



RCMS announces
ACE winners

Comets grapplers get
right to business



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Braidwood seeks special service area for D'Orazio, Bauer developments

BY MARNEY SIMON
EDITOR

The city of Braidwood is proposing a special service area as part of the planned development that will move D'Orazio Ford and Arnie Bauer Chevrolet Buick out of Wilmington and into the commercial development on Braidwood's northwest side along I-55.

The members of the Braidwood City Council signed off on the latest batch of paperwork to accommodate

the new dealerships during their regular meeting on Nov. 22. The ordinance provides for a public hearing on the proposal prior to its passage.

In June, the City Council approved a redevelopment agreement with Bauer & D'Orazio, LLC, to bring D'Orazio Ford and Arnie Bauer Chevrolet into the subdivision at EZ Street and Division Street, which is located inside the city's Tax Increment Financing (TIF) III district.

The agreement includes a total of 64 acres of land that will be purchased

by the City of Braidwood for \$1.8 million, and conveyed to Bauer & D'Orazio, LLC for construction of a new Ford dealership and a new Chevrolet dealership. The D'Orazio Ford dealership is expected to be built on 11.7 acres, while the Arnie Bauer Chevrolet dealership will take up 8 acres. The new dealerships will sit adjacent to Camping World and Warren's Collision Center.

The city paid that \$1.8 million with the issuance of debt certificates—bonds that the city can sell to

investors in order to raise funds. That money is deposited into a deb service fund dedicated for specific appropriations, and investors are paid back plus interest when the bonds mature.

City leaders said the creation of the special service area will include a tax levy that, if approved, will provide sufficient revenue equal to the amount of those annual debt service bonds.

"The agreement made with the land acquisition, they will be making the payments on the loan for the land

until the time that they start producing sales tax, and then it will transfer back to the city," city administrator Tony Altieri said. "This ordinance is setting up a special assessment area so that the [LLC] will be making all the payments on the land, not the city of Braidwood. So, it has to do with all of that. The buildings, the development, it's one big area that includes the development, the dealerships, all of that. We have to set up the special

SEE AREA, PAGE 2

District still waiting on replacement equipment for park

Goodrich Park equipment closed off for more than one year

BY MARNEY SIMON
EDITOR

Fourteen months after vandals took aim at the playground equipment at Goodrich Park in Braidwood, and the play area is still off limits to those youngsters who want an afternoon on the jungle gym.

The play structure at Goodrich Park on south Maple Street was vandalized in September 2021. The damage appeared to be the result of someone taking a swing at the equipment with a heavy object, leaving holes large enough that a child's leg could easily fall through. As a result, the Braidwood Park District closed off the area and filed both a police report and an insurance claim.

After things were all worked through insurance for replacement pieces for the damaged equipment, the district was hopeful for parts to be delivered by July. But over the summer, that date was pushed back to November.

But now that November has come and gone, supply chain issues and backorders mean the equipment still isn't ready, and likely might not be available until spring.

"Everything is in backlog," Braidwood Park District Commissioner Josh Bolatto said. "Some park districts have been waiting over a year or two years to get any equipment because they just can't get the orders yet. It's just a huge backlog."

The park district only needs replacement pieces, not a full set for replacement. But, Bolatto said, the district's insurance won't allow a patch or fix in the meantime due to liability issues, should someone be injured on equipment that the park district patched themselves.

The damage left the main playground equipment with

SEE PARK, PAGE 2

Christmas arrives in Braidwood



Photos by Marney Simon

HEY SANTA! The annual tradition of Santa bringing up the rear atop one of the fire engines of the Braidwood Fire Department continued on Saturday, Dec. 3, as folks from all around town braved the cold for the 12th Annual Lighted Christmas Parade. The evening kicked off with the official tree lighting across from City Hall. This year's honorary tree lighters were the members of the RCMS state champion softball team.



Smith says safety is top priority in streets dept.

BY MARNEY SIMON
EDITOR

There's no love lost between Commissioner Fay Smith and city leaders in Braidwood.

For well over a year, the Streets and Alleys Commissioner has been at odds with other elected and appointed officials in the city, engaging in disagreements in public meetings with City Administrator Tony Altieri, City Attorney Bryan Wellner, City Engineer Dave Weber, and Finance Commissioner Doug Money.

Smith once again took the

opportunity to air some grievances during the Nov. 22 regular meeting of the City Council, addressing unspecified rumors of safety issues within the streets department.

"Number one, I have told the city council, I have told the union, I have told everybody about OSHA. If anybody that works for me has anything that they think is unsafe, they do not have to do it until we iron the problem out, and I still stand by that," Smith said. "If anybody goes to do something unsafe... and they still do it,

SEE CUNCIL, PAGE 2

Train speeds set to increase Dec. 13

STAFF REPORT

Residents in Braided can expect some faster moving trains through the city's crossings, beginning on Dec. 13, as part of the High Speed Rail (HSR) initiative.

Last week, the Interstate Commerce Commission announced that it had approved a large segment of the HSR track for increased speeds, including the Union Pacific line that hosts the Amtrak Lincoln Service between Chicago and St. Louis. That means speeds through the city are now approved at up to 110 miles per hour.

However, at this time Union Pacific has only authorized speeds up to 90 miles per hour. The increased speed limit will

SEE TRAINS, PAGE 2

Shadow Lakes home destroyed in fire

STAFF REPORT

A home in Shadow Lakes was destroyed and its two occupants received minor injuries after a fire swept through the structure in the early morning hours of Friday, Dec. 2.

The fire broke out around 5 a.m. at the residence on Hole in the Wall Court.

The Braidwood Fire Department responded to the fire, reporting that there were flames visible from the home upon the department's arrival on the scene.

Fire officials said one of the occupants of the home

was alerted to the fire by a smoke detector, which allowed the pair to escape the fire quickly. Both individuals were transported to Riverside Hospital and treated for smoke inhalation.

According to reports, the structure was a complete loss, suffering approximately \$350,000 in damages.

The cause of the fire is under investigation, but foul play is not suspected.



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Area

service area so they make the payments.”

Back in August, the city approved an ordinance authorizing the sale of property along EZ Street for the project.

The deal includes TIF eligible incentives up to \$4.765 million, including:

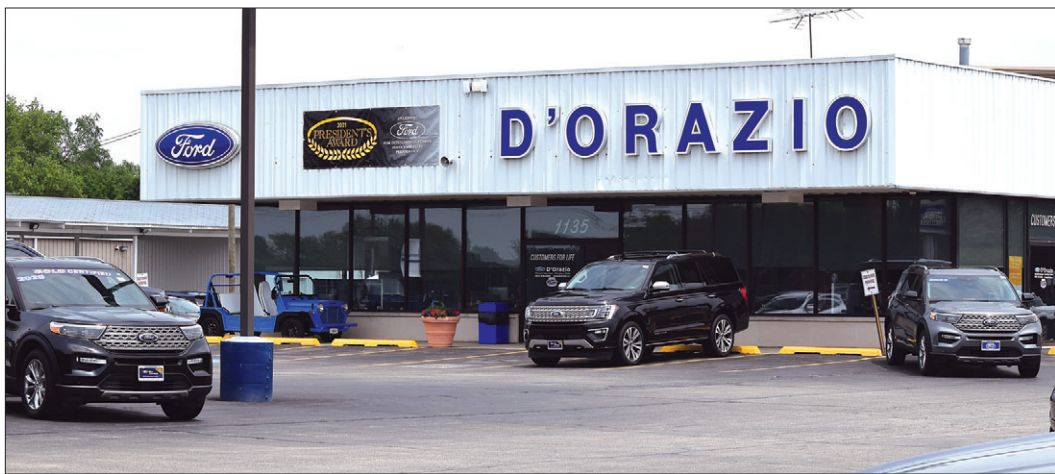
- Real Estate Tax Increment — the city will reimburse the developers 100% of the annual net real estate tax increment generated by the dealerships, until the developer has received the TIF eligible project costs. For other development within the 64 acres, the city will reimburse 50% of net real estate tax increment generated by retail or commercial development.

- Municipal Sales Tax — The city will reimburse the developer 55% of municipal sales tax revenues generated by the dealerships in calendar years 2025 through 2034.

- Construction projects — Those projects to be constructed by the developer that are eligible for TIF reimbursement include site preparation, grading, engineering, architectural services, legal services, planning, infrastructure improvements, utilities extensions, and job training.

In addition, the city will waive all permit fees and utility tap on fees for the two dealerships. The city will also construct a left turn lane onto north Division Street, which is currently a right in/right out only.

Per the agreement, both



Free Press file photos

THE CITY OF BRAIDWOOD will hold a public hearing on a proposed special service area along EZ Street, to help capture taxes to pay for bonds that purchased the land for the future sites of D'Orazio Ford and Arnie Bauer Chevy Buick, both of which will relocate from their current Wilmington locations to Braidwood by the end of 2024.



dealerships must be completed on or before Dec. 24, 2024. The public hearing on the

special service area will be held during the regular meeting of the Braidwood City

Council on Tuesday, Dec. 13, at 7 p.m. at Braidwood City Hall.

Park

five large holes, and unusable for more than a year now.

“We are disappointed. We don’t like keeping it closed. We know that there are a lot of kids who like to use that park, it does get used,” Bolatto said.

While the district never did find the culprits, Bolatto said the damage looks as if someone took a sledgehammer to the equipment.

“Just, why?” Bolatto said. “There’s no rhyme or reason, it’s nothing but madness... So, we’ve still got it blocked off. We put updates out there periodically to try to keep the residents updated. But, ultimately, we’re at the mercy of the manufacturers. I don’t know if we can get it installed in the middle of winter [even if it’s ready].”

Bolatto said the park is still open to the public, just not the playground equipment.

“We did add the basketball court in there at the end of last year,” he said. “We

got the stripes in there this year. There’s a half court back there right in front of the water tower, and that we know is getting a lot of use by the neighborhood kids. We had quite a few requests for that.”

As far as the district’s other properties, Bolatto said the waiting game also continues for development at the Bergera and Bohac Memorial Park. The vacant land on west Bergera Street was donated to the park district in 2021 by the family of the late Shirley Mae Bergera Bohac, to develop into park space. Bolatto said for now, the park is still in the planning phases as the district works on funding.

The family donated the land plus \$10,000 initially, and the district is budgeting \$10,000 per year if available to add to that fund. But, higher costs are affecting any immediate plans.

“We want to develop that into a nice neighborhood park, with a play area, benches, a picnic pavilion,” Bolatto said. “You have to factor in the foundation, installation, all that. We know there are different state grants that the park district can apply for.”

For now, the district is working to add into the fund and make plans with the

hopes to be able to move ahead as soon as prices are more practical for improvements.

“It’s kind of disappointing that we can’t make it happen sooner,” Bolatto said.

Bolatto said the district is excited for the snowy season to finally arrive, with improvements at Old Smokey turning the spoils pile, which was moved in 2017 to the north side of the park, into a local sledding destination.

“Last year, every time it snowed, there were dozens of kids up there sledding. It was awesome,” Bolatto said. “Being able to shape it up there the way it is, having the steep slope face the north side and the not as steep slope, a longer slope on the south side, we found that it helped to hold the snow a little better. That gets a lot of good use.”

Looking ahead, Bolatto added that the district plans to work with the Braidwood Lions Club to expand the butterfly garden at Old Smokey City Park in the spring.

Braidwood Park District updates can be found online throughout the year at www.braidwoodparkdistrict.com.

Trains

only apply to Amtrak passenger trains, not freight trains.

The Amtrak Lincoln Service between Chicago and St. Louis utilizes the UP line six times daily, three trips northbound and three trips southbound.

That said, additional information about HSR remains difficult to come by.

With the exception of posting press releases from the governor and Amtrak, the state’s website and information center on the project, www.idothsr.org, has not been updated since 2018.

Even the link announcing the increase in speeds for the Lincoln Service include just

the Dec. 13 start date, with a link only to Amtrak’s website.

The most recent press release on the site is dated August 2021.

HSR will accommodate trains of up to 110 miles per hour. New Amtrak locomotives designed to reach that speed were introduced in 2017.

The high speed rail project began in 2010, an effort to add faster service on the 284-mile long Chicago to St. Louis corridor.

At that time, IDOT secured \$1.2 billion in federal funds to add HSR between Dwight and St. Louis. In 2012, the state received an additional \$186.3 million for corridor improvements between Joliet and Dwight.

Approximately 99% of the 35 million annual trips made

in the Chicago to St. Louis corridor are accomplished through automobile and air travel, according to IDOT.

The HSR project intends to establish a more balanced modal use of the transportation network by improving rail service.

The overall purpose of the project is to enhance the passenger transportation network within the corridor.

In July Of 2018, the HSR project released the Historic Property Identification and Effects Assessment Report for the project between Elwood and Braidwood.

That report was used by IDOT and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to identify historic properties and assess effects for the proposed Elwood to Braidwood track construction.

Morris Hospital announces Stroke Support Group

Morris Hospital is hosting a Stroke Support Group on Wednesday, Dec. 21, from 3-4 p.m. at the Diagnostic & Rehabilitative Center of Morris

Hospital, 100 Gore Rd., Suite H, Morris. The support group facilitator is a speech pathologist from Morris Hospital.

The Stroke Support Group

is for individuals who have a history of stroke or any neurologic event, as well as their caregivers, spouses, and loved ones. The focus is to support, educate, and bring people together who are facing similar issues. The session typically includes a guest speaker who provides education and is available to answer questions.

Those planning to attend are asked to register online at www.morrishospital.org/event s, or call Morris Hospital’s

Speech Therapy Department at 815-705-7440.

PERSONAL INJURY



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then they’re breaking what I’m saying. They know they don’t have to, because I don’t put pressure on nobody to work unsafe.”

Smith did not elaborate on what potential safety concerns there are within the streets department, only reiterated that anyone with concerns can come directly to him, rather than go to other city leaders, elected or appointed.

Echoing a sentiment he has shared multiple times, Smith challenged anyone to run for the seat he currently has if they think they can do a better job than he can.

“Everyone wants to run my job,” Smith said. “And I’ve said it before, if you want my job, you have to run for it. And it’s coming up pretty quick. It’s hard to do when everybody is trying to tell you what to do, and nothing comes out the way it’s supposed to.”

The city’s next election is April 4, 2023. All five seats on the City Council will be on the ballot. In other business before the City Council on Nov. 22:

- The council gave special recognition to the Reed-Custer Middle School eighth grade girls softball team. The team was the 2022 Class 2A State Champions. The members of the team were honored with a plaque to adorn the new honors wall at City Hall. The girls, their coaches, and their families were also treated to a pizza party courtesy of the city.

- Mayor Bob Jones also offered up congratulations to the Reed-Custer High School Comet football team for a successful season. The team’s undefeated streak came to an end during the playoffs in November.

- The council approved a request from Constellation Energy to host a 5K walk/run in Braidwood on May 27, 2023.

While details on the run and the route are not yet available, city leaders said the energy provider plans to use the run as a benefit fundraisers for a veterans charity.

- The council approved the dates for City Council and Planning and Zoning Board meetings for calendar year 2023.

Zoning meetings are held the first Monday of the month at 7 p.m., unless otherwise announced due to holiday changes or cancellations.

City Council meetings take place the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m.

All public meetings take place inside the council chambers at City Hall, 141 W. Main St. in Braidwood.

- The council approved the payroll for the week of Nov. 11, 2023 in the amount of \$91,945, as well as \$7,150 for a police department stipend and \$6,750 water department certificate bonus.

The council also approved the payroll for the week of Nov. 23, 2023 in the amount of \$91,372. The dual payroll periods were both on the agenda for approval due to the first meeting date of the month being changed because of the election.

- The council approved the payment of bills in the amount of \$845,844. Included in those bills was a \$350,000 payment for the city’s IEPA loan for the wastewater treatment plant.

- Finance Commissioner Doug Money announced that the city will seek \$1.8 million in property taxes for 2022. The 2022 property tax levy will go before the council for final action on Dec. 13.

Storytime with Santa this Friday in city park

The Braidwood Lions Club and Santa Services will be hosting a special storytime and pictures with Santa and Mrs. Claus on Friday, Dec. 9, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. under the Lions Pavilion in the Braidwood City Park.

The event is free to attend and donations are greatly appreciated. All donations will benefit the purchase of new playground equipment

for the Lions Kiddie Park in Braidwood.

The Braidwood Area Healthy Community Coalition will be handing out complimentary hot chocolate and cookies during the event as well as Christmas coloring sheets for the children.

For more information, please visit the Braidwood Lions Club or Santa Services Facebook pages.

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Eric D. Fisher, publisher
Marney Simon, editor

Beauty in bottle, 19th century cosmetics

Page through any women's magazine and you will find all the beauty preparations you could possibly think of. It is a multi-billion dollar industry worldwide. But time was, when you had to concoct those potions and lotions yourself.



TIME WAS....
Sandy Vasko

Our reference today is a book entitled, "Our Departments or The Manners, Conduct and Dress of the Most Refined Society" published in Chicago in 1881.

In the section titled "Toilet Recipes" we read the following:

"To remove freckles - bruise and squeeze the juice out of common chick-weed, and to this juice add three times its quantity of soft water. Bathe the skin with this for five or ten minutes morning and evening, and wash afterwards with clean water. Elder flowers treated and applied exactly in the same manner."

"For pimples on the face - Wash the face in a solution composed of one teaspoonful of carbollic acid to a pint of water. Be careful not to get any of it in the eyes as it will weaken them."

"Another remedy is one tablespoonful of borax to half a

pint of water, or pulverize a piece of alum the size of a walnut, dissolved in one ounce of lemon juice and one ounce of alcohol. Apply twice a day."

"Washes for the complexion - this prescription used by hunters to keep away the black flies and mosquitoes is said to leave the skin very clear, and is as follows: Mix one spoonful of the best tar in a pint of pure olive oil or almond oil, by heating the two together in a tin cup set in boiling water.

Stir till completely mixed and smooth, putting in more oil if the compound is too thick to run easily. Rub this on the face when going to bed, and lay patches of soft cloth on the cheeks and forehead to keep the tar from rubbing off. The bed linens must be protected by cloth folded and thrown over the pillows."

"Another effective wash is the whites of four eggs boiled in rosewater; half an ounce of alum; half an ounce of sweet almonds; beat the whole together until it assumes the consistency of paste. Spread upon a silk or muslin mask, to be worn at night."

"To remove sunburn - take two drams of borax, one dram

of alum, one dram of camphor, half an ounce of sugar candy, and a pound of ix-gall. Mix and stir well for ten minutes, and stir it three or four times a fortnight (Two weeks). When clear and transparent, strain through a blotting paper and bottle for use."

"To make pomades (now called hair mousse) for the hair - Take the marrow out of a beef shank bone, melt it in a vessel placed over boiling water, then strain and scent to liking, with attar of roses or other perfume."

"For another pomade use unsalted lard 5 ounces, olive oil two and a half ounces, castor oil one-quarter of an ounce, yellow wax and spermaceti (derived from the spermaceti whale) one quarter ounce. These ingredients are to be liquefied over a warm bath, and when cool, perfume to liking."

"For inflamed eyelids - Take a slice of stale bread, cut as thin as possible, toast both sides well, but do not burn it; when cold soak it in cold water, then put it between a piece of old linen and apply, changing when it gets warm."

"To whiten the fingernails - Take two drams of dilute sulphuric acid, one dram of the tincture of myrrh, 4 ounces of spring water, and mix in a bottle. After washing the hands, dip the fingers in a little of the

mixture. Rings with stones or pearls in them should be removed before using this mixture."

"To cure warts - Take a piece of raw beef steeped in vinegar for 24 hours, tie it on the part affected. Apply each night for two weeks."

"To remove wrinkles - Put powder of myrrh upon an iron plate sufficiently hot to melt the gum gently, and when it liquefies, cover over your head with a napkin, and hold your face over the fumes at a distance that will cause you no inconvenience. If it produces headache, discontinue its use."

"To reduce the flesh (lose weight) - A strong decoction of sassafras (the root that root beer used to be made of), drank frequently, will reduce the flesh as rapidly as any remedy known. A strong infusion is made at the rate of an ounce of sassafras to a quart of water.

Boil it half an hour very slowly, and let it stand till cold, eating again if desired. Keep it from air."

Writers warning: I have not tried any of these recipes and I hope that you don't. However, after looking at what's in some of the lotions I have, perhaps they aren't any worse than those unpronounceable chemicals we use on our faces now.

New non-profit focuses on I&M Canal cleanup

In late September a group of community volunteers gathered at Canalport Park in Morris to participate in a clean-up event.

More than 35 people of all ages showed up to pick up trash and debris along the I&M Canal in Morris.

The team walked the pathways, carrying trash bags, picking up litter. They covered the area from the Price Street Bridge all the way down to the Viaduct Construction site. Six of the volunteers brought kayaks and cleaned the canal from the water.

"We organized this event to make sure the canal was inviting and clean for the Grundy County Corn Festival," said Erik Olson. He is the president of a new non-profit called I&M Canal Cleanup Coalition (IMC3).

"We've been organizing canal cleanups for years, and finally decided to make our organization official," Olson added.

He explained that the Board is made up of Grundy County residents who are passionate about the history and preservation of the I&M Canal.

"We are starting to raise money for some beautification projects, and we plan to coordinate guest speakers to educate the community on the I&M Canal," Olson said.

They work closely with the Heritage Corridor Convention and Visitors Center and the I&M Canal. The group hosted a second cleanup a week later, cleaning the empty canal from the Viaduct Construction

site to Gebhard Woods.

"You'd be amazed at the trash we find," Olson added. They've found everything from old milk bottles to bowling balls.

IMC3 uses its donations to provide trash bags, trash grabbing tools, water, and snacks for volunteers.

"This was the largest turnout yet," Glenn Burnam, secretary of IMC3 added. The event was posted, and volunteers signed up, through the nonprofit's Facebook page, (facebook.com/IMC3-Morris).

"We were thrilled and are planning another clean-up event after Corn Festival," Burnam added.

This nonprofit is the group behind fForest Fest, a live music festival and vendor market taking place in Goold Park. Its purpose is to create a fun day under the trees, while attracting visitors to Morris.

"Be, Do and Make in Nature, is our motto. We're trying to give people a reason to get outside and enjoy the beautiful park," added Clarissa Barkley, a member of the IMC3/ fForest Fest planning committee. This was a new Morris event in 2022, attracting 5,000 attendees. The group announced they plan to bring fForest Fest back again, on Saturday, June 3, 2023.

If you'd like to participate in a Canal Cleanup, follow IMC3 on Facebook. To help sponsor fForest Fest, more information is available at www.forestfest.com.

RCHS names students of the month for October



REED-CUSTER HIGH School named the students of the month for October (from left) Echo Mudro, Jordan Hickman, Gwen Stewart, Anastasia Smith, Cameron Wallace, Collin Monroe and Cooper Smith. Not Pictured: Addison Brown.

RCMS names Ace winners



REED-CUSTER MIDDLE school named the ACE winners for the month of November (front) Dexter Perona (7th grade). Back row (from left): Brody Alexander (8th), Logan Baumgartner (6th), April Fierro (6th) and Ana Downing (8th).

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City of Braidwood proposal of special service area No. 22-001 (Bauer & D'Orazio LLC)

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING PROPOSED SPECIAL SERVICE AREA NO. 22-001 (BAUER & D'ORAZIO LLC) IN THE CITY OF BRAIDWOOD
"SSA NO. 22-001 (BAUER & D'ORAZIO LLC)"
Effective PIN: 02-24-06-400-027-0000

Please take notice that on the 22nd day of November, 2022, the City of Braidwood adopted Ordinance No. _____ proposing the Establishment of Special Service Number 22-001 ("SSA NO. 22-001 (BAUER & D'ORAZIO LLC)").

The Mayor and Commissioners of the City of Braidwood will conduct a Public Hearing on the Proposed SSA #22-001 (BAUER & D'ORAZIO LLC) on the 13th day of December, 2022, during the course of the Regular Village Board meeting commencing at 7:00 p.m. The Public Hearing will be conducted in the City Council Chambers, City of Braidwood City Hall, 141 W Main St, Braidwood, IL 60408.

The Proposed SSA NO. 22-001 (BAUER & D'ORAZIO LLC) is generally described as consisting of approximately 19.7 acres and generally situated on the west side of N. Division Street and south of EZ Street within the corporate limits of the City, and legally described as:

TRACT 1: A PARCEL OF LAND IN SECTION 6, TOWNSHIP 32 NORTH, RANGE 9 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: COMMENCING AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION 6; THENCE NORTH 00 DEGREES 01 MINUTE 09 SECONDS WEST ALONG THE EAST LINE OF SAID SECTION 6 FOR A DISTANCE OF 541.56 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 18 MINUTES 13 SECONDS WEST FOR A DISTANCE OF 57.65 FEET TO A POINT ON THE WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF STATE ROUTE 113, SAID POINT BEING THE POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE SOUTH 00 DEGREES 11 MINUTES 37 SECONDS EAST ALONG THE SAID WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE FOR A DISTANCE OF 541.12 FEET; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 45 MINUTES 53 SECONDS EAST CONTINUING ALONG THE SAID WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE FOR A DISTANCE OF 8.00 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 00 DEGREES 24 MINUTES 29 SECONDS WEST CONTINUING ALONG THE SAID WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE FOR A DISTANCE OF 252.12 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 55 MINUTES 48 SECONDS WEST FOR A DISTANCE OF 901.01 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 01 DEGREE 07 MINUTES 15 SECONDS EAST FOR A DISTANCE OF 588.56 FEET; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 35 MINUTES 09 SECONDS WEST FOR A DISTANCE OF 2056.27 FEET TO A POINT WHICH FALLS ON THE SOUTHEASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF INTERSTATE ROUTE 55, BEING A CURVE CONCAVE TO THE SOUTHEAST WITH A 00 DEGREES 15 MINUTES 00 SECONDS DEGREES OF CURVATURE AND A 22918.33 FOOT RADIUS; THENCE NORTHEASTERLY ALONG SAID CURVE FOR A DISTANCE OF 798.01 FEET TO A POINT ON THE SOUTH LINE OF COMMONWEALTH EDISON COMPANY'S RIGHT-OF-WAY; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 43 MINUTES 53 SECONDS EAST ALONG THE SAID RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE FOR A DISTANCE OF 816.35 FEET; THENCE NORTH 21 DEGREES 24 MINUTES 35 SECONDS EAST ALONG THE SAID RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE FOR A DISTANCE OF 710.12 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 56 MINUTES 36 SECONDS EAST FOR A DISTANCE OF 1487.72 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, IN WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

EXCEPTING THEREFROM A PARCEL OF LAND LOCATED IN SECTION 6, TOWNSHIP 32 NORTH, RANGE 9 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: COMMENCING AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION 6; THENCE SOUTH 00 DEGREES 23 MINUTES 22 SECONDS WEST ALONG THE EAST LINE OF SAID SECTION 6 FOR A DISTANCE OF 252.29 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 55 MINUTES 48 SECONDS WEST FOR A DISTANCE OF 48.08 FEET TO A POINT WHICH FALLS ON THE WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF ILLINOIS ROUTE 113, SAID POINT BEING THE POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE CONTINUING SOUTH 89 DEGREES 55 MINUTES 48 SECONDS WEST FOR A DISTANCE OF 150.00 FEET; THENCE NORTH 00 DEGREES 24 MINUTES 29 SECONDS EAST FOR A DISTANCE OF 150.00 FEET; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 45 MINUTES 48 SECONDS EAST FOR A DISTANCE OF 150.00 FEET TO A POINT WHICH FALLS ON SAID WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE; THENCE SOUTH 00 DEGREES 24 MINUTES 29 SECONDS WEST ALONG SAID WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE FOR A DISTANCE OF 150.00 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, IN WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

FURTHER EXCEPTING THEREFROM A PARCEL OF LAND LOCATED IN SECTION 6, TOWNSHIP 32 NORTH, RANGE 9 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: COMMENCING AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION 6; THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 43 MINUTES 53 SECONDS WEST FOR A DISTANCE OF 48.00 FEET TO A POINT WHICH FALLS ON THE WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF ILLINOIS ROUTE 113, SAID POINT BEING THE POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE SOUTH 00 DEGREES 24 MINUTES 29

SECONDS WEST ALONG SAID WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE FOR A DISTANCE OF 36.12 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 55 MINUTES 48 SECONDS WEST FOR A DISTANCE OF 150.00 FEET; THENCE NORTH 00 DEGREES 24 MINUTES 29 SECONDS EAST FOR A DISTANCE OF 150.00 FEET; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 55 MINUTES 48 SECONDS EAST FOR A DISTANCE OF 140.80 FEET TO A POINT WHICH FALLS ON THE SAID WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE; THENCE SOUTH 00 DEGREES 11 MINUTES 37 SECONDS EAST ALONG SAID WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE FOR A DISTANCE OF 113.90 FEET; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 43 MINUTES 53 SECONDS EAST FOR A DISTANCE OF 8.00 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, IN WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

TRACT 2: A PARCEL OF LAND IN SECTION 6, TOWNSHIP 32 NORTH, RANGE 9 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

COMMENCING AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION 6; THENCE NORTH 00 DEGREES 01 MINUTES 09 SECONDS WEST ALONG THE EAST LINE OF SAID SECTION 6 FOR A DISTANCE OF 541.56 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 18 MINUTES 13 SECONDS WEST FOR A DISTANCE OF 57.65 FEET; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 56 MINUTES 36 SECONDS WEST 1606.08 FEET TO A POINT WHICH FALLS ON THE NORTHWESTERLY LINE OF COMMONWEALTH EDISON COMPANY'S RIGHT-OF-WAY, SAID POINT BEING THE POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE SOUTH 21 DEGREES 24 MINUTES 35 SECONDS WEST LONG THE SAID RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE FOR A DISTANCE OF 592.41 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 43 MINUTES 53 SECONDS WEST ALONG THE SAID RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE FOR A DISTANCE OF 679.36 FEET TO A POINT WHICH FALLS ON THE SOUTHEASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF INTERSTATE 55, BEING A CURVE CONCAVE TO THE SOUTHEAST WITH A 00 DEGREES 15 MINUTES 00 SECONDS DEGREES OF CURVATURE AND 22918.33 FOOT RADIUS; THENCE NORTHEASTERLY ALONG SAID CURVE FOR A DISTANCE OF 642.37 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 56 MINUTES 36 SECONDS EAST FOR A DISTANCE OF 572.07 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING, IN WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

The Permanent Index Number of the parcel located within Proposed SSA NO. 22-001 (BAUER & D'ORAZIO LLC) is 02-24-06-400-027-0000.

The services to be provided in SSA NO. 22-001 (BAUER & D'ORAZIO LLC) is the City's purchase of the property and conveyance to the Owner, in addition to the services generally provided by the City as a whole, consistent with the TIF Redevelopment Agreement entered into by and between the City of Braidwood and Bauer & D'Orazio, LLC, dated on the 31st day of May, 2022 (the "Agreement"). The proposed special tax shall be levied at a rate that provides sufficient revenue equal to the amount of the annual debt service on the bonds necessary for the City to purchase the Property. The Proposed Special Service Area's first tax levy shall be for the tax year 2023, payable in the year 2024, and upon timely completion of the Ford Dealership and Chevrolet Dealership as set forth in the Agreement, the City agrees to terminate the Special Service Area. Said tax shall be in addition to all other taxes provided by law, and shall be levied pursuant to the provisions of the Law.

All interested persons, including persons owning taxable property within proposed SSA NO. 22-001 (BAUER & D'ORAZIO LLC) will be given an opportunity to be heard at the Public Hearing and an opportunity to file objections to the formation of the Special Service Area, the boundary of the Special Service Area, the amount of the tax levy upon the property in the Proposed SSA NO. 22-001 (BAUER & D'ORAZIO LLC) and any other matter embodied in this Notice or permitted by law.

The hearing may be adjourned by City Council to another date without further notice other than a motion to be entered upon the minutes of its meeting fixing the time and place of its adjournment.

If a petition signed by at least 51% of the electors residing within the SSA and by at least 51% of the owners of record of the land included within the boundaries of the SSA is filed with the City Clerk within 60 days following the final adjournment of the public hearing objecting to the creation of the SSA, the levy or imposition of a tax, no such SSA as proposed may be created, or tax may be levied or imposed, except as otherwise permitted by law.

Published by order of the Mayor and Commissioners of the City of Braidwood.
Published in the Braidwood Journal Wednesday, Nov. 30 and Dec. 7, 2022.

Fossil Ridge Library News

Adult Programs

Dec. 9-Bagels and Books, 10-11 a.m. Talk about holiday plans and share your thoughts about the latest book you read over bagels and coffee.

Dec. 15-LIHEAP, 1-3 p.m. This program is designed to assist households with low incomes to help, through financial aid, meet their energy needs.

Teen Programs

Dec. 12-Maker Monday: Kawaii Ornaments, 4-5 p.m. Make Kawaii ornaments to hang on your tree or give as a gift to someone else.

Child Programs

Dec. 15-Kids Can Cook: Christmas Edition, 5:30-7 p.m. Get the kids in the kitchen this Christmas with these festive recipes, including some yummy Mars Bar Christmas crackles, Cheerios Christmas Trees and Christmas tree brownies. It might be messy but that's half the fun.

Dec. 16-Kids Bingo, 3:30-4:30 p.m. A fun hour of everyone's favorite game and candy prizes.

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

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By executive order

SHADOW LAKES—Here is one for you to fact-check! China Joe just signed an executive order to build an oil terminal in Texas for the oil we are selling to foreign countries. What are you paying for gas? Always, Margot Lane

Welcome to Illinois

COAL CITY—Regarding the story in last week's Courant about the mountain lion they captured near Springfield and took to Indiana to a rescue where it will be caged for the rest of its life. Here's a male cougar who traveled across two states without any interference. But when he reaches Illinois the state has to take control and interfere. All they had to do was monitor it like Nebraska and Iowa did. It wasn't hurting anyone yet typical political reaction, have to control everything.

Checkmate

WILMINGTON—I found Margo Lane's use of chess as a metaphor for government amusing. But as anyone who has ever played the game can tell you when played correctly a pawn can take a king. Checkmate Margo. Penny Lane, Wilmington.

Were we perfect?

WILMINGTON—I agree with the caller from Coal City complaining about unruly juveniles. I ask myself why can't they be like we were, perfect in every way. What's the matter with kids today?

When Joe?

SHADOW LAKES—I was watching Joe Biden on the news saying that he's been down to the border. His PR spokesperson says yes he's been down to the border and I'm sure at one point in time Biden was down to the border as I also have been down to the border in 1959. Dan Hill.

Record profits

WILMINGTON—Caller Sharon made a very good point about how the U.S. should be drilling for more oil on our lands so the consumers could be paying a reasonable price for gas. But why should they drill more? Oil companies are making record profits and CEO's are getting hefty bonuses and stockholders are making fortunes the way it is now – screwing the American public! There are currently 7600 permits already out that would allow for more drilling and jobs. Do you see the problem here?

Better for everyone

WILMINGTON—Thank you to the City of Wilmington for the purchase of a tractor to clear snow from the sidewalks! There are many people who do not have cars, or wish to reduce their dependence on cars in Wilmington, and this is a step in the right direction. When pedestrian safety and access are improved, it makes Wilmington better for everyone. Stay active this winter! Wes Smith

Not it's role

BRAIDWOOD—When the government subsidizes pet technologies, it can distort the market and encourage malinvestments by the private sector. Just look at wind power: Although wind receives far more in subsidies than other sources of energy, average wind-power costs were higher in 2009 than they were

in 1994. And even still, the artificially cheap cost of wind power drives stable sources of energy, like oil and gas, out of the market. This isn't to say that government never funds winning technologies, just that it usually does so at greater expense and less innovatively than the private sector. The government is a crappy venture capitalist.

Not so nice

BRAIDWOOD—My family and I went to see the Christmas parade Saturday in Braidwood it was very nice and I would like to say thank you to all who were involved, wonderful job. The only downside was when the parade got to the end where Rt 113 turns North there is a full size flag that has the complete "F" word directed at President Biden, Not showing too much class and not a very nice thing for kids to read on their way home from a nice family event. Brian Lewis

Our real enemies

SHADOW LAKES—Abe Lincoln said a house divided can not stand. Maybe we should stop the infighting and go after our real enemies, China spy's and influences our elections with Tik Tok it's using your kids. Fentanyl kills 300 people a day, it comes from China to Mexico and into our open borders. They steal companies' information. China, and the politicians who accept money from them, are your real enemies. Eddie

Clean up the town

COAL CITY—Clean Up Coal City. This is in reference to the article in the Nov. 16th Courant concerning seasonal parking rules. Instead of the location of where people park their campers, boats, snowmobiles, etc., I think the city should be focusing on the people who collect junk, cars, trucks, scrap metal, building materials, garbage cans, etc. and clean-up the city. People have expensive campers, boats, wave runners, etc. and the city wants to fine them and just let the junk piles grow. It is time to "Clean-up our city"! D.K.

For the best advice

WILMINGTON—Food for thought. Of course I talk to myself. Sometimes I need expert advice.

Something's amiss

WILMINGTON—I just wonder what is going on with the Wilmington post office and why people are not receiving their mail. Myself and at least three other people that I know of have not received their church envelopes. Obviously it's something at the post office. Sometimes I don't get mail until 7:00 at night and I get my neighbor's mail. A couple of weeks ago I didn't get my Free Press normally like I do on Thursdays. When the letter carrier got across the street from my house I said "I didn't get my paper" and then he looked in his pile and gives me the paper. So I don't know what he was gonna do, if he was gonna wait till Friday to deliver it or throw it away if I hadn't said something. And then a couple of days ago I opened up my door thinking I heard the mailbox close and it was a letter carrier she had a truck with a package asking me what my address was and the street number on the street. And I thought aren't they taught how to read numbers? You know, when they deliver the mail to look at the houses and look at the num-



bers. So I don't know what is going on with the post office. I know it's been a hard couple of years with Covid and everything like that but it's getting really ridiculous. Something needs to be done.

Loss of morality

BRAIDWOOD—Today's public school students are taught marriage is marriage and gender has nothing to do with it. Children can be raised by two mothers, or fathers or a single parent. A father nor a mother has nothing unique to offer a child. And single parent households can live off of government handouts. It is a mortal sin to mention the "Bible" in a classroom. There are no moral truths because there is no religious basis for morality. During the Enlightenment, the Bible guided our founders in crafting Americas institutional values. Today they are being guided by a socially acceptable woke culture.

TITA notices

WILMINGTON—Our local taxing districts are required by law to notify you that they will be receiving more money than expected from property taxes because there is an increase in taxable property in the district. Your existing property taxes will not increase because of what the library or school district is doing because that are already charging the maximum allowed by law. What these districts have to do is make notice to everyone that it will receive more money than expected because of the increased tax base. Again, odds are they are already taxing you at the maximum. This notice is to advise you it will get even more money than expected from other sources that it did not expect to get. This does not mean the district will lower your taxes because of this bonus. It only means it can take it and spend it legally along with the maximum it collects from you. Just another form of additional taxation.

A national crisis

BRAIDWOOD—A toddler playing in a San

Francisco public park was nearly killed from fentanyl poisoning. If paramedics hadn't arrived as quickly as they had and administered Narcan, he would have likely died. The 10-month-old boy was crawling in the grass and playing with leaves at the park last week when he suddenly began struggling to breathe and turned blue, his nanny said. She called 911 and paramedics administered Narcan, a medication used to quickly reverse opioid overdoses. The toddler's father shared a copy of the hospital report which listed a fentanyl overdose as his son's diagnosis. The synthetic opioid can be accidentally absorbed through skin contact and by breathing the powder. It's odorless and can be undetectable by the naked eye. Two milligrams of the illicit opioid, the weight of a mosquito, is considered a lethal dose. Since last March, Texas law enforcement officers have seized over 352 million lethal doses of fentanyl in pill and powder form being brought in through the southern border, enough to kill everyone in the United States. Earlier this year, DEA agents in a three-month operation seized 10.2 million fake prescription pills laced with fentanyl across all 50 states after they'd seized more than 20.4 million fake pills in 2021, a 50-fold increase in three years. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, has called on President Joe Biden to designate the Sinaloa Cartel and the Jalisco New Generation Cartel, both primarily responsible for bringing in fentanyl to the U.S., as foreign terrorist organizations. Attorney generals from 18 states have called on Biden to classify fentanyl as a weapon of mass destruction. The governors and AGs also have repeatedly called on Biden to secure the border and stop the cartel-orchestrated violence, human and drug trafficking that is inundating American communities. They've yet to receive a response. This has become a national crisis that now is attacking innocent children. It's time for action from the very top and Americans should be outraged that the president is so lax on this. Call senators and congressmen and tell them to do more to fight fentanyl being imported.

Dropoff string lights and electronics Thursday

Will County's free electronics drop-off event will be held Thursday, Dec. 8 from 5-7 p.m. at the Wilmington City Hall parking lot, 1165 S. Water St.

Holiday string lights that are no longer working may be dropped off for recycling. This is for string lights only, no stand alone LEDs, CFLs or other fluorescent lights.

Participants are reminded to remain in their vehicles at all times, show ID by holding it to the window for staff to see and then allow staff to remove items without assistance from each vehicle.

Items accepted include: Televisions (limit 2), monitors, printers, computers (desktops, laptops, notebooks, tablets), electronic keyboards, fax machines, video-cassette recorders, portable digital music players, DVD players, DVD recorders, video game consoles, small scale servers, scanners, electronic mice, digital converter boxes, cable receivers, satellite receivers, cell phones, computer cable, portable digital assistants (PDAs) and zip drives.

Electronic items contain materials that can be recycled countless times while other materials in items are considered hazardous.

The recycling takes place in Wilmington the second Thursday of each month. An ID showing Will County residency may be required.

Illinois businesses are breaking under the weight of excessive costs

BY JERRY EVANS

Nobody likes "For Lease" signs filling the windows on Main Street. The result of a bust in the economic cycle, mass business closures and unemployment are the extreme conclusion that political candidates swear to fight every time we have an election.

But as our state and national economy move into a recession, it's alarming that elected lawmakers are seemingly doing more to bring on the hardship than prevent it.

Much has been written about the Federal Reserve raising interest rates and the current Congress's propensity to approve astronomical stimulus spending. What I'm not seeing much of is a proper discussion about our own state government's role in burdening business owners to the point of near failure.

As the owner of a small business in Illinois, I've seen firsthand the detrimental effects that excessive costs can have on simply remaining solvent, let alone thriving. Opening and running a small business is difficult, and only about 1 in 3 small businesses survive past the 10-year mark. In spite

of this, over the past few years, we've all had to endure costly changes to worker's compensation, labor regulations, and inflation that are stacking up and making it difficult for businesses to stay afloat.

Our state lawmakers need to take action to reduce these types of costs so that the Illinois economy has a chance to survive the current economic contraction.

The high cost of worker's compensation is a good example of a significant burden for businesses in Illinois that lawmakers aren't addressing. While it is very important that workers injured on the job are given proper healthcare, Illinois has a more expansive definition of a work-related injury and more extensive benefits than most other states – therefore raising costs.

In addition, loopholes that allow workers comp laws to be exploited by predatory lawsuits pushed by trial lawyers create additional costs that hurt employers and consumers alike.

As a result, businesses are forced to pay out more in worker's compensation costs, which raises the price of doing business in Illinois and makes it difficult for companies to compete with those

in other states.

In addition to the high cost of worker's compensation, businesses in Illinois are also burdened by excessive labor regulations. For example, Illinois's minimum wage and employee health insurance regulations are more costly than in other places and make it difficult for them to compete with businesses in other states that do not have such strict requirements.

Additionally, lapses in defendant protection laws make these areas ripe for further lawsuit abuse and a prime way for predatory attorneys to cash in on the hard-earned income of everyday families. All of these higher business costs usually have to get put back on the consumer through higher prices in order for the small business to keep its doors open.

Mismanagement by the state of Illinois can be costly as well. A state audit from June 2022 found that almost \$2 billion of unemployment claims paid out from July 2020 through June 2021 were fraudulent. Because of this, unemployment taxes subsequently increased for many small business owners each month - making it even more costly to do business.

Finally, Illinois is struggling because of the rising cost of living.

Historic inflation rates are no longer a secret to anyone who made a purchase over the last year. And while you might think this has been good for people like me, it hasn't. My business has seen our purchasing power reduced, our necessary expenses like rent and utilities rise significantly, and our business can't raise prices quick enough to keep up with the skyrocketing rate of inflation.

Any increase in revenue that we do have has been quickly siphoned away by the increased price of rent, energy, labor, raw goods, and litigation payouts.

The costs associated with doing business in Illinois are becoming increasingly burdensome for small businesses. State lawmakers need to take action to reduce the costs of worker's compensation, labor regulations, and inflation so businesses can continue to thrive in our state.

There is a path to renewal for the Illinois economy, but it must come through free-market and fiscally responsible policies that cut excessive regulations and encourage small business growth.

Jerry Evans is the founder and Director of the Jerry Evans School of Music in Wheaton, IL.

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<p>\$2⁹⁹ PER LB</p> <p>USDA Choice, Angus Boneless Rump Roast</p>	
<p>\$9⁹⁹ LB</p> <p>Cosenza, JUMBO Cooked Shrimp 16-20 ct - Sold in 1 lb bag</p>	<p>\$7⁹⁹ LB</p> <p>USDA Choice T-Bone Steaks (Porterhouse - \$8.99/lb)</p>
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<p>\$4⁹⁹ PER LB</p> <p>Berkot's Famous Cooked Meatballs "Just Heat & Eat!"</p>	<p>49¢ PER LB</p> <p>Berkot's Farm Fresh Chicken Drumsticks Family Pack-LIMIT 40 LBS</p>
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<p>4/\$10</p> <p>Absopure Purified Water 24 pk- 0.5 L btls</p>	<p>2/\$4</p> <p>Best Choice Chunk or Shredded Cheese 6-8 oz</p>
<p>69¢ EACH WITH LOYALTY</p> <p>Green Giant Canned Vegetables 14.5-15.25 oz Sel. Var. LIMIT 12</p>	<p>\$1⁶⁹ EACH WITH LOYALTY</p> <p>Pillsbury Flour 5 lbs or Best Choice Granulated Sugar 4 lbs LIMIT 1 OF EACH ITEM</p>
<p>\$3⁹⁹ PER LB</p> <p>Krakus Polish Ham Pre-Sliced ONLY!</p>	<p>Present This Coupon</p> <p>AT ANY BERKOT'S SUPER FOODS & SAVE ON KENTUCKY LEGEND WHOLE OR HALF HAM!</p> <p>\$3.00 OFF</p> <p>ANY KENTUCKY LEGEND WHOLE HAM OR HALF HAM</p> <p>Redeemable only at Berkot's Super Foods. Limit one coupon per customer. Good only while supplies last. Offer good through 12/31/22. See back of coupon for restrictions. Some restrictions may apply. ©2022 Berkot's Super Foods. No other coupons may be used in conjunction with this offer. For the full details of this promotion, please visit www.BerkotsSuperFoods.com.</p>
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<p>DIGITAL COUPON \$8⁹⁹</p> <p>Tide 2 x 92 oz (Select Varieties) Regular Sale Price: \$11.99 with \$3 digital coupon</p>	<p>DIGITAL COUPON \$2⁹⁹</p> <p>Nabisco Family Sized Crackers or Cookies 12.5-20 oz Regular Sale Price: \$3.49 with 50c digital coupon</p>
<p>DIGITAL COUPON \$7⁹⁹</p> <p>Downy Liquid April Fresh 164 oz Regular Sale Price: \$10.99 with \$3 digital coupon</p>	<p>DIGITAL COUPON \$2⁴⁹</p> <p>Best Choice Salted Butter 16 oz Regular Sale Price: \$3.49 with \$1 digital coupon</p>

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2 FOR \$4

Yukon Gold Potatoes 3 lb bag

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The Cove welcomed to the community

The Grundy County Chamber and village of Coal City welcomed The Cove, a nutrition club offering beverages for your health and wellness.

Laura and Tyler Jones opened the business at 30 N. Broadway St. in Coal City about three months ago. It is open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

"We are a nutrition club offering customizable beverages for your health and wellness, featuring protein shakes, protein coffees, and loaded vitamin teas," Laura Jones said. "We also offer space for the community for public and private events. It's also our goal to highlight local businesses and organizations that benefit the body and mind."

The Jones family is local and understands the importance of community and well-being. They have already hit the ground running offering fun events and participating in the Chamber's Eat, Drink,

Shop & Be Merry Passport program going on now through Dec. 20.

Mayor Terry Halliday joined the Chamber along with the Jones family for a ribbon cutting celebrating the new business on Nov. 23.

"The Cove offers delicious customizable beverages you don't have to feel guilty about indulging in. They truly fulfill a niche needed in the area," Grundy Chamber president & CEO Christina Van Yperen said.

Jones has plans to expand The Cove's event offerings by providing more rental options for meetings, workshops, celebrations and more. The space is open to the public during business hours for free wifi use and has a play area for younger children. It also has board games for entertainment.

"We are passionate about contributing to the community that our family is growing up in and provide wellbeing options for the surrounding people," Jones said.



Courtesy photo

THE GRUNDY CHAMBER of Commerce & Industry joined the village of Coal City in welcoming **The Cove** to the business community with a ribbon cutting ceremony. Taking part in the special event were [from left] Amanda Hiller, Chamber events director, Laura and Tyler Jones, owners of the Cove, and Coal City Mayor Terry Halliday.

Feeding a need, resources available for those seeking sustenance

STAFF REPORT

For those who are in need of a hot meal or food to stock the kitchen pantry, there are many resources in the area of those in need of assistance.

The Coal City Food Pantry is housed at Coal City United Methodist Church, 6805 E. McArdle Rd., and is open Mondays from 9-11 a.m. and Thursdays from 1-3 p.m., except for holidays and during inclement weather. For information call 815-216-3288.

Help for Hope, 100 S. Baima St., Coal City is open Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to noon and 4 to 6 p.m. For more information or for 24/7 assistance call 815-518-2000.

The Braidwood Food Pantry at the Community Care

Center, 112 S. Center Street, Braidwood, is open Tuesdays from 8-11:45 a.m. Additional information can be obtained by calling 630-738-8863.

Ignite Christian Church, 1180 W. First St., Braidwood, is the site of a 24/7 micro-pantry. Top Fuel Saloon Food Pantry, 275 S. Hickory St., Braidwood hosts a food pantry every Friday from 4-5 p.m.

In the Wilmington area the Kuzma Care Cottage food pantry, 635 S. Main St., Wilmington, is open Monday - Friday 9-11 a.m. and 1-3 p.m., as well as 8-11 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month. Call 815-476-2030 for additional information.

We Care of Grundy County Food Pantry, 530 Bedford Rd., Morris, is open weekdays from

1-3 p.m. by appointment. Call 815-942-6389 for information or to schedule an appointment.

The Original Secret Pantry operates from various locations to serve the needy. For hours and locations view their page on Facebook.

Those in need of a hot meal are invited to take a seat at the weekly St. Vincent Table dinners.

The weekly dinner service is sponsored by churches in Coal City and Braidwood is held on Monday evenings from 4:30-6 p.m.

St. Vincent Table is a non-profit group established to ensure everyone has access to a hot and nutritious meal.

Participating churches take turns hosting the dinners

on a regular rotation.

Assumption Church, 180 S. Kankakee St., Coal City, is hosting the meals through the month of December.

The meals will move to Immaculate Conception Church, 110 S. School St., Braidwood, for the months of January and February 2023.

The table will once again be set at Assumption Church during the months of March and April.

First Baptist Church of Coal City, 4470 E. Route 113 will be serving up dinners in the months of May and June.

In July the meal service moves to New Hope Presbyterian Church, 80 N. Garfield St., Coal City, where it will remain through August.

Pastoral vacancy has Grace Lutheran planning special Christmas service

Grace Lutheran Church in Wilmington is thinking outside of the gift box for worship. While the congregation currently has a pastoral vacancy, getting an ordained person to come on Christmas Eve has been a challenge. But it seems there are some options for the day before.

If family or work commitments keep you from a traditional candlelight Christmas Eve service, Grace is offering an option on Christmas Eve

Eve, Friday, Dec. 23, at 6 p.m.

This will be a great time to hear and sing your Christmas favorites. Gianna Kohl, soloist, will sing and play the guitar. Paul Kenyon is the pianist for the evening.

Pastor Kyle Johnson will deliver the message and preside at Holy Communion. Kyle spent time at Grace as an intern during Covid, so it will be nice to see his smiling face again.

All are welcome.

Christmas Cantata to be performed in Coal City

The Coal City United Methodist Church invites the community to get into the spirit of the season with the Community Christmas Cantata "What Sweeter Music" at Coal City United Methodist Church, 6805 E. McArdle Rd., on Saturday, Dec. 17, at 6 p.m.

This is a free performance and everyone is welcome to attend.

Hines VA Outreach Team to assist veterans with benefits

The Edward Hines Jr. VA Medical Center Outreach Team, along with the Grundy County Veterans Assistance Commission, will hold an outreach visit in Channahon at the Village Hall, 24555 Navajo Dr., from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 14.

The outreach team and the VAC staff can assist veterans with U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs benefits, along with veteran's benefits available from other agencies. This event is free and open to all veterans.

If a veteran is interested in enrollment in the VA Health Care System, bring a copy of their DD214 and a government issued photo ID. One may be eligible for VA health care benefits if they served in the active military, naval, or air service and didn't receive a dishonorable discharge.

Those who enlisted after Sept. 7, 1980, or entered active duty after Oct. 16, 1981, must have served 24 continuous months or the full period for which you were called to active duty. There are other conditions under which you might be eligible, attending these outreach events will allow you to discuss your situation with the enrollment coordinator directly.

For those not able to attend an outreach event the Grundy County VAC can be reached at vac@grundycounty-il.gov or 815-941-3152 to schedule an office appointment to discuss all of the benefits and services available to veterans.

The Village Christian Church to open in Coal City

The Village Christian Church will open the doors of its new worship center this Sunday.

The Village is a non-denominational Christian church, meaning all backgrounds are welcome.

"I'm most excited about The Village coming to Coal City because it's in our hometown.

We want to heavily invest in people in our backyard so they can get to know Jesus," said Mike Strunga, pastor of the Coal City Campus.

The Village is one church with multiple locations and the mission is the same at all campuses: to help people experience life change, life growth, and life purpose.

Individuals may have a personal relationship with Jesus, or maybe they don't, or maybe they've grown up in the

church, but now are having some doubts. Or maybe have never been to church, or don't believe in God. The Village offers a place for everyone.

Currently, The Village Christian Church has campuses in Minooka and Seneca.

Church officials announced earlier this year a plan to open a location in the village of Coal City. It is currently leasing the space above Fitness Premiere, 965 E. Division St.,

Sunday morning services will be at 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. There will be in-person teaching from the Bible, inspiring worship, Kid Village for infants - grade 3 and Pulse Students for grades 4-8. High school students will have an opportunity to join the Pulse Students at the Minooka Campus on Sunday nights at 6:30 p.m. during the school session.

For more information visit the thevillagechristianchurch.com.

Re/Max Top Properties under new ownership

MORRIS—Ashley and David Welter have purchased Re/Max Top Properties, acquiring the real estate business on Nov. 28 from Vicki Geiger and Tana Nordaker.

Ashley Welter serves as president and will be running the day-to-day operations of the office while pursuing her broker's license.

David Welter has been a broker with the office since October 2018. In addition to working as an agent, David served as State Representative for Illinois' 75th District since July 2016. His terms ends in January 2023. He will remain as an agent with the office moving forward.

Geiger will continue as the managing broker of the agency as she has since 2006 when she opened the first Re/Max office in Grundy

County. Nordaker will also continue on as an agent in the office. Nordaker had been part owner of the Re/Max office since 2021.

The office is located in Morris at 101 E. Waverly St. All agents will remain on and continue providing great service to clients in the area.

The entire team at Re/Max Top Properties would like to thank the community for its support over the years as we begin this next exciting chapter together under new ownership.

Re/Max Top Properties is looking to grow its presence in the area and are looking for agents that want to join the office. Those who may be interested are encouraged to reach out to the office via social media or call 815-942-1133.

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An icon sailor's cocktail, the Dark 'n stormy

Jimmy Buffett was forced to cancel his fall tour dates following a health scare in late September. He was hospitalized briefly and on his doctor's orders, pushed pause on the Life on the Flipside - Redux tour.

It sounds like Jimmy is on the road to recovery, and the Coral Reefer band will be back on the road in 2023. In the meantime, let's drink a toast to Jimmy's health in the New Year with an iconic sailor's cocktail, the Dark 'n Stormy.

What's in a Dark 'n Stormy? It's the perfect marriage of Bermuda rum, ginger beer, and fresh lime juice. If you've never enjoyed a Dark 'n Stormy, it's time to change that.

Ginger beer and Bermudian rum are an unlikely pair that met by chance in Bermuda following the end of World War I.

The Royal Navy began brewing ginger beer as a remedy for seasickness in the early 20th century, and by the 1920s British sailors had introduced their spicy ginger beverage to the British Overseas Territories, among other ports around the globe.

The people of Bermuda were intrigued by this spicy ginger beer, but felt it was missing something. So, they did what islanders do, they added rum. Not just any rum, Bermuda rum.

The rest is mixology history. The Dark 'n Stormy would go on to become Bermuda's National drink and was the

first dink inducted into the Cocktail Hall of Fame in the "Modern Classic" category.

What's with the name? When the drink was relatively new to the Island, it didn't have a name. The drink was typically made by pouring the ginger beer into glass first, and then the dark rum was floated on top giving the drink a layered look.

A sailor looked at the color of the "cloud" of dark rum on top of the drink and remarked that the rum was the "color of a cloud only a fool or a dead man would sail under". There it was, from that point on the drink would be known as the Dark 'n Stormy.

The Dark 'n Stormy captures the essence of Bermuda in more ways than one. Bermuda has both a British identity, and what we in the US think of as an "island" or "tropical" identity. Bermuda is Britain's oldest colony (colonized 1611), recognizes "God Save the Queen" as their National anthem, and their citizens carry "British Overseas Territory" passports.

British legal descriptors aside, Bermuda's pink sand beaches, calypso music, rum, and Caribbean culture are 100% island.

Let's make our very own Dark 'n Stormy, starting with the ginger beer.



What exactly is ginger beer, and can you substitute ginger ale? Ginger ale and ginger beer are entirely different beverages, even though both carry dominant notes of ginger.

Ginger ale will be sweeter, similar to a sweetened soda whereas ginger beer is actually brewed and carries heavier notes of ginger spice.

Even though ginger beer is brewed, it is non-alcoholic. Outside of the Dark 'n Stormy, the most popular use for ginger beer is in the Moscow Mule. Goslings brand of ginger beer is the top selling brand in the US and it's right at home in a Dark 'n Stormy.

If you are unable to track down Goslings ginger beer, Fever Tree also makes a high quality ginger beer.

There is only one rum for the Dark 'n Stormy, and that rum is Bermuda's Goslings Black Seal. No seriously. Goslings Co. has trademarked the Dark 'n Stormy, and it is not officially a Dark 'n Stormy unless Goslings rum is used.

I suppose that you could use your favorite dark rum in your home bar, but a commercial bar is not allowed to advertise a Dark 'n Stormy on the menu without Goslings Black Seal rum. Fortunately, Goslings rum is widely available so you can make an authentic Dark 'n Stormy at home.

The standard garnish in nearly all tropical drinks is a lime, and given its ties to the British Navy the Dark 'n Stormy received a lime garnish almost immediately after the drink was first served. It's only natural that imbibers would squeeze their lime garnish into their drinks, and over time it became acceptable to add fresh lime juice to the Dark 'n Stormy.

I take mine with the juice from a small lime, or juice from a lime wedge. Don't go too heavy on the lime juice, it's not supposed to taste like a Bermudian Margarita. Keep the lime juice under 1/2 oz. and you will maintain balance in the drink.

Folks, this one is easy. Ice, ginger beer, rum, maybe squeeze in a lime. No special tools or talent required. Pour a Dark 'n Stormy while you make

plans to catch Jimmy Buffett and the Coral Reefer Band on tour in 2023. Both of the October Las Vegas shows have been rescheduled for March 2023 at the MGM Grand Arena.

The Dark 'n Stormy is built and served in a chilled Highball glass.

Fill glass with ice, than add:

- 3 oz. ginger beer
- Top with 2 oz. Goslings Black Seal rum
- Squeeze in 1/2 oz. fresh lime juice (optional)
- Garnish with lime

Until next week, enjoy responsibly.

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Light Up Your House contest returns to Custer

The 14th annual Lighting Up Your House For the Holidays Contest. Enter your house or a neighbor's. Entry forms are available at Santa's mailbox at the Custer Park Fire Department, or use the one below, and return it to the mailbox by Friday, Dec. 15. Judging will be done that weekend.

For more information call Bill Marquardt at 708-372-2500.

Lighting Up Your House for the Holidays Contest

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Federal REAL ID deadline extended

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has extended the federal REAL ID deadline an additional two years, from May 3, 2023, to May 7, 2025.

With this extension, current standard Illinois driver's licenses or ID cards will continue to be accepted at airports for domestic air travel until May 7, 2025.

Illinoisans interested in applying for a REAL ID are encouraged to visit REALID.ilsos.gov and use the interactive document checklist. This checklist is designed to help ensure REAL ID applicants gather all the

documents required by the federal government to obtain a REAL ID before visiting a driver services facility.

First-time REAL ID applicants are required by DHS to visit a driver services facility in person. Not everyone needs a REAL ID, and in Illinois, the Secretary of State's office gives Illinoisans a choice. Illinoisans who do not fly domestically do not necessarily need a REAL ID. Additionally, a valid U.S. passport is a compliant REAL ID document; therefore, those with valid U.S. passports do not necessarily need a REAL ID.

Tree Lighting Celebration

Saturday, Dec 10
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OPERATION ST. NICK

40th RADIO AUCTION

Sunday December 11th
8:00am to NOON
WCSJ Radio - 103.1 FM

Back in 1983 the Operation St. Nick Radio Auction was born with auctioning off one Cabbage Patch doll. Here we are 40 years later with 223 items for you to choose from, helping 150 children and their families from here in Grundy County have a Christmas they could only dream about.

Each child will receive \$250 in toys and gifts right from their own wish list they have given Santa. The family will also receive \$300 in food to help them enjoy this special time of year. St. Nick. will also pay \$1,000 on their winter utility bills.

To accomplish this Christmas Miracle here in Grundy County we have budgeted \$110,000, once again, not possible without your generous participation in the Radio Auction.

Pick up an Auction Brochure at Grundy Bank in downtown Morris or go to their website, grundybank.com and view the entire brochure on line and be sure to call in on Sunday December 11th from 8 am 'til Noon.

KEY AUCTION ITEMS

- 4 Taylor Swift tickets for June 2nd Concert
- Custom made Golf Cart
- Green Mountain Peak Plus pellet grill
- White Sox vs Cubs package of 2 games
- 20 Year Old Pappy Van Winkle Bourbon
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OBITUARIES

Lawrence Boyle



MORRIS— Lawrence Andrew Boyle, 98, of Morris, passed away peacefully on Thursday, Dec. 1, 2022 at his son's house in Bourbonnais. Born Oct. 4, 1924 in Joliet, he was a son of Andrew and Hazel (Hartshorne) Boyle. Lawrence was raised and educated in Minooka and graduated from Minooka High School with the class of 1942. Lawrence joined the United States Army honorably serving during WWII with the Army 9th Division Artillery. On Oct. 26, 1946 he married Emma Prohaska in Passau, Germany. Together they made their home in Morris, and cherished 59 years until her passing on Dec. 5, 2005.

Lawrence attended Joliet Junior College and Illinois State University where he earned his Masters in Education. From 1952-1953 he taught and coached at Farmers City, before relocating back to Morris. In 1954 he began his career with CAT in Joliet, retiring as a Cost Analysis after more than 40 years. Lawrence was an active member of the Caterpillar Retirees Club and former parishioner of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church. He was active in Boy Scouts having been Cub Master for many years. Lawrence enjoyed lapidary arts, fishing, collecting fossils and traveling both domestically and internationally. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather and brother who will be deeply missed.

Survivors include three children: Larry (GraceAnne) Boyle, of rural Morris; John (Jan) Boyle, of Bourbonnais and Christl McCoy, of Morris; eight grandchildren: Erica (Devin) Doran, of Bloomington; Andrea Boyle and Larry



Boyle, both of rural Morris; Edward (Amber) Boyle, of Morris; Carie (Noah) Bellamy, of Belleville, MI; Amanda (Benjamin) Salgado, of Frankfort, IL and Christopher (Jennifer) Greenback, of Palmdale, CA and Patrick (Melinda) Greenback, of Arlington, WA; 16 great-grandchildren: Jacob, Ashley, Brian, Adam, Bailey, Lilly, Elora, Makenna, Logan, Shane, Madeline, Cecilia, Abigail, Abraham, Tucker and Candon, and one sister, Barbara (the late Calvin) Salars, of Silver City, NM.

Lawrence was preceded in death by his parents, wife, Emma; two brothers, Arthur (Margaret) Boyle and David (Mary Anne) Boyle, and his son-in-law, Tony McCoy.

The family will receive friends at Reeves Funeral Home, 408 East Washington Street, (one block east of Illinois Route 47) in Morris on Thursday, Dec. 8, 2022 from 9 a.m. until time of funeral service at 11 a.m. Burial with full military honors will follow in Aux Sable Cemetery in Minooka. Pallbearers and honorary pallbearers will be: Larry Boyle, Edward Boyle, Christopher Greenback, Noah Bellamy, Benjamin Salgado, Jacob Fuss, Brian Fuss, Adam Fuss.

Preferred memorials in Lawrence's memory may be made as gifts to the Honor Flight of Chicago Program or to Lightways Hospice.

Friends and family are encouraged to log onto www.ReevesFuneral.com to sign the online guestbook, upload photos and share Lawrence's memorial page via social media.

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

Alyce Mae Rink

WILMINGTON— Alyce Mae Rink, 93, of Wilmington, and formerly of Custer Park, passed away peacefully on Friday, Dec. 2, 2022 at her home in the presence of family.

Born Jan. 27, 1929 in Custer Park, Alyce Mae was a daughter of James Hugh and Margaret Rose (Weikum) Cunning. She was raised and educated in Custer Park, and on Aug. 7, 1948, Mae married William "Bill" Rink in Wing, IL.

Mae worked at various places throughout the years including early on at Mary's Restaurant, Reynolds Aluminum and the Joliet Army Ammunition Plant. Most recently and memorable to the community Mae was a Beautician working out of her home as Mae's Beauty Salon. She was an active member of St. Rose Catholic Church in Wilmington, where she served as a Eucharistic Minister and taught Religious Education. In addition Mae volunteered for Kuzma Care Cottage for 25 years.

Known as Grandma Mae by family and friends, Mae cherished spending time with family, and took great pleasure in attending all of her grandchildren's school activities. She was an exceptional cook and baker; was known for her pies, and would frequently return a good deed done with an apple or cherry pie. She enjoyed playing cards with friends, traveling and following the Wilmington Wildcats. Gardening and tending to her flowers preoccupied her time in the seasons that allowed, and her exceptional cleanliness was never ending. Forever in our hearts, Mae will be deeply missed and lovingly remembered by all who knew and loved her.

Survivors include two children: Mike (Diane) Rink, of Hoffman Estates and Judith (Patrick) Mann, of Wilmington; six grandchildren: Ryan (Holly) Rink, of Cypress, TX; Jill (Ted) Lorenzen, of Evanston, IL and Jacqueline Mann



(Jake), Joe Mann (Amanda), Luke Mann (Madysen "Mini") and Megan Mann, all of Wilmington; four great-grandchildren: Lily Rink, Gage Rink, Eliza Lorenzen and Margaret Lorenzen; one sister, Shirley (the late John) Cavanaugh; two brothers: Ray (the late Kay) Cuning and Donald (Jody) Cuning; numerous nieces and nephews, and several cousins, as well as her special friends: Ruby Green, Irene Walsh and Mary Hendron.

Mae was preceded in death by her parents; husband, William; one son, Daniel; three brothers: William (Dolly) Cuning, Robert (Lorraine) Cuning and Harold Cuning, and two sisters: Minnie (Alfred) LeRoy and Fae (Ray) Lain.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, Dec. 7, 2022 from Baskerville Funeral Home in Wilmington to St. Rose Catholic Church in Wilmington, for a Mass of Christian Burial with Reverend Sebastian Gargol presiding.

Burial was in Mt. Olivet Catholic Cemetery in Wilmington, where Mae was laid to rest with her late husband, Bill and son, Daniel. Pallbearers were: Ryan Rink, Jill Lorenzen, Jacqueline Mann, Joe Mann, Luke Mann and Megan Mann.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Mae's memory to Kuzma Care Cottage, 635 S. Main Street, Wilmington, IL 60481 or to the Wilmington Foundation for Excellence, 209 Wildcat Ct., Wilmington, IL 60481.

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

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

Timothy Drapeau

DWIGHT—Timothy James Drapeau, 40 of Dwight, and formerly of Coal City, passed away Nov. 27, 2022.

Born Feb. 6, 1982 in Whittier, CA, Timothy James was the son of John Drapeau, of California and Vickie (Trujillo) Drapeau, of Dwight. He moved to Coal City in 1988, where he was raised and graduated from Coal City High School with the class of 2001.

A 'Jack of all trades,' Tim was a self-employed handyman, who was proficient in carpentry and roofing. His ability to take things apart and put them back together also complimented his love of working on cars. Tim liked to stay busy. He enjoyed video games and fishing, but most of all on his days off, Tim enjoyed spending time with his son. He was always helpful and one who made an impact on those whom he met. Tim will be remembered as a fun guy with an incredibly beautiful smile.

Survivors include his mother, Vickie Drapeau; father, John Drapeau; one son, Aidan, of Dwight; four siblings: Kristie (Craig) Dock, of Coal City; Alisha Drapeau, of Odell and Teena Drapeau and Ryan Drapeau, both of California; nieces and nephews, Destinie Drapeau and



Victoria Ybarra-Drapeau, and several aunts, uncles and cousins.

Tim was preceded in death by his maternal grandparents: Velma Southall and Joe Trujillo; paternal grandmother, Lucille Drapeau; brother, Anthony Drapeau, niece, Grace Hope Drapeau; cousins, Peggy Taylor and Sonny Southall; uncle, Rudy Gallegos and aunt, Peggy Taylor.

Cremation rites have been accorded.

The family will receive friends for a memorial visitation at Reeves Funeral Home, 75 North Broadway, one block north of Illinois Route 113 in Coal City on Sunday, Dec. 11, 2022 between the hours of 12 noon and 2 p.m.

Preferred memorials in lieu of memorials may be made as gifts in Tim's memory to his family for their distribution.

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

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

Marilyn Canup

BRAIDWOOD—Marilyn E. Canup (nee Sneed), 73, of Braidwood, passed away Friday, Dec. 2, 2022 at Alden Estates of Orland Park.

She was born Sept. 8, 1949 in Albuquerque, NM to Marlin and Vera (nee Padgett) Sneed. Marilyn was an active member of the Phelan Acres Bible Church where she considered church members, family. She was a proud homemaker, who loved unconditionally and dedicated her life raising four children. She was a very supportive wife, mother, and grandmother.

Surviving are four children: James Canup Jr., Thomas Canup, Kevin Canup and Kimberly (Brian) Elias; two grandchildren, Adam (flancé, Hannah Mueller) Elias and Breanne Elias; one sister, Kathryn Padgett and numerous nieces.

Preceding her in death were her parents and husband of 53 years, James Canup Sr., who



predeceased her Feb. 2, 2021.

Visitation for Marilyn will be at the R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory, Braidwood, Sunday, Dec. 11, 2022 from 2-5 p.m. Funeral services will also be at the funeral home Monday, Dec. 12 at 11 a.m.

Interment will follow in Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood, IL.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in her name may be directed to the American Legion Koca Post #39.

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

R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory, 401 E. Main St., Braidwood is in charge of arrangements.

Elizabeth Mulvihill

PORT ST. LUCIE, FL— Elizabeth "Betty" L. Mulvihill, 70, of Port St. Lucie, FL, passed away on Thursday, Nov. 24, 2022 at Treasure Coast Hospice in Fort Pierce.

She was born on Oct. 22, 1952 in Kankakee, the daughter of Raymond and Joanne (Pommier) Devine. She married Ronald Mulvihill on Jan. 27, 1973 at St. Theresa's Church. They later moved to Wilmington, where they made a home and raised their three children. After retirement, Betty and Ron built their dream home in the Lake Charles community in Port St. Lucie, FL; and she continued in her role as a very proud and doting grandma "Nonnie" to her then small grandchildren who also reside in Florida.

Betty had an accomplished career, starting as bank teller and culminating in her role as Vice President of Human Resources with First National Bank of Wilmington. After moving to Florida, she continued utilizing her talents and managed the Indian River Community College (now University) Training Center, quickly becoming well versed in all the technology this cutting-edge educational facility had to offer. Later in life, she decided to try her hand at writing and became a published author, going on to write five novels. Her final book, The Price of Freedom, was born out of a deep admiration for her husband's grandparents. Of all her books, this labor of love to honor the Mazzini family was one in which she was particularly proud,



and elated when it was showcased in her hometown at the Kankakee Public Library.

Betty was a lifelong fan of the Bee Gees and all things creative: arts, crafts, jewelry and gift making, baking, and writing. She was also an avid and ferociously competitive card and game player, as well as the undisputed family Scrabble champion. She loved spending time with her children and grandchildren and enjoyed road tripping and vacationing together.

Betty is survived by her devoted husband of 49 years, Ron Mulvihill; daughter, Joy (Joe) Sikora, all of Port St. Lucie, FL; her sons: Chris (Dawn) Mulvihill, of Elburn, IL and Ryan (Jamie) Mulvihill, of Plainfield; grandchildren: Andrew, Aliya (Alex), Ariel (Chris), Reif, Skylar, Zachary, Matthew and Nicholas, and one great-grandson, Mason; sister, Sue (Rich) Bergan, of Bradley; brother, Ray (Debbie) Devine, of Lantana, FL; mother-in-law, Leola Mulvihill; sister-in-law, Madonna (Lynne) Brown, all of Danforth, IL; brother-in-law, Gary (Debbie) Mulvihill, of Oak Forest, IL and numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins.

She was preceded in death by her parents, and her beloved sister and friend, Mary Jo Wells.

Cremation rites have been accorded.

The family will receive friends for a memorial at the Shamrock Golf Course, 6575 E Illinois Highway 17 in Saint Anne, IL, on Saturday, Jan. 7, 2023 between the hours of 1 and 4 p.m..

Morris Hospital to host blood drive

Morris Hospital is hosting a blood drive in cooperation with Versiti Blood Center on Wednesday, Dec. 14, from 2-6 p.m. in Conference Rooms 2 & 3 on the lower level of Morris Hospital, 150 W. High Street in Morris.

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

Blood donors must be age 17 or older, weigh at least 110 pounds, be in good health and free from cold or flu symptoms on the day of donation. In Illinois, 16-year-olds may donate with written approval from a parent or guardian. Donors may be required to wear a mask while inside Morris Hospital depending on COVID community transmission levels.

The entire process for

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

To schedule an appointment, call Ashley Wagner at Morris Hospital at 815-705-7370. Walk-ins are welcome.

The health benefits of pumpkin

Even though Thanksgiving and the traditional pumpkin pie serving may have passed, don't give up on eating pumpkin and its health benefits.

We're not talking about pumpkin spice which this year has been added to hummus, Pringles, and Twinkies; even instant pumpkin spice latte for dogs!

OSF HealthCare Dietitian Kaela Ketcham says be careful because pumpkin flavor is often added to sugary products.

"You do want to be cautious about what pumpkin spice products you are buying because one, they may not contain any pumpkin at all and two they might just contain a lot of sugar."

Ketcham says pumpkin is a highly nutrient-dense food. It is rich in vitamins and minerals but low in calories. Also, pumpkins seeds can be a good

protein snack because they are high in fiber and make you feel full longer, so they suppress hunger pangs.

The seeds also contain serotonin which can help promote better sleep and their monounsaturated fatty acids help lower bad cholesterol and increase good cholesterol in the blood.

"If you're making a smoothie, you can always add a little bit, two tablespoons or so, of pureed pumpkin. Even if you're making pumpkin spice lattes at home, you can even add a couple of tablespoons of real pumpkin to get that depth of the pumpkin flavor to have it a little bit healthier, not as much sugar and actually get more pumpkin than what they use in a store."

Pumpkin is a fruit that contains 94 percent water. That is what makes it low in calories. Ketcham adds it's also

great for a body's immune system because it's high in beta-carotene which your body turns into Vitamin A which boosts your ability to fight infection.

Because of all of its great nutritional qualities, Ketcham suggests talking to your grocer's produce manager about stocking edible pumpkins all year long.

"You can also incorporate it in your oatmeal. You can put it in soups and stews and chilies. I saw a recipe for pasta shells. You stuff pasta shells with pumpkin and cheeses. You really get the benefit of pumpkin all year round without having to put it in a baked good and then putting all that sugar on top of it."

Fun fact about pumpkins, 85% of the processed pumpkin in the United States comes from Libby's plant in Morton, IL



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Respect needed between Illinois Democrats, Republicans

The state legislative debate last week over amending the Pre-Trial Fairness Act provisions within the controversial SAFE-T Act featured many of the same obfuscations and outright misinformation that characterized the fall campaign by Republicans and many of the same insufficient answers by Democrats.

One of the problems that the super-majority Democrats have in both chambers is that when they know their bill is going to pass, they usually don't take the Republicans' objections seriously enough to fully engage with them. But on bills like this, misinformation can spread when points aren't adequately rebutted.

For just one example, during the House debate, Republican Leader Jim Durkin and his leadership successor, Rep. Tony McCombie (R-Savanna), repeatedly blasted the Democrats at length for forcing victims of violent crime, via the Pre-Trial Fairness Act, to be dragged into court for hearings within 48 hours of an arrest.

Leader Durkin has been making this argument in public venues for months, so the Democrats had to know this was coming.

Durkin appeared furious that the Democrats didn't fix what he claimed was their egregious mistake in drafting the original bill back in 2021, and claimed it directly violated the Illinois Constitution's protections for crime victims. He predicted that it would have a horrible impact on victims by victimizing them all over again.

But the only answer provided by the sponsor, Rep. Justin Slaughter (D-Chicago)

was that some victims' rights organizations supported the law.

Rep. McCombie amped up the rhetoric even further than Leader Durkin by asking if her 8-year-old niece was abducted by two men, brutally raped, buried alive and rescued, then would she be compelled to go to court for a detention hearing.

After saying that the bill "didn't make that possible," Rep. Slaughter then said the law would make it more difficult for that to happen. McCombie said what Slaughter claimed wasn't true, and that claim was followed by more emotional and unenlightening back and forth.

Rep. Slaughter was right, but the actual explanation he could've offered and didn't is pretty simple. Before the Pre-Trial Fairness Act, judges were given full discretion to compel a victim to appear at a hearing on a defendant's culpability and dangerousness. That's no longer the case.

The law was changed in 2021 to force judges to explain why they were granting a request, and then they could "only grant the request if the court finds by clear and convincing evidence that the defendant will be materially prejudiced if the complaining witness does not appear." That's one reason why victims' rights groups supported the overall reforms.

Before the changes were first made in 2021, judges were admonished to "be consider-

ate of the emotional and physical well-being of the witness," and that particular statutory language was not altered.

The Pre-Trial Fairness Act even eliminated previous statutory language which gave accused criminals "the right to present witnesses in his favor" at those hearings. So, to claim that this revision is a horrific sop to accused violent criminals just doesn't make sense.

The Democrats decided to exclude legislative Republicans from the revision talks, perhaps because they believed that the GOP was more interested in theater than responsibly negotiating the new bill. Rarely does one negotiate with someone who will undoubtedly wind up being a hard and public "No." That's understandable on one level. I get it.

But, again, this problem is not just about the Pre-Trial Fairness Act or the SAFE-T Act. Time and time again I've watched the Democrats stand mute while Republicans lambasted their legislation, drafted without GOP input, and then jammed it through with their superior numbers. It's an arrogance of power and it resulted in a whole lot of scrambling during this past election season as wild claims were made about the bill they had passed.

On the other side, though, the fact that this amendment was not officially opposed by any statewide law enforcement groups (which tend to be dominated by Republicans) should've prompted an



Rich Miller
CAPITOL FACTS

Gas price lowest in almost a year

Average gasoline prices in Illinois have fallen 18.4 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.60/g Monday, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,378 stations in Illinois. Prices in Illinois are 69.5 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 10.6 cents per gallon higher than a year ago.

"For the first time in 670 days, the national average price of gasoline has fallen below its year-ago level, dropping for the fourth straight week to its lowest level since January," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in downstate Illinois was priced at \$2.92/g, while the

most expensive was \$5.87/g, a difference of \$2.95/g.

Locally, the cheapest station was Mohsen on Lorenzo Road, Wilmington at \$2.97; Joliet stations at \$2.99; Braidwood \$3.41; Wilmington \$3.56; Morris \$3.75; Bourbonnais \$3.84; and Coal City \$3.93.

The national average price of diesel has fallen 13.6 cents in the last week and stands at \$5.06 per gallon.

The national average price of gasoline has fallen 15.8 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.36/g. The national average is down 43.0 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 1.5 cents per gallon higher than a year ago, according to GasBuddy.

"Every state has again

seen average gasoline prices drop in the last week, and it remains very possible the national average could fall under \$3 per gallon by Christmas. There has also been a drop in diesel prices, which this week will fall back under \$5 per gallon, and could soon thereafter fall to their lowest level since March.

"However, despite all the good news about fuel prices, there may be some concerns coming as the price cap on Russian oil kicks in. Retaliation is possible, and while OPEC+ upheld production cuts from last month, they could always cut more production. For now, however, we'll likely see another week of declines at the pump in nearly all areas," De Haan said.

IDNR monitoring avian flu outbreak among waterfowl

At least 300 waterbirds, primarily snow geese, have died of suspected avian influenza at public hunting areas throughout southern Illinois, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) has confirmed.

Deceased wild birds have been found at Baldwin Lake, Pyramid State Recreation Area, Rend Lake, and Carlyle Lake in recent days.

IDNR will continue to monitor for ongoing outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza, or HPAI, during the fall bird migration. Members of the public are encouraged to report large concentrations of 20 or more deceased birds at

one location. Reports can be made to the local IDNR district wildlife biologist.

IDNR first announced HPAI was detected in wild Canada geese in Illinois in March 2022. IDNR continues to remind waterfowl hunters to take precautions by thoroughly cooking game meat to an internal temperature of 165 degrees F.

Hunters also should avoid handling sick or dead waterfowl found in the field, and they should not allow dogs or other pets to consume waterfowl that died from unknown causes.

Rubber gloves and a mask should be worn when disposing of any deceased wild birds,

and carcasses should be double-bagged in sealed plastic bags. The bags can be buried away from scavengers or placed in the garbage if approved by the local waste service provider.

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December 7, 2022

RE: Notice of Semi-Retirement

To my clients and friends:

After 40 years in a rewarding career that allowed me to help and counsel thousands of clients on their legal matters, I am announcing my retirement from the full time practice of law while I am still healthy and able to properly finish business at hand. Starting Jan. 1, 2023, I will be semi-retired, handling limited estate planning and real estate legal matters through Meents Law, P.C. coordinated by my partner, Frank Meents and other attorneys in the law firm. All my client files and records will be retained and kept under my supervision through Meents Law, P.C.

Over the past four decades I've had the privilege and honor to represent many entities and individuals during some of the best events in their lives such as buying or selling a home, starting new business or standing before a judge to help a couple adopt a newborn child. Other clients experienced tragic events such as the death of a family member, work accidents or personal injuries arising from a motor vehicle accident. Every day of my law practice was handling different challenges dealing with many personalities and fact situations that kept my career interesting. I appreciate all the business and clients for the support they provided so I could live in Wilmington and raise my family.

It has been my great pleasure and sincere honor to represent you as clients, and many of you are, and have remained, my friends over the years. I tried to provide each client with honest and diligent representation to the best of my ability. I hope your contact and experience with me met your expectations.

My health continues to be good as does that of my wife, Theresa, but we never know for certain how much sand is left in our individual hourglass. I hope to travel and spend more time with my children, grandchildren and friends. I have many activities and hobbies I still want to participate in and accomplish. There are many books to be read, places to see and community events to attend. I also plan on volunteering for charitable causes and to pass on my knowledge and experience to the Associates at Meents Law, P.C. I know I have an excellent partner, Frank Meents, who has the skills, compassion and ethics to uphold the legal standards I followed in building my practice. May you have the same confidence in Meents Law, P.C. as you had with me.

Very truly yours,
Jeffrey Fisher
Attorney at Law

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Commentary

Give one hour, donate to warm your heart

The late, great Martin Luther King once said, "Not everyone can be famous, but everyone can be great because greatness is determined by service. You only need a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love."

For many years, I have been of service to the Christian Help Association (CHA) to provide a wonderful holiday season to the families of Wilmington who are struggling.

The smiles, the hugs, the "thank you" is all a volunteer needs to warm our hearts (and cold toes). The thought that families will have a blessed Christmas because we gave a few hours of our time and donated to organize, pack and distribute food, clothes and gifts will warm your heart on the coldest day. There are

many ways you can help make a difference and warm your heart.

Monetary donations are used to cover additional food, toiletries, packing and other expenses. Donations can be dropped off at local churches, Kuzma Care Cottage or mailed to 635 S. Main St., Wilmington. Another easy way to help CHA is by supporting the Chamber of Commerce Christmas Elves. Local businesses throughout town have donation boxes near the register to collect money for CHA. As you check out, look for a bright painted box with a photo of a cute elf or two. Deposit your change, or a few dollars or even a check. All money is used for CHA expenses to provide a beautiful Christmas to 300 families in Wilmington.

Please join us on Friday, Dec. 16 at St. Rose School with giving little more than one hour of your time. By helping pack groceries, you can give back to others and will leave

with a wonderful feeling of helping.

We have jobs for everyone! If you are not able to stand or walk for long periods of time, I have a job for you. If you are young and have a strong back, I have a job for you. If you need some community service time for a school or civic organization, I have a job for you! We welcome new faces and are happy to be able to come together this year.

Donations of unwrapped toys and non-perishable food (can goods, pasta, cereal, cake mix, and one-package meals) may be left with the local churches, local businesses or at Kuzma Cottage. It takes a lot of items to fill the bags for these families.

With the cold winds starting and snowflakes in the air, CHA is also in need of winter clothing (coats, gloves, hats, etc) for Our Caring Closet. Collections for clothing are set up at churches, the library and few other locations around

town. Donations can also be dropped off at 205 N. 1st Street.

Please bring any new or slightly used winter wear for distribution. Others items they need are boots, snow pants, mittens, and scarves. With 400 kids and over 450 adults receiving assistance, it takes a lot of clothes to keep them warm and dry.

Service means the act of helpful activity to others. Give one hour. Give a donation. Give the warmth of hat & gloves. Give a smile to someone struggling. You only must touch one life to make a difference.

The warmth in your heart from putting others ahead of yourself will be a positive in your life, in your community and in your spirit. If you take a few hours to help a charity cause, your heart will grow. You will receive more in appreciation than you can give.

Cynthia Ragain
Christian Help Association
Chamber of Commerce Elves

Something fishy is going on at Four Rivers

The smallest fish in a new 2,000-gallon aquarium at Four Rivers Environmental Education Center in Channahon has a big story to tell.

The redspotted sunfish is struggling out in the wild. The fish is no longer on the state endangered list thanks to a state program designed to help the species recover. But redspotted sunfish are still threatened.

As part of the redspotted sunfish recovery program, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources has asked public aquariums to include the fish and to educate the public about its plight.

"Most people have never even heard of the redspotted sunfish," said Trent Thomas, a streams biologist with IDNR's division of fisheries. "Having these fish in public aquariums will bring attention to the species and draw attention to the threats it and other vulnerable species face and what needs to be done to protect and/or recover these species."

After viewing the fish at Four Rivers, Thomas said he hopes people will realize there are things they can do on a personal level to help threatened and endangered fish species.

"Don't pollute," Thomas advised. "Don't release unwanted pets or move species from one waterbody to another. Report dead fish or fish kill events to local conservation and/or law enforcement. Participate in cleanup events. Advocate for funding to restore aquatic habitat."

Ambassador fish

Jerome Gabriel, Forest Preserve facility supervisor at Four Rivers, said he was happy to add a dozen redspotted sunfish at IDNR's request to the mix of native river fish in the aquarium.

The redspotted sunfish once lived in the types of waters found around Four Rivers, he explained. Including the redspotted sunfish in the aquarium will help initiate a conversation about the species and its threatened status, Gabriel said.

"We host the fish as an animal ambassador to be able to talk about the impact of industrialization of waterways and the efforts IDNR is making today to reestablish populations of the animal," he said.

The new aquarium at Four Rivers features around 50 fish including bluegill, crappie, smallmouth bass, walleye and channel catfish. Gabriel would like to add gar and pumpkin-seed sunfish to the tank in the months to come.

"We feed the fish three times a week, Mondays (when the building is closed), Wednesdays and Saturdays. And it's always a highlight to do feedings when there are families in to watch."

Fostering biodiversity

The redspotted sunfish is only 6 to 7 inches long and it has horizontal rows of red-orange spots in males and yellow-brown spots in females. The sides of the fish's body are dark olive but its belly is yellow to red-orange.

Since March 2010, a total of 17,257 redspotted sunfish

have been released in wildlife areas and preserves around the state and more were stocked in refuge populations. Because of these efforts and those of other organizations, the species was moved from the endangered list to the threatened list in 2020.

In its native habitat, redspotted sunfish inhabit quiet, sluggish, well-vegetated streams, oxbows and backwater lakes, Thomas said. The species is struggling because of the deterioration of water quality, reduction of aquatic vegetation, and draining of swamps and bottomlands.

"These threats include levees that isolate backwater habitats from large rivers, the draining of their preferred habitats for development and agriculture, and invasive species that uproot or consume aquatic vegetation," he said.

Redspotted sunfish can be found in the Illinois River Basin, the Mississippi River Valley and the Gulf Coast. The two remaining stable populations in Illinois are found in the lower Sangamon River and the lower Saline River.

It's important to help the redspotted sunfish make a comeback to foster ecosystems with higher biodiversity, Thomas said. Those ecosystems are better able to withstand disturbances from human activity, natural phenomena, climate change and invasive species, he added.

"Every species lost results in higher vulnerability and potential ecosystem collapse," he said.

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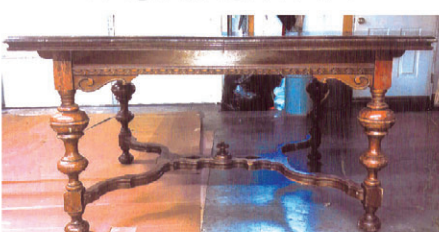
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THANK YOU

My family and I wish to thank everyone who has supported us during our sad loss of Jim Hunt. Your donations in so many ways are greatly appreciated and will never be forgotten.

Mary Hunt & Family,
Steve, Russ, Dan & Cyndi

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Chop up

5. Ones who utilize

10. Sings with closed lips

14. South American hummingbird

15. Serves as a coxswain

16. Liquor distilled from coconut or rice

17. Spur

18. Senile

19. Tanzanian people

20. Cruel

22. Boxing's "GOAT"

23. Yokels

24. London soccer team

27. Chinese chess piece

30. Supervises flying

31. 007's creator

32. Shaft horsepower (abbr.)

35. A spider makes one

37. Liquefied natural gas

38. Opaque gem

39. Brazilian palm

40. Periodical (slang)

41. You might step on one

42. Marvin and Horsley are two

43. Partner to cheese

44. Unpleasant smell

45. Field force unit (abbr.)

46. Fashion accessory

47. Cool!

48. Time zone

49. Songs to one's lover

52. German river

55. Go bad

56. Sword

60. Very cager

61. Leaf bug

63. Italian seaport

64. Napoleon Dynamite's uncle

65. Member of Jamaican religion

66. Large wading bird

67. Carries out

68. Eternal rest

69. It holds up your headwords

CLUES DOWN

1. Not low

2. Small water buffalo

3. A mark left behind

4. Archaic form of have

5. Fiddler crabs

6. Popular Hyundai sedan

7. Deport

8. Making over

9. Midway between south and southeast

10. Arabic masculine name

11. Type of acid

12. Popular 1980s Cher film

13. Outdoor enthusiasts' tools

21. Chinese city

23. "Star Wars" character Solo

25. The bill in a restaurant

26. Old, ugly witch

27. Burn with a hot liquid

28. To claim or demand

29. "A Doll's House" playwright

32. Involuntary muscular contraction

33. Pea stems (British)

34. Double or multiple fold

36. No longer is

37. Lakers' crosstown rivals (abbr.)

38. S. American plant cultivated in Peru

40. Cloth or fabric

41. Flanks

43. Disfigure

44. Angry

46. Baltic coast peninsula

47. Large, flightless birds

49. Plants of the lily family

50. Medieval Norwegian language

51. Polio vaccine developer

52. Not soft

53. Exchange rate

54. Voice (Italian)

57. Baseball's Ruth

58. Famed guitarist Clapton

59. Take a chance

61. Wife

62. Elaborate handshake

More money to be pushed to help the climate crisis

Dear EarthTalk: What is the EPA's new Green Bank all about?

-- Rick D., Asheville, NC

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently proposed the creation of a so-called green bank, known as the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) to help leverage the power of traditional financial markets in solving the climate crisis.

Investing in carbon offset projects from lower income communities across the United States, the GGRF, at face value, has a social-ecological conscience. However, beneath the guise of green goodwill, darker forces are at play.

As a by-product of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), there are fears that the GGRF is a 'green trojan horse' created to give fossil fuels another chance and push out foreign business.

"The IRA is rife with corporate giveaways and hand-outs aimed at allowing the fossil fuel industry to continue business as usual," says Ebony Twilly Martin, the Executive Co-Director of Greenpeace USA.

Meanwhile, Frederick Erixon, the Director of the European Centre for International Political Economy adds that the European Union (EU) has concerns about the discrimination inherent in the IRA: "Many of the IRA policies take an 'America first' attitude that will

EARTH TALK

Questions & Answers About Our Environment

hurt European green industries and cleantech."

Furthermore, the new independent national green bank, by virtue of its association with the IRA, may struggle to convince a crucial player in the climate war, the risk-averse private sector, to invest in the development of low emissions services and products from disadvantaged communities.

Delegates to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27) stressed that not enough finance is supplementing the right sectors of the economy to create green technologies and infrastructure.

In theory, championing green banks as an effective means of financing climate action and optimizing social-ecological system resilience is a good idea — especially for communities that have been left behind in the transition to cleaner energy, transport and living.

However, green bank models like the GGRF can only succeed when detached from the design of coal barons, protectionist policies and political



RESEARCHERS HAVE found that the more people are exposed to air quality monitoring data, the more they will do to reduce air pollution.

squabbling.

Global biodiversity is in the headlights of the climate crisis. With a burgeoning population of 8 billion, humans must take account of our carbon footprint and develop innovative strategies that lift nature and all walks of society to reduce our impact.

Green banks can be part of 'the solution' but must first escape fossil fuel interests and discriminatory bills to coax the private sector to follow them into a brave new world of green financing.

"The climate test is simple. It requires jobs, justice and restoration of the environment," says Edward Markey, U.S. Senator from Massachusetts. An independent national green bank could be the answer.

"Through the GGRE, fund-

ing can be leveraged to advance green initiatives and infrastructure in disadvantaged communities while creating good, local jobs."

With less than six months for EPA to distribute funds to eligible projects across the U.S., stakeholder input on the implementation, design and structure of the GGRF is currently being sought.

Now is the time for the public to question the evolution and motives of the scheme, so that when a national green bank does arrive, it is truly transformational to the global economy, ecology and climate.

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Food prices remain high, but supplies strong

BY RICHARD GUEBERT JR.
ILLINOIS FARM BUREAU PRESIDENT

Americans look forward to celebrating the simplest of gifts and gathering with family and friends around the table during the holiday season. It is also often a time of giving thanks as Illinois farmers mark the end of another growing season.

The past few years have confronted all Americans to pivot, adapt, and learn as we navigate uncharted waters. In March 2018, American farmers were dealing with market destruction because of China's trade wars. The May 2019 spring planting season reminded Midwest farmers that Mother Nature was in charge when many acres went unplanted.

The pandemic that began in March 2020 forced all of us to pivot. Farmers continued to grow food to feed our neighbors in rural, urban, and global communities.

The curveballs continued in 2022 with high inflation, the Russian invasion of Ukraine,

and uncertainty for an already fragile economy. Farmers vividly remember the role inflation played in the '80s farm crisis. That crisis is forever etched in farmers' memories as historically high-interest rates reached 19%. Many farmers didn't survive the crisis. Those who did spent many years paying off the debt created by the high-interest rates.

Despite the adversity many family farms have faced over the years, 96% of Illinois farms are still family-owned.

I understand firsthand the role inflation has had inside our home and farming operation. Inflation running at 7% to 9% in recent months is robbing consumers (and farmers) of their buying power. Food price inflation is even higher. Other factors include supply

chain disruptions and the war in Ukraine, with other countries pulling back on exports to protect domestic food supplies.

When I've been interviewed by news media over the past four years, the standard question is, "How will this impact consumers?" The truth is a farmer's share of the food dollar is only 7.4 cents.

Illinois shoppers participating in the 37th annual American Farm Bureau Federation's Cost survey captured a statewide average price of \$65.53 for a classic holiday meal for 10 people, a 13% increase over the previous year's state average of \$58.15. General price inflation is a big part of the increase in cost for the meal.

It is likely those high

prices will continue through the new year.

Food prices reflect many factors including transportation, distribution, and food company marketing costs. Rising costs for fuel, which have more than doubled, and fertilizer, which have tripled, are driving food prices up. As President Kennedy said many years ago, "Farmers are price takers and not price makers."

The food we grow is shared with our family, friends and neighbors. Farmers understand the pain consumers are feeling at the checkout counter this holiday season. As we give thanks again this year for our many blessings, please know farmers will strive to provide affordable food sustainably to make sure our traditions continue.

Elwood Fire Protection District accepting bids for 2023 Can-Am Defender

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Elwood Fire Protection District will be accepting bids for one (1) 2023 Can-Am Defender Pro XT 6x6, pursuant to all the specifications laid out by the Apparatus Build Committee. Bid specifications/bid packets are available for pick up at the Elwood Fire Protection District, Mon-Fri between the hours of 9am and 3pm or you may email admin@elwoodfpd.com to request a packet. All bids must be submitted by 9:00am December 19th, 2022. The sealed bids may be mailed to: Elwood Fire Protection District, 309 W Mississippi Street, Elwood, IL 60421, or dropped off in person between 9am and 3pm Mon-Fri. The Fire District will not accept bids after the December 19th deadline. The bids shall be opened at the Elwood Fire Protection District Fire Station on December 19th, 2022, at 1:00 p.m. The District reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

Published in the Free Press Advocate, Wednesday, Nov. 23, 30, Dec. 7 and 14, 2022.

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COMET SPORTS

JV Comets make their mark on the mat



REED-CUSTER WRESTLERS who did well during the Wilmington JV Invite include (from left) Brock Billingsley, Jayden Brodinski, Christian Mounts, Madysen Meyer, Zach Markle, Jimmy Watson, Aiden Shultz and Tristan Randall.

Varsity Panthers rout Sandwich

The Reed-Custer 8th grade Panthers defeated Sandwich last week 33-22.
Post players Alex Fierro and Orion Bergmann led in scoring with 7 points each. Ethan Segoviano added 6 points by nailing two three-pointers in the first half.
Jesse Tresouthick contributed with 4, Lucas Walsh and Tyler Compton added 3, Carson Catron had 2, and Frank Crotty rounded out the scoring with 1 point.
The team is now 4-2.

RCHS winter sports schedules

BOYS BASKETBALL		
Varsity		
Dec. 9	.....host Lisle	.....6:45 p.m.
Dec. 12	.....host Clifton Central	.....6:45 p.m.
Dec. 13	.....host Wilmington	.....6:45 p.m.
Dec. 16	.....@Peotone	.....6:45 p.m.
Dec. 19	.....@Somonausk	.....5:30 p.m.
Dec. 21	.....@GSW	.....6:15 p.m.
Dec. 26, 27		
28, 29	.....@Marseilles Holiday Tourn	.....TBA
Jan. 4	.....@Serena	.....6:45 p.m.
Jan. 6	.....@Coal City	.....6:45 p.m.
Jan. 7	.....@Rock Falls Shootout/vs Bureau Va.12	p.m.
Jan. 9	.....@Mokenca	.....6:45 p.m.
Jan. 13	.....host Streator	.....6:45 p.m.
Jan. 17	.....host Herscher	.....6:45 p.m.
Jan. 20	.....@Manteno	.....6:45 p.m.
Jan. 21	.....host Hall	.....1:30 p.m.
Jan. 24	.....@Lisle	.....6:45 p.m.
Jan. 25	.....host Grant Park	.....6:45 p.m.
Jan. 28	.....@Beecher Shootout	.....TBA
Jan. 30	.....host El Paso	.....6:45 p.m.
Feb. 1	.....host Peotone	.....6:45 p.m.
Feb. 3	.....@Wilmington	.....6:45 p.m.
Feb. 7	.....@Beecher	.....6:45 p.m.
Feb. 10	.....host Coal City- Senior Night	.....6:45 p.m.
Feb. 14	.....@Streator	.....6:45 p.m.
Feb. 18	.....@IHS Regional	.....TBA
March 8	.....Winter Sports Awards	.....6:30 p.m.

Freshmen		
Dec. 8	.....host Peotone	.....5:30 p.m.
Dec. 15	.....host Morris	.....5:30 p.m.
Dec. 19	.....@Wilmington	.....5:30 p.m.
Jan. 5	.....@Streator	.....5:30 p.m.
Jan. 9	.....@Herscher	.....5:30 p.m.
Jan. 12	.....host Manteno	.....5:30 p.m.
Jan. 18	.....host Wilmington	.....5:30 p.m.
Jan. 19	.....host Coal City	.....5:30 p.m.
Jan. 23	.....host Lisle	.....5:30 p.m.
Jan. 25	.....@Peotone	.....5:30 p.m.
Jan. 31	.....host Seneca	.....5:30 p.m.
Feb. 2	.....@Coal City	.....5:30 p.m.
Feb. 6	.....@Streator	.....5:30 p.m.
Feb. 8	.....@Lisle Tournament	.....TBA
Feb. 11	.....@Lisle Tournament	.....TBA
March 8	.....Winter Sports Awards	.....6:30 p.m.

GIRLS BASKETBALL		
Varsity		
Dec. 8	.....@Peotone	.....6:45 p.m.
Dec. 13	.....@Lemont	.....6:45 p.m.
Dec. 15	.....@Somonausk	.....6:45 p.m.
Dec. 19	.....host @Wilmington	.....6:45 p.m.
Dec. 27		
28, 29, 30	.....@Lisle Tournament	.....TBA
Jan. 3	.....host Flanagan	.....6:45 p.m.
Jan. 5	.....host Streator	.....6:45 p.m.
Jan. 9	.....host Herscher	.....6:45 p.m.
Jan. 12	.....@Manteno	.....6:45 p.m.
Jan. 19	.....@Coal City	.....6:45 p.m.
Jan. 21	.....@Beecher	.....1:30 p.m.
Jan. 23	.....@Lisle	.....6:45 p.m.
Jan. 24	.....@Serena	.....6:45 p.m.
Jan. 26	.....host Peotone	.....6:45 p.m.
Jan. 30	.....@Wilmington	.....6:45 p.m.
Feb. 2	.....host Coal City- Senior Night	.....6:45 p.m.
Feb. 6	.....@Streator	.....6:45 p.m.
Feb. 11	.....@IHS Regional	.....TBA
March 8	.....Winter Sports Awards	.....6:30 p.m.

WRESTLING		
Varsity		
Dec. 8	.....@ICE Quad/Lisle & Wilmington	.....5:30 p.m.
Dec. 14	.....@Pontiac w/Seneca	.....5 p.m.
Dec. 15	.....host Clifton Central w/GCMS	.....5:30 p.m.
Dec. 17	.....@Wilmington JV Invite	.....9 a.m.
Dec. 29, 30	.....@Lincoln Rumble @Springfield	.....9 a.m.
Jan. 5	.....@ICE Quad w/Streator/Herscher	.....5:30 p.m.
Jan. 6	.....@Princeton Tournament	.....4:30 p.m.
Jan. 7	.....@Princeton Tournament	.....9 a.m.
Jan. 12	.....@ICE Quad Manteno/Peotone	.....5:30 p.m.
Jan. 13	.....host Comet Classic Invite	.....TBA
Jan. 14	.....host Comet Classic Invite	.....9 a.m.
Jan. 19	.....host Coal City	.....5:30 p.m.
Jan. 20	.....host Dwight	.....5:30 p.m.
Jan. 21	.....@ICE@Wilmington	.....9 a.m.
Jan. 23	.....host Prairie Central w/Ridgview	.....5:30 p.m.
Jan. 26	.....@Sandwich w/Plano	.....5:30 p.m.
Jan. 27	.....@JV .ICE Conference @Lisle	.....5:30 p.m.
Feb. 4	.....@IHS Regional	.....TBA
Feb. 10	.....@IHS Sectionals @TBA	.....4:30 p.m.
Feb. 11	.....@IHS Sectionals@TBA	.....9 a.m.
Feb. 16	.....@IHS State @Champaign	.....1 p.m.
Feb. 17	.....@IHS State @Champaign	.....8:30 a.m.
Feb. 18	.....@IHS State @Champaign	.....9 a.m.
March 8	.....Winter Sports Awards	.....6:30 p.m.

JV Panthers hold off Limestone to win

The 7th grade Panthers traveled to Limestone Monday night and secured a 32-27 victory.
Reed-Custer led the entire game, but things got a little too close for comfort in the fourth quarter. Ultimately, their defense held up as they improved to 6-4.
As team, the Panthers shot six of nine from behind the arc. Matthew Kuban led the way with 12 points. Chase Isaac played an excellent game with 11 points, four rebounds, and three steals. Kaiden Klein also played well, scoring nine points and grabbing seven rebounds.
Reed-Custer will host Channahon on Thursday.
Balanced attack

Reed-Custer defeated Saratoga on Friday evening by a final score of 33-22. The team had a season high of six players scoring.
Matthew Kuban led all scorers again with 18 points and five rebounds. Kaiden Klein scored seven points while adding five rebounds.
Chase Isaac added three points. Eddie Bryan and Carson Lowe each contributed two points. Trent Boudreau scored a free throw.
The Panthers were 5-4 before traveling to Limestone Monday.
Overtime loss
The Panthers suffered an overtime loss at Coal City Thursday, 37-35.
Kuban had a fantastic game, leading

all scorers with 27 points, including five three-pointers. Klein also had a strong game with eight points and nine rebounds.
Ultimately, Reed-Custer committed too many turnovers and the Warriors converted those into points.
Minooka muscle
Reed-Custer returned from the holiday break to host Minooka last Wednesday and was defeated 44-20. The Panthers free throw struggles continued as they finished just five for 14.
Matt Kuban had a game high 15 points. Kaiden Klein and Trent Boudreau each finished with two points. Damian Sanchez also added a free throw.

Comet Students of the month



REED-CUSTER HIGH School named the students of the month for November (from left) Alex Delp, Andrew Tribe, Anastasia Couch, Macey Valone, Brianna Lestina and Addison Hartman. Not Pictured: Eden Przbylski, Logan Frauston and Andrew Martinez.

RCMS names students of the month for November



REED-CUSTER MIDDLE School announced the students of the month for November. The characteristic was Honesty (from left) Presley Dockery (7th grade), Zachary Pruss (7th), Michael Faletti (8th), Selah Walsh (7th), Cameron Junkroski (8th), Jordana Nagle (7th), Caden Atwell (6th), Sam Crotty (6th), Katie Lantka (8th), Adalyn Alexander (6th), Brandon Pries (8th) and Addison Gurney (6th).

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THE WRESTLING COMETS were impressive during the Prairie Central Mutli-Quad in Fairbury Saturday, finishing 4-0. They sit for a pre-match meeting with the referee.

Courtesy photo

Comet wrestlers get right to business

On Saturday, RCHS Wrestling was busy with two tournaments. The varsity Comets traveled to Fairbury, to compete in the Prairie Central Muti-Quad.

The team started out with an electric win against Riverton 66-18. The Comets faced three more adversaries and came up on top in all: beating Hoopston Area 43-42, Monticello 48-36 and El-Paso Gridley 41-39.

The Comets did a great job in some very tough duals to start at 4-0 as a team.

The JV team headed to the Coal City F/S Tournament on Saturday. RC took eight wrestlers eager to get a chance to take the mat. Brock Billingsley, Tristan Randall and Aidan Schultz scored wins for the Comets. Many other Comets competed in their first match and did very well. Aidan Shultz came home with a 6th place medal out of 16.

The Comets travel to Lisle Thursday for a quad against Wilmington and the hosts.

Reed-Custer 66, Riverton 18

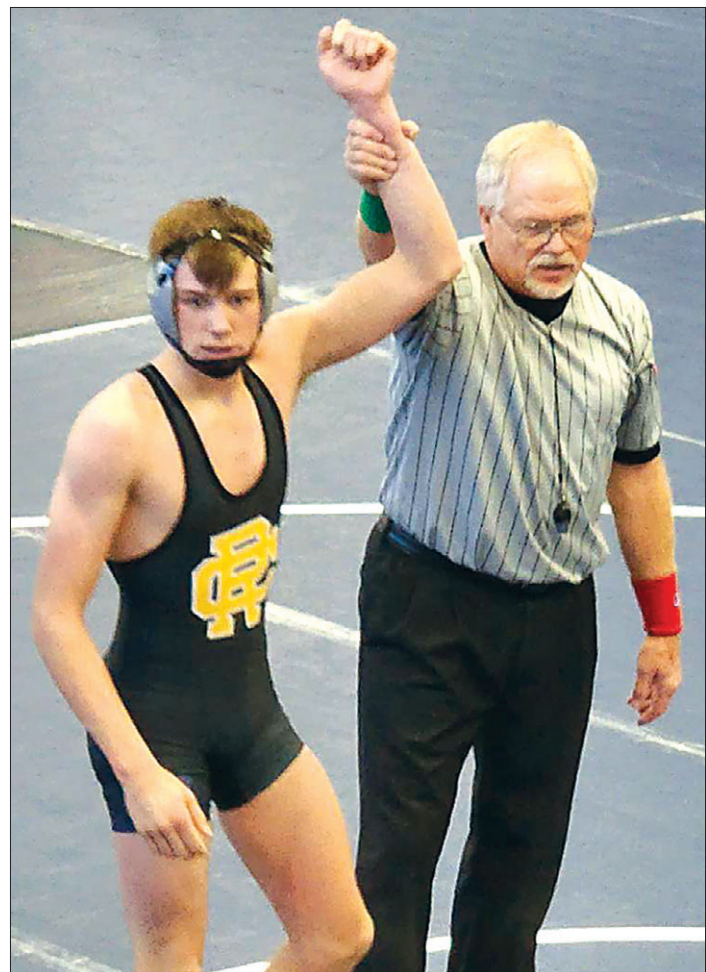
145—Jason Davis (RC) over Damion White (Riverton) fall 2:00

152—Landon Markle (RC) by forfeit
160—Travis Bohac (RC) by forfeit
170—Jordan Hickman (RC) by forfeit
182—Rex Pfeifer (RC) over Dalton Leka, fall 0:33
195—Dominic Alaimo (RC) over Anthony Beckman fall 2:16
220—Mayson Buckman (Riverton) over Owen Dooley fall 1:25
285—Gunnar Berg (RC) over Mathew Crouch fall 0:43
106—Judith Gamboa (RC) by forfeit
113—Jamison Borello (RC) by forfeit
120—Matthew Miller (Riverton) over Josh Adams (RC) fall 1:47
126—Kameron Sklenka (Riverton) over Kris Budick fall :39
132—Sam Begler (RC) over Anthony Campo (Riverton) fall 1:29
138—Jeremy Eggleston (RC) by forfeit
Reed-Custer 43, Hoopston Area 42

Reed-Custer's team score was adjusted by 1.0 for criteria to determine winner of match.

152—Landon Markle (RC) over Ayden Larkin fall 0:29
160—Cohen Brown (Hoop A) over Travis Bohac (RC) fall 3:36
170—Angel Zamora (Hoop A) over Jordan Hickman fall 1:30
182—Rex Pfeifer (RC) over Jason Moore fall 0:16

195—Dominic Alaimo (RC) by forfeit
220—Landon Mills (Hoop A) over Owen Dooley fall 0:26
285—Gunnar Berg (RC) over Nick Brown (Hoop A) fall 0:21
106—Judith Gamboa (RC) over Owen Garrett (Hoop A) fall 1:29
113—Charlie Flores (Hoop A) over Jamison Borello (RC) fall 2:53
120—Talon Nelson (Hoop A) over Josh Adams (RC) fall 0:42
126—Aiden Bell (Hoop A) over Kris Budick (RC) fall 0:42
132—Sam Begler (RC) over Brian Armstrong (Hoop A) fall 0:47
138—Jeremy Eggleston (RC) over Rasiah Jones (Hoop A) fall 5:53
145—Ceasar Espinoza (Hoop A) over Jason Davis (RC) fall 1:01
Reed Custer 48, Monticello 36
160—Russ Brown (Monticello) over Travis Bohac (RC) fall 3:59
170—Hunter Romano (Monticello) over Jordan Hickman fall :30
182—Rex Pfeifer (RC) by forfeit
195—Caleb O' Linc (Monticello) over Dominic Alaimo fall 1:19
220—Riley Jones (Monticello) over Owen Dooley fall 0:30
285—Gunnar Berg (RC) over TJ Nickerson fall 1:05
106—Judith Gamboa (RC) over Marissa Miller fall 0:46
113—Jamison Borello (RC) by forfeit
120—Josh Adams (RC) over Westin O' Linc fall 1:20
126—Preston Bettinger (Monticello) over Kris Budick fall :23
132—Sam Begler (RC) over Drake Weeks fall 1:15
138—Jeremy Eggleston (RC) over Tristan Slade fall 3:16
145—Gavin Ridings (Monticello) over Jason Davis fall 0:17
152—Landon Markle (RC) over Dawson Sheets fall 1:08
Reed Custer 41, El Paso Gridley 39
170—Ethan Whitman (EPG) over Jordan Hickman fall 0:42
182—Dominic Alaimo (RC) by forfeit
195—Rex Pfeifer (RC) over Parker Duffy fall 3:29
220—Bobby Shaffer (EPG) by forfeit
285—Gunnar Berg (RC) over Jesse Gerber fall 0:11
106—Caleb Graham (EPG) over Judith Gamboa fall 0:18
113—Jamison Borello (RC) by forfeit
120—Logan Gibson (EPG) by forfeit
126—Ethan Kruger (EPG) over Kris Budick decision 15-10
132—Sam Begler (RC) over Jack Erwin fall 2:22
138—Jeremy Eggleston (RC) over Parker Key TF 18-3
145—Conlee Landrus (EPG) over Jason Davis fall 0:40
152—Landon Markle (RC) over Waylon Melick fall 0:48
160—Dax Gentes (EPG) by forfeit



WINNER! WINNER! — Recording one of his four victories Saturday at Fairbury is Reed-Custer's 152-pounder Landon Markle.

Lady Comets post win over visiting Lisle



Photo by Zadi Sims

LADY COMET Gwen Stewart looks for an open teammate during Monday's home game against Lisle. Reed-Custer won the contest and will be on the road for two weeks before hosting Wilmington Dec. 19.



Photo by Zadi Sims

SENIOR GUARD Brooklyn Harding hustles the ball up the court during Monday's 55-49 victory over Lisle.