



# COAL CITY COURANT.com

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2025

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Photo by Patti Sorg

THE ASSUMPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH in Coal City will “amalgamate” or merge with the Sacred Heart Church in Kinsman as part of a restructuring plan of catholic churches under the direction of the Diocese of Joliet.

## Diocese of Joliet announces closings, mergers for area Catholic churches

**Y ROSE PANIERI**  
STAFF WRITER

Bishop Ronald Hicks, head of the Diocese of Joliet, announced Thursday the closing of four churches—including two in our area. The closures are part of the third phase of the diocese's restructuring.

St. Lawrence O'Toole Chapel in Essex and St. Patrick in Manhattan, will close effective July 1. St. Patrick will be merged into St. Joseph of Manhattan.

In December 2024, Hicks expressed his thoughts and concerns about the restructuring.

“I wish the reality and data were different,” Hicks said. “I wish we didn't have to make a lot of these hard decisions.”

Hicks outlined the decisions during a statement that detailed the future of 22 sites across DuPage, Grundy, and southern Will Counties,

as part of Phase 3 of the diocese's plan.

The initiative was spurred by declining Mass attendance, financial challenges and the need to address the availability of clergy.

“Change is hard,” Bishop Hicks acknowledged. “These decisions may affect where you worship, how far you need to drive to attend Mass, and what you consider to be your intimate faith community.”

For residents of Wilmington, Braidwood, Coal City, South Wilmington, Essex, and Wilton Center, these changes represent a significant shift in how local Catholic communities will operate.

In addition to the closing of the parishes in Essex and Manhattan, the restructuring, the following parishes will participate in the third and final phase of targeted restructuring:

- St. Rose of Lima, Wilmington
- Assumption, Coal City

• St. Lawrence, South Wilmington

• St. Joseph, Manhattan  
The following changes will be effective as of July 1:

Immaculate Conception Parish in Braidwood will remain as a worship site, but be extinguished as a separate parish and be united with St. Rose of Lima Parish in Wilmington.

Sacred Heart in Kinsman will amalgamate into Assumption Parish in Coal City, with Sacred Heart retaining worship site status as part of Assumption.

St. Mary in Reddick will merge with St. Lawrence Parish in South Wilmington, but retain status as a worship site.

“I don't want to be the bishop who buried his head in the sand and kicked the can down the road,” Bishop Hicks said. “We have to make

SEE CHURCHES PAGE 2



AN ARTIST RENDERING shows design for the Culver's Restaurant that will be built at Illinois 113 and Will Road in the Village of Diamond.

Here's the scoop

## Culver's to build new restaurant

**BY MICHAEL LOOMIS**  
CORRESPONDENT

New dining options are on the way for Diamond residents, with two regional chain restaurants tentatively set to begin construction this spring.

Culver's Restaurant, popular for its frozen custard, butterburgers and chees curds, and Heroes West both plan to open new locations near each other on Route 113.

“The permit for Heroes West is ready to

be issued,” said Village of Diamond Planning and Zoning Coordinator Cindy Atwood Tuesday, adding that plans submitted by Culver's are still in the review stage.

The two new eateries will be separated only by an undeveloped lot. Culver's will be at the southeast corner of Route 113 and Will Road, while Heroes West will be just east of that in the same shopping center as the Jewel Osco.

Diamond Mayor  
SEE RESTAURANTS PAGE 2

## Coffee with the Superintendent

Coal City Community Unit School District 1 Superintendent Chris Spencer invites the community to Coffee with the Superintendent, a quarterly program that affords school district residents an opportunity to receive timely updates on issues of importance, gain a better understanding of school operations and governance and pose

questions on school related topics of their choosing.

The next Coffee with the Superintendent will be held at 9 a.m., Friday, Feb. 21 in the District Administration Center Board Room, 550 S. Carbon Hill Rd. All Coal City School District residents are invited and encouraged to participate.

## Internships available for juniors, seniors

Applications are now available to high school juniors and seniors interested in a summer job with real world experience.

The Grundy County Economic Development Council [GEDC] and Grundy Area Vocational Center [GAVC] are seeking applications from current high school juniors and seniors to fill 43 paid internships across 17 local companies.

There are a wide range of positions includ-

ing health care, information technology, accounting, engineering and many more.

The positions are open to students from Grundy County high schools who apply by Friday, Feb. 28. Visit the GAVC website at www.gavc-il.org to view the available positions and access the application.



## Board of Education approves calendar for the next school year

The Unit 1 Board of Education met in regular session on Feb. 5 and set the 2025-2026 school year calendar.

The first day of school for students will be Wednesday, Aug. 13 and the last day of student attendance is scheduled for Thursday, May 21, 2026, barring the use of emergency days.

Winter break will begin Dec. 22 and students will return to class on

Tuesday, Jan. 6, 2026. Spring break is scheduled to begin March 30 with students returning to class April 7, 2026. Per state requirement, the calendar contains 176 instructional days.

In other action”

• Bids for a summer roofing project at Coal City Middle School were reviewed and the Board approved the base bid of \$306,540 and two alternate bids—\$27,730 and

\$177,720— from Elens & Maichin for a total project cost of \$511,990.

• The Board set the base salary for new certified staff at \$48,250 effective with the 2025-2026 school year. The increase is up from current \$47,500.

• Starting with 2025-2026 the daily rate of pay for a substitute teacher will increase from \$125 to \$150 per day in order to keep the district competitive with neighboring school dis-

tricts.

• Approval was given to increase the high school social studies requirement to 2.5 credits for graduation. The current requirement is two credits and colleges are now requiring three credits upon entrance. The change in required credits would align with surrounding districts. The additional credit requirement begins with the class of 2029.

• Superintendent

SEE BOARD BRIEFS PAGE 2

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# Restaurants, continued from page 1

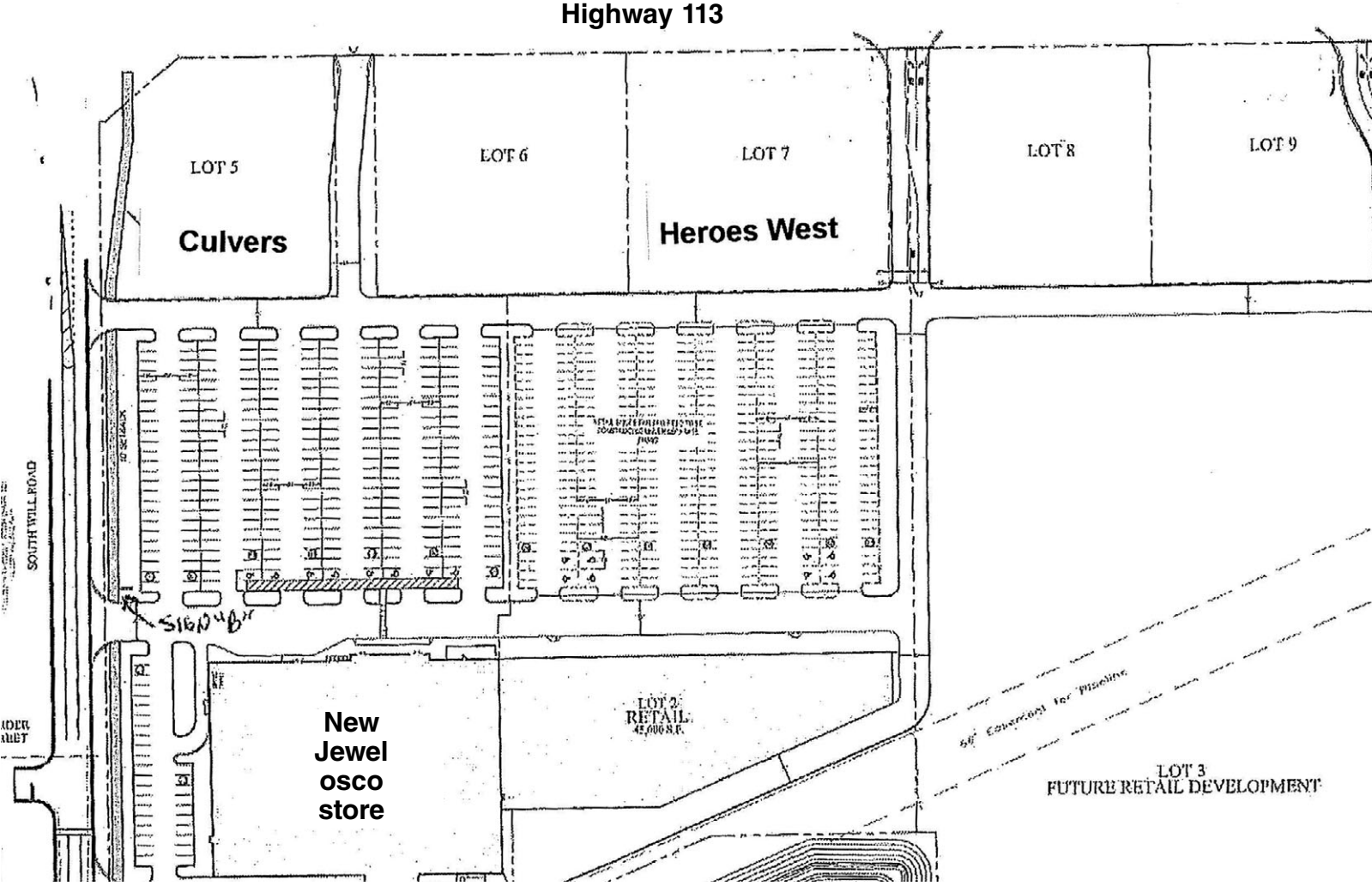
Terry Kernc said the addition of more restaurants is an encouraging sign for the area's local economy.

"It's going to help with pulling more people off the highway in ways we never did before. We want them to stay in town longer and give them more options that will keep them interested in Diamond," the mayor said.

Founded in 1984 in Sauk City, Wis., Culvers has 139 restaurants in Illinois. According to the company's website, each location employs between 30 and 75 people and has seating for 98 to 118 guests.

Heroes West has locations in Lemont and Joliet. Owner Robert Taft said that if weather conditions are favorable, groundbreaking for the restaurant in Diamond will be in mid-March.

"If all goes as planned, it will be a mid-summer opening. The Heroes West in Diamond will be 9,000 square feet, have multiple bars, a private party room with its own bar in it, an outdoor dining area and once we fully staff up, open for breakfast with a drive through pick up window," Taft said.



# Churches, continued from page 1

some of these hard and unpopular decision for the good of the wider church."

Bishop Hicks emphasized that the restructuring process was deliberate and inclusive, involving clergy, lay leaders, and parishioners.

The restructuring decisions were made based on demographic trends, financial data, Mass attendance, and input from Catholic Leadership Institute consultants and the Diocese's Targeted Restructuring Committee (TRC).

"That means you will no longer have pastors who are asked to lead two or more parishes," Bishop Hicks said. "My hope is to support a local church that is thriving and growing."

The restructuring process will also involve reassignments of priests within the diocese, with those decisions to be announced by June 1, 2025.

Bishop Hicks urged parishioners to embrace the changes with an open heart and to welcome members from other parishes into their communities.

"My obligation as your bishop is to remain attentive to our pastoral needs and the shifting needs of our faithful and surrounding demographics," he said.

Additional details may be found on the Diocese of Joliet's website under the "Targeted Restructuring for Parishes and Schools" under the News, Events, & Multimedia tab.

# Police warn of latest scam to get your PIN

Wilmington Police have received reports of a phone scam in which the suspects are targeting debit card information.

Officers posted on social media that the call will show up as the contact phone number of your bank, and the caller will identify themselves to be from the fraud department.

According to the police, the scammers provide the last four digits of your debit card number.

"The caller then provides transaction information from out of state—which does not actually exist—to get you

to advise if the transactions are fraudulent and offer to issue you a new debit card," the post warned.

Scammers provide personal information such as your address and phone number—which are easily obtained by a Google search of your name—and provide a verification number via text message. Once you provide the verification number, the scammer will ask for the PIN number for your debit card.

Once this PIN is given, they immediately begin removing money from your account.

The police department

advises all residents to never provide your PIN numbers to anyone. Your bank will never request your PIN.

Should you receive any phone call from anyone identifying themselves to be from your bank, or other financial institutions fraud department, hang up and call the number on your card or account directly, police warn.

"There are a number of apps available which allow scammers to clone phone numbers and allow their calls to your phone to seem legitimate. Do not allow yourself to fall victim to this crime."

# Board briefs, continued from page 1

Chris Spencer reported the Grundy County Board of Review held a hearing regarding the valuation of the GE-Hitachi Morris Operation and indicated it would place a hold on the valuation pending a final decision by the state of Illinois' Property Tax Appeals Board (PTAB).

A resolution authorizing Intervention in proceedings before the Grundy County Board of Review, The Will County Board of Review and the state of Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board was approved.

Administrative guidelines for a respiratory protection program for district custodians and maintenance personnel was presented and approved.

Board members approved entering into a two year agreement with Morris Hospital for athletic training services.

At the recommendation of the high school principal, the Board approved mid-year graduation for two students.

As required, the Board approved filing the quarterly drop out report for the quarter ending Dec. 20, 2024 with the Regional Office of Education.

Personnel: The resignations of Casey McGrath, pre-kindergarten teacher at the early childhood center, and Grace Thelo, social worker at the intermediate

school, were accepted effective May 28.

Tricia Smith was employed as a classroom aide at the high school.

The transfer of Keegan Clampit, a one-on-one aide, from the middle school to the high school PATH program was approved effective Jan. 31.

Sick leave requests were received and approved from Nick King, grounds worker; Tanya Miller, fifth grade teacher; Nikki Planeta, early childhood center librarian, and Lauren Schoonover, kindergarten teacher.

Board members approved employment contracts including one year contracts for Brad Boresi, Ann Gill, Corey Mikula, Rodney Monbrum and Rebecca Pendergast. Three year contracts for Cameron Stone and Kristen Wilson. Contract amendments were approved for Amanda Davidson, LaWanda Gagliardo, Jennifer Kenney, Luke Krippel, Art Stafford, Taryn Trotter, and Denny Wickiser, and final contracts for Tracy Carlson and Jason Smith.

One year salary agreements were approved for Leah Hajdu, Heather Kruszewski, and Jay Radke at 261 days and Yolanda Hossack and Danielle Marma at 220 days.

Board members approved a 5 percent salary increase for non-certified staff.

The superintendent reported Hannah Sizemore, a student at Joliet Junior College, will be completing 130 hours of fieldwork in Mrs. Harseim's Pre-K class at the Early Childhood Center.

The Board recognized the academic achievement of 20 high school seniors who have been named Illinois State Scholars. Those students are: Elliana Allen, Aylianna Castle, Will Johnke, Mason Natyshok, Owen Quarles, Anthony Aultz, Mackenzie Croxton, Melody Kinder, Hunter Nettles, Molly Ramsden, Corinna Barkley, Lilly Feisley, Deborah Lynch, Trevor Perino, Mayson Wantroba, August Burns, Peyton Gibson, Ava Meyer, Shaun Polark and Dylan Young.

Coal City High School students Melody Kinder, Mason Natyshok, Martin Ramirez, and Mackenzie Messina were recognized for their selection to participate in the Illinois Music Education Association Student Programs. Melody, Mason and Martin were members of the All-State Chorus and Mackenzie, a bassoon player, performed with the All-State Senior Band. Coal City Middle School student Jackson Hollis was recognized for his selection to the inaugural All-State Jr. High Chorus. Additionally, it was announced Jackson has been selected to perform the National Anthem at the IESA Eighth Grade Volleyball State Final next month.

Board vice president Shawn Hamilton was recognized for attaining the Level of Distinguished Annual Merit from the Illinois Association of School Boards.

Student enrollment at the end of January was 2,184.

The next meeting of the Board of Education is scheduled for Wednesday, March 5 with a study session meeting on Feb. 26. Both meetings will be held at 6 p.m. in the boardroom of the District Administration Center.

## Attorney Meents files Sirovy estate claim

### PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT GRUNDY COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF JANET MARIE SIROVY, Deceased; No. 2024 PR 80

#### CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given of the death of Janet Marie Sirovy, Letters Testamentary as Independent Executor were issued on January 24, 2025, to Terry F. Sirovy, whose address is 8780 East Teal Lane, Wilmington, Illinois 60481; whose attorney is Meents Law, P.C., 25158 W. Eames Street, Unit A, Channahon, Illinois 60410. Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Grundy County Courthouse, 111 East Washington Street, Morris, Illinois 60450, or with the representative, or both, on or before August 6, 2025, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a Claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

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

Terry F. Sirovy  
Independent Executor of the Estate of Janet Marie Sirovy, Deceased  
Frank J. Meents  
25158 W. Eames Street, Unit A  
Channahon, Illinois 60410  
Telephone: (815) 534-9515  
Facsimile: (815) 534-9516  
Attorney Code: 06298859  
E-mail: [Frank@MeentsLaw.com](mailto:Frank@MeentsLaw.com)  
Published in the Coal City Courant on Wednesday, Feb. 5, 12 and 19, 2025.

## Attorney Meents files Schultz estate claim

### PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT GRUNDY COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF WAYNE MICHAEL SCHULTZ, Deceased; No. 2024 PR 81

#### CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given of the death of Wayne Michael Schultz, Letters Testamentary as Independent Executor were issued on January 24, 2025, to Sarah Elizabeth Probst f/k/a Sarah Elizabeth Schultz, whose address is 177 County Road 400 N, Sigel, Illinois 62462; whose attorney is Meents Law, P.C., 25158 W. Eames Street, Unit A, Channahon, Illinois 60410. Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Grundy County Courthouse, 111 East Washington Street, Morris, Illinois 60450, or with the representative, or both, on or before August 6, 2025, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a Claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

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

Sarah Elizabeth Probst f/k/a Sarah Elizabeth Schultz  
Independent Executor of the Estate of Wayne Michael Schultz, Deceased  
Frank J. Meents  
25158 W. Eames Street, Unit A  
Channahon, Illinois 60410  
Telephone: (815) 534-9515  
Facsimile: (815) 534-9516  
Attorney Code: 06298859  
E-mail: [Frank@MeentsLaw.com](mailto:Frank@MeentsLaw.com)  
Published in the Coal City Courant on Wednesday, Feb. 5, 12 and 19, 2025.

## Attorney Harrop files Henke estate notice

### PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, GRUNDY COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
In the Matter of the Estate of JOYCE P. HENKE, Deceased. Case No.: 2025 PR3

#### CLAIM DATE NOTICE

NOTICE IS GIVEN of the death of Joyce P. Henke, and Letters of Office were issued on the 9th day of January, 2025 to Beverly K. Henke, 520 South Vermillion Street, Coal City, IL 60416 as Independent Executor, whose attorney is JOAN N. HARROP, 220 West Main Street, Suite 300, Morris, Illinois 60450.

The estate will be administered without court supervision, unless under 755 ILCS 5/28-4, any interested person terminates independent administration at any time by mailing or delivering a petition to terminate to the Circuit Clerk.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Circuit Clerk, Probate Division, Grundy County Court House, 111 East Washington Street, Morris, Illinois, 60450, or with the representative, or both, on or before August 5, 2025. Any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed.

E-filing is now mandatory for documents in civil cases with limited exemptions. To e-file, you must first create an account with an e-filing service provider. Visit <https://efile.illinoiscourts.gov/service-providers.htm> to learn more and to select a service provider. If you need additional help or have trouble e-filing, visit <https://www.illinoiscourts.gov/FAQ/gethelp.asp>, or talk with your local circuit clerk's office.

Beverly K. Henke,  
Independent Executor  
Joan N. Harrop, #6237262  
GOMIEN & HARROP, LTD.  
Old National Bank Building  
220 West Main Street, Ste. 300  
Morris, Illinois 60450  
(815) 942-0071  
[joanharrop@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joanharrop@sbcglobal.net)  
Published in the Coal City Courant on Feb. 5, 12 and 19, 2025.

## Felix Township Road Dist. Financial report

### PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE  
FELIX TOWNSHIP ROAD DISTRICT ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT  
Notice is hereby given that the Annual Financial Report for the Felix Township Road District, in the County of Grundy, State of Illinois, was completed by Tri County Management Tax & Accounting. The Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2023, and ending March 31, 2024, are on file and available for public inspection at Felix Township, 6525 E. Whitetie Rd., Coal City, Illinois, by appointment. Please contact our office at 815-634-7288 or e-mail [felixclerk1@gmail.com](mailto:felixclerk1@gmail.com) to schedule.

Published in the Coal City Courant on Feb. 19, 2025.

## Felix Township Annual Financial Report

### PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF FELIX TOWNSHIP ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT  
Notice is hereby given that the Annual Financial Report for Felix Township, in the County of Grundy, State of Illinois, was completed by Wermer, Rogers, Doran & Ruzon, LLC. The Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2023, and ending March 31, 2024, are on file and available for public inspection at Felix Township, 6525 E. Whitetie Rd., Coal City, Illinois, by appointment. Please contact our office at 815-634-7288 or e-mail [felixclerk1@gmail.com](mailto:felixclerk1@gmail.com) to schedule.

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Eric D. Fisher, publisher



# Students of the week



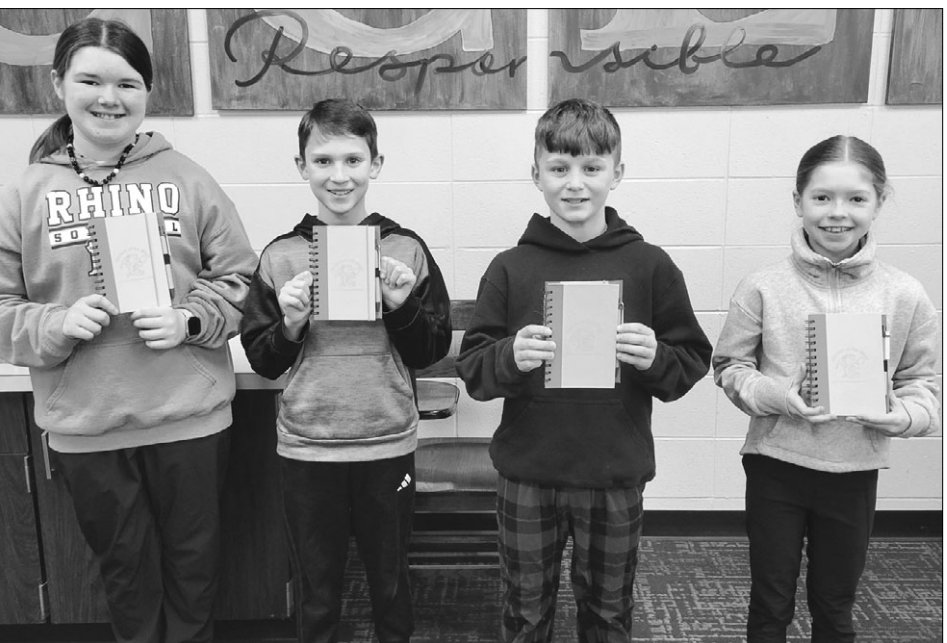
COAL CITY MIDDLE School has announced its Students of the Week for the week of Feb. 10. Honored were [from left]: Sergio Soler, nominated by Mrs. Siefken; Kamden Gabehart, nominated by Mrs. Clark, and Kobilyn Shimp, nominated by Ms. Horrie.



COAL CITY MIDDLE School has announced its Students of the Week for the week of Feb. 17. Students recognized by their teachers are [from left]: Abigail Hitchcock, nominated by Mr. Brimm; Ellyanna Nicholson, nominated by Mrs. Roseland; Ruby Padavona, nominated by Ms. Fincher, and Kiley Nichols, nominated by Mrs. Sandburg.



COAL CITY ELEMENTARY School named the Students of Week for Feb. 10, they include (from left) Clay Surman, Shaelynn Kline, Blakely Riley, Finley Ader, Casen Schott, Graham D'Orazio, Adeline Stott, Piper Shelton, Riley Matsko, Kade Bieda and Henry Livermore.



COAL CITY INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL named students of the week for Feb. 12 (from left) Emersyn Hall, Lincoln Connor-Mikos, Leo Christensen and Evelyn Lardi.



COAL CITY EARLY Childhood Center named students of the week for Feb. 12 (kneeling, from left) Alivia Frese, Knox D'Orazio, Oakley Sinkular, Claire Andruskevitch and Reagan Bruyn. Back row: Jaceson Wintermute, Marley Svec, Ayla Sheedy, Shayne Shelly, Charlotte Terrel and Lillian Workman.



COAL CITY EARLY CHILDHOOD Center named the students of the week, they include (front, from left) Aurora Schmitt, Quinn Bigg, Celia Tabler and Easton Sgarlata. Back row: Yana Chaudhari, Merik Schott, Cason Surman, Hadley Popovich and Julian Walters.

## Coal City Public Library News

Check online event calendar at ccpld.org for a description of the events and to register.

Check out our digital services available 24/7 on our website at [www.ccpld.org](http://www.ccpld.org).

In-Person Adult Exercise, Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays 9-10 a.m. First half hour is cardio and the second half is weights, resistance band and strength training.

**Thursday, Feb. 20-**

- Terrific Tots - 10am
- Family Story and Play Time - 11am
- Versiti Blood Drive of IL - 3-7pm
- Terrific Tots - 6pm

**Friday, Feb. 21-**

- Teen Take and Makes - all day

**Monday, Feb. 24-**

- Inside Walking at CCPLD - 8-9am
- Terrific Tots - 10am
- Preschool Storytime - 11am
- Eager Readers - Homeschool Edition - 1pm
- Eager Readers - 4pm
- Lapsit - 6pm
- Preschool Storytime - 6pm

**Tuesday, Feb. 25-**

- Happy Scrappers - 9am-4pm
- Adult Evening Book Club - 6pm

**Wednesday, Feb. 26-**

- Inside Walking at CCPLD - 8-9am
- SHIP - 9am-12pm
- Lapsit - 10am
- Preschool Storytime - 10am
- Adult Game Night - 6pm

## Johnson named to president's list

Brecken Johnson of Coal City was among the more than 1,000 undergraduate students at the University of Iowa named to the president's list for the 2024 fall semester.

University of Iowa undergraduates who achieve a grade point average (GPA; 4.0 is an A) of 4.0 in 12 semester hours or more are recognized by inclusion on the president's list.

## Gagliardo named to dean's list

Addison Gagliardo of Coal City has been named to the Dean's List at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee for the Fall 2024 semester. UWM is the second largest university in the State of Wisconsin.



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*"Support Coal City High School Athletes"*

## Wehman named to dean's list

Matthew Wehman, from Coal City, was named to the Milwaukee School of Engineering's Dean's List for the 2024 Fall Semester. Wehman is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Software Engineering.



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The comments stated are the opinions and ideas of the callers and not that of the newspaper.  
Information may not constitute the actual events or facts of a particular topic.  
Submissions by email to: [courant@fpnusa.com](mailto:courant@fpnusa.com) with "soundoff" in the subject line or visit [www.freepressnewspapers.com](http://www.freepressnewspapers.com), or call 815-634-0317. Please state the town in which you are calling from or in regards to. Mail comments to Sound-Off, 271 S. Broadway, Coal City, IL 60416 or 111 S. Water St., Wilmington, IL 60481. There can be only one submission of 250 words or less per person during any given week.

## Handicapped parking

BRAIDWOOD—Just a friendly reminder handicap parking at the schools means handicap parking at all times. Multiple times a week I go to pick up my child after school and cars are parked in the handicap spots. I've also seen staff pull into them. Park in a regular spot even if it means you have to walk five extra feet.

## Public right of way

BRAIDWOOD—There are currently two large campaign signs located at the Rt. 113 entrance to town near the Welcome to Braidwood sign. They are on a public right-of-way and not on private property. Would the candidate involved kindly remove them as it is very unprofessional to have campaign signs placed in public right-of-ways or easements.

## Good riddance

CUSTER PARK—Thank you for the article about the solar farm cancellation and finding out that the solar company seems to have left town. It's a good thing that Accionna left town because there would be no end of problems if they followed through with the solar farm. It's about profit and not green energy. Also liked the article about bird flu and that it's probably not the reason that egg prices are so high. C.P.

## Said no from day one

CUSTER TOWNSHIP—I was one of the property owners approached by Accionna about putting up solar panels on my land. I was skeptical four years ago when they first approached me. Now they are gone. To all you people who signed up, be thankful they pulled out now, not 10 years from now when all those panels would be left standing and a big mess to clean up in 20 years when they break down. I hope they never come back.

## Confused caller

SHADOW LAKES—I'm calling about the Feb. 5th article in sound-off titled "ignoring Constitution." Obviously the person that wrote that and the one I called in about Democracy is different than a Republic which this country is. This person does not have a clue to anything. I talked about him repeating Democracy three times in his past article. We are not a Democracy, we are a Republic. And they come back about reading the constitution and how Trump has already violated many amendments. That is not an answer to what I stated. Dan Hill

## Because Elon cares

COAL CITY—I just want to let you know that Elon Musk is not getting paid by our government. He doesn't have to do this at all, but he cares about us. May God bless us all.

## The lone no vote

COAL CITY—I was glad to read in the Courant that we have at least one member on the school board not afraid to speak their mind and vote no. So often they all just vote alike. But dumping money into that old building doesn't make sense when the District is already planning to build a new school anyway. I say build new and in the end save us taxpayers the money.

## A standby victim

WILMINGTON—If it was God that saved Trump from that assassin's bullet why did God let the fireman die?

## Misguided focus

WILMINGTON—I am so glad Trump and the Republicans have figured out that all of our problems can be solved by attacking trans people.

## They don't care

COAL CITY—Our governor is planning on raising taxes again. But why is he doing this unless he needs more money for the migrants without any concern for Illinoisans or prices in the state of Illinois. It will cause us taxpayers to go further into poverty. The people from foreign lands are not American citizens and are not entitled to receive any taxpayer funds. It appears our governor likes aiding criminal activity and so do the people in Illinois congress. What are they really doing with the money except to give themselves raises? If they really want to balance the budget then they should cut back on their benefits and all their perks they receive. But our elected

public servants only have greed in their brains no matter how the American citizens suffer while they waste tons of money every year. How many elected public servants in Illinois really care about U.S. citizens? The answer in none.

## Your appointments

BRAIDWOOD—Braidwood's two Mayoral candidates absolutely need to disclose publicly before the election who they plan to appoint as their City Administrator, City Clerk and Police Chief. This is very important information that the voters need in order to make their decisions. Mayoral candidates try to wait and keep it a secret because they know that these three decisions could very well make or break their campaign, but after they get elected they seem to think that it doesn't matter to the voters, but it absolutely does. Mr. Lyons and Mrs. Hart, we'll be waiting for your answers.

## In my prayers

WILMINGTON—First of all, I am a "conservative" Democrat who only wants what is best for America and it's legal patriotic American citizens. I see that many of you are constantly bashing President Trump, which is called Trump Derangement Syndrome. In medical terms, it is called "Brain Rot Disease", which it seems that many of you have. Also included is no logic and very little, if any, common sense. This disease is very contagious and there is no cure. It seems a person by the name of "Irene" has severe B.R.D. I will pray for all you Trump bashers and hope that maybe by some miracle that you all will get well.

## Who's running?

BRAIDWOOD—I'm confused. There are three seats for election on April 1st and so far I've only seen the Truthseekers point out three people running. Lyons, the guy they call Moose and Dixon. Why have they not pointed out anyone else running? I thought one of them was running or is that Dixon? Where can I find a copy of the ballot we are voting for so we all can see who's running? And yes I've seen Mayor Heart signs. Can the paper please run an article on candidates.

## King and his tyrants

BRAIDWOOD—We will not allow a twice impeached president, indicted four times, convicted of 34 felonies to treat our country like a banana republic and overtake it by coup. Not too long ago we were the strong and proud nation that helped other countries fight the greedy tyrants who robbed them of democracy and now our democracy is being robbed by a tyrant of our own. Trump has been a shameless con man his entire life and now uses his craft to form a cult around himself called MAGA which recruits cutthroats for Congress and brainwashes the masses. Trump has corrupted the Supreme Court for the purpose of gaining immunity as a king and he has chosen for his cabinet sycophants who are too incompetent to oust him by invoking the 25th amendment. Trump has sought the support of traitors hailing back to the miscreants of Nixon's Watergate days in addition to the scoundrels of today. And what advice is that? It's the practice of enhancing the rich by stealing from everyone else as well as rewriting American history and twisting America's future into something ugly. Oligarchs and kleptocrats were ousted from America long ago but Trump invites them back to swagger anew like the robber barons of old while the rest of us scrounge for crumbs. Yes, Trump is dragging us back, kicking and screaming, into the past inequalities of income, gender and race and we must fight until this charlatan is out of the Oval Office and in jail.

## Sick of the waste

SHADOW LAKES—Every politician that has run for president has said the same thing: "I will end corruption, stop fraud and taxpayer waste, and this as far as it goes, talk. Now we have a president keeping his word and the Democrats are saying if you keep finding the truth we will call you names, stomp our feet and hold our breath. This is why you lost. The taxpayers are sick of government waste.

## Girls sports neglected

BRAIDWOOD—Can someone from the BBSA answer a simple question? Why are you still running ads for boys baseball



but stopped registration for girls softball, a week early? It's been two weeks since you closed sign-ups yet you're still seeking players for boys teams. I'm pretty sure I know why. I've come to the conclusion this town doesn't care about girls sports. Starting with the school just ask anyone with girls who play sports in Braidwood.

## What happens next

BRAIDWOOD—I'm not sure if Braidwood is having a meet the candidate night to ask questions, but if they are can someone please ask Moose why he resigned 2 years ago? Why we should vote for him after he vacated the same seat he's running for 2 years ago? And if Todd doesn't get elected mayor what's stopping him from resigning again because his friends not there?

## Send them to mars

WILMINGTON—The irony is unmistakable between the selfish, egomaniac Trump on this side of the pond and the Royals of the U.K. who work tirelessly to help the less fortunate. In fact, Princess Kate, kindly and considerately, dropped her royal title and her security entourage during her visit to a primary school in order to put the children at ease. In contrast Trump has manipulated the corrupt Supreme Court to falsely make himself king through the immunity ruling which is unconstitutional but handy indeed when he illegally tears down foreign aid agencies which save lives around the world. Surveys from the Kaiser Family Foundation indicate that Americans, wrongly and begrudgingly, think that foreign aid makes up 30% of our budget. On the contrary, the total spent by all foreign aid organizations combined, not just USAID, is less than 1% of our budget. Moreover foreign aid is well spent for our national security because if we turn our back, then our enemies China, Russia, North Korea and others are eager to jump in, take our place giving aid and thereby gain influence in struggling countries. For 60 years America has been the respected world leader due to the soft power of aid. Sadly we no longer have that respect since Trump's presidency and we will pay the price with increased military involvement and the loss of precious American lives. The solution is for Trump, Musk and MAGA to take a rocket off to Mars and never come back. Irene

## Little boy DOGE

WILMINGTON—When Musk brings his boy into the Oval Office, we think about children of his age living far away who are no longer helped by USAID. While Musk carries his son around the halls of government, families throughout the world who are just as important and just as worthy as the Musk family suffer from malnutrition and drink contaminated water and are now more helpless than ever since Musk became Trump's henchman. Is Musk pretending to make himself look kind by using his son as a prop? Does Musk think we will judge him any less harshly because of his affectionate displays toward his son? If so, it's not working. We've already heard about Musk's racist policies and his hardline treatment

against his employees. Go home, Musk, and let our country be. Think of the innocent people around the world who have suffered and died since the disastrous onset of you and your DOGE.

## 88 Indictments

RITCHIE—Are we living in Russia now? Trump, who promised to become our dictator on day one, has made his draconian declarations causing sheer devastation and making it feel like we're certainly not in America anymore. Most people are stunned and those fired from their jobs are reeling because their lives are destroyed by a guy indicted on 88 charges. How did Trump become president with this rap sheet? Ask the Republicans who claim to despise elite's, but that's exactly what Trump is, a spoiled brat born with a silver spoon in his mouth who prefers to use his gold-plated toilet. Trump has filed one bankruptcy after another in his lifetime because he's never been a smart businessman. Con man yes, smart businessman no. His three casinos failed in an industry where the house always wins which is well documented in books available at the public library. Unless of course, the books have been banned from the library already.

## Crisis in Europe

BRAIDWOOD—How is the Ukraine-Russia treaty in Munich going? Shamefully. Due to the absence of Ukraine from the negotiating table, Zelensky is righteously furious that Trump and Hegseth have been conceding negotiating points before the Munich meeting ever got underway. Europe in general is spooked enough to realize that they can't trust Trump at all to have their backs which has prompted an emergency crisis meeting in Paris to take place on Monday for European countries with the deliberate exclusion of both Trump and Putin. Remember the 1987 book about Trump, The Art of the Deal, written by author Tony Schwartz who came to know Trump very well? Due to the talent of Schwartz the book became a bestseller, but Schwartz never admired Trump and Schwartz has stated publicly that western civilization would be destroyed if Trump would become president. It looks like Schwartz' prediction might be realized.

## Relax Coal City

COAL CITY—To all the whiners, complainers and just unhappy people who write to the Sound-off give it a rest. People voted, they have spoken. Donald Trump is in and your president for the next four years, whether you like it or not. However if you are really so miserable about this fact you can always pack up your bags and leave America. You think you can get a better deal in Russia, Mexico, Ukraine, Germany or anywhere else? Go for it. However these countries won't let you in their borders or hand out goodies like America does. America is in a bit of a mess right now but it is going to get better with those who really love and care about America. Rome wasn't built in a day so just relax and quit complaining. You have too much time on your hands. Do something kind for someone in need.

### Donate to replace the monument to Civil War veteran, Ira Temple



- 1862: Enlisted in company H, 100th Illinois Infantry ("Will County regiment.")
- 1863: taken prisoner at the Battle of Chickamauga.
- 1864: Died at/buried at Andersonville Prison.

A monument to his memory was erected years ago to Wilton Township Cemetery, and it is crumbling.  
**Please donate** to replace this monument honoring our Will Co. Civil War veteran, Private Ira Temple.

Donations must be made by check only, payable to  
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Thank You



With heartfelt sincerity, we would like to thank Reeves & Baskerville and Staff and the Hospice Care in Bourbonnais for the compassion and understanding in helping us with all the arrangements. Thank you to all the family & friends who showed up for the memorial and showed love and compassion in memory of Mary Bigham.

The Family of Mary Bigham

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## Batteries: Storage and recycling

Rechargeable batteries are considered hazardous and should never be placed in the garbage or the curbside recycling.

Will County offers drop-off collection sites at Braidwood's Fossil Ridge Library and at all Household Hazardous Waste Collection Events

held at various locations.

Tape the ends of all Lithium and rechargeable batteries to store them and to place them in collection boxes.

Later this year, more collection sites are expected to open that will accept all types of batteries.

## Madigan pays the price while Blago gets full pardon

Mike Madigan knew for a very long time that the US Attorney's office and the FBI badly wanted to put his head on a spike.

It was no secret. Everybody knew it. Madigan was investigated over and over again, but nothing ever came of it.

"This was a guy they wanted to go after, and they gathered as much as they could against him and something stuck," the Madigan/McClain jury foreman told the Chicago Tribune.

After the now-pardoned Rod Blagojevich was arrested by the feds in a pre-dawn raid on unseemly corruption charges and was impeached by Madigan's House, then-Lt. Gov. Pat Quinn appointed a blue-ribbon committee to recommend ethics changes, chaired by former Assistant US Attorney Patrick Collins, who'd helped put George Ryan in prison.

Madigan had been



CAPITOL FACTS

Rich Miller

convinced that Blagojevich was a crook for several years. The House Speaker, for instance, would never agree to a major capital plan because he believed the governor and his pals would try to put their grubby paws

on every dollar.

But instead of focusing mainly on the executive branch – which had seen the indictments of two governors in a row by that time – the former prosecutor Collins' commission focused quite significant attention on the General Assembly, and on Madigan in particular.

Most folks just figured that Mike Madigan had avoided the long arm of federal law by being extra careful. And he may have been. But the arrogance of immense power apparently overrode his sense of self-preservation.

He paid a big price last week – two days after Blagojevich received a full pardon from President Donald Trump. Try to put that in a movie and they'd

tell you it just wasn't believable.

The jury believed the prosecution's (persuasive) arguments that Madigan knew of the move to put the Speaker's cronies into do-nothing ComEd-related jobs (four counts). Madigan's insanely unwise decision to associate himself with the widely known scumbag Danny Solis got him guilty verdicts on six more counts.

Madigan was convicted on 10 of 23 charges. It's possible that Madigan, 82, could spend the rest of his life in prison, while Blagojevich may end up serving as the US Ambassador to Serbia.

A few more points:

- The federal government's much-ballyhooed RICO charge against Mike Madigan and Mike McClain was rejected by jurors 11-1, the jury foreman told some Chicago news media outlets. The foreman told the Tribune that it was part of a "government overreach" against Madigan. The feds almost never lose racketeering cases, but most jurors apparently bought the defense argument that the US Attorney was prosecuting the Mike Madigan "myth" instead of Mike Madigan the man.

- I really thought the G had Madigan cold on the Chinatown thing. They had Madigan on tape numerous times talking with Solis and his consigliere Mike McClain about a land-transfer bill to help a favored developer buy a Chinatown parking lot and build a hotel and how that would result in a new law firm client.

But 10 out of 12 jurors apparently bought the argument that Madigan's longtime property tax law partner Bud Getzendanner had the final say over who would become a client, and that he would never approve a new client with state land transfer issues

before the House.

- Two federal trials have now directly addressed the AT&T charges. Both trials have resulted in hung juries on this topic.

Back in October of 2022, AT&T paid \$23 million and entered into a deferred prosecution agreement "to resolve a federal criminal investigation into alleged misconduct involving the company's efforts to unlawfully influence (Madigan)," the Justice Department declared at the time.

The feds put former AT&T Illinois president Paul La Schiazza on trial but the jury was unable to convict.

Madigan and McClain were also charged with participating in a bribery scheme in which La Schiazza hired former Rep. Eddie Acevedo (D-Chicago) for a no-show job to help the company pass a bill to exempt the company from having to provide universal landline service. The jury hung 10-2 in favor of acquittal.

The AT&T provision was included in an omnibus bill that had been painstakingly devised over a period of years, had bipartisan support and backing from organized labor, and, most importantly, was part of a 2017 effort to test whether Republicans would help break the notorious Bruce Rauner budget impasse, because the bill also included a 911 call center service fee increases. The bill passed, Rauner's veto was overridden, and a budget was approved shortly thereafter.

On this point, the feds truly did go after the myth and not the facts.

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

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## Gas prices inching higher

Average gasoline prices in Illinois have risen 3.2 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.25/g on Sunday, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,378 stations in Illinois.

Prices in Illinois are 1.2 cents per gallon higher than a month ago and stand 24.4 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has increased 0.8 cents in the last week and stands at \$3.632 per gallon.

Indeed, the rise in gas prices is reflected locally. You'll find no gas under \$3/g. In Wilmington, Mohsen is charging \$3.03/g at the low end in Wilmington, and Circle K at the high end, with gas at \$3.19/g.

In Braidwood, expect to pay \$3.19/g across the board (Marathon prices not available.)

Coal City stations are charging \$3.09/g across the board.

You won't save money in Morris, where gas ranges from \$3.19/g at Pilot to a whopping \$3.39 at BP. Bourbonnais runs the gamut from \$3.03/g at Gulf to \$3.25/g at Road Ranger.

"The national average has inched higher, driven primarily by sharp gas price increases on the West Coast, where refinery maintenance and outages have created a ripple effect in neighboring states, pushing prices higher in many communities," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy.

"Although the surge remains isolated to the West for now, refinery maintenance will soon begin in other regions, and with the transition to summer gasoline blends underway, prices in most areas are likely to start rising in the weeks ahead. Meanwhile, oil prices remain subdued in the low \$70s as President Trump works on a potential peace deal between Russia and Ukraine—an event that, if realized, could have significant implications for oil markets in the months ahead."

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Illinois was priced at \$2.77/g while the most expensive was \$4.49/g.

## Warm up with energy savings

Looking to reduce energy costs and increase indoor comfort at home?

ComEd, Nicor Gas, and the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus are partnering to help renters and homeowners save energy by offering free Home Energy Savings assessments, which identify efficiency solutions tailored to your home.

The assessments, plus free or discounted energy-saving products like advanced power strips and pipe insulation, are available.

Anyone who pays a ComEd and/or Nicor Gas bill can fill out this form at [eesavings.com/mmcc](http://eesavings.com/mmcc) to check for eligibility.

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## Gemini Giant tours Land Down Under

WHAT DID THE Gemini Giant really get up to during his time away from Wilmington? Matt and Lucas Youell from Australia send evidence he was touring the Land Down Under. "We live in Australia and thought to provide a 'gnoming' travel log of the Gemini Giant's great adventures pictured with giant statues Down Under," the brothers emailed. The Gemini Giant (toy) travelled to Australia and visited the giant landmark tourism sites from Sydney to Melbourne, pinpointing his travels on the attached map. The toy Gemini Giant was given to the brothers courtesy of Wilmington residents Mark and Grace Youell, during a visit to America in December. So the Free Press invites readers during the Spring and Summer travel seasons to send us photos of the Gemini Giant visiting other travel destinations. Submissions should be emailed a jepps to news@fpnusa.com.

## Live wolf presentation a highlight of Mammal Madness

Amow, a North American gray wolf, will be the star of the show during the Forest Preserve District of Will County's Mammal Madness event on Saturday, March 1.

The free event will feature mammal-themed, family-friendly activities from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Four Rivers Environmental Education Center in Channahon.

Amow belongs to Big Run Wolf Ranch, which will conduct two 45-minute live animal presentations at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. The North American gray wolf is 9 months old and weighs over 80 pounds. He was born in captivity at another wolf facility that was closing. Big Run Wolf Ranch in Lockport is a federally licensed non-profit educational facility specializing

in North American wildlife.

Previous Mammal Madness events have featured smaller animals, including skunks, porcupines and opossums. Last year, a Canada lynx was part of the lineup. But this year's wolf is an exciting first for Four Rivers, Gabriel said.

"Mammal Madness is a chance for visitors to come learn about all of these mammals in a fun and interactive way, while also exploring Four Rivers Environmental Education Center and the surrounding McKinley Woods preserve," he said. "Whether it is seeing a wolf, touching a fur or balancing like a squirrel, everyone will have the chance to learn about some of our most recognizable animal ambassadors."

In addition to the wolf

presentations, visitors will be able to learn more about mammals from a naturalist while touching mammal furs and bones in a show-and-tell room. A craft room will feature a local artist providing mammal-themed face painting for kids.

Outside the building, attendees can participate in Mammallympics to test their abilities against other mammals and find out if they can jump as high as a fox or smell as well as a deer, for instance.

A self-guided mammal hike will lead visitors through the woods around Four Rivers while giving them the chance to spot some of our region's mammals hiding in the trees.

The Forest Preserve District offers an annual Mammal Madness event to educate members of the public about the creatures we see around us every day, Gabriel said.

"From deer running through an open field, to a raccoon sneaking through a backyard at night, mammals are some of nature's most easily recognizable ambassadors," he said. "This event gives people the opportunity to learn about all of our regional mammals in a fun, hands-on way right in their own backyard."

For more information on the Forest Preserve District of Will County, visit ReconnectWithNature.org.



Photo by Sandra Rust

Two presentations featuring Amow, a North American gray wolf, are scheduled for the Forest Preserve District's Mammal Madness event on March 1 in Channahon.



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# OBITUARIES

## Earla Mae Bell

MORRIS— Earla Mae Bell (Douglas), 81 of Morris, passed away Saturday, Feb. 15, 2025 at the Gardens at Park Pointe with her children by her side.

Born May 17, 1943 in Gardner, Earla Mae was the eldest daughter of Alvin and Eleina (Storm) Douglas. She was raised and educated in Gardner and graduated from Gardner South Wilmington High School with the Class of 1961. Earla Mae worked for the Social Security Administration in Kankakee for over 30 years until she retired. She was also well known as a Mary Kay Consultant for 15 years. Earla Mae married Raymond Bell on Sept. 24, 2003. Following their marriage and her retirement they moved to Rock River, WY where they spent the remainder of her years until she returned to Illinois in May of 2022. Earla Mae found great joy in working in her flower gardens, as well as sewing and baking. She loved music, especially Elvis, and would sing along and dance to her favorite tunes. Being with her family is what probably brought Earla Mae the most joy, with her grandchildren being the apple of her eye. She lived a blessed life, surrounded by so many people that loved her dearly and whom she loved as well.

Survivors include her children: Douglas (Melinda) Warriner of Diamond; Kandi (Jay) Cockream of Morris; and her step-son, Bernie (Laura) Warriner, Jr. of Richmond, TX; five grandchildren: Ashley (Scott) Pfeiffer of Lexington, KY; Danielle



(Bennett) Gulling of Yorkville, IL; Douglas Warriner, Jr. (Katie Wiens) of Custer Park; Derek Cockream (Kayla Houston) of Morris, and Samantha Warriner of Houston, TX; six great grandchildren: Ian and Tanner Cockream, Elliott and Myles Gulling, Hayden Cockream, and Magnolia Mae Gulling; two sisters: Marjorie Flynn and Mary Black, both of Wilmington; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Earla Mae was preceded in death by her parents and her husband, Raymond Bell.

Per her wishes cremation rites are being accorded.

The family will receive friends for a memorial visitation at Fruland Funeral Home, 121 West Jefferson Street, in Morris on Saturday, Feb. 22, 2025 from 9:30 a.m. until the time of memorial service at 11:00 a.m.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Earla's memory to: the Gardens at Park Pointe, MEMO: Employee Appreciation Fund, 1550 Dupont Avenue, Morris, Illinois 60450.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guest book, upload photographs, and share Earla Mae's memorial page via social media by logging onto [www.frulandfuneralhome.com](http://www.frulandfuneralhome.com)

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

## Andrew Goodman

MORRIS—Andrew Goodman, 32 of Morris, passed away unexpectedly on Wednesday Feb. 12, 2025 in Bergland, Michigan after a brief illness.

Born Sept. 22, 1992 in Morris, Andrew is the son of Roger and Pam (Nelson) Goodman. He was raised and educated in Morris and graduated from Morris Community High School with the Class of 2011. Andrew furthered his education at Joliet Junior College and was employed as senior control room operator at Aux Sable in Morris, where he had been employed for the last ten years. He held memberships with the Loyal Order of Moose Lodge 300 in Joliet as well as the Morris Country Club and Nettle Creek Golf Course in Morris. Golfing was one of Andrew's favorite past times and he was often found out on the course with his friends. He enjoyed many other outdoor activities such as fishing, bicycle riding, and target shooting.

Andrew's favorite place in the world was Michigan, taking great pleasure in family trips to Lake Michigan, snowmobiling in the U.P. and going to University of Michigan football games in Ann Arbor with his dad. He also enjoyed perfecting his culinary talents, whether it was grilling out, cooking in the kitchen or baking his signature key lime pie. Andrew loved all animals great and small, always looking for ways he could help any stray animal in need. He was a bright and humble young man whose unique sense of humor res-



onated with family and so many friends, and no one could forget that beautiful smile.

Survivors include his parents, Roger and Pam Goodman of Morris and his sister Kelcie Goodman Franks (Carl) of Oswego, IL; his paternal grandmother Patsy Goodman of Morris, as well as several aunts and uncles, numerous cousins, and countless dear friends.

Andrew was preceded in death by his maternal grandparents, Sherwood and Faye Nelson; one aunt, Dana Goodman, and one cousin, Tasha Nelson.

The family will receive friends at Reeves Funeral Home, 408 East Washington Street, in Morris on Saturday, Feb. 22, 2025 from 12:00 p.m. until the time of funeral services at 3:00 p.m. Cremation rites will be accorded following the services.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Andrew's memory to K.A.R.E for Wildlife Rescue, 35W261 Fox River Drive, St. Charles, Illinois 60174 or to Just Animals Shelter, 505 Depot St., Mazon, Illinois 60444.

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

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

## Aliene Daugherty

STREATOR—Aliene Daugherty, 77 of Streator, IL, formerly of Wilmington, and Braidwood, passed away on Monday, Feb. 10, 2025 after a long battle with Alzheimer's. Born on Aug. 8, 1948, in Silverton, OR, Ailene Louise was the beloved daughter of Amos and Martha (Leatherman) Porterfield. She was raised in Oregon and later moved to California. She went on to marry the love of her life Doyle Ray Daugherty, on Dec. 19, 1970, in Las Vegas, NV. Once married, they began planting their roots in Illinois.

She was a devoted wife and mother, spending much of her time caring for her family and their businesses, Continental Amusements, and the Mar Theatre. She then went on to work at the Embassy Casino for many years before retiring. Aliene was a woman of many passions, always keeping herself busy with the family business. She enjoyed baking, gardening and spending time with her family, especially the love of her life, Doyle. Traveling with Doyle was something she always looked forward to and the two were never apart. Aliene had a natural ease about her, with a smile that came easily and a laugh that was contagious. She always managed to see the good in people, making her a genuinely pleasant person to be around. Compassionate and well-liked, Aliene was someone who everyone loved.

She is survived by her two children:



Bridget Cavallucci, and Adam (Jessica) Daugherty; five grandchildren: Jacob (Brittany) Smith, Zakary (Alex) Smith, Scott (Laina) Scamen, Aiddan Daugherty, and Kennedy Daugherty; two great-grandchildren: Bentley and Delanie Smith; four brothers: Virgil Porterfield, Ronnie Bassler, Carlos Bassler, Jr., and Michael Bassler; two sisters: Loretta Schrodetz, and Joyce Watts; brother-in-law Arty Martens; multiple cousins and numerous nieces and nephews.

Aliene was preceded in death by her parents, her husband Doyle; three brothers-in-law: Delton (Betty) Daugherty, Joe (Lynnette) Huml; two sisters-in-law: Edna Reppert and Francine Martens; parents-in-law Chip (Marie) Ferguson, Rosemary Huml.

The family will receive friends for a visitation at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 East Kahler Road, in Wilmington on Thursday, Feb. 20, 2025 from 9:30 a.m. until the time of service at 11:30 a.m. Burial will follow at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood, IL, where she will be laid to rest with her husband.

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

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

## Margaret M. Davis

KANKAKEE—Margaret M. (nee Onderisin) Davis, passed away at the age of 76, on Feb. 5, 2025, at Ascension St. Mary Hospital in Kankakee, IL.

She was born on June 22, 1948, to the late Chester E. and Genevieve M. (nee Fuhrmann) Onderisin and lived in the Joliet area until she moved to Wilmington in 2019 to be with her daughter's family.

Margaret enjoyed crafting and cooking big meals for holiday celebrations with her family.

Margaret is survived by her children, William B. (Jennifer) Davis III, Stephen Michael (Pamela) Davis, and Jenna L. Davis; four adored grandchildren, Caleb Davis, Marissa Davis, Michael E. Davis, and Andrew Boersma; one great-granddaughter, Aveya Graf; her sister, Therese A. (James R. Postel) Onderisin; and her nieces and nephew, Amy Postel, Sarah Postel, and Gregory Postel.



She is preceded in death by her former husband, William B. Davis, Jr.; her parents; her beloved grandmother, Theresa Fuhrmann; her sister, Elaine M. Onderisin; and her partner, Danny Lee Shaw.

A Memorial Gathering for Margaret M. Davis will be celebrated along with her sister, Elaine M. Onderisin (2021) at the Fred C. Dames Funeral Home, 3200 Black Rd. (at Essington Rd.), Joliet, on Friday, Feb. 28, 2025, from 11 a.m. until the time of Memorial Service at 12:30 p.m. Inurnment will follow at St. John the Baptist Cemetery in Joliet.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made in her name to Wounded Warriors Project.

For more information please call 815-741-5500 or visit their Memorial Tribute pages at [www.fredcdames.com](http://www.fredcdames.com) where you can share a favorite memory or leave an online condolence.

## Frank Metes

NORTH FORT MYERS, FL—Frank Metes 70, North Fort Myers, FL formerly of Wilmington passed away peacefully on Feb. 9, 2025, after a life well lived. Frank was born March 29, 1954 in Joliet, to William and Stephania Metes.

Frank grew up with a passion for craftsmanship, a love of the water and a deep devotion to family. A proud member of the Chicago District Council of Carpenters, he took immense pride in his work. He and his beloved wife Margaret (Foley), Thomas Edwin (Tom) relocated to North Fort Myers, where they embraced the beauty of life on the water. An avid boater Frank could often be found navigating the Kankakee and Caloosahatchee rivers, finding peace in the rhythm of waves.

Frank's kindness, craftsmanship, and love for adventure will deeply be missed by all who knew him. His memory will live on



in the stories told about the waters he traveled, and by admiring the true beauty of the iconic buildings, skyscrapers, stadiums, and the humblest of homes built and remodeled with his skilled hands.

He is survived by his loving wife of 43 years, Maggie; his sister, JoAnn Sullivan; and his loyal four-legged companion, Mischief.

Frank was preceded in death by his parents, Stephanie and William Metes; his twin sister, Sue; his brother, Bill; and his son, Tom.

A memorial service will be held Friday, Feb. 21, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. at Memorial Gardens, 1589 Colonial Blvd. Fort Myers, FL 33907.

In lieu of flowers donations can be made to ARC, Animal Rescue Center 18011 Old Bayshore Rd. North Fort Myers, FL 33917. [animalrefugecenter.com](http://animalrefugecenter.com)

## Eligible taxpayers in Illinois can file for free

The Internal Revenue Service reminds taxpayers in Illinois that they can file their taxes quickly, easily and for free directly with the agency using IRS Direct File.

The web-based service offers guided help for preparing and filing a federal tax return from a smartphone, tablet or computer.

Direct File does not replace existing filing options like tax professionals, IRS Free File, free return preparation sites, commercial software or authorized e-file providers.

IRS customer service representatives staffing the Direct File support function can provide technical support and provide basic clarification of tax law related to the scope of Direct File. Questions related to issues other than Direct File will be routed to other IRS customer support, as appropriate.

The deadline to file a 2024 tax return and pay any tax owed is April 15, 2025.

For the 2025 filing season, Direct File includes new features that make filing taxes quicker and easier.

- Import W-2 wages and other tax information directly from the IRS with step-by-step guidance
- Chat bot helps guide taxpayers through the eligibility checker
- Live chat feature is available in English and Spanish
- Opt-in option allows authenticated and verified taxpayers to access additional customer support or
- Request a callback from an IRS Direct File customer support representative.

IRS Direct File is available for taxpayers who lived and worked in Illinois for all of 2024, file simple federal tax returns and report the following types of income:

- W-2 wage income
- SSA-1099 Social Security income
- 1099-G unemployment compensation
- 1099-INT interest income

- 1099-R retirement income

Direct File is not available to taxpayers with other types of income, such as gig economy, rental or business income, or for taxpayers that itemize deductions.

IRS Direct File will automatically identify and apply Earned Income Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit and Credit for Other Dependents; Child and Dependent Care Credit, Premium Tax Credit, Credit for the Elderly or the Disabled and Retirement Savings Contributions Credit.

In addition to covering taxpayers claiming the standard deduction and deductions for student loan interest and educator expenses, Direct File supports taxpayers claiming deductions for Health Savings Account contributions.

Direct File won't prepare Illinois state tax returns. Once taxpayers

have completed their federal tax return, Direct File automatically guides them to Illinois services to complete their state taxes. Visit the state websites [23] to find information about income tax filing in each state.

IRS Free File provides a free online alternative to file federal income tax returns online using guided tax preparation software to any individual or family who earned \$84,000 or less in 2024.

People who make over \$84,000 can use the IRS' Free File Fillable Forms. People who generally make \$67,000 or less, persons with disabilities, limited English-speaking taxpayers and those who are 60 years of age and older, can also find free one-on-one tax preparation help around the nation through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) programs.

## Donations needed for monument for Civil War soldier

A fund-raising effort is underway to replace a monument at the Wilton Township Cemetery honoring Civil War veteran Ira Temple.

A monument erected decades ago has not withstood the elements and is no longer readable as it has broken in half.

Caretakers and other veterans want to replace the monument so cemetery visitors will never forget Temple who enlisted in 1862 with the Will County regiment, Company H with the 100th Illinois Infantry.

Leonard Seltzer of Manhattan is coordinating the effort to replace the monument. The goal is to raise \$10,000 pay off the Dwight company who will sculpt the new 50-inch tall monument.

Seltzer said \$2,000 in donations have been made and his open is the balance

can be donated by May so the project can be completed.

"This would be an ideal project for an Eagle Scout candidate," Seltzer commented. "It's a worthy effort to honor a fallen Patriot who served our state before being taken prisoner."

Temple fought in the battle of Chickamauga in Georgia in September 1863 when he was captured and taken prisoner. He ended up dying and being buried at Andersonville Prison in Georgia on June 10, 1864 at the age of 45 years old.

Donations must be made by check only payable to Wilton Township Cemetery, First Bank of Manhattan, 550 W. North St., Manhattan, IL 60442.

For more details contact Seltzer at 815-263-4875.

## Local churches offering meals or pickup free food at pantries

CLA Food Pantry. Christian Life Assembly, 2960 E Division St Diamond IL. 815-578-5441. Available Tuesday 9:00-2:30 am and Friday 3:30 to 6 p.m.

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

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

Top Fuel Saloon Food Pantry. Open Fridays from 3 to 4 p.m. 275 S. Hickory St., Braidwood.

Secret Pantry, for hours and location see: The Original Secret Pantry Facebook page

Coal City Food Pantry

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

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

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

### Local Meals:

St. Vincent Table hot meals are offered at various locations throughout the year. Here are the months and locations for 2025. Hours for pick-up for shut ins 4-4:30 p.m. Eat in start 4:30 until 5:30 p.m.

February 2025: CC First Baptist Church, 4470 E Rt 113 Mazon.

March-April 2025: Assumption of the BVM, 180 S Kankakee St., Coal City.

May-July 2025: New Hope Presbyterian Church, 80 N. Garfield St Coal City.

Aug.-Oct. 2025: Immaculate Conception Church, 110 S School St Braidwood.

Nov. 2025: Assumption of the BVM, 180 S Kankakee St Coal City.

December 2025: CC First Baptist Church, 4470 E Rt 113 Mazon.



# Join in the fight against climate change

Dear EarthTalk: What can we expect regarding changes President Trump is promising regarding: climate, environment and energy policy?  
-- Name withheld



Despite only being in office for a second term for a few weeks, Donald Trump has already begun rolling back climate initiatives and

environmental regulations. Trump, who has previously called global warming a "hoax," made bold decisions in his first term; notably, he slashed the budget of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and also replaced Obama's Clean Power Plan which mandated states to reduce carbon emissions.

With his return, Trump has pledged more efforts as follow-ups to his previous acts. One of his promises is removing strict environmental regulations on the fossil fuel economy. On Jan. 20, Trump announced a "national energy emergency", the first in Presidential history, only

preceded by regional energy crises in the early 1970s. This assertion gives Trump the authority to limit environmental regulations on oil firms and boost the use of natural resources like coal. Yet, the U.S. isn't facing a fuel shortage like in the 70s: Bank of America analysts predict that oil prices will fall in 2025 as the American crude supply surpasses its demand. In his second inaugural address Trump stated, "we have the largest amount of oil and gas of any country on Earth, and we are going to use it," adding that America stands on "liquid gold." While more drilling could lower energy prices, this optimistic outcome

isn't guaranteed and could also spark a price resurgence from the oil industry's boom-bust cycle. His policies, however, do assure an increase in national emissions and pollutants that would exacerbate global warming. Trump is also targeting the electric vehicle (EV) industry. Over the last four years, Biden's administration promoted emission-reducing cars and put regulations on total emissions for gas vehicles. By removing these standards, Trump hopes to save "our auto industry" and keep his "sacred pledge to our great American autoworkers"-though he misinterprets Biden's regu-

lations and treats them as mandates to ban gas vehicles entirely. Trump will soon work to remove more integrated EV policies such as tax credits. Trump has also withdrawn from the Paris Agreement-an international treaty with over 190 countries aimed to combat climate change via emissions reductions-just like he did in his first term. He hopes to save America "trillions of dollars" by pulling out of these climate accords first ratified 10 years ago. With 2024 already exceeding the agreement's intended limit of 1.5 degrees Celsius as the hottest year ever recorded,

global warming will likely continue to rise during his presidency. That said, many leaders are optimistic about halting climate change. Said Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson, "Chicago and our peer cities are, and will remain, at the forefront of climate action." To fight environmental deregulation, contact your local representatives, join advocacy groups, or donate relevant organizations. EarthTalk® is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit EarthTalk. Send questions to: question@earthtalk.org.

## Grundy Bank offers advice on how not to get scammed

Looking to protect yourself from fraud, identity theft and scams? Wondering about the best way to improve your credit, shop for a used car, or keep your kids safe online? Grundy Bank has information for you during

National Consumer Protection Week (NCPW) – March 2 - 8 – and any time of the year. NCPW is a time when government agencies, consumer protection groups, and organizations like Grundy Bank work together to share informa-

tion about consumer rights and help people learn to spot, report, and avoid scams. "Safeguarding our consumers against fraud, theft, and scams is not just a responsibility, but a commitment to building trust

and ensuring peace of mind." Said Kevin Olson, President & CEO of Grundy Bank. Grundy Bank, in Morris and Wilmington, will be offering information regarding how to protect yourself from scams, identity theft, fraud, and other important topics at branches located at 201 Liberty St., Morris and 120 S. Main St., Wilmington during National Consumer Protection Week.

"We will be empowering consumers with free reading resources on scams, identity theft, staying safe online, and fraud to help raise awareness and help gain knowledge about safeguarding their financial well-being," said Christine Mendez, Marketing & Sales Director of Grundy Bank. For more information visit [www.consumer.ftc.gov](http://www.consumer.ftc.gov).

## NIU Fall 2024 graduates

More than 1,150 students received their bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees from Northern Illinois University in December. Included among the graduates were: Peyton Byerley, Bachelor of Science, History, of Custer Park, Erica Baker, Bachelor of Science, Nursing, of Elwood and Kayliegh Anderson, Master of Science, Nutrition and Dietetics, of Gardner.



## Hayley Henke awarded Chamber trophy

CITY OF WILMINGTON employee Hayley Henke (right) is presented the Chamber of Commerce trophy for Employee of the Month by Chamber ambassador Wendy Hill. The nomination from a Wilmington resident stated, "Hayley is very nice and understanding and very easy to talk to if there are any issues with the water bill. She makes it a pleasant experience instead of a dreadful one to talk about any and all billing issues."

## Midwin welcome center re-opens with improvements

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service announced that the Midwin National Tallgrass Prairie (NTP) supervisor's office, including the welcome center, reopened Tuesday after being closed 10 weeks, for extensive maintenance to the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system. Throughout the closure, staff and partners continued the work of restoring and administering the Forest Service's only Tallgrass Prairie by sharing working spaces in the other buildings at Midwin NTP and using alternate work locations. "We are excited the maintenance is complete

and we can re-open the supervisor's office and welcome center," said Christina Henderson, Midwin NTP's prairie supervisor. "We sincerely appreciate everyone's patience during this extremely important maintenance period. We will now be able to offer a better experience to all those visitors during the cold of winter and the hot days of summer." Midwin's Welcome Center is located at 30239 S. State Route 53, Wilmington. For more information contact the Midwin National Tallgrass Prairie at (815) 763-1936 or email [joseph.wax@usda.gov](mailto:joseph.wax@usda.gov).

## Elmhurst University dean's list

Karissa Esposito, of Wilmington and Lawanda Gagliardo of Coal City, was among more than 1,000 students named to Elmhurst University's Fall 2024 Dean's List. The Dean's List is composed of students who during the term concerned, attained a grade-point average of 3.75 or higher out of a possible 4.00.



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## Wilmington Library to host seed swap

The Wilmington Public Library District, in collaboration with Proclamation Flowers, is excited to host its annual Seed Swap on Wednesday, March 5, from 5-7 p.m.. This family-friendly, drop-in event is perfect for gardeners of all ages and experience levels. Bring your favorite seeds to exchange with other local enthusiasts or simply come to collect new seeds to kick-start your spring garden-no contribution is necessary to participate. In addition to the seed swap, attendees can enjoy garden-themed crafts designed for both adults and children. Craft projects

can be completed during the event or taken home (limit one per person). For those unable to attend, the Seed Library will be open starting Monday, Feb. 17, offering free seeds for patrons to take home. There is no limit, but patrons are encouraged to take only what they need and have room to grow. The library is grateful to Sow Right Seeds, Hudson Valley Seed Company, and Peaceful Valley Farm for generously donating seeds to support this initiative. For more information, please contact the Wilmington Public Library District at 815-476-2834.

All students welcome to:  
**Saturday March 1st, 9am-1pm**  
Godley Park District  
500 S. Kankakee St  
Godley, IL 60407  
All Dresses \$5 at Event  
proceeds will fund Melissa's Closet & Crystal's Jewelry Box Scholarship

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

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

**REAL ESTATE**

SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE of **916 Laurel Dr Unit B, Elwood, IL 60421** (Single Family Home). On the **13th day of March, 2025** to be held at 12:00 noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 1001, Joliet, IL 60432, under Case Title: **Freedom Mortgage Corporation Plaintiff V. Toni M. Henderson; et. al.** Defendant. Case No. **23 FC 0304** in the Circuit Court of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, Will County, Illinois. Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County. In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the purchaser of the unit, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and legal fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 and the as-

sessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Illinois Condominium Property Act. Pursuant to Local Court Rule 11.03 (J) if there is a surplus following application of the proceeds of sale, then the plaintiff shall send written notice pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/15-1512(d) to all parties to the proceeding advising them of the amount of the surplus and that the surplus will be held until a party obtains a court order for its distribution or, in the absence of an order, until the surplus is forfeited to the State. For Information Please Contact: **Codilis & Associates, P.C.** **15W030 N. Frontage Road Suite 100 Burr Ridge, Illinois 60527** **P: 630-794-5300 F: 630-794-9090** PURSUANT TO THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT YOU ARE ADVISED THAT THIS LAW FIRM IS DEEMED TO BE A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. Published in the Free Press Newspapers on Wed., February 19, 26 & March 5, 2025.

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**REAL ESTATE**

SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE of **1222 Park Dr, Wilmington, IL 60481** (N/A). On the **27th day of February, 2025** to be held at 12:00 noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 1001, Joliet, IL 60432, under Case Title: **Lakeview Loan Servicing LLC Plaintiff V. Jacqueline Hambrick; O'Dekirk, Allred and Associates, LLC; Unknown Owners and Non-Record Claimants** Defendant. Case No. **22 FC 0293** in the Circuit Court of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, Will County, Illinois. Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County. In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the purchaser of the unit, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and legal

fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 and the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Illinois Condominium Property Act. Pursuant to Local Court Rule 11.03 (J) if there is a surplus following application of the proceeds of sale, then the plaintiff shall send written notice pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/15-1512(d) to all parties to the proceeding advising them of the amount of the surplus and that the surplus will be held until a party obtains a court order for its distribution or, in the absence of an order, until the surplus is forfeited to the State. For Information Please Contact: **ROBERTSON, ANSCHUTZ, SCHNEID, CRANE & PARTNERS, PLLC** **10700 ABBOTT'S BRIDGE RD SUITE 170 DULUTH, GA 30097 P: 708-668-4410 X 52109 F:** PURSUANT TO THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT YOU ARE ADVISED THAT THIS LAW FIRM IS DEEMED TO BE A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. Published in the Free Press Newspapers on Wed., February 5, 12 & 19, 2025.

**REAL ESTATE**

SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE of **725 Elmo Court, Godley, IL 60407** (Single family residence, 1 Story, 3 bedrooms and 2 baths). On the **6th day of March, 2025** to be held at 12:00 noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 1001, Joliet, IL 60432, under Case Title: **Grundy Bank Plaintiff V. Daniel Dietrich, Tanya L. Dietrich, Illinois Housing Development Authority, and Non-Record Claimants** Defendant. Case No. **22 FC 1371** in the Circuit Court of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, Will County, Illinois. Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County. In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the purchaser of the

unit, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and legal fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 and the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Illinois Condominium Property Act. Pursuant to Local Court Rule 11.03 (J) if there is a surplus following application of the proceeds of sale, then the plaintiff shall send written notice pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/15-1512(d) to all parties to the proceeding advising them of the amount of the surplus and that the surplus will be held until a party obtains a court order for its distribution or, in the absence of an order, until the surplus is forfeited to the State. For Information Please Contact: **GEIGER VAZQUEZ 415 LIBERTY STREET MORRIS, IL 60450 P: 815-942-5072 F: 815-942-5073** PURSUANT TO THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT YOU ARE ADVISED THAT THIS LAW FIRM IS DEEMED TO BE A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. Published in the Free Press Newspaper on Wed., February 12, 19 & 26, 2025.

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## HELP FOR VETERANS



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

**In an emergency text the Veterans CRISIS LINE 988 THEN PRESS 1**

## Crossword Puzzle and Soduko

CLUES ACROSS

1. Tropical Asian plant
5. Yankees' slugger Judge
10. Helps to preserve food
12. Plant disease
14. One who predicts

16. Equally

18. Burundian franc
19. Pouch
20. Arizona city
22. Surround
23. Hard, heavy timber

25. Witnessed

26. They \_\_\_
27. French river
28. A way to drink
30. Small constellation
31. Peruse a written work

33. Type of hound

35. Plant of the goosefoot family
37. Evade or escape
38. A way to confine
40. Volcanic crater
41. Weekday
42. Women's service organization (abbr.)
44. Local area network
45. Sensory receptor
48. Posted
50. Tibetan pastry
52. Licensed for Wall Street
53. Very willing
55. Golf score
56. Consume
57. Touchdown
58. Tends to remind
63. In a way, smoothed
65. Poke holes in the ground
66. Herbaceous plants
67. Taiwanese river

CLUES DOWN

1. Body art
2. Boxing's GOAT
3. Film for posterity (abbr.)
4. Prayer
5. Calculating machine
6. Keyboard key
7. Outburst
8. Man-eating giants
9. New Hampshire
10. Type of sword
11. Counting
13. Pants style
15. Political action committee
17. U.S. government legislative branch
18. Civil Rights Act component
21. Contractors take one
23. Spanish soldier
24. A person's brother or sister
27. Expressed pleasure
29. Song of praise
32. Shock treatment
34. Patti Hearst's captors
35. Counteract
36. Goes over again
39. Popular Dodge truck
40. Male adult
43. A part of a river where the current is very fast
44. Rope used to lasso
46. Become less intense
47. Subway rodent
49. Lead alloy
51. Japanese honorific title
54. Advise someone
59. Famous NYC museum
60. Ocean
61. Cathode-ray tube
62. Cologne
64. It starts with these two

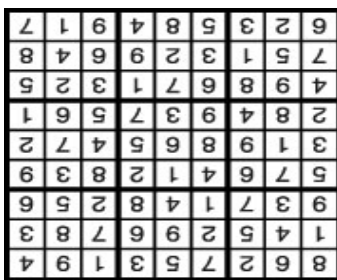
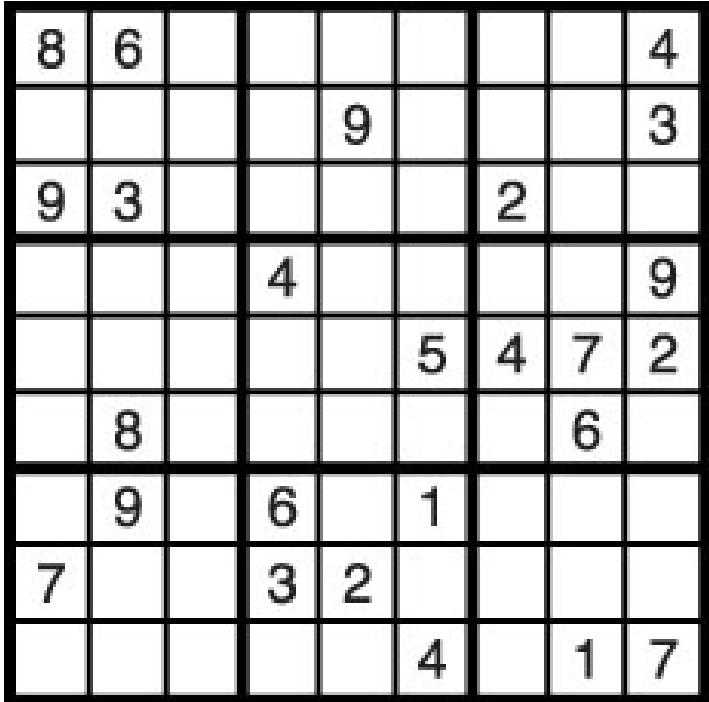
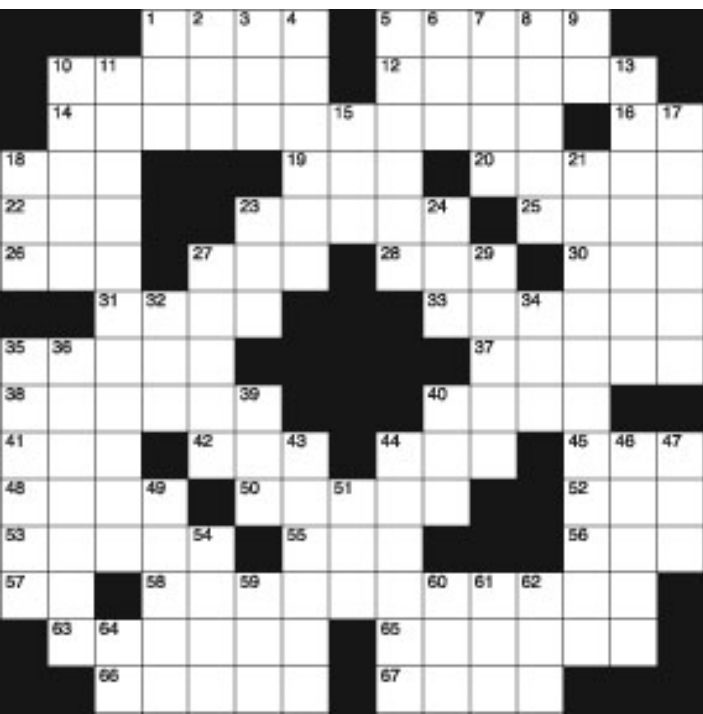






Photo by Eric Fisher

**REVENGE IS SWEET**—Coal City's Cade Poyner avenged two earlier losses against Wilmington's Logan Van Duyne by winning sectional third place at 190 with a 4-2 decision.



Photo by Eric Fisher

**SCORING POINTS** at 120 during the sectional championship is Coal City's Culan Lindemuth who ended up settling for second place.

# Coalers rule sectional with 13 qualifiers

BY ERIC FISHER  
PUBLISHER

The Coal City wrestling team showcased their talent Saturday during the IHSA Class 1A Sectional, advancing 13 qualifiers and one alternate to the Individual State Finals at the State Farm Center in Champaign, IL, starting Thursday.

The Coalers finished with seven Sectional champions, two seconds, three thirds and one fourth place has they dominated the best of 40 teams in the Coal City tournament.

### Sectional Champions

Owen Petersen (113 lbs.) led the way, earning a sectional title with a dominant performance, including a 15-2 major decision in the finals. Petersen enters the state finals with an impressive 40-2 record. A year ago Petersen went to state and placed sixth.

Cooper Morris (126) secured his championship with three pins, including a fall in 3:11 in the finals. Morris improved to

37-5 this season as he qualifies for state the second year in a row. He was 5th last year a 113 pounds.

Three-time state qualifier Brody Widlowski (138) remained undefeated at 24-0, winning his bracket with two pins and a hard-fought 4-1 decision in the finals. Last year Widlowski was second at 126.

Aidan Kenney (144) earned his sectional crown with two pins and a technical fall, sealing the title with a fall at 4:59 in the championship match.

Mason Garner (157) dominated his way to the top of the podium, finishing with a pin in just 1:33 in the finals. Garner now holds a 32-6 record.

Senior Landin Benson (175) added another title for Coal City with three falls, including a 2:51 pin in the finals. Benson boasts an impressive 38-2 record, looking to repeat as a state champion after winning it at 165 in 2024.

John Keigher (215 lbs) closed out the championship wins with a fall over Reed-Custer's Dominic Alaimo in the finals. Keigher stands at 32-1 heading into the

state competition.

### Top-Four Placements

Jason Piatak (106) placed fourth, advancing to state after earning key victories, including a 9-0 major decision in the consolation semifinals.

Culan Lindemuth (120) took second after battling through his bracket, finishing with two pins before falling in the finals. Lindemuth holds a 33-11 record.

Luke Munsterman (132) finished third, rebounding from a semifinal loss to win his consolation semifinal and third-place match. Munsterman improved to 37-12.

Noah Houston (150) placed third after a strong showing in the consolation bracket, capped by a 4-2 decision in the third-place match. Houston carries a 29-13 record.

Brock Finch (165) claimed second place with two dominant wins before falling in the finals. Finch's record now stands at 29-8.

Cade Poyner (190) earned third place with two pins and a narrow 4-2 decision over Wilmington's Logan Van Duyne in the

third-place match, improving to 33-7. Poyner had lost to the Wildcat during the ICE conference tourney and at regionals so the win was a bit of revenge as the two opponents smiled and hugged when they were through.

Alec Waliczek (285) put up a strong fight but fell short after competing deep into the consolation bracket. Waliczek finished the sectional with a 23-7 record and will go to Champaign hoping to get in as an alternate.

Coal City's stellar sectional performance underscores their reputation as a wrestling powerhouse. Having 13 qualifiers is impressive but not a record for the Coalers as Coach Mark Masters sent 14 qualifiers in 2023. A year ago Coal City had 11 qualifiers with four medalists.

The team is poised for a strong showing in Champaign and will come back to prepare for the Dual team Sectional at home on Tuesday, Feb. 25 at 6 p.m. against Chicago King. A victory over King would advance them to the finals at Grossinger Motors Arena in Bloomington Feb. 28 - March 1.



Photo by Eric Fisher

**COALER MASON GARNER (right)** won the 157 pound sectional championship on Saturday with a 1:33 fall. He looks to carry that momentum into the state finals which start Thursday.

# Coalers fall to Comets with regionals next

It makes no difference who wins or loses now until Feb. 24. That's when regional play begins for the Coal City boys basketball team.

The ICE conference title went to Streator (no surprise there) and the regional pairings are deter-

mined so the Coalers could have played their reserves on Friday when they went to Reed-Custer.

The result was a 47-45 loss for the Coalers who struggled in the first quarter with just five points while the Comets put in 10. By the half, Reed-Custer

extended their lead to 18-13. But the Coalers never gave up in the third and closed to within 34-33 before the Comets made enough free throws in the end to win.

Pacing the Coalers with 14 points was senior Gabe McHugh. Scoring 11 points in the second half to finish with 13 total was Gavin Berger. Dylan Young chipped in with nine points while Carter Gill tallied six points and Zander Meents three.

Coal City played at Manteno Tuesday and will complete the regular season Friday when Gardner-South Wilmington comes to town.

Then it's on to Regionals.

The Coalers are the #3 seed in their own regional. Other teams include #2 Manteno, #5 Southland College Prep, #6 Beecher, #7 Peotone and Reed-Custer, the #10 seed.

The tournament opens Monday with Peotone at Beecher and the Comets at Southland College Prep.

On Wednesday the 6 p.m. game at Coal City will feature Manteno facing either Peotone or Beecher, followed by the 7:30 p.m. contest of the Coalers taking on RCHS or Southland College Prep.

The Coalers need to win to make it to Friday's championship contest at 7 p.m. The regional winner advances to the Peotone Sectional on March 4.



Photo by Amy Walker

**COAL CITY'S Mason Hamilton** dribbles at the top looking for an open teammate during Friday's game against Reed-Custer. The Coalers will host Gardner-South Wilmington on Friday.



Photo by Eric Fisher

**SECTIONAL CHAMPION**—Coal City's Owen Petersen won first place at 113 pounds in convincing fashion on Saturday, beating his opponent by major decision, 15-2.

# Lady Coalers move on after loss to Dwight

The Coal City girls basketball team was out of sync last week when they closed out the regular season with a 50-19 loss to Dwight.

The Lady Coalers were down 21-10 at the half before the visiting Trojans went on a 19-3 run in the third to put the game out of reach.

Coal City didn't help themselves with 20 turnovers while Dwight stepped to the line for 17-for-20 completions for 85% success.

High-point shooter for Coal City was Becca Hall with six while Chloe Pluger followed with five points. Chipping in with three points each were Emma Rodriguez and Sydney Larson. Riley Walker had two points.

The Lady Coalers enter their own regional with a 21-9 record. They were to play Reed-Custer last night (Tuesday) and if they won they will battle Joliet Catholic or Wilmington for the regional championship at 7 p.m. Thursday.



Photo by Eric Fisher

**GETTING OFF A shot** for the Lady Coalers from 8-feet out is Coal City senior D'Arcy Ness.