ahead of schedule, with city officials authorizing a \$417,351.13 payment to Excel Electric for work completed through early September.

The payment represents the second payout request on the project and reflects substantial progress on the installation of backup power systems at both treatment facilities.

During discussion of the payment request, City Engineer Sean Kelly reported that major equipment has already been delivered and installation work is progressing smoothly.

"This is the generator project we have going on,"

Kelly said. "The generators have now been brought out to the site."

Kelly said representatives from Cummins were expected on-site to complete connections and commissioning work before crews move on to additional electrical components.

"Things are moving along very well," he said.

Project records show total earned work to date of \$505,195. After accounting for a 10 percent retainage and a previous payment, the amount due under Pay Request No. 2 totaled \$417,351.13.

"We're expecting them to be done hopefully later this month or early October at the latest," Kelly said. "We were anticipating they'd be done sometime mid-November, so we're a little ahead of schedule at this point in time."

Blood donors needed Sept. 17

The City of Braidwood will host its next community blood drive on Thursday, Sept. 17, from 2 to 6 p.m. in the meeting room at Braidwood City Hall, 141 W. Main Street.

Pre-registration is highly recommended, although walk-in donors will also be accepted.

To register, please visit the online registration link provided by the city or contact Blood Drive Coordinator Josh Bolatto at

(815) 458-2342 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

As part of Versiti's September donor promotion, individuals who donate blood will be entered into the Fire Up Your Team Sweepstakes for a chance to win a Chicago Fire FC VIP Team Experience. Participants must be at least 18-years-old to be eligible for the sweepstakes.

Braidwood seeking bids for Town Center project

PUBLIC NOTICE

Braidwood Town Center

The City of Braidwood does hereby invite sealed bids for the Braidwood Town Center project. Work will include earthwork operations, utilities, concrete curbs, walks and paving, site furnishings, splash pad construction, landscaping, stone masonry, prefabricated park structures, and lighting installation.

Project manuals, including bid form and specifications, and construction documents are available after September 14, 2026, available from Accurate Repro, Inc., 2368 Corporate Lane, Naperville, IL 60563, 630-428-4433, www.rviplanroom.com. A non-refundable fee equal to Accurate Repro, Inc.'s charge for printing or digital download of the documents will be charged for each requested bid package.

Bids will be accepted at the City of Braidwood, 141 West Main Street, Braidwood, Illinois 60408, during regular office hours. All bids must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked with the Contractor's name and address, and "Bid for Braidwood Town Center," on the face of the envelope. Bids must be received no later than 10:00AM October 5, 2026, and will be opened publicly at that time. All bidders will be required to submit Bid Security in the form of a Bid Bond, Certified Check, Cashier's Check in the amount of 10% of the Base Bid, payable to the City of Braidwood.

The City of Braidwood reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, parts of any and all proposals, or to waive technical errors or omissions in submitted proposals. No submitted bid may be withdrawn until a period of ninety (90) days after the bid opening date, without written consent of the City of Braidwood. The City of Braidwood encourages minority business firms to submit bids on this project and the success-ful contract bidder to utilize minority businesses as sub-contractors for supplies, equipment, services, and construction.

Questions should be directed to Mike Wood, RVI Planning + Landscape Architecture at (331) 229-5422, mwood@rviplanning.com. This project is being financed, in part, with funds from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, "Open Space Land Acquisition & Development" (OSLAD) grant program.

Published in the Braidwood Journal, September 9 and 16, 2026.

The market is always changing. Here for you.

Dean A Shepherd
AAMS®

Financial Advisor
311 W Baltimore St
Wilmington, IL 60481
815-476-6856

Member SIPC
www.edwardjones.com

Christopher Scholtes
Financial Advisor

311 W Baltimore St
Wilmington, IL 60481
815-476-6856

Edward Jones®
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING



The Braidwood Journal

USPS No. 550-940
Published weekly, 52 times a year,
on Wednesdays by
G-W COMMUNICATIONS, INC.,
111 S. Water St., Wilmington, IL 60481
Periodicals postage paid at
Wilmington, Illinois

Postmaster:

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

Subscription rates: \$46 Grundy & Will counties; \$53 other Illinois counties and \$60 out of state
G.W. Communications, Inc publishes the weekly subscription newspapers named The Free Press Advocate, The Braidwood Journal and The Coal City Courant.

Advertising and Business Offices:

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

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

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

E-mail: News & News Photos: news@fpnusa.com
Ads & Artwork: graphics@fpnusa.com

©2026 All news, photographs and advertising material used in this publication are the property of G-W Communications, Inc. Use of the material without the consent of G-W. Communications, Inc. is strictly prohibited. Violators of this property right are subject to legal action.

Eric D. Fisher, publisher

The Red Menace invades Braidwood, to arms!

It was the communists alright, red flag and all. What's to be done? They have taken over Braidwood, the mayor, the clerk - all the offices. Would Wilmington be next? If you are thinking this happened during the communist scare of the 1950's, or perhaps during the early 20th century during the Russian Revolution you would be wrong. Set the way back machine to the 1870's and find out.

It all started with the election of 1876. Miners broke into the polling place and stole the ballot box because they feared the outcome of the election. The Joliet Sun wrote, "The rowdies and "bummers" of Braidwood, after finding themselves fairly beaten at the polls by the Republican party, rush in to the rescue by mob violence seize, the poll books, tally lists, ballot box and ticket string, blow



TIME WAS....
Sandy Vasko

out the lights, knock a Republican on the head with a brick and clear out with their booty. We submit, in all candor, to our readers whether this outrage is not fully in keeping with the late teachings of the communistic howlers in this State. It looks that way to us."

Were these miners really communists? I don't really think so, but they were some of the first labor activists, with an agenda which said more money for the miners and less for the mine companies. Certainly it did sound communistic. For two years at every occasion Dan McLaughlin, mayor of Braidwood, and others spoke out for labor rights.

In 1878 McLaughlin and other labor leaders, under the banner of the National Socialist Labor Party, announced they were going to hold a grand picnic

in Chicago where they would rally the troops. A parade route was determined and speakers engaged.

This announcement sent most of the public into a panic. All those communists banding together surely had nothing good on their minds. Fears of mass rioting and looting, poor shooting the rich down in their homes, and many other ridiculous scenarios were flying from one mouth to another.

In nearby Wilmington a panic did ensue from a prank. We read, "Some of our young men, anxious to have a little sport, marked the doors of several stores and private houses on Saturday night, 8th inst. On the following morning the report was that the Communes of Braidwood (if there be any) had been in town and marked the buildings upon which they were going to make a raid. Excitement ran high with a few persons until the boys told the mystery of the marks. A great many have armed themselves with the

latest improved repeating rifles, sixteen shooters."

Henry Parkinson of the Braidwood Republican paper made fun of Wilmingtonians and their communist scare. Ed Conley, probably more than a little embarrassed wrote, "According to the stuttering-bob editor of the Braidwood Republican the citizens of Wilmington are foaming at the mouth with excitement in anticipation of a raid upon their devoted city by the communists of Braidwood. That there may possibly be some few deluded communists in Braidwood we have little doubt, but it is doubted very much that a greater damphool exists within the limits of four counties than is the ignorant brat who is at the helm of the Republican."

The day of the big parade and picnic finally arrived. Reports in newspapers list the attendance anywhere from 3,000 to 10,000 people. Three companies of miners, each lead by a miners' band marched under the Stars and Stripes,

but carried the red flag of communism right next to it. Chicago Socialist I. B. Belopdradsky spoke as did Civil War hero Captain James Elwood, originally from Joliet. Elwood had drifted through and out of the Republican and Democratic parties and was, at the time, experimenting with the Socialist movement.

There was no riot, no violence of any kind. Cal Zarley of the Joliet Signal afterwards wrote, "About the most ridiculous thing since the tidal wave scare, is the shake given to the American Spinal column by the recent bugaboo Commune stories. A great many of the panicky kind of people believed all the silly yarns set afloat by mischief loving newspapers, and had worked themselves up into a perfect frenzy of despair. The real foundation for the rumors is in the imaginative brains of newspaper reporters and the stories are dished up to a credulous public as a sort of sensational relish to otherwise dreary columns."

Four years later McLaughlin was trying to live down the name of Communist. In a speech he gave at a labor meeting in Joliet he said, "while railroad magnates, grain gamblers, money sharpers, boards of trade, etc., had their meetings for the purpose of bulling and bearing commercial interest, prices, rates, etc., the work- ingmen should at least have the privilege of discussing their own affairs and saying what their own labor was worth, without being dubbed communist, nihilists, outlaws, and other such pet names. Too many papers, like the Joliet Sun pandor to a corrupt, fine-haired aristocracy at the expense of the masses. The workingman has just as much right to discuss his affairs as any, and he should be treated with just as much consideration and respect."

Words of a communist or someone working for the rights of every working man? You decide.

Logan Bean captures Senior Spotlight



The Reed-Custer High School Senior Spotlight winner for the month of September is Logan Bean. Logan is the son of Jim and Alicia Bean.

During his high school career, Logan was involved in Band, Jazz Band, Mad Brass, Pep Band, Golf, Wrestling, Soccer, Bass Fishing Team, Math Team, World Culture Club, Book Club, and RAD (Reed-Custer Against Drugs).

He is also a member of the National Honor Society, Student Council, and Safe School Ambassadors. He was a Student of the Month, an ACE winner, the Drum Major for 2 years, on the Academic All-Conference Golf Team, a participant in the ICE Leadership Conference, and was on the High Honor Roll.

His future plans are to attend an as of yet undecided college, major in Biology, and eventually attend medical school in hopes to become an Orthopedic Surgeon.

Here are a few thoughts from Logan's teachers.

Mr. Frieders simply says, "Logan Bean. What a guy. He always has a smile on his face, is fun to talk to, and (above all else) has superb drip."

Mrs. Arseneau asks "Is it okay to have a favorite student? Because Logan Bean makes a very strong case! Logan is a one-of-a-kind student who has been a natural leader from day one. He brings a bright smile, positive attitude, a great sense of humor, or a random fun fact every day. He has fun while learning, which makes teaching fun! I feel so honored to have had the privilege of being his teacher. Logan is exceptionally bright, talented, kind to everyone he meets, and a young man of faith and outstanding character. Quite simply, he is the kind of person I hope my own sons grow up to be. Logan has an incredible future ahead of him, and I am eager to watch him shine in his next chapter!"

Ms. Chinski thinks that Logan is "caring and kind. He has a bright personality and always has a smile on his face. He is super smart and has a great future ahead!"

Mrs. Meyr remarks "What a phenomenal human being! Logan is personable and friendly. He has a maturity about him that is to be admired. Logan is thoughtful in conversations and truly thinks about others. Anytime he sees me, he takes the time to say

hello and asks how I'm doing. He is a fantastic role model for others. I'm very excited to see what great things he does in life. What a privilege it is to know him."

Mrs. Lee appreciates that Logan is "such a bright light at Reed-Custer! His smile and cheerful greeting have a way of brightening everyone's day. Logan is incredibly kind, funny, and intelligent, but my favorite attribute of his is how he has a way of making everyone around him feel welcome. He often goes out of his way to include others and ensure every voice is heard. I have absolutely loved watching Logan mature and grow throughout high school. He is a wonderful example to others of hard work, perseverance, and positivity. I have really enjoyed having Logan in my math classes for two years and will miss his ability to make us all smile!"

Mrs. Copeland believes that Logan is "truly one of the nicest kids I know. He is always smiling, cheerful, and providing positivity to those around him. Logan is very smart and also a very empathetic person. He does what is right even when it is hard and makes sure that everyone around him feels included. I am proud of the young man he is and continues to be."

Mrs. Rankin is thankful that Logan "brings such a great, positive energy to the class. In the short time I've had him as a student, his kindness and enthusiasm have made a huge impact. He's a true standout as both a student and human being."

Mrs. Bain says that Logan is "such a fun student to have in class! He's got a great sense of humor, but knows when to turn it off and work hard. A well-deserved spotlight winner!"

Mr. Gleixner thinks that Logan is "a great student, athlete, and leader. He always has a positive attitude and is someone that younger students can look up to. Always a smile on his face, Logan truly is an example of what Comet is."

Mrs. Kealey is glad that Logan is "an awesome student and person! He always goes above and beyond to make sure each student in the class is included. He strives for excellence in his academics but is known even more for how he makes the other students laugh and feel welcome. He is a great example for younger students and his

peers alike!"

Ms. Conley appreciates that Logan is "a bright light packed with endless humor. He is a stellar student, but he is an even better human. He is kind, genuine, and personable. His bubbly greetings in the hallway always make my day!"

Mrs. A. Robinson believes that Logan is "a wonderful human being! He is hardworking, intelligent, generous, kind, and a friend to everyone. Logan is someone you want to be on your side cheering you on. It has been great having him here."

Mrs. Edgar says that Logan is "an awesome kid! He never fails to say hello in the hallways with a huge smile on his face, or stop in just to chat. He is the type of student to always ask how you are and actually care about the response! He does a great job at making others feel seen and included! Although I've never had the opportunity to teach him in class, it is obvious that Logan is a great student and person!"

Mrs. Redwitz comments that Logan is "a

friendly and intelligent young adult who is always willing to help out. He genuinely cares about others and makes an effort to include everyone. He is approachable and brings enthusiasm to everything he does. His kindness and ability to connect with others make him someone people naturally look up to."

Mrs. Vogler remarks that Logan has "such an infectious smile and is so kindhearted! He is always willing to help out, gets his work done and knows how to brighten up your day!! I wish him all the best!" Mrs. Dennis is thankful that Logan is "kind, considerate, talented, and smart. He has a great attitude about life and his joy is infectious!"

Mr. Kristofer thinks that Logan has "a bright and charismatic personality, and clearly shows how much he cares for others through his actions constantly."

Mr. Wolf thinks that Logan is "a wonderfully kind young man with a great sense of humor. I have never actually had him in class, but every interaction I have had with him has always been a positive one. He is a terrific kid whose future is a very bright one indeed."

As a final thought, Logan's advice to younger students is, "Everyone has good days and bad days. When you're having a good day, why not give someone else a little bit of yours; you might just make their bad day a little bit better."

On behalf of the teachers and staff at RCHS, we would like to congratulate Logan Bean as the September

Braidwood pays nearly \$700,000 in expenses, payroll

BY ROSE PANIERI
STAFF WRITER

It was an expensive couple of weeks in the City of Braidwood. But, as the wise old saying goes, "If you want to dance, you've got to pay the piper." And whether you're planning to dance or simply want to make it to the dance hall without flattening a tire, money is always involved.

City officials approved \$589,990.88 in bills and \$109,042.78 in payroll during the Sept. 8 city council meeting, with expenditures covering infrastructure projects, utilities, public works operations, professional services and police training.

The heftiest chunk from the budget was a \$338,600 payment to D Construction for the city's ongoing street improvement program. Yes, fixing the roads is expensive, but so is a front end alignment.

Another significant expenditure was \$121,900 paid to Robinson Engineering for engineering-related services.

Utility and operational costs also accounted for a substantial portion of the bills. ComEd received \$9,200 for electrical service, while Casey's was paid \$3,800 for fuel. Hawkins Inc. received \$4,700 for chemicals, and Omega Industrial Products was paid \$4,600 for sewer

chemicals.

The city also continued investments in its water and wastewater infrastructure. Metropolitan Industries received \$8,800 for a sludge pump, while Water Well Solutions was paid \$4,600 for a motor starter. Midwest Salt received \$6,400 for salt supplies.

Public safety expenses included \$16,400 paid to the University of Illinois for law enforcement training programs.

The city also purchased a diagnostic reader from Cutting Edge for \$9,589.

Professional services represented another significant category of spending. B&F Construction received \$4,500 for inspections, Gulden & Associates was paid \$4,900, and the city's accountant received \$14,000. Wipfli received \$3,700 for the first billing associated with the city's annual audit.

Additional expenditures included \$3,200 to Ryan for economic development services and \$4,000 paid through U.S. Bank for miscellaneous purchases.

The combined total of approved bills and payroll exceeded \$699,000 for the period.

City officials said the expenditures reflect ongoing investments in infrastructure maintenance, public services and municipal operations.

RCMS Jr. Honor Society elects officers



Courtesy photo

THE REED-CUSTER Middle School Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) recently held an election for new officers for the 2026-2027 school year. The new officers will preside over the organization as NJHS members are currently planning community service projects and fundraisers for various charitable organizations for the year to come. Members include (front, from left) Yvani Berrios—Historian, McKenna Sterling—Historian, Willa Meyer, Abel Rodriguez, Gavin Vogler—President and Mathias Martinez. In the back row are Bailey Vaughn—Secretary, Paisley Sukley—Vice President, Lillian Trost—Treasurer, Paisley Wilson, Eamon Roberts and Maximus Hayducak.

Free Press Newspapers readers

SOUND-OFF

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

Sound-Off is a 24-hour phone line provided to give readers a chance to voice their opinions. The Free Press Newspapers reserves the right to edit remarks for taste, length, personal attacks, racism, threatening, calls for boycotts and libel. The comments stated are the opinions and ideas of the callers and not that of the newspaper. Information may not constitute the actual events or facts of a particular topic. Submissions by email to: coalcitycourant@gmail.com with "soundoff" in the subject line or visit www.freepressnewspapers.com, or call 815-634-0317. Please state the town in which you are calling from or in regards to. Mail comments to Sound-Off, 271 S. Broadway, Coal City, IL 60416 or 111 S. Water St., Wilmington, IL 60481. There can be only one submission of 250 words or less per person during any given week.

Pickleball suggestions

COAL CITY—It is so nice to see the pickleball courts at North Park getting used by young and older people. Curious on who maintains them? After speaking to many that play there, they wish they had a better solution for the gaps at the bottom of the courts because balls roll outside the fences. Right now, they stick pool noodles in those areas. Another suggestion is for some type of divider between each court, so balls do not interfere with other courts. Lastly, improve lighting for all the courts. This time of year, the weather is still nice but by 7:15 p.m. you can barely see the ball on some of the courts. The community would appreciate some of the suggested updates to improve our pickleball courts.

Change of tune

WILMINGTON—Trump's two-day Republican Midterm Convention is September 9-10 in Dallas. It may be time to change his entrance song. Instead of Lee Greenwood's "God Bless the U.S.A.," maybe the President should consider coming in with Carly Simon's "You're So Vain." But since there has been a lot of speculation about the president's relationship with his 35-year-old personal aide, as well as rumors about his past with questionable girls, maybe it is time to use Gary Puckett and the Union Gap's "Young Girl."

Love local history

BRACEVILLE—Thank you Sandy Vasko on the local history of our mining town. It's great to read about our small town.

Aldi, please

COAL CITY—Hey Diamond, we'd like an Aldi now, please. Thank you.

Not so intelligent

SHADOW LAKES—My name is Dan Hill. Watching channel two news about the problem in Michigan with state drivers licenses. Eight thousand people have the wrong identity. They just showed a white, blonde woman's picture on her license as being an African-American. You people that trust in artificial intelligence, I call it

intelligence. Think people.

Tunes: Part Two

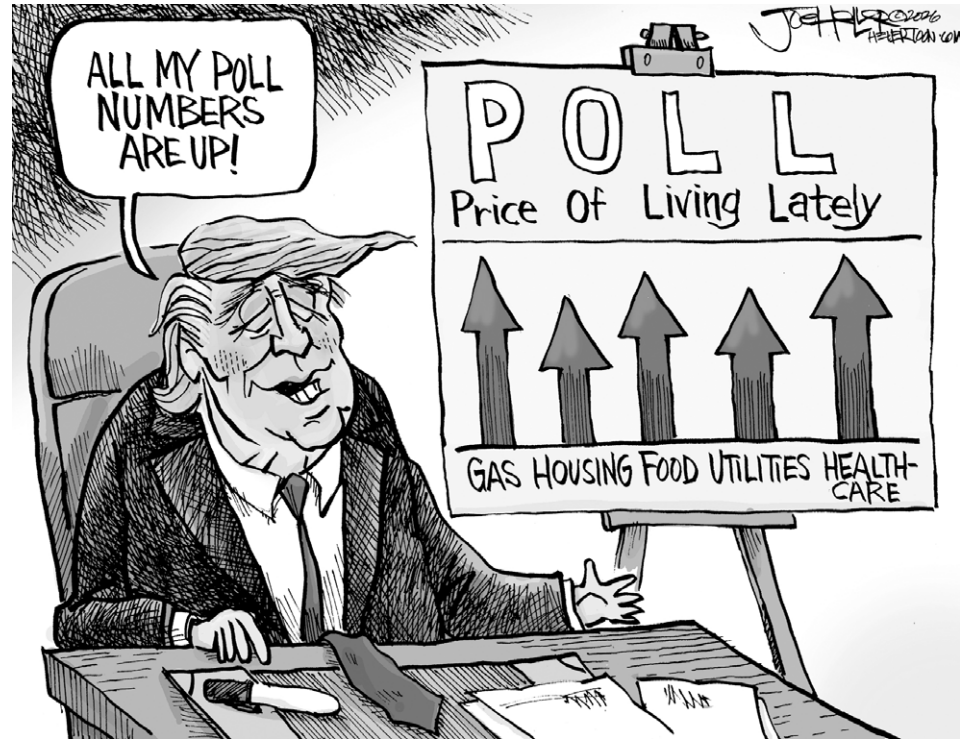
WILMINGTON—The president's two day Republican Midterm Convention has concluded in Dallas. As usual, he entered the convention with Lee Greenwood's "God Bless the U.S.A." I still say that the President should consider coming in with Carly Simon's "You're So Vain." But since there has been a lot of speculation about the president's relationship with his 35 year old personal aide, as well as rumors about his past with underage girls, maybe it is time to use Gary Puckett and the Union Gap's "Young Girl." Then he promised \$5,000 to all Americans if the Republicans kept their majority after the November midterms. That being said, the more appropriate song now would be Three Dog Night's "Liar" or The Little River Band's "Lonesome Loser!"

You can stop war

WILMINGTON—Our next war will not be against Russia or China it will against Islam. It has started with the help of the Democratic Party you can stop it. Vote for your children and grandchildren.

Doesn't make sense

WILMINGTON—How did 30% of this country get infatuated with a Vietnam-Era War draft dodger? This community is 1000% pro military, family histories of generations proudly serving for country. Mohammed Ali was openly denounced and sent to prison for his religious beliefs and draft-dodging. But this tennis playing, avid golfer who is prominently a top three headliner in the Epstein files gets a pass from a majority of this community, his direct family has never been in military since coming to America two centuries ago. Please help it make sense. He has never ever been good for over 80 years. Why are you people so willfully ignorant to this life-long con man? We struggle and he has personally made more than ever for himself in 11 months than in his entire miserable existence. What is wrong with you?



We're not Naperville

BRAIDWOOD—This in response to "Do as we please." You need to read and comprehend what you are reading as well as understand it. I've been a resident of Braidwood for 27 years. My husband and his parents are lifelong residents. So with that being said, the powers that be that want to be like Naperville—where do you think they got the idea for a city center and a splash pad? Duh. And people are tired of hearing the fireworks that are illegal and

need to be enforced. You are probably one of the morons letting them off and if you think you can do whatever you want in this town you sound like an accident that's waiting to happen.

Dee

I'm glad he's dead

WILMINGTON don't condone murder but I'm glad Charlie Kirk is dead. He was nothing but a Christian huckster making money off of people's superstitions.

Commentary

Bring together your neighbors for a welcoming community

BY CARLOS BARCENAS

The internet and expanded access to technology has made our small communities part of a global landscape. Exploring the world is easy from the comfort of our living rooms.

However, your next cultural experience may be right outside your front door. Walk around your community, and a cultural experience may come to life.

That's the case in rural communities across the nation. In Nebraska, an influx of immigrant families from various ethnic backgrounds has meant a change in population. That's a positive sign for jobs and economic impact.

But it also brings its own struggles and challenges.

In newly diverse communities, chief topics of conversation include language differences and a lack of services and resources. How can we confront the challenges when language, religion, and ethnic backgrounds are so diverse?

In my small community, we looked for a common denominator. It began with the idea that "we all live in this community." A conversation centered on working together for the well-being of everyone around us was a great place to start. With that premise, we began to explore how to strengthen our communities by learning about our differences.

Creating an inclusive community is a two-way street. The effort should come from both sides.

During any given week, bring together your neighbors. Start a conversation with local leaders, and get involved to create changes that ignite the process of welcoming everyone in your community.

When people have a sense of belonging in a community, this is a mark of a healthy community.

Carlos Barcenas is a consultant for the Center for Rural Affairs, a private, nonprofit organization working to strengthen small businesses, family farms and ranches in rural communities.

Autumn Harvest Fest family fun coming Saturday

BY ROSE PANIERI
STAFF WRITER

Finance Commissioner Liz Dixon urged residents to partake in Braidwood's upcoming Fall festival, which will feature family-friendly activities, food and entertainment this Saturday, Sept. 19 at Old Smokey City Park.

Dixon said organizers have arranged for lots of activities for children, food trucks, and a variety of vendors to participate in the event. Local artists will also be involved, including an area art group that plans to offer hands-on activities for children.

"We have two bounce houses and vendors coming and food trucks and the art part," Dixon said. "One of the art groups here in town are going to come. They're going to be there. They're going to do crafts with kids where pumpkins are going to be able to decorate them."

Do you bake the best pecan pie in the

state? Here's your chance to prove it. The festival will host a pie-baking contest.

"We're going to have a pie baking contest, so if you want to enter your pie, just bring it to the park on Saturday...between one and five," Dixon said.

Dixon said she hopes the event draws strong community participation and provides an enjoyable afternoon for local families.

"So I hope we can get a lot of people there," Dixon said. "The kids are going to have a good time."

This family friendly festival offers fun and food for all, and is especially geared to the town's children.

In addition to bounce houses, kids will have the chance to decorate pumpkins and participate in the Scarecrow Contest. Simply bring along your scarecrow for a chance to compete for prizes.

Music, food trucks, and vendors will be on hand for to assure a good time is had by all.

CRAFT SHOW

WINE GARDEN

FOOD TRUCKS

LIVE MUSIC

ALL AGES EVENT

OCT. 11, 2026

10 AM - 4 PM

FREE ENTRY!

N. ISLAND PARK

WILMINGTON, IL

(815) 476-5991

WILMINGTONILCHAMBER.ORG/CRAFTS

OPEN TO ALL VENDORS

APPLY AT WEBSITE

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

SISTEK RENTALS

We **SELL, REPAIR,** and **RENT**
Outdoor Power Equipment



815-237-8298

740 Oak Street • South Wilmington, IL



Spray Foam Insulation

- garages
- pole buildings
- attics
- basements
- commercial
- industrial

Concrete Raising

- driveways
- sidewalks
- patios
- stairs
- and more!

Wilmington • 815-200-6880

Mini Storage

CLEMENTINE'S
CLOSETS

515 Davy Lane,
Wilmington

Affordable
Clean, Secure
Monthly Rentals

No Deposit Required

815-530-0200

A & E SEPTIC SERVICE

Pumping - Repairs - New Installation
Sewer Rodding - Sanitary - Party Potties

Ed Bonnivier

Coal City • 634-4691

SHORKEY PAINTING

(815) 546-1321

Interior/Exterior



AMY MILLER'S PHOTO of deer on a misty morning at Rock Run Preserve in Joliet won August's portion of the Forest Preserve District of Will County's Preserve the Moment photo contest.

Joliet woman's deer photo wins August contest

Amy Miller of Joliet won August's portion of the Preserve the Moment ture of three deer following a path at Rock Run Preserve.

Miller said she lives near Rock Run and often heads there with her camera.

"Rock Run has some beautiful spots where the trails meet fields so any time there is fog in the morning, I know that there will be a chance for a more textured photo," she wrote in an email after being notified of her win. "I have a few favorite sunrise spots, and this is definitely one of them."

Photographing deer is a creative activity for Miller, who works as a documentation specialist.

"I absolutely love photographing deer," she said. "To me they are a calming sight. To some people, all deer look the same, but different times of day, seasons, etc., always give me something to capture that is unique to the moment."

Living close to Rock Run and being able to take photos is always a win, no matter how the photos turn out, she added.

"I am grateful for the ability to get out and shoot, to see such beauty in the middle of the city, and to try to better myself," she said. "I grew up with forest preserve all around me, so every time I go out into the preserves to shoot it's like going home. I love the changing of the seasons, so

every season brings a fresh look for photography."

Honorable mentions went to: Michelle Wendling for a foggy landscape shot filled with pink and purple light at Hadley Valley; Mark Hanna for a shadowy shot of an alert coyote at O'Hara Woods Preserve, and Chad Morschly for a glittery golden dragonfly at Isle a la Cache.

The Preserve the Moment photo contest began in February and runs bthrough Dec. 31. Monthly winners will advance to the final round, where they will compete for likes on Facebook in January 2027 to determine the first-, second- and third-place winners overall.

Each monthly photo contest winner will receive

a \$75 gift card. Overall winners will receive Mastercard gift cards worth \$500 for first place, \$250 for second place and \$150 for third place. At the end of the contest, three participants also will be randomly selected to receive \$75 Mastercard gift cards.

The contest is made possible with support from The Nature Foundation of Will County.

Participants are encouraged to read the rules before entering. Up to five photos can be submitted per month via the District's contest upload page at ReconnectWithNature.org. All photos must be taken at a Forest Preserve District of Will County location.

Local Newspapers are **IMPORTANT** Any Way You Look At It

AUTO • HOME • LIFE • BUSINESS • PROPERTY

Your local State Farm Agent for 30 years

Jerry Hallahan - Agent

1350 E. Division St., Diamond

(815) 634-2222 jerry@jerryhallahan.com

INSURANCE

MOTORCYCLE • REC VEHICLES • WATERCRAFT • LIABILITY

WEESIP LIQUORS

Barefoot Wine Liberty Creek Wine \$200 OFF 1.5L	Sailor Jerry Rum \$200 OFF 750ml \$500 OFF 1.75L
Wild Turkey Bourbon \$400 OFF 750ml \$600 OFF 1.75L	Chi Chi or Jose Cuervo Pre mix cocktails \$300 OFF 1.75L
UV Vodka \$300 OFF 1.75L	Cazadores Tequila \$400 OFF 750ml
Svedka Vodka Water \$200 OFF 8 pk	All Brands of October Fest Beer \$200 OFF 12 pk cans or btls

LIL VEGAS Must be 21 yrs or older. **6 Machines Private Room COME TRY YOUR LUCK!**

Offers good through Sept. 15, 2026.

1099 S. Water St., Wilmington • 815-476-2764

Grundy Bank

COMMUNITY IMPACT SCHOLARSHIP CLASS OF 2027

We want to recognize **TWO** outstanding graduates!

\$500

ATTENTION CLASS OF 2027

- Are you a graduating senior from **Morris Community High School or Wilmington High School?**
- Have you made a **positive impact** in your community over the past four years?

IF YOU ANSWERED YES TO BOTH QUESTIONS, YOU'RE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY!

Member FDIC

GRUNDY BANK

URGENT CARE
On Your Schedule

SAVE YOUR SPOT!

OR
WALK IN

7 DAYS A WEEK!
Mon-Fri, 8am-8pm
Sat & Sun, 8am-4pm

Now you can **Save Your Spot** before heading to one of Morris Hospital's urgent care locations. You can also check estimated wait times!

Morris Hospital's urgent care is a **great solution** for the diagnosis and treatment of **minor illness and injuries**, including:

• Allergies	• Congestion	• Infections
• Back Pain	• Diarrhea	• Rashes
• Bites, Stings	• Earache	• Sore Throat
• Burns	• Fever	• Sprains, Strains
• Cough	• Headache	• Vomiting and more!

Urgent Care Locations:
Morris – north of 80 off Gore Road
Channahon – north of Route 6 off Ridge Road
Diamond-Coal City – Route 113 and McGinty Street

To see estimated wait times and **Save Your Spot**, go to morrishospital.org/GetUrgentCareNow.

MORRIS HOSPITAL
& HEALTHCARE CENTERS

OBITUARIES

Norman Heiman

 **BRAIDWOOD**—Norman Arthur Heiman, 85, of Braidwood, passed away on Saturday, Aug. 22, 2026, at his home surrounded by his family. Born Oct. 21, 1940, in Joliet, Norman was the son of Alfred and Alice (née Van Lienen) Heiman.



Norm grew up in Plainfield, IL and was a member of the graduating class from Plainfield High School, Class of 1959. After schooling, Norm joined the United States Navy, continued his career with the Joliet Army Ammunition Plant until its closure, and then was employed at Johns Manville until his retirement.

Norm was a compassionate animal lover throughout his life. He cared for a wide variety of animals including dogs, cats, pigeons, chickens, pheasants, Canadian geese, ducks, rabbits, and ferrets. He was also an outdoorsman and enjoyed hunting and fishing. He took many trips out west and across the northern border to Canada in the hunt for big game. However, as Norm aged, that heart turned soft and he went from hunting deer to feeding them in his backyard.

Norm suffered a major stroke on Nov. 6, 2022, and as a result developed vascular dementia. In true Norm fashion, his hard-headedness prevailed and he fiercely battled dementia for almost four years. His family wishes to thank the several caregivers that aided him along the grueling

journey.

Norm is survived by his former spouse Sharon Heiman of South Wilmington, IL; four daughters, Kristy Sorensen of South Wilmington; Lisa (Randy) Kiefling of South Wilmington; Jennifer Heiman (Jim Cwick) of Elmhurst, IL; and Casey (Brad) Campbell of Waterford, WI; two granddaughters: Caitlin (Bryan Meadors and Jessica Kiefling; two great grandsons: Remy and Drax Meadors; and dear family friends Dale Halpin, Tod DeSonia, and Jeff (Kim) Pachter. Norm is also survived by his furry felines: Scottie, Marmalade, Callie, Kiki, Colorful, Grey Baby, Mama and Scrounge.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Donna Johnson Heiman; his parents, Alfred and Alice Heiman; his uncle, George Van Lienen; his brothers: Jim and Donald Heiman; and an infant son, Steven Arthur.

Cremation rites have been accorded. At a later date, a private gathering will be held involving tacos and Budweiser, two of Norm's favorite things.

If you wish to honor Norm, donations may be made in his memory to the local animal shelter Just Animals, 505 Depot Street, PO Box 275, Mazon, IL 60444 or via the internet at justanimals.org.

To share memories or offer condolences, please visit Norman's online guest-book at www.rwpattersonfuneralhomes.com or find them on Facebook.

Larry Knop



VERONA—Larry J. "Pete" Knop, 81, of Verona, passed away Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2026 at Lightways Hospice in Joliet.

Born April 12, 1945 in Shumway, IL, Larry James was a son of Clarence and Lillian (Correll) Knop. He was raised and educated in Mazon, and later served in the United States Army from 1968 until his honorable discharge in 1970. On Nov. 18, 1972, Larry married Sharon Lee Jones at the Ritchey United Methodist Church, and together they raised their family in Verona. He worked for RR Donnelly in Dwight for over 30 years until he formally retired.

While living in Verona, Larry often worked as a farmhand for the surrounding farms in his community and was a member of the Grundy County Farm Bureau. He was a great fan of stock car racing and regularly attended races at the former Mazon Speedway and the Grundy County Speedway on Friday nights. Larry's greatest passion was horseshoe pitching. He was a long-time member of the Illinois Horseshoe Pitcher's Association, was a five-time Illinois State Champion, and was inducted into the Illinois Horseshoe Pitcher's Hall of Fame in 2007. Larry also enjoyed bowling leagues at Echo Lanes in Morris and was a great fan of Western films.

He had a great sense of humor that would keep up with the best of them, a talent that was with him until his final days. Above all else, Larry was a loving and devoted husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather who passed along many important lessons to his family. He was a truly great man who will be missed by all who knew him.

Survivors include his five children: Chuck (Marcy) Hood, of Morris; Venita Hood (Brenda Barnhart), of Yorkville; Mitzi



(Robert) Anderson, of Morris; Ellen (Paul) Page, of Ottawa, and Jami Knop, of Verona; 13 grandchildren: Tim Hood, Ashley Hood (fiancé: Roman Lytovchenko), Carley Hood, Hayley Hood, Steffani (John) Bearden, Alexandra Anderson, Katelyn (John Lilly) Anderson, Donielle Anderson, Elizebeth Knop, Rebecca Page, David Page, Isabella Benson, and Brianna Benson; six great-grandchildren: Nico, Arianna, Matthew, Michael, Piper and Kieran; two brothers and three sisters: Elvera (the late Russell) Merkel, Nancy (the late Marty) Armstrong, Mary Lou (the late Jimmy) Walker, Rich (the late Wanda Bertoglio) Knop, and Mike (Launa Johnson) Knop, one brother-in-law, Vance (Judi) Jones, and numerous nieces and nephews.

Larry was preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Sharon Knop, on Feb. 16, 2022; one brother, Eddie (Donna) Knop and one sister, Angie Jewett; his granddaughter, Brittany, and two great-granddaughters: Mia and Madison.

Per Larry's wishes, cremation rites are being accorded.

The family will receive friends for a memorial visitation at Fruland Funeral Home, 121 W. Jefferson St., in Morris on Saturday, Oct. 3, 2026, from 1 p.m. until the time of memorial service at 4 p.m. A private inurnment with full military honors will be held at Wesley Cemetery in Rural Wilmington, where Larry will be laid to rest with his wife, Sharon.

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

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

WHS Class of 1957 to hold Sept. 19 reunion

Members of the Wilmington High School Class of 1957 are being invited to turn back the clock and spend an afternoon catching up with old friends during an upcoming class reunion.

The reunion will be held Saturday, Sept. 19, from noon to 4 p.m. at Nellie's Restaurant and Old School Brewery, 110 Bridge St. in Wilmington.

Organizers say the gathering will provide classmates with an opportunity to see one another again, renew old friendships and spend a few hours reminiscing about their Wilmington High School days.

A \$15 cover charge will be collected at the door and includes a meal of pulled

pork, Italian beef, baked beans and coleslaw.

The invitation is open to members of the Class of 1957 and their guests. Reunion organizers are also asking classmates to spread the word, particularly to former classmates who may not have received an invitation.

Those planning to attend — as well as those unable to make the reunion — are asked to contact Jim Johnston (815) 476-7572 or email johnstonjames132@yahoo.com, or Marilyn 708-289-5613, so organizers can get an accurate count and confirm current contact information.

Early voting in Will County begins Sept. 24

Will County Clerk Annette Parker announced that Thursday, Sept. 24, is the first day Will County voters can take part in Early Voting for the Nov. 3, General Election.

Voters who wish to cast their ballot early may do so from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. beginning Thursday, September 24, through Friday, October 23, at the Will County Clerk's Office, 302 N. Chicago St., in downtown Joliet.

Voting hours at the Clerk's Office will expand to include weekend and early evening hours beginning Saturday, Oct. 24, as Election Day draws near.

Beginning Monday, Oct. 19, voters will also have the opportunity to vote early at 24 satellite Early Voting locations throughout Will County.

Parker encourages voters to review all Early Voting locations and

hours before heading out to vote. Following feedback received through a survey of each Early Voting site, some voting hours have been adjusted to better accommodate the availability and needs of the individual locations.

For a complete list of Early Voting locations and hours, as well as additional information about the Nov. 3 General Election, visit willcountyclerk.gov.

Fossil Ridge Library calendar

Adult Programs

Bingocize, 1-2 p.m. Every Tuesday starting Sept. 1. Looking for a fun new way to be more active?

Bingo + Exercise = Bingocize®, a health promotion program that combines the game of bingo with fall prevention exercise. Play bingo with us and meet new people while learning about techniques to reduce falls.

Tween Programs

Tuesday, Sept. 22- Community Helpers Storytime (Registration Required) 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. 275 W. Main St, Braidwood, on Sept. 15th. 21750 IL-113, Custer Park, on Sept. 22nd. Join us at the Braidwood Fire Protection District for a tour of the fire station. Meet Sparky, the fire dog, and listen to stories read by the firefighters. Registration is required, and a caregiver must accompany their child.

Friday, Sept. 18-Movies on the Green (Registration required) 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. A movie night under the stars? Sign us up! Join us for Movies on the Green on the lawn of the Fossil Ridge Public Library on Friday, Sept. 18th, as we watch Hoppers (2026). Seating begins at 7:00 p.m., and the movie begins at 8:00 p.m.! Popcorn and light refreshments will be served. Hoppers (2026) - A 19-year-old animal lover uses technology that places her consciousness into a robotic beaver to uncover mysteries within the animal world beyond her imagination. Rated: PG Running Time: 1hr, 44 min

Children & Toddler Programs

Tuesday, Sept. 22- (Registration Required) 10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Play-Doh PlaydatesJoin us for a Play-Doh workshop! Display your creativity using our Play-Doh and tools. This program is for children aged 2-6, and registra-

tion is required.

5:30 p.m.- 6:30 p.m. Sensory Tuesdays, Dive into a world of texture, color and hands-on fun with our new Sensory Bin program!

Perfect for little hands and growing minds, our rotating themed bins let toddlers and preschoolers explore, scoop, and play while building critical fine motor and language skills.

Wednesday, Sept. 23 & 30- (Registration Required) 10 a.m.-10:45

Little Learner's: Let's learn our ABCs! "Little Learners" is a fun, weekly program where preschoolers can master the alphabet through stories, music, and a craft. Join us as we explore the wonderful world of letters, one week at a time.

Thursday, Sept. 17 & 24- (Registration required)

Toddler Time: 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. We welcome toddlers and their caregivers to join us weekly to explore various toys and sensory materials. Toddlers can enhance their gross and fine motor skills, social interaction, and language skills. Caregivers must accompany their little ones throughout the program.

Listen and Create Storytime 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. This program is specially designed for children aged 3-8. Every week, children can explore new books and engage in a fun craft project. Please make sure to dress in clothes that can get messy, as the craft project will involve getting creative with various art materials.

Saturday, Sept. 12- 11:00 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.

Children's Costume Swap: Halloween is around the corner! Swap out the costumes your children have outgrown for something new. Stop by the library to see what you might be able to find! Costumes should be in good condition. Please make sure the items are freshly washed.

Illinois could site renewable energy on former strip mines, brownfields

While Illinois continues to work to reach its ambitious renewable energy goals, where to site solar panels and wind turbines along with the associated costs are just two barriers slowing down progress.

But the new Mining the Sun report from The Nature Conservancy shows that repurposing low-conflict sites, like former coal mines, is a financially viable and community-centered option.

Illinois has more than 200,000 acres of former strip mines, according to the report, and several thousand other sites that would make suitable hosts for renewable energy.

Mining the Sun shows Illinois has plenty of otherwise underutilized space, such as old mines and "brownfields," which are former industrial or commercial sites that may have environmental contaminants but are well-suited locations for a field of solar panels or wind turbines. The report says that to make that happen, policy changes likely will be needed.

"Illinois has outstanding opportunities to deploy more clean energy installations without taking over prime farmland or encroaching on open greenspaces," said Tonyisha Harris, Climate and Energy Program Manager for The Nature Conservancy in Illinois.

"Given the progressive policy measures already in place, Illinois is a compelling location for clean energy projects on mine lands and brownfields."

The state's groundbreaking Climate and Equitable Jobs Act of 2021 (CEJA) is forecast to drive nearly five times the current capacity for wind and solar by 2050. Renewable energy incentives through CEJA are significantly bolstered when combined with the federal Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

"If Illinois goes even further with its policy initiatives to fund projects, we're going to see a real boom in renewable energy sources in the state," Harris said.

The IRA, voted into law in 2022, includes a 10% tax credit to site clean energy installations on brownfields, along with \$250 billion to repurpose old coal and oil infrastructure for clean energy.

Passed in 2021, IIJA provides \$500 million for large-scale wind and solar demonstration projects on former mine lands. Grant opportunities such as the Abandoned Mine Land program and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Brownfield Program can further reduce the cost of building on former industrial lands,

according to Harris.

In addition to recommendations for Illinois, the report looks at opportunities across the U.S. to build on mine lands and brownfields. Siting on mines and other industrialized areas can be a way for renewable projects to be completed faster and with lower community conflict, which is important to meet U.S. net zero goals by 2050, Harris said.

Across the U.S., there are up to 20 million acres of mine lands and brownfields suitable for new clean energy projects, enough to meet the energy needs of most U.S. homes each year.

"The United States cannot meet its energy and climate goals without the rapid deployment of large-scale solar installations," Harris said.

"Renewable energy development on mine lands is not a silver bullet, but it is an exceptionally promising avenue to produce clean energy in a way that respects communities and local landscapes. We encourage renewable energy developers, electric utilities, policymakers and regulators to read the report to learn more about the opportunities to site clean energy on mines and brownfields in their communities."

Visit nature.org/miningthesun to read the Mining the Sun report.

Sip smart:

Coffee supports your heart

Are you the type of person who can't wait to kickstart your day with that piping-hot cup of coffee in the morning? If so, there's good news for you.

According to a recent study published in the European Heart Journal, one perk of morning coffee is it's healthier for you than any other part of the day.

Early risers – coffee connoisseurs who pour their first cup of java between 4 a.m. and noon – have a 16% lower chance of dying from any cause compared to non-coffee drinkers.

According to the study, coffee drinkers also had a 31% lower risk of dying from heart disease compared to non-coffee drinkers.

"The study identified that one of the aspects of coffee lowers inflammation, and we have more inflammation in the morning. And so that's why the benefit was shown in this

study," says Nancy Dagefoerde, a nurse practitioner with OSF HealthCare Cardiovascular Institute. "I do agree that that's a good benefit of drinking coffee in the morning."

The research team studied two groups – morning-only coffee drinkers and all-day coffee drinkers.

Researchers focused on patterns of drinking coffee throughout the day rather than the amount of coffee consumed. Dagefoerde recommends drinking no more than two or three cups a day.

Another important aspect of coffee is how it's made. For example, unfiltered coffee that's boiled contains higher amounts of chemicals that can raise triglyceride levels and low density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol levels.

"Filtered coffee is more beneficial. Boiled can actually be more harmful. There are many

compounds in coffee that are beneficial to health in general," says Dagefoerde.

But a cup of brew isn't everything when it comes to heart health. Dagefoerde says there are other things you should be doing including exercising, treating your blood pressure and cholesterol.

"Coffee can lower inflammation, increase your metabolism and decrease the absorption of fats," she adds. "But you definitely want to work on all your risk factors, not just drinking coffee."

It's better to drink black coffee, but if you take it with sugar or cream, make sure you are using the ones that are as healthy as possible such as unsweetened almond milk, raw honey or cinnamon. Cream adds 50 calories and three grams of saturated fat per tablespoon. And a teaspoon of sugar contains 16 calories, which adds up quickly.

Handling Methane to reduce impact of greenhouse gas

Dear EarthTalk: What are some ways we can reduce, absorb or convert atmospheric methane to reduce its impact as a greenhouse gas?

-- William Jackman, Troy, NY

EARTH TALK

Questions & Answers About Our Environment

As global temperatures continue to rise at unprecedented levels, experts are searching for ways to reduce and remove methane, a climate-warming hydrocarbon that can remain in the atmosphere for up to 10 years.

Mainly released from the agricultural sector or human-caused emissions, methane can trap the sun's heat 85 times more than CO₂, according to the World Resources Institute.

Scientists have developed multiple removal methods within the precise limitations of handling methane. "Traditional methane processing typically requires extremely high temperatures, which are costly to produce and harmful to the environment," says Dr. Zhiliang Wang, a materials chemist at the University of Queensland.

One removal method is called "ecosystem uptake enhancement" and fortifies soil with methane-absorbing minerals and microorganisms. Additionally, methane reactors are designed to break down or oxidize methane in air through ultraviolet light, and surface treatments coat large surface areas with metal that breaks down light-exposed methane. These strategies require specific conditions.

There are promising, new methane removal strategies on the horizon. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) has been working on a catalyst that converts methane into formaldehyde through a series of steps.

Formaldehyde is a useful polymer in particle boards and textiles. "Other systems operate at high temperature and high pressure, and they use hydrogen peroxide, which is an expensive chemical, to drive the methane oxidation," says Jimin Kim, a postdoc at MIT leading the study. "But our enzyme produces hydrogen peroxide from oxygen, so I think our system could be very cost-effective and scalable." The clay-like zeolite and enzymes are combined to convert methane into methanol, which is then turned into formaldehyde. Moreover, engineers at University of Maryland are working on a membrane



AS GLOBAL TEMPERATURES continue to rise at unprecedented levels, experts are searching for ways to reduce and remove methane.

reactor that turns methane into chemicals for both large- and small-scale needs. "This is a major breakthrough in the conversion of natural gas to major commodity chemicals...in terms of the high yield achieved," says Eric Washman, director of the Maryland Energy Innovation Institute.

There are challenges facing methane removal advancements. Government funding is being cut, so experts are less interested in investing limited resources into removing methane. Also, there is minimal government regulation regarding methane emissions and removal technology. The

current legal framework would need to be enhanced in order to effectively maintain a clean atmosphere.

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

Garden Club annual membership tea, birthday

The Wilmington Garden Club will have its annual Membership Tea and celebrate its 90th birthday on Wednesday, Sept. 16.

The club's meeting is scheduled for 1 p.m. at the Wilmington Park District 315 N. Water St. If you have an interest in gardening become a member and bring a friend.

For more information call Judy at 815-258-8450.

Morris Hospital Auxiliary to hold annual golf outing

The Morris Hospital Auxiliary will host its annual golf outing on Monday, Sept. 28 at the The Creek golf course, 5355 Saratoga Road, Morris, with all proceeds benefitting the Morris Hospital Patient Transportation program.

The public is invited to support the event by playing golf, attending dinner, or making a donation.

Activities will begin with golfer registration and lunch from 11 a.m.-12 p.m. At noon, golfers will head out on the links for 18 holes of golf. The cost for 18 holes of golf, lunch and dinner is \$150 per person or \$540 for a foursome.

For those not golfing who wish to attend dinner, the cost is \$25 per person and includes a buffet-style

dinner reception featuring pulled pork, coleslaw, rolls and butter, roasted potatoes, corn and dessert. Dinner begins at 5 p.m.

The money raised through the Auxiliary Golf Outing is used to purchase replacement buses for the Morris Hospital Patient Transportation, which provides non-emergent, free transportation to medical appointments for patients who are unable to drive or have limited mobility. The Morris Hospital Auxiliary and Foundation have provided funding for the majority of the Patient Transportation vehicles since the service began in 1998.

Patient Transportation drivers and assistants are all volunteers.

The success of the Morris Hospital Auxiliary Golf Outing is also dependent on sponsors to help make the event a success.

To date, sponsors include the Morris Hospital Medical Staff at the \$5,000 "Top Flite" level; Block Electric Company, Grundy Bank, and The Horton Group-a Marsh & McLennan Agency at the \$2,500 "Eagle" level; and Steve and Kristi Banghart, Busey Bank, Blue Spruce Tree Care, and West Flooring Company at the \$1,000 "Driver" level.

To make a reservation for golf or dinner, go to morrishospital.org/golf by Sept. 14 or call the Morris Hospital Auxiliary Office at 815-705-7024.



WILLS & ESTATES

The experience and personal attention to help you secure a lasting and meaningful legacy:

- Simple wills • Estate planning
- Trust administration & probate



MEENTS LAW, P.C.

Family Law | Real Estate | Business
Estate Planning | Probate

207 S. Water St., Wilmington • 815-476-7635

2026 Fall Festival & Car Show

September 19, 2026 at 3pm
DOWNTOWN COAL CITY

EVENTS

3-6 p.m. Car Show-Award at 5:15pm

3-6 p.m. Makers Court

5 p.m. Community Service Award

6 p.m. Megan's Mission 5K

7-11 p.m. Who Dat Dere Band

ALL Announcements Made in front of Babe's Tap

ACTIVITIES @ 3PM

Free Inflatables

Touch-A-Truck

Games & More

FOOD & DRINKS

New Hope Presbyterian Church
(Turkey Poorboys & More)

Boy Scout Brats

Cub Scouts Candy Apples

Science Club Lemon Shake Ups

Methodist Church

(Ice Cream Floats)

& Food Trucks

Downtown Restaurants & Bars
will be Open



Scheer's Insurance Services
LLC



Constellation

Advanced
Auto & Tire, Inc.



FISHER
Auto Parts



warrencollisioncenteril.com



✓ **Finest quality warranted collision repair**
 ✓ **Rentals available**
 ✓ **Certified technicians**
 ✓ **All insurance accepted**
 ✓ **Completed in a timely fashion**

WARREN'S COLLISION CENTER
 860 E.Z. St., Braidwood
 815-458-3300

WE CARE BEYOND THE REPAIR!

Legislative Inspector's job needs a major fix

You may know that embattled Legislative Inspector General Michael McCuskey has agreed to resign his post by the end of September.

But this sorry saga shouldn't end there. The Legislative Ethics Commission should im-



Rich Miller

McCuskey with to revisit the cases, for instance.

And that sounds like what they might do. According to the chair of the Legislative Ethics Commission, Rep. Jeff Keicher, "The recent investigations and situations that the LEC has been involved in and the LIG has conducted have revealed points of frustration and pain that the LEC is very interested in closing the gap."

Keicher (R-Sycamore) was referring to the inspector general's investigations into former Rep. Harry Benton (D-Plainfield) and current Rep. Amy "Murri" Briel (D-Ottawa).

Benton was found to have sexually harassed women, but a female lobbyist forcefully complained that she was mistreated by LIG McCuskey during her interview process.

Rep. Briel was accused of sexually harassing a 2024 campaign worker who eventually moved to her House district office staff.

Briel has repeatedly claimed the McCuskey ruled the allegations to be "unfounded," meaning they were without merit.

However, McCuskey actually declared that he had made "no finding," which has no bearing on

whether the allegations against Rep. Briel were accurate or not. Most of the allegations were about the alleged victim Laura Jackson's campaign work experience, and the LIG has no authority to look into those. He also ruled that Jackson was an "at will" employee and he had no jurisdiction in the matter.

Either way, Jackson said she experienced many of the same problems the unnamed female lobbyist reported about McCuskey.

McCuskey's alleged behavior wasn't a "systems" issue. It had little to nothing to do with the state statutes and rules governing his office.

Yet, nobody can tell you with a straight face that the law creating the LIG is adequate. For instance, this one-person quasi-legal tribunal approach to deciding whether sexual harassment allegations are valid doesn't work on its face, no matter who might be in charge of the office.

The first thing that has to be done is to make sure that those claiming sexual harassment or mistreatment are protected from further harm.

Perhaps an ombudsperson could be brought in to help the accusers navigate their paths and maybe even attend LIG interrogations with them (and that interrogation process ought to end as well, of course).

The LIG's office is prohibited from investigating any reports it receives if they are filed more than a year after the alleged wrongdoing. That's pretty ridiculous. As Rep. Mary Beth Canty (D-Arlington Heights) pointed out in a recent WGN TV interview, House terms are two years,

so the limit should be at least that amount.

However, Senators serve two four-year terms every ten years, so there could be room for further expansion.

The LIG is also prohibited from investigating stories he or she may have seen in news media reports, unless and until someone files a complaint. That has to be changed.

The Chicago city council's inspector general has some limited enforcement authority over conduct in city campaigns (using images and video taken at places like city fire stations appears to be a favorite campaign thing). Campaign sexual harassment by a legislator or a candidate should be included in the LIG's portfolio.

And, finally, recent legislative inspectors general have had judicial backgrounds. Those folks are accustomed to lawyers bringing facts and arguments to their courtrooms. The next LIG should have some investigatory skills to get to the bottom of things, rather than just looking witnesses in the eye to discern whether they're telling the truth, as former federal and state judge McCuskey recently described his own process to a Springfield talk radio host.

"This is a bad process in place from an investigatory standpoint, from a research standpoint, from a how do you communicate it, how do you hold responsibility - there are a lot of pain points that we need to fix," said LEC Chair Keicher. Agreed.

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

Now Hiring Bus Drivers



No experience? No problem we provide paid training

- Child Ride-A-Long program
- Hiring Bonus
- Regular Attendance Bonus
- Great pay, \$25-\$30/hr based on experience
- Abundance of sports/extracurricular trips to earn extra money
- Newer well maintained buses



For more information stop by
 700 W. Mondamin Rd or
 text/call 815-258-3511

APPLY NOW

MINOOKA COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL **MINOOKA COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED SD 201**

Learn why you should have Narcan in your home

Opioid overdose is not something that just affects those who abuse or misuse the drug. Overdoses can happen to anybody who takes opioid-based medications.

Sometimes, an opioid overdose can happen when you accidentally take a medication twice or because you mixed medications with an opioid-related pain medication and can happen to anybody who takes an opioid-related medication.

Naloxone nasal spray, otherwise known as Narcan, can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. It is not dangerous and is a great tool to have in case someone you love experiences an overdose.

Having access to Narcan could not only save the life of a loved one, but also a friend, neighbor or even a stranger.

The Will County Health Department has provided Will County communities with multiple Narcan Distribution boxes where you can get Narcan for free.

Wilmington is home to three of these locations including, the Wilmington Coalition Office (1095 S. Water St.), Wilmington Police Department (129 Robert P. Weidling Dr.), and Wilmington Park District (315 N. Water St.).

Dr. Kathleen Burke, of the Will County Health Department serves as the Director of Substance Use Initiatives and has an extensive knowledge on the present opioid crisis.

The Wilmington Coalition is honored to have her speak during the local farmers market on Thursday, Sept. 17, where she will educate on topics such as the continued opioid crisis, the importance of having Narcan available to you, and how to administer Narcan to someone how is suffering from an overdose.

If you have any questions, you can visit wilmington-coalition.org or call 815-476-1660.

WE BUY Gold & Silver



Let me give you a free estimate on scrap gold, gold jewelry, sterling silver, coins & more



ANY CONDITION

We appraise and/or buy coin collections...
 Over 20 years experience

Meet by appointment only
CALL 815-370-6110

112 E. Jefferson St.
 Wilmington

Email crowncoin23@gmail.com



BRAIDWOOD American Legion

KOCA POST 39!

553 KENNEDY RD. • BRAIDWOOD, IL
COMMANDER BILL KILEY | 815-216-2570

MEETINGS 1ST MONDAY OF THE MONTH! **New Members WELCOME!** **Join Us!**

TUESDAY BINGO!

DOORS OPEN 4:00PM | FIRST GAME 6:30PM

HIGH PROGRESSIVE JACKPOTS!
\$500 COVERALL!
BEST PULL TAB VARIETY AROUND!
50/50 RAFFLE
QUEEN OF HEARTS DRAWING!

QUEEN OF HEARTS
 Current Queen Jackpot
\$13,660.00

MUST BE PLAYING BINGO TO PLAY AND WIN!

SUNDAY MEGA MONEY RAFFLE!

DOORS OPEN 3:00PM | FIRST GAME 5:00PM

MEGA PROGRESSIVE JACKPOTS!
PULL TABS
\$50/50 RAFFLE
\$500 LOTTERY BOARD RAFFLE
RAFFLING OFF AN 80 INCH TV!
OLD GLORY RAFFLE BOARD!

OLD GLORY
 60/40 SPLIT!
\$1000 STARTING PAYOUT!

Current Old Glory Jackpot
\$1,091.00

HOT FOOD AND SNACK BAR AVAILABLE!

Come out and MAKE IT YOUR NIGHT TO WIN!

Resources available for food, meals

With more families being affected by SNAP program cutbacks, anyone in need of supplement food or meals can get help from the following organizations.

The Christian Life Assembly, 2960 E Division St Diamond, offers a food pantry Tuesday 2:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Wednesday 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and Friday 9:00 a.m. to noon. By appointment only 815-578-5441.

Braidwood Food Pantry at Community Care Center. Open Tuesdays 8 to 11:45 a.m. 112 S. Center Street, Braidwood. Info: 815-325-0779

Ignite Christian Church, 1180 W 1st St. Braidwood. Micro-pantry open 24 hours front of church Info: (815)-390-5040

Top Fuel Saloon Food

Pantry. Open Fridays from 1 to 2 p.m. 275 S. Hickory St., Braidwood.

Coal City Food Pantry at Coal City United Methodist Church. (Use south entrance) Closed all Federal holidays. Open Mondays 9-11 a.m. and Thursdays 1-3 p.m. 6805 E. McArdle Road, Coal City. Information: 815-216-3288.

We Care of Grundy County Food Pantry. Office Hours: Mon.-Wed. and Fri.: 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m. and 1:00-4:00 p.m. Pantry Hours: Monday-Friday 1:00-3:00 by appointment. Please call to schedule your time to come 815-942-6389. 530 Bedford Rd., Morris.

Kuzma Care Cottage, food pantry. 635 S. Main Street, Wilmington. Hours: M-F 9-11 a.m. and 1-3 p.m. and the 2nd Saturday of each month, 8-11 a.m. 815-476-2030

Local Meals

St. Vincent Table Hot Meals. Coordinators Cindi Grove 815-735-1432 and Laura Marizza 815-325-8605. Hours for pickup for shut ins 4:00-4:30 p.m. Dine in hours 4:30 until 5:30 p.m.

Throughout September and October, meals will be distributed at Immaculate Conception, 220 S. School St., Braidwood; Nov. - Assumption of the BVM, 180 S. Kankakee St., Coal City. Dec. through Feb. - Closed and will resume in March, 2027.

If you would like to help with this ministry or know of anyone in need of meals, please contact our coordinators for more information.

We are always looking for more churches or organizations to help.

Oktoberfest coming to Braidwood

Immaculate Conception Church in Braidwood will be hosting Oktoberfest on Saturday, Sept. 26.

Don your lederhosen and break out your stein and join in an evening of food, fun, friends and German bier.

The event will be held at in Fr. White Hall, Immaculate Conception Church, 110 S. School St.

Doors open at 5 p.m., serving food from 5-7 pm with carry outs available. A free will donation for food and a cash bar for the bier.

FREE HAUNTED HOUSE Kid Friendly 6-6:30
975 E 4th St Oct.2-31st Fri,Sat, Sun 6-9pm

Sweet Treats & Tasty Eats

301 S Broadway St., Coal City

815-634-6643

Hot Dogs-Burgers-Beef-Gyros

Custom Cakes-Desserts-Ice Cream

Dine In-Carryout-Delivery

Morris Hospital enhances Urgent Care with Save Your Spot

Morris Hospital has added a new feature to its urgent care offering that enables patients to reserve a time before heading to one of its urgent care locations in Diamond, Channahon or Morris.

While patients can still walk in for urgent care services, using "Save Your Spot" in advance of the visit helps reduce wait times once patients arrive, according to Kirsten Gribbin, Manager of Immediate Care at Morris Hospital & Healthcare Centers. Patients can also see estimated wait times on the hospital website.

"Checking wait times in advance and reserving a time for an urgent care visit essentially allows patients

to wait at home, work, or wherever they happen to be," said Gribbin. "We're also very excited to give patients the ability to see wait times before they leave home, which are constantly changing throughout the day."

Patients can reserve a time for an urgent care visit by going to the home page of the hospital website, morrishospital.org, and clicking the Get Urgent Care Now button. After reviewing estimated wait times, patients can reserve a time at the location of their choosing.

Morris Hospital's urgent care is a helpful solution for the diagnosis and treatment of minor illness and injuries including

allergies, back pain, bites, burns, coughs, congestion, earache, fever, headache, infections, rashes, sore throats, stings, sprains and strains, vomiting and more.

Morris Hospital offers urgent care in Channahon at the Morris Hospital Ridge Road Campus, 27240 W. Saxony Drive, just north of Route 6 off Ridge Road; in Diamond at the Morris Hospital Diamond-Coal City Campus, 1450 E. Division St.; and in Morris at 100 W. Gore Road just north of Interstate 80.

To learn more about Morris Hospital's Urgent Care and how to "Save Your Spot," go to morrishospital.org/GetUrgentCareNow.

Mobile food pantry coming to Braidwood

The Village is a church that works with the community to help where it is needed the most.

That is why The Village is partnering with Northern Illinois Food Bank and will host a Mobile Food Pantry at the Reed-Custer Middle School, 407 Comet Drive, Braidwood, on Monday, Oct. 5, at 5 p.m.

Families in the Braidwood and surrounding communities will be able to get enough groceries (bread, dairy, meats, veggies) for about a week.

Distribution will be first come first served. There is no registration, proof of income or I.D. required.

WE-PTO selling mums

The Wilmington school WE-PTO is taking pre-orders at the Wilmington Downtown Farmers Market on Thursday, Sept 17, from 5-8 pm for garden mums to be sold as a fundraiser for school activities.

They come in six different colors: orange, pink, red, yellow, purple and white. They are 16-18 inches in diameter inside a 9 in pot. Prices will be one for \$12, three for \$33 or five for \$50.

Don't rush to throw items away. Many charities can help find new homes for used clothing, appliances, and other functional items you no longer want.

Blue Mass to honor area first responders

Immaculate Conception Church in Braidwood will host a Blue Mass on Sunday, Sept. 27 at 9 a.m.

All those who work in the public safety field—police, fire, EMS, ESDA, and dispatchers—are invited to join in this Mass of thanksgiving.

This mass is extended to all denominations of faith, or those not of faith, and is the church's way to say thank you for your

service.

Father Tom Louge will bless all in attendance with a special prayer towards the end of mass.

If possible, please wear your uniform.

Following Mass fellowship and a light breakfast of appreciation will be held in Father White Hall.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call Dave Wollgast (815) 705-6229 or Tami Favero (815) 405-0982.

Glaucoma often does not produce symptoms until the disease has progressed and caused irreversible vision loss.

That's why early detection and treatment are key to protecting your sight.

You may not see Glaucoma coming...
But We Will.

If you're age 40 or older, or if you have diabetes, high blood pressure or a family history of glaucoma, talk to us to learn more or to schedule a screening

815-468-2015 FISHER-GENTRY EYE CARE
501 S. Locust St. (Rt. 50) • Manteno

ID TheftSmart™

GET YOUR 3-STAGE DEFENSE!

PROTECTION • DETECTION • RESTORATION

ID TheftSmart™

The smart choice for safeguarding your identity.

PROTECTION | Ask about our
DETECTION | IDTheftSmart™
RESTORATION | Protection Plan

Easy. Affordable. Peace of Mind.

SurfInternet®

SWITCH TO FIBER INTERNET THAT CAN KEEP UP

FIBER INTERNET PLANS STARTING AT

\$30 /mo with AutoPay*

Taxes & Equipment Fees Included

- ✓ NO contracts
- ✓ All-In Pricing*
- ✓ Price-Lock Guarantee*
- ✓ FREE Installation*
- ✓ FREE eero WiFi router*
- ✓ Local customer support

CALL 1-833-544-2983
VISIT SurfInternet.com

*Restrictions apply. Visit SurfInternet.com for details.

Bank of Pontiac

Bloomington • Coal City • Delavan • Dwight • Fairbury • Forrest
Melvin • Minier • Odell • Paxton • Piper City • Pontiac

Toll FREE 855-844-6151 | www.bankofpontiac.com

Member FDIC

First human case of West Nile Virus reported in Will County

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) announced the first human case of West Nile Virus (WNV) in Will County.

A 51-year-old person from Will County has tested positive for West Nile Virus after developing symptoms in the second week of August. The individual has not required hospitalization and is recovering.

The Will County Health Department's Environmental Health Division has also reported that mosquito batches in seven different Will County communities have tested positive for WNV this summer.

IDPH reported a total of 24 human cases of WNV have now been detected throughout the state. In addition to the case in Will County, 15 were reported in Cook County, two were reported in DuPage County while Kane, Kendall, Livingston, Madison, Piatt, and Shelby all reported one

positive case. IDPH has also reported two deaths have been linked to WNV.

So far in 2026, there have been 2,773 WNV-positive mosquito batches from 52 counties throughout the state. In Will County, mosquitoes trapped in Crete, Frankfort, Bolingbrook, Plainfield, Joliet and Mokena have tested positive for WNV this summer.

WNV typically causes mild, flu-like symptoms. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 8 out of 10 people infected with West Nile virus do not develop any symptoms. About 1 in 5 people who are infected develop a fever with other symptoms such as headache, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea, or rash. Most people who develop symptoms from WNV recover completely, but fatigue and weakness can last for weeks or months.

However, about 1 in 150 people who are infect-

ed develop a severe illness that affects the central nervous system such as inflammation of the brain (encephalitis) or inflammation of the membranes that surround the brain and spinal cord (meningitis).

Severe illness can occur in people of any age, however people over 60 years of age are at greater risk for severe illness if they are infected. People with certain medical conditions, such as cancer, diabetes, hypertension, kidney disease, and people who have received organ transplants, are also at greater risk.

Because there is no vaccine available to prevent West Nile virus, it is important to avoid mosquito bites.

For more information on WNV and what can be done to prevent getting bitten by mosquitoes, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's West Nile virus page at <https://www.cdc.gov/westnile>.

Mobile food pantry coming Monday to South Wilmington

Catholic Charities' Mobile Food Pantry will be distributing food on Monday, Sept. 21 and Oct. 19 from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at St. Lawrence Church (135 Rice Road in South Wilmington) in the church parking lot (rain or shine).

Catholic Charities and the Northern Illinois Food Bank have partnered to deliver nutritious food (meat, produce and nonperishable items) to people in need.

Participants are asked to stay in their cars. The Mobile Food Pantry will use a "drive thru" method to distribute pre-packed groceries.

You do not have to be Catholic to participate. Catholic Charities helps people of all faiths and beliefs. For more information about Catholic Charities, please visit catholiccharitiesjoliet.org.

Struggling to afford phone or broadband? Lifeline can help

Access to phone and broadband service is vital for keeping residents plugged into emergency services and local resources.

That's why there is state and federal help in supporting Lifeline which offers monthly discounts to eligible residents for access to voice or broadband services.

"No Illinoisan should be stuck without access to phone or internet. The federal Lifeline program provides crucial financial assistance to make it easier for qualifying low-income customers to stay connected to school, work, and other everyday essentials," said Illinois Commerce Commission Chairman Doug Scott.

Customers whose household incomes are at or below 135 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines or already enrolled in select public assistance programs can qualify for a \$9.25 monthly discount, and residents on qualifying Tribal lands can receive a \$34.25 monthly discount.

Survivors of domestic violence or human trafficking may be eligible to receive emergency Lifeline support for up to six months under the Safe Connections Act.

For more information on eligibility, enrollment, and recertification, visit LifelineSupport.org.

Learn about the unsolved murders of Grimes sisters

Step into one of Chicago's most infamous and haunting unsolved mysteries. In December 1956, sisters, Barbara and Patricia Grimes disappeared after leaving a movie theater, and their murders remain unsolved to this day.

Explore the details of the case, the investigation, and the many theories that have emerged over the years. New information and renewed interest continue to fuel the search for answers to this enduring mystery.

Raymond Johnson, also known as the

"History Cop", will present the program. A former police officer, military instructor, historian, researcher, and author, Johnson has spent more than 17 years teaching genealogical and historical research.

He has also been featured on programs including American Ripper, Mysteries at the Museum, and A Crime to Remember.

Register for the event to be held Wednesday, Sept. 23, at 6 p.m. at the Wilmington Public Library District. Registration is required.

CLASSIFIED DEADLINES

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

Deadlines

Classified Ads & Classified Display Ads
Fridays - 5 p.m.

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

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

Cost

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

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

APARTMENT FOR RENT

Apartment for rent Newly renovated 830 sq ft. apartment, 2 bedroom, 1 bath. Located in Godley, \$1,200 a month. Call Mike for details, 815-370-6110.

GARAGE SALE

426 N. Center St. Braidwood, Thurs., Fri., & Sat., Sept. 24, 25, 26 9am-5pm. Golf Cart, Lift recliner, 3 wheel bike, new shoes, clothes, Dining Table w/ 4 chairs, CD player, Cordless pool vacuum, Misc items.

SERVICE & REPAIRS

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

STORAGE

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

FREE

Free kittens to loving home or farm, Wilmington. Please text (618-383-5870).

GARAGE SALE

Multi Family Mega Sale! 388 E. Main St. Braidwood. Thursday, Sept. 17 and Friday, Sept. 18 from 9-5. Old pennies, electric 3 wheel bike, wagon wheels, antique ruby red glassware, fiesta, 3D fidgets, primitives, antiques, fishing, jewelry, rocks, crystals, Magic & Pokémon trading cards, record players and records, household, tools, lamps, end tables, roll top desk, old oil cans, tons of misc.

LOST & FOUND

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

PETS

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

Bubbles Cleaning Service

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

A Thousand Words Photography

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

WANTED

WANTED SCRAP METAL

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

Free pickup 7 days 815-210-8819

Place your grage sale here for only \$17.00 (Up to 30 words)

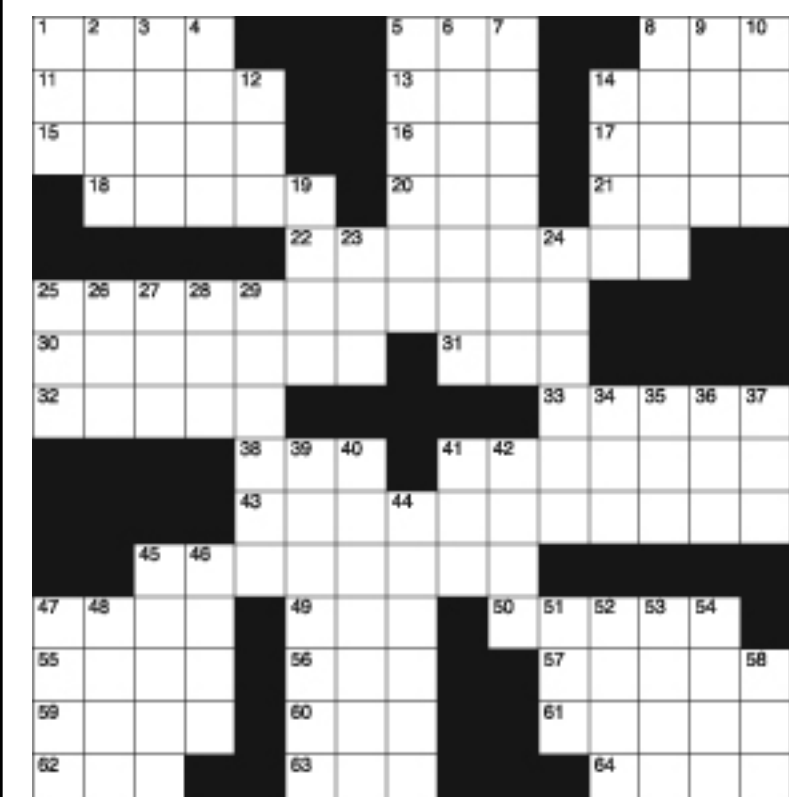
PUBLIC NOTICES

Because it's your right to know

HELP FOR VETERANS

BE THE ONE is the suicide prevention part of the American Legion. Vets can call: 779-206-8391, The Wilmington Help Line to talk with a Veteran who has had PTSD. There is help, only a phone call away.

In an emergency call the Veterans CRISIS LINE 988 THEN PRESS 1



CLUES ACROSS

1. Egyptian bull god
5. A young canine
8. North Carolina university
11. "Oddbod" actor Tom
13. Midway between northeast and east
14. A place to shop
15. Mysterious "Severance" family
16. Single Lens Reflex
17. Malaria
18. Informal loan organizations
20. Twitching
21. Holm oak

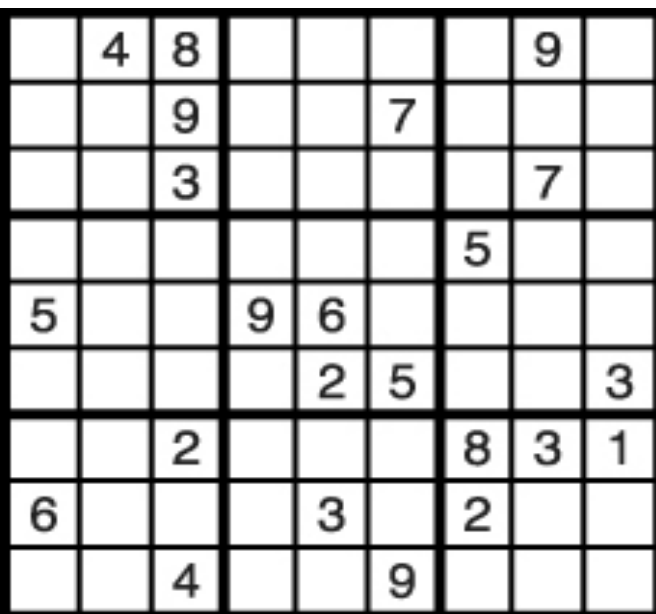
CLUES DOWN

22. Willing to consent
25. In an early way
30. Stuck it out
31. Language in Ghana
32. Obtain
33. Ancient Greek currency
38. One point east (clockwise) of due north
41. Popular baseball movie
43. Group of islands
45. Church building
47. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea
49. Late AC/DC frontman Scott

50. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
55. Thick piece of something
56. Breakfast food
57. One mole of solute per kilogram of solvent
59. Ancient Greek City
60. Bitterly regret
61. Don't forget it
62. Dishonorable man
63. Affirmative
64. "___ and flows"

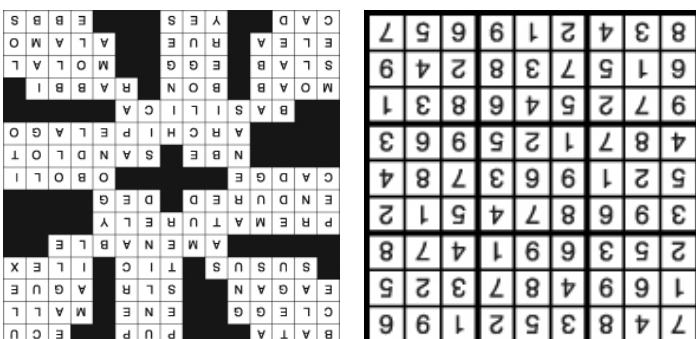
CLUES DOWN

1. Bridge-building degree
2. Expression of sorrow or pity
3. Lizard species
4. Turkish leader title
5. A way to bother
6. Blank
7. A fine, closely woven cotton fabric
8. Sports broadcaster Ian
9. Popular whodunit board game
10. Alkali flats mineral
12. Large African antelope
14. It's delivered most days
19. Satisfy
23. Water soaked soil
24. Of a past era
25. Chest muscle (slang)
26. Ribonucleic acid
27. Doctor of Education
28. Coffee receptacle
29. Where rockstars work
34. International airport in Connecticut
35. Russian river
36. It's used to make cabins
37. OJ trial judge Lance
39. A means to persuade
40. Short poem
41. A way to begin hostilities with
42. Multi-function radar (abbr.)
44. Joints
45. Blatted
46. Swedish rock group
47. Millisecond
48. ___ podrida: Spanish stew
51. Doctors' group
52. Trunk of a tree
53. Tattle
54. Metrical foot
58. ___ Angeles



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.



COMET SPORTS



Photo by Eric Fisher

REED-CUSTER'S Mackenzie Foote bumps the ball up for the varsity Lady Comets.



Photo by Eric Fisher

REED-CUSTER'S Dillan Loob gets a knee up on the ball during a recent home match.

Comets fall to Streator in lone match

The Reed-Custer boys soccer team had a light schedule last week with just one match, traveling to Streator on Saturday where the Comets suffered a 5-1 conference loss.

The Bulldogs jumped in front early, scoring three times in the first half. Reed-Custer managed to get one back before halftime and went into the break trailing 3-1.

Jakub Lichaj accounted for the Comets' lone goal, with Kacper Stypulkowski picking up the assist.

Streator kept Reed-Custer off the scoreboard in the second half while adding two more goals to pull away for the four-goal victory.

Reed-Custer goalkeeper Caden Atwell faced plenty of pressure throughout the match and finished with eight saves.

Despite the final score, the Comets were able to stay within striking distance through the opening half before the Bulldogs put the match away after the break.



Photo by Eric Fisher

COMET AIDEN JONES tries to steal the ball away from an opponent during a recent home match.

Lady Comets battle through tough stretch, fall to Peotone

The Reed-Custer varsity volleyball team continues to search for the combination that will get it back in the win column after dropping four straight matches to fall to 1-6 overall and 0-4 in the Illinois Central Eight Conference.

The Lady Comets' latest setback came Thursday at Peotone, where they fell in two sets, 25-14, 25-23. While the Blue Devils controlled the opener, Reed-Custer battled throughout the second set and came within two points of forcing a third.

Kenzie Foote led the Comets at the net with eight kills while adding six digs. Alyssa Wollenzien contributed three kills and 10 digs.

Taylor Bova turned in a solid all-around performance with four kills, 10 digs and a setting assist.

Madelyn Marschner directed the offense with 13 assists, while Reese Brown added two assists and Sophie Moyers had one.

The loss followed another conference setback earlier in the week when Reed-Custer hosted neighboring Coal City. The Lady Coalers controlled that matchup, winning 25-16, 25-8.

Reed-Custer has struggled to find consistency since picking up its first victory of the season against Dwight. The Comets won that three-set battle 25-19, 20-25, 25-19, but have since dropped four in a row.

The varsity may be looking for a spark, but Reed-Custer's JV squad provided one Monday with a come-from-behind victory over Ottawa Marquette.

After dropping the opening set 25-12, the JV

Comets refused to fold. They edged Marquette 25-23 in the second set before winning a back-and-forth deciding set 17-15.

Johanna Jonapoulos led Reed-Custer with eight kills. Avah Thompson added four kills and an ace, while Ava Povalish served three aces and contributed a kill.

Monahan finished with two kills and an ace, Sophia Flowers served three aces and Sarah Urban put down two kills as the Comets completed the three-set comeback.

For the varsity, the focus now shifts to getting back on track as the conference schedule continues.

Reed-Custer travels to Herscher on Wednesday looking for its first ICE victory. The Lady Comets will then return home to host Seneca on Sept. 21.



Photo by Eric Fisher

LADY COMET Kamryn Wilkey digs a serve by Coal City on Tuesday.

Panthers ride three-game win streak into postseason

The Panther A baseball team is getting hot at just the right time.

The Panthers have won three straight games, defeating Saratoga, Peotone and Bradley as they head into the final two games of the regular season before postseason play begins.

Mauricio Hueramo has been a driving force during the winning streak, collecting six hits, including a double and a home run.

Abel Rodriguez has provided plenty of power as well, recording four hits during the three-game stretch. His biggest swing was a grand slam, and he also added a double.

Gavin Vogler and Cooper Dvorak have each contributed a single and a double, while Mathias Martinez, Gannon Tryner and Eddie Davies have collected two singles apiece.

Josh Forsythe added an extra-base hit with a triple,

while Zack Soto, Eamon Roberts and Brandon Kuchar each chipped in a single.

With contributions coming throughout the lineup, the Panthers have built some late-season momentum at an ideal time.

They have two games remaining to keep the streak alive before turning their attention to the postseason.



"Proud to be serving the community for the past 41 years!"

FRESH HOT DELIVERY!

COUPON

41ST ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL

1 X-Large - 2 Topping Pizza

XL Geo's Nuggets, 2-Liter of Soda and Slice of Brownie
(Limit 1 coupon per party per visit)

 **ONLY \$31.99**

Not valid with any other offer. Plus sales tax. Expires 09/30/26.

715 S. Broadway, Coal City

815-634-8858

Order online at www.geospizza.net

GIFT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE



 FOLLOW US ON Facebook

 FOLLOW US ON Instagram

 FOLLOW US ON X

COMET SPORTS



Photo by Angela Rose

OFFENSIVE LINEMAN Kane Laurencell blocks the Manteno line for runningback Sam Crotty who reaches for a pitchout.



Photo by Angela Rose

THE REED-CUSTER defense kept the Comets in the game through the first half of Friday's at Manteno, down by only one touchdown in the first half. They will be up for a new challenge this week when they host Coal City.

Manteno powers past Comets

BY JIM SHELTON
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

It set up as a good litmus test to show Reed-Custer (2-2) or Manteno (4-0) if they could take that next step.

In the end, the home side was too strong and the Comets made too many mistakes in a 27-12 loss.

Manteno's star running back Nick Honkisz took their first offensive snap 65 yards for a touchdown.

"Kudos to him. He runs hard. Our interior was where we needed to be and then he cut it back to where we have one guy and he just missed the tackle at the line of scrimmage," said head coach Joe Turek.

"We just didn't finish off plays. We didn't drive through on the tackle or finish on the back end."

Quarterback Logan Buford added an 11-yard touchdown run four minutes into the second before Nate Vogler was able to score on a 19-yard run to make it a 14-6 game at half.

"It was a rough one for sure. We did some good things at times, and when we do what we preach and work what we're coached to do, it looks good on the

video, and then we have to do the same plays and don't do them.

"It needs to be more about consistency and learning to build off the positive instead of continuing to revert back to old habits."

Manteno extended the lead to 21-6 with four minutes left in the third on another Honkisz score and Trent Boudreau punched in a short touchdown run early in the fourth, but the extra point was blocked, keeping it a two-score game.

Buford put the game away with his second touchdown run midway through the fourth.

The duo of Honkisz and Buford combined for 197 yards on the ground and all four scores.

The Comets rushed for over 200 yards for the fourth straight game (208), but it took 41 carries.

"We controlled the time of possession no doubt and part of that was giving up too many explosives on defense. We stalled one time in the redzone and fumbled another time," said Turek.

"We were definitely moving the ball which is a good thing to see always, but just didn't make

enough plays in the end. We just need make sure we finish what we're doing."

Kaiden Klein led the balanced rushing attack with 13 carries for 69 yards and Jesse Tresouthick had 68 yards on 14 rushes.

Boudreau added four rushes for 19 yards and recorded an interception and Donald Bryan tallied 32 yards on four catches.

It's another tough opponent this week as Coal City (3-1) comes to town.

The Coalers blitzed Streater last week 57-0 and scored 36 points in the first quarter.

"We talked a little bit at the end of Friday night. Just when things get tough, how are we going to respond? Are we going to respond tough? Are we going to respond negatively or without energy? And we kind of did that on Friday, and that was the most disappointing part."

"I think kudos to Manteno and what they were doing. They played the better game, but I want to see us this Friday respond in a different way than how we responded early against Manteno. It's going to be tough. It's not going to be easy. We know that."



Photo by Angela Rose

MAKING A STOP for Reed-Custer on a Manteno ball carrier is junior Kaiden Klein (6).



Photo by Angela Rose

REED-CUSTER JUNIOR Eddie Bryan gains extra yards with a good second effort despite being hit by a pair of Manteno defenders.

Comet golfers come up short against Manteno

The Reed-Custer boys and girls golf teams were both in action against Manteno last week, with the Panthers coming away with victories in both matches.

The Lady Comets were led by Harlie Liebermann, who carded a 55 as Reed-Custer fell to Manteno 195-233.

Katie Lanta and Kaylee Scholtes were close behind, each shooting a 59, while Sophia Dixon turned in a 60. Taylor Koehler added a 67 for Reed-Custer.

While the Lady Comets were unable to keep pace with Manteno, only five strokes separated Reed-Custer's top four golfers, giving the team a relatively balanced scor-

ing effort.

The Reed-Custer boys also battled Manteno, falling 175-196.

Sophomore Johnny Buchanan led the Comets with a 48. Josh Creger and Nathan Trucano followed just one stroke back with matching rounds of 49, while Mason Vasil shot a 50.

That gave Reed-Custer an especially tight grouping among its four scoring golfers, with only two strokes separating Buchanan's team-best 48 from Vasil's 50.

The Comets will compete in the Minnie Monesse Invite in Grant Park on Friday and the Illinois Central Eight conference meet at Wolf Creek on Monday.

TOUCH A TRUCK

FREE EVENT!



Saturday, September 19

2 pm - 4 pm



GODLEY PARK DISTRICT

500 S. KANKAKEE STREET ~ GODLEY, IL

WWW.GODLEYPARK.COM



Follow us on Facebook