



Winners named in Baby Valentine's

Lady Coalers' tripped up

COALER SPORTS



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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2024

A FREE PRESS NEWSPAPER • (815) 634-0315

\$2.5 million forgivable loan to get the lead out

BY ERIC FISHER
PUBLISHER

The Village of Coal City will borrow \$2.75 million from the Illinois Environmental Agency to replace lead service lines for water users.

The good news is that the village won't have to pay the loan back.

"The expectation is that they'll forgive the \$2,755,000 in principal before we even start," city administrator Matt Fritz

told village trustees during their Feb. 14 meeting. "Lead remediation of underground infrastructure is a federal mandate so this is at the top of their priority list."

Last October, the Coal City board expressed its support for the lead remediation project. The IEPA will provide \$2.75 million of principal forgiveness to complete approximately half of the expected lead remediation of underground lines.

The project will begin with the replacement of lead pipes

for homes west of North Broadway, east of Mary and North of Division streets. Contractors will make their way east toward the BNFS tracks, staying north of Division Street. Eventually the work will swing south in a clockwise order.

Ordinance 24-02 was approved with a full yes vote. It will allow another ordinance to be adopted following 30 days' notice to the public to complete the process of entering into an agreement with IEPA

for necessary capital.

The IEPA provides funding through a loan agreement with the village for the total work to be completed. When the work is completed, the city will receive a letter forgiving the total debt.

"For this purpose, a planned utility rate is predicated that will never take place because the IEPA is focused on getting lead remediation completed with this model," Fritz noted.

The village will seek bids

from contractors who will check every supply line leading from the main into the home. Fritz said the contractor will bore new lines from a pit by the water shutoffs to a pit close to each house, then through exterior walls.

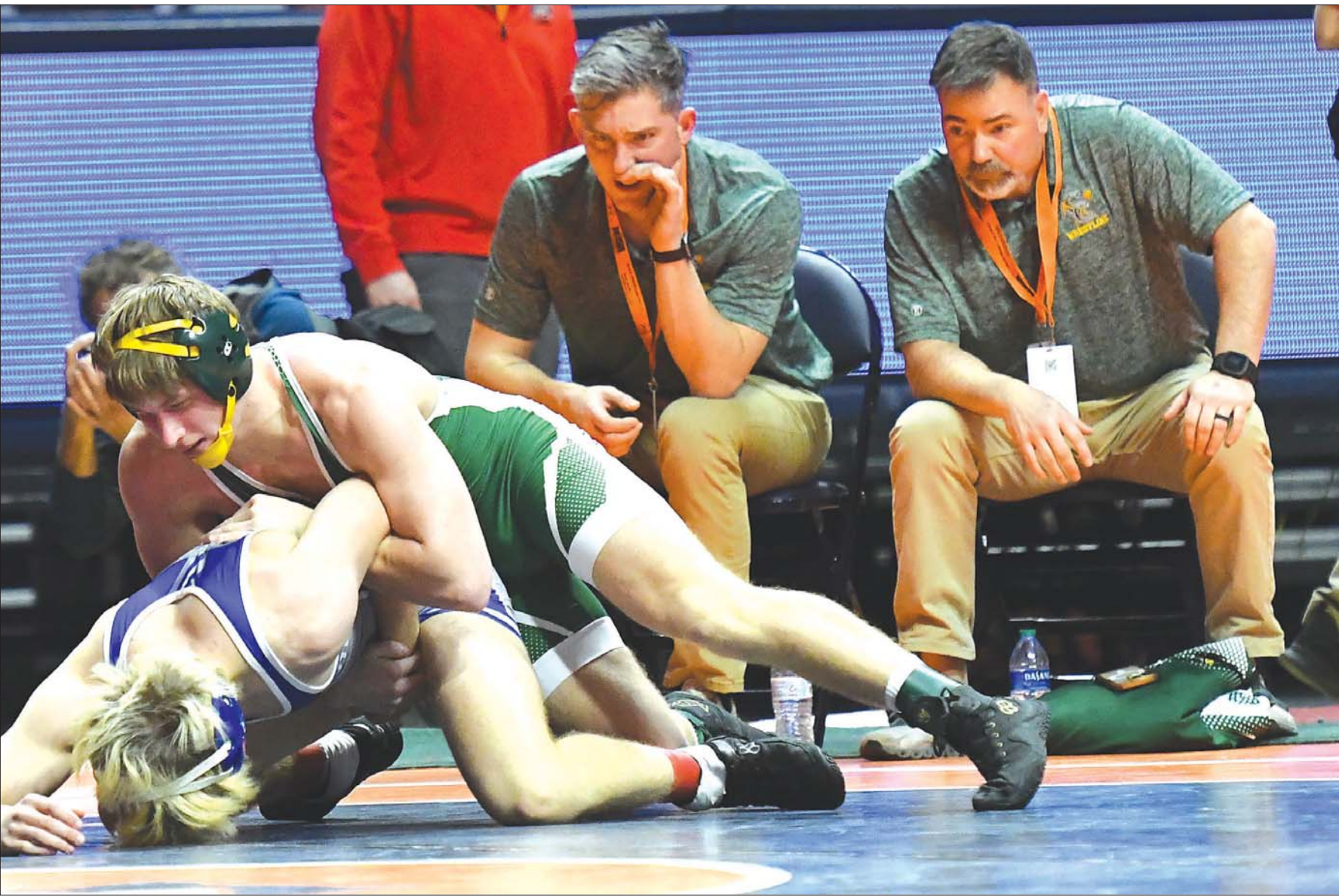
Fritz said it is unknown exactly how many homes presently have lead lines. No construction is expected until the latter half of 2024.

As required by law, the ordinance is being published in detail in this week's Coal City

Courant, giving notice that if at least 371 registered voters petition the village within 30 days, the loan agreement and project would be placed on the Nov. 5, 2024 ballot to let electors decide.

A petition form shall be provided by the village clerk to any individual requesting one.

If no petition is filed then the village may adopt additional ordinances and loan agreement to proceed automatically.



STATE CHAMPION!

Coal City junior Landin Benson took 1st place at 165 pounds Saturday during the IHSA State Wrestling tournament in Champaign, IL becoming the 17th state champion for Coal City. He was one of five medalist for Coal City. He is pictured during the preliminary round as he gets a little direction from coach Jim Looper (back left) as head coach Mark Masters watches. Hopefully the wrestling Coalers aren't done, winning last night's sectional meet to advance to the Class 1A Dual Team tournament on Friday in Bloomington. For more turn to sports

Photo by Kelly VanDuyne

Village approves TIF funds for Riverside sewer line

BY ERIC FISHER
PUBLISHER

The Village of Coal City will commit \$201,219 from its TIF Fund to help extend sewer services to Riverside Healthcare's Coal City clinic on Route 113.

Riverside Healthcare is planning to double the size of its Coal City campus by adding a second story to its existing clinic, a 10,000 square-foot addition, while expanding its parking lot and adding a second entrance off Carbon Hill Road.

The construction will bring more jobs as Riverside adds more health services like oncology and infusion, physical therapy and cardiac diagnostics and rehabilitation.

But with the expansion

comes the need for city services, mainly a hook up to the sanitary sewer system. At present the facility uses a septic system it intends to abandon.

Riverside approached the Village Board back in October seeking a redevelopment agreement to connect to the village's sanitary system. As they prepare to begin the project Riverside has more solid numbers as to how much the installation of the sewer line will cost. They brought their project before the board during the Feb. 14 meeting.

The cost will exceed \$800,000, but Coal City's portion is the first 650 linear feet of the proposed connection which would run along the north side of Oak Street, westward to the west side of Carbon Hill Road. The village

must extend its sewer line toward an end point directly across from the high school baseball field dugout, along third baseline.

This portion will cost \$201,219 for required easements and infrastructure and TIF funds will be used to pay for it.

Riverside will front the \$800,000 for the project, with the village reimbursing its portion of the work in four equal payments.

City administrator Matt Fritz told trustees that any change orders to the project on the village's portion of line would be negotiated and possibly amend the total to be reimbursed by Coal City.

Once the work is complete the village will take ownership of the entire sewer line and the existing water main

that has already been installed.

Riverside guarantees it will share established curb cuts with future users of property immediately adjacent to Riverside on its north, along Carbon Hill Road and east along Route 113.

Fritz said there is an option to extend the sewer and water lines further north from the parking lot to Route 113 if adjacent owners want to tap on to the city services. The village board can be enacted that option until April, after landowners have had time to consider it.

Board members approved the agreement with Riverside unanimously.

Riverside hopes to break ground within the month and have the expanded facility completed within one year.

In other action the board approved the purchase of 18 body cameras for police officers and new dash cameras and equipment for squad cars in order to comply with a state mandate that will start Jan. 1, 2025.

While the 73,213.70 purchase was not included in the current fiscal year budget, Fritz noted the purchase was being timed so that the department could apply for a \$50,800 reimbursement grant in the upcoming Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board.

The board authorized Mayor David Spesia to seek reclassification for Reed Road between South Broadway and Gorman, jointly with Maine Township. The village has engaged in a phase one design on the three-mile sec-

tion of Reed Road between Broadway and Gorman for future federal funding consideration through the Will County Governmental League transportation plan.

However, recently the portion of roadway was identified in the Grundy County Master Transportation Plan as a Tier 2 or high priority project. The village will send a letter to the WCGL noting it as a priority in being able to accommodate future truck traffic.

The board noted that its second meeting in March will be changed to Monday, March 25 instead of March 27 due to the upcoming election.



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CCMS students submit most essays

PATRIOT'S PEN, a national program of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, is an annual program that invites middle school students in grades six to eight to submit an essay based on a theme selected by the military organization's national commander. This year's question was "How are you inspired by America?" Coal City Middle School had 321 students or 64 percent of its student body submit an essay to St. Juvin Post 1336, the local VFW chapter. The

Post is allowed to submit one essay per each 15 received for judging at the district level. This year Post 1336 submitted 21 essays for judging in Illinois VFW's 18th District, the largest number of submissions out of 11 VFW organizations in the district. Commander Jim Phillips (standing right) recently commended the essay writers during the District Unit 1 School Board meeting.



Photo by Diana Vestal

LOOKING TO SHOOT for the Coalers is senior Jim Feeney.

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.

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. 22- Terrific Tots - 10am

Versiti Blood Drive of Illinois - 3-7pm - Versiti Blood Center of Illinois will be here in the Library's meeting room for the blood drive. Please register through Versiti's appointment link

donate.illinois.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/5599386 or call 800-7TO-GIVE. Every donor will save up to 3 lives!

Terrific Tots - 6pm

Friday, Feb. 23 -Storytime at The Cove - 9am - Families are invited to join us at The Cove located at 30 N. Broadway Street. We will have stories, songs and a craft. No registration required.

Toddler Play Days - 10am

Fun Fridays - 3pm

Teen Gamers Guild - 4pm

Monday, Feb. 26- Terrific Tots - 10am

Preschool Storytime - 11am

Eager Readers Homeschool Edition - 1pm

Flute Lessons for Vets - 1pm

Eager Readers - 4pm

Family Lapsit - 6pm

Preschool Storytime - 6pm

Tuesday, Feb. 27- Happy Scrappers - 9am-4pm

Every Bunny Welcome Door Sign - 6pm - Create your own Every Bunny Welcome door sign. Cost is \$5 per adult CCPLD cardholder.

Wednesday, Feb. 28-Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP) - 9am-12pm

Family Lapsit - 10am

Preschool Storytime - 10am

Fit 4 Life - 3:30pm

Teen Game Night - 5pm

Coalers win to advance to tonight's contest vs. 'Cats

Can the Coalers beat the Wildcats for the second time this season?

Coalers fans will find out tonight (Wednesday) at 7:30 p.m. in Manteno during the semifinal round of the regional.

The Coalers (#8 seed) are coming off a 62-53 win over Southland College Prep on Monday as they improve to 13-17 overall.

The first two times these ICE rivals played, Wilmington (#4) won 45-24 and 47-32.

Most recently Coal City defeated Wilmington at home 47-40.

Whichever team wins will advance to Friday's regional championship in Manteno (#2) at 7 p.m. They will face either Reed-Custer (#10) or Manteno.

The Comets (10-20 overall) won Monday's first round contest over Peotone 55-43. The two teams had split wins

earlier in the season but this time Reed-Custer kept up the pressure to win. They will have a tough go against the hosting Panthers as they lost to them twice on previous occasions, 71-29, 61-41.

The Manteno regional champion will advance to the Clifton Sectional on Tuesday at 7 p.m. against the winner of the Bishop McNamara Regional.

PUBLIC NOTICE

EARLY VOTING SITES

GENERAL PRIMARY ELECTION - MARCH 19, 2024

Early Voting will begin on Thursday, February 8, 2024 and continue through Monday, March 18, 2024.

LOCATION - Grundy County Courthouse (Lobby)
111 East Washington Street, Room 12
Morris, IL 60450

Please note: Cell phones are not allowed in the Grundy County Courthouse.

TIME - Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (unless noted below)

Tuesday	February 13th	8:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Thursday	February 15th	8:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	February 17th	8:00 a.m. to Noon
Monday	February 19th	CLOSED PRESIDENT'S DAY
Tuesday	February 20th	8:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Thursday	February 22nd	8:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	February 24th	8:00 a.m. to Noon
Tuesday	February 27th	8:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Thursday	February 29th	8:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	March 2nd	8:00 a.m. to Noon
Tuesday	March 5th	8:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Thursday	March 7th	8:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	March 9th	8:00 a.m. to Noon
Sunday	March 10th	8:00 a.m. to Noon
Tuesday	March 12th	8:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Thursday	March 14th	8:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	March 16th	8:00 a.m. to Noon

LOCATION - Village of Minooka (Community Room A)
121 E. McEvilly Rd.
Minooka, IL 60447

Available only during dates/times listed below:

Tuesday	March 5th	3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Thursday	March 7th	3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	March 9th	8:00 a.m. to Noon
Sunday	March 10th	8:00 a.m. to Noon
Tuesday	March 12th	3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Thursday	March 14th	3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	March 16th	8:00 a.m. to Noon

LOCATION - Coal City Library (Annex Building)
85 N. Garfield St.
Coal City, IL 60416

Available only during dates/times listed below:

Tuesday	March 5th	3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Thursday	March 7th	3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	March 9th	8:00 a.m. to Noon
Sunday	March 10th	8:00 a.m. to Noon
Tuesday	March 12th	3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Thursday	March 14th	3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	March 16th	8:00 a.m. to Noon

Please call the Grundy County Clerk's Office at (815) 941-3222, if you have any questions.

KAY T. OLSON
GRUNDY COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER

Ooooooeeeeee Trucking files as new business

LEGAL NOTICE

Assumed Name Publication Notice

Public Notice is hereby given that on February 13, A.D. 2024, a certificate was filed in the Office of the County Clerk of Grundy County, Illinois, setting forth names and post-office addresses of all of the persons owning, conducting and transacting the business known as Ooooooeeeeee Trucking, located at 4660 S. Gorman Rd., Gardner, IL 60424.

Dated this 13th day of February, A.D. 2024.

Kay T Olson, Grundy County Clerk
Published in the Coal City Courant on Feb. 21, 28 and March 6, 2024.

Felix Township Road Dist. Financial report

LEGAL 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, 2021, and ending March 31, 2022, and fiscal year beginning April 1, 2022, and ending March 31, 2023, 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 to schedule.

Published in the Coal City Courant on Feb. 21, 2024 .

Attorney Wilson files Rosenthal estate claim

PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT GRUNDY COUNTY-IN PROBATE

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF Robin L. Rosenthal, Deceased;
No. 2024 PR 4

CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given to creditors of the death of Robin L. Rosenthal of Morris, IL. On February 2, 2024, Letters of Office as Independent Executor were issued to Brenda Sanders, of 730 East Jefferson Street, Morris, IL 60450 whose attorneys are Claire M. Wilson and Jonathan W. Grossi, P.O. Box 344, Channahon, IL 60410. Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Circuit Clerk of Grundy County at the Grundy County Courthouse, 111 E Washington St., Morris, IL 60450, within six months from the date of the first publication of this 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 to the representative and her attorneys 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 <http://efile.illinoiscourts.gov/serviceproviders.htm> to learn more and to select a service provider. If you need additional help or have trouble e-filing, visit <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/FAQ/gethelp.asp>, or talk with your local circuit clerk's office.

Claire M. Wilson
Jonathan W. Grossi
e-Mail: cwilsonlaw@gmail.com,
jwgwilsonlaw@gmail.com
PH: (815) 467-1184
Fax: (815) 467-1498

Published in the Coal City Courant on Wednesday, Feb. 21, 28 and March 6, 2024.

Coal Bin to dispose of property

PUBLIC NOTICE

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given, that pursuant to Section 40 of the Self-Storage Facility Act, State of Illinois a sale or other disposition of property by COAL BIN STORAGE INC will be held online at www.BID13.com, auction ending on February 28, 2024 1:00 PM, to sell or dispose of the personal property of the following person, Susan Butler, 315 E North St, Morris, IL, Unit H7/Location#1, to enforce a lien for storage pursuant to the self-storage facility act, in the amount of \$660.00, plus attorney fees & costs.

Published in the Coal City Courant on Feb. 14 and 21, 2024.

Hometown Storage to dispose of property

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice of Lien

Hometown Storage, 2920 E. Division St., Diamond, IL 60416, 815-634-3333 hereby is asserting a Possessory Lien in pursuant to your contract and the State of Illinois Self-Service Facility Act.

Tenant: Kimberly Riordan, 920 W. Kennedy Rd. Braidwood, IL 60408 Unit #G-14.

If unpaid rental charges, late fees and associated charges are not paid for in full by February 29, 2024 the property will be sold to satisfy the lien.

Published in the Coal City Courant on Wednesday, Feb. 7, and Feb. 21, 2024.

Looks by Shania files as new business

LEGAL NOTICE

Assumed Name Publication Notice

Public Notice is hereby given that on February 7, A.D. 2024, a certificate was filed in the Office of the County Clerk of Grundy County, Illinois, setting forth names and post-office addresses of all of the persons owning, conducting and transacting the business known as Looks by Shania, located at 100 W. Commercial Dr., Suite 11, Morris, IL 60450.

Dated this 7th day of February, A.D. 2024.

Kay T Olson, Grundy County Clerk
Published in the Coal City Courant on Feb. 14, 21 and 28, 2024.

The Coal City Courant

USPS No. 120-060

Published weekly, 52 times a year, on Wednesdays by

G-W COMMUNICATIONS, INC.,
271 S. Broadway St.
Coal City, IL 60416

Periodicals postage paid at Coal City, Illinois

Postmaster: Send address changes to:
Free Press Newspapers; 111 S. Water St.;
Wilmington, IL 60481

Subscription rates: \$43 Grundy & Will counties; \$50 other Illinois counties and \$57 out of state

Dylan on Defense—Coal City's Dylan Young pressures the Manteno guard during a recent game at home.

Photo by Diana Vestal

CC United Methodist to host blood drive

Coal City United Methodist Church, 6805 E. McArdle Road in Coal City, will host a Community Blood Drive in conjunction with Versiti Blood Center on Tuesday, March 5, from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Anyone willing to donate blood can contact Karen Hart at 708-217-5808 to schedule a preferred time or you may register online at www.versiti.org.

Walk-ins are also welcome, but appointments are recommended. Please bring a photo ID and eat a good meal before donating. Please consider giving blood - one pint of blood can save up to 3 lives.

G.W. Communications, Inc publishes the weekly subscription newspapers named The Free Press Advocate, The Braidwood Journal and The Coal City Courant.

Advertising and Business Offices:

- 111 South Water St., Wilmington, IL 60481 (815) 476-7966; Fax: (815) 476-7002
- 271 South Broadway, Coal City, IL 60416 (815) 634-0315; Fax: (815) 476-7002

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

Display Advertising: Friday, noon

News and Classified Advertising: Monday, noon

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

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Eric D. Fisher, publisher



Coal City School District photo

EACH MONTH Coal City Middle School recognizes students who exemplify a specific character trait. This month students focused on leadership and the honored students were [from left]: Jaxon Duke, Ashlyn Siron, Charly Gray, Cora Bill, Cameron Haas and Kayla Kowalski, Not pictured are John Viano and Danny Fite.

Leaders recognized at Coal City Middle School

The Coaler character trait of the month at Coal City Middle School focused on leadership. A good leader, school officials say, is goal oriented, honest, hard-working, willing to serve others, a good listener, a good communicator, a good decision-maker, encouraging, positive, and

responsible. A good student leader can recognize that everyone has strengths and weaknesses and they affirm and utilize the strengths in the group, while also assisting in the areas of weakness.

Students recognized for being leaders were: sixth grade—Charly Gray and John

Viano; seventh grade—Cora Bill and Cameron Haas; eighth grade—Kayla Kowalski and Danny Fite; Encore honorees—Ashlyn Siron and Jaxon Duke.

Each of the students received a certificate and gift card.

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 2023 Fall Semester. Wehman is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Software Engineering.

Village of Coal City notice of intent for loan agreement with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

PUBLIC NOTICE

EXHIBIT A

NOTICE OF INTENT TO BORROW FUNDS AND RIGHT TO FILE PETITION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to Ordinance Number 24-02, adopted at a duly called Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees, held at Coal City, Illinois, at 7:00 p.m. on the 14th day of February, 2024, the Village of Coal City, Grundy and Will Counties, Illinois (the "Village"), intends to enter into a Loan Agreement with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency in an aggregate principal amount not to exceed \$2,755,000.00 and bearing annual interest at an amount not to exceed the maximum rate authorized by law at the time of execution of the Loan Agreement, for the purpose of paying the cost of replacing lead service lines throughout its public water supply system, together with any land or rights in land and all electrical, mechanical or other services necessary, useful or advisable to the construction and installation thereof ("the Project"). A complete copy of the Ordinance accompanies this notice.

NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that if a petition signed by signed by 371 electors (said number being ten percent (10%) or more of the registered voters in the Village), requesting that the question of replacing lead service lines throughout its public water supply system, together with any land or rights in land and all electrical, mechanical or other services necessary, useful or advisable to the construction and installation thereof and entering into the Loan Agreement is submitted to the Village Clerk within 30 days after the publication of this Notice, the question of replacing lead service lines throughout its public water supply system as provided in the Ordinance and Loan Agreement shall be submitted to the electors of the Village at the general election to be held on November 5, 2024.

The forms of petitions shall be provided by the Village Clerk at the principal office of the Village, located at 515 South Broadway Street, Coal City, Illinois, to any individual requesting one.

By order of the Board of the Village.
Dated this 14th day of February, 2024.

/s/ Alexis Stone
Village Clerk
Village of Coal City, Grundy and Will Counties, Illinois

ORDINANCE NO. _24-02

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING ENTRY INTO A PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY LOAN AGREEMENT WITH THE ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY AUTHORIZING THE VILLAGE OF COAL CITY, GRUNDY AND WILL COUNTIES, ILLINOIS TO BORROW UP TO \$2,755,000 FROM THE PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY LOAN PROGRAM (PWSLP) TO FINANCE LEAD SERVICE LINE REPLACEMENT

Loan Number LSL L17 6111

WHEREAS, the Village of Coal City, Grundy and Will Counties, Illinois ("Village") is an Illinois municipal corporation organized and operated under the laws of the State of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, the Village is a non-home rule municipality and, as such, may exercise delegated statutory and Constitutional powers and such powers as are necessarily implied therefrom; and

WHEREAS, the Village operates has for many years owned and operated a combined waterworks and sewerage system as set forth in Division 139 of Article 11 of the Illinois Municipal Code (the "System") and operates said System in accordance with the provisions of 65 ILCS 5/11-139-2 and the Local Government Debt Reform Act, 30 ILCS 350/1 et seq. (collectively, "Act"); and

WHEREAS, the President and Board of Trustees of the Village (the "Corporate Authorities") have determined that it is advisable, necessary and in the best interests of the public health, safety and welfare to improve the System by replacing lead service lines throughout its public water supply system, together with any land or rights in land and all electrical, mechanical or other services necessary, useful or advisable to the construction and installation thereof (the "Project"), all in accordance with the plans and specifications prepared by consulting engineers of the Village; which Project has a useful life of 50 years; and

WHEREAS, the estimated cost of construction and installation of the Project, including engineering, legal, financial and other related expenses is \$2,755,000, and there are insufficient funds on hand and lawfully available to pay these costs; and

WHEREAS, the loan shall bear an interest rate as defined by 35 Ill. Adm. Code 662, which does not exceed the maximum rate authorized by the Bond Authorization Act, as amended, 30 ILCS 305/0.01 et seq., at the time of the issuance of the loan; and

WHEREAS, the Village anticipates that the loan will be fully forgivable by the IEPA, but acknowledges that the principal and interest payment shall be payable semi-annually, and the loan shall mature in 20 years, which is within the period of useful life of the Project; and

WHEREAS, the costs are expected to be paid for with a loan to the Village from the Public Water Supply Loan Program ("PWSLP") through the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the loan to be repaid from revenues of the System and the loan is authorized to be accepted at this time pursuant to the Act; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the provisions of the Act, the Village is authorized to borrow funds from the Public Water Supply Loan Program in the aggregate principal amount of \$2,755,000 to provide funds to pay the costs of the Project; and

WHEREAS, the loan(s) to the Village shall be made pursuant to a Loan Agreement, including certain terms and conditions between the Village and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency; and

WHEREAS, the Corporate Authorities hereby determine that it is advisable, necessary and in the best interests of the Village to complete the Project in accordance with the estimate of costs as hereinabove described and to authorize entry into a Public Water Supply Loan Agreement (the "Loan Agreement") with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency; and

WHEREAS, the loan is authorized to be accepted at this time pursuant to the Act.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Coal City, Counties of Grundy and Will, Illinois, as follows:

SECTION 1. RECITALS.

That the foregoing recitals shall be and are hereby incorporated into and made a part of this Ordinance as if fully set forth in this Section 1.

SECTION 2. DETERMINATION TO BORROW FUNDS.

It is necessary and in the best interests of the Village to construct the Project for the public health, safety, and welfare, in accordance with the plans and specifications, as described; that the System continues to be operated in accordance with the provisions of the Illinois Environmental Protection Act, 415 ILCS 5/1 et seq.; and that for the purpose of constructing the Project, is hereby authorized that funds be borrowed by the Village in the aggregate principal amount (which can include construction period interest financed over the term of the loan) not to exceed \$2,755,000.00.

SECTION 3. PUBLICATION.

This Ordinance, together with a Notice in the statutory form, a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit A, shall be published once within ten (10) days after passage in the Coal City Courant, a newspaper published and of general circulation in the Village, and if a petition, signed by 371 electors (said number being ten percent (10%) or more of the registered voters in the Village) asking that the question of improving the System as provided in this Ordinance and entering into the Loan Agreement therefore be submitted to the electors of the Village, is not filed with the Village Clerk within thirty (30) days after the date of the publication, then this Ordinance shall be in full force and effect. A petition form shall be provided by the Village Clerk to any individual requesting one.

SECTION 4. ADDITIONAL ORDINANCES.

If no petition meeting the requirements of the Act and other applicable laws is filed during the thirty (30) day petition period, then the Corporate Authorities may adopt additional ordinances or proceedings supplementing or amending this Ordinance, providing for entering into the Loan Agreement with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, prescribing all the details of the Loan Agreement, and providing for the collection, segregation, and distribution of the revenues of the System, so long as the maximum amount of the Loan Agreement as set forth in this Ordinance is not exceeded and there is no material change in the project or purposes described herein. Any additional ordinances or proceedings shall in all instances become effective in accordance with the Act or other applicable laws. This Ordinance, together with such additional ordinances or proceedings, shall constitute complete authority for entering into the Loan Agreement under applicable law.

However, notwithstanding the above, the Village may not adopt additional ordinances or amendments which provide for any substantive or material change in the scope and intent of this Ordinance, including but not limited to interest rate, preference or priority of any other ordinance with this Ordinance, parity of any other ordinance with this Ordinance, or otherwise alter or impair the obligation of the Village to pay the principal and interest due to the Public Water Supply Loan Program without the written consent of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

SECTION 5. LOAN NOT INDEBTEDNESS OF THE VILLAGE OF COAL CITY.

Repayment of the loan to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency by the Village pursuant to this Ordinance is to be solely from the revenue derived from the revenues of the System, and the loan does not constitute an indebtedness of the Village within the meaning of any constitutional or statutory limitation.

SECTION 6. APPLICATION FOR LOAN.

The Village Administrator, President and/or Village Clerk are hereby jointly and severally authorized to make application to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency for a loan through the Public Water Supply Loan Program, in accordance with the loan requirements set out in 35 Ill. Adm. Code 662.

SECTION 7. ACCEPTANCE OF LOAN AGREEMENT.

The Corporate Authorities hereby authorize acceptance of the offer of a loan through the Public Water Supply Loan Program, including all terms and conditions of the Loan Agreement as well as all special conditions contained therein and made a part thereof by reference. The Corporate Authorities further agree that the loan funds awarded shall be used solely for the purposes of the Project as approved by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Loan Agreement.

SECTION 8. OUTSTANDING BONDS.

The Village has outstanding unsecured bonds, payable from revenues of the system, but the outstanding bonds are not senior to, but on parity with, the loan authorized by this Ordinance.

SECTION 9. AUTHORIZATION OF PRESIDENT TO EXECUTE LOAN AGREEMENT.

The President is hereby authorized and directed to execute the Loan Agreement with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. The Corporate Authorities hereby additionally authorize the Village Administrator to authorize or execute any documents associated with payment requests or reimbursements from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency in connection with this loan.

SECTION 10. RESOLUTION OF CONFLICTS.

All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

SECTION 11. SAVING CLAUSE.

If any section, paragraph, clause, or provision of this Ordinance shall be held invalid, the invalidity thereof shall not affect any of the other provisions of this Ordinance, which are hereby declared to be separable.

SECTION 12. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage, approval and publication in pamphlet form as provided by law.

SO ORDAINED this 14th day of February, 2024, at Coal City, Grundy and Will Counties, Illinois, pursuant to a roll call vote as follows:

AYES: 6 NAYS: 0 ABSENT: 0 ABSTAIN: 0 PRESENT: 6

Approved on this 14th day of February, 2024.

VILLAGE OF COAL CITY
/s/ David A. Spesia
David A. Spesia, President

Attest:

/s/ Alexis Stone
Alexis Stone, Clerk

Published in the Coal City Courant on Wednesday, February 21, 2024.

Church to host Alzheimer's caregiver support group

If you or someone you know is caring for a loved one with memory problems, you are invited to attend a caregivers support group that meets the second Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. at the First Baptist Church of Coal City, 4470 E. Route 113 in Coal City.

This meeting is for caregivers only. For additional information, please contact Becky Haldorson at 815-791-2658.

Alzheimer's caregiver support groups have many benefits for both caregivers and patients. Caregiving takes a heavy toll on the caregivers' mental and physical health and the health of the patient

with dementia is directly related to the health of his or her caregiver: the healthier the caregiver, the healthier the patient, and vice versa.

Support group participants, value support groups as a place to learn more factual information about dementia. Increased education about dementia makes caregivers more effective: they are better able to respond to patients' needs when they understand and can anticipate them.

Furthermore caregiver depression decreases as caregiver education about dementia increases, and when caregiver depression decreases, patient outcomes improve.



Courtesy photo

FIRST PLACE WINNER was a tie in this year's Baby Valentine Contest. Sylvie Moore, daughter of Kelli Wharrie and Quintan Moore, of Coal City.



Courtesy photo

FIRST PLACE WINNER in a tie was also Kye Clubb, son of Sabrina and Nick Clubb, of Coal City.

Baby Valentine winners

The annual Baby Valentine Contest sponsored by the GFWC-IL Coal City Junior Woman's Club is excited to announce winners for Baby Valentine 2024.

There was a tie for 1st place. The first place winners are Sylvie Moore, daughter of Kelli Wharrie and Quintan Moore and Kye Clubb, son of Sabrina and Nick Clubb, of Coal City. The 2nd place winner is Summer Rain

Robinette, daughter of Alyssa Sharwarko, of Diamond. The 3rd place winner is Zachary Plata, son of Hannah and Brandon Plata, of Coal City. The winners will receive a gift certificate from the Grundy County Chamber of Commerce. All participants of the contest received a Certificate of Participation.

A big thank you to all participants.



Courtesy photo

SECOND PLACE BABY Valentine winner was Summer Rain Robinette, daughter of Alyssa Sharwarko, of Diamond.



Courtesy photo

THIRD PLACE WINNER was Zachary Plata, son of Hannah and Brandon Plata, of Coal City.

Free Press Newspapers readers

SOUND-OFF

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Back seat to sports

COAL CITY—So the school board decides to spend over \$5 million on the various sports fields while ignoring the over-crowded class rooms at the elementary school and the under paid teaching assistants and other issues at the school. Way to go school board, once again you have put sports above a good education.

Lunch debt reason?

COAL CITY—It's heart-warming to see how the people in Coal City, like in Wilmington, donated over \$7,300 to pay what kids owed on their lunch debt. Now what needs to happen is to ask how this debt happened in the first place. Is it because parents can't afford the \$3 or \$4 it takes to make sure their children can eat at lunch-time? Or are parents simply being forgetful in paying their bills? Do the math, that's about 1,825 lunches at \$4 in half of the school year. In my estimation, that's about 20 kids a day, at just one school, that is unable to pay for his/her lunch. How can this be happening in America, in our community? I'm sure the school district feds them even if they can't afford a lunch. But do we not see what's happening? While school lunch debt is growing, so are the number of gambling machines coming into our town. These young parents are being tempted by gaming and \$20 instant lottery tickets every where you look. Can't even go grocery shopping without the temptation of an instant ticket machine. Meanwhile, the state of Illinois gets the winnings, spends it on what it wants and lunch debts get bigger and bigger. Illinois has more gaming machines than Las Vegas now and it's time to realize what they're doing to our communities. Town leaders need to ban them. JB Pritzker should have never allowed them. I feel sorry for these children, it must be embarrassing for them.

Just asking

WILMINGTON—If president's have absolute immunity why did Nixon resign?

Still guilty

WILMINGTON—Fani Willis having a boyfriend does not make Trump innocent.

Ignoring our veterans

SHADOW LAKES—The taxpayer paid employees treat the migrants with kid gloves and give them everything they could ever need while they continue to treat the veterans worse than anything you could possibly imagine even though the veterans fought in wars to preserve the legal rights for the American citizens to enjoy. But it definitely appears that the Democratic party has always had nothing but hatred towards the veterans and will do anything for any foreign government or foreign individual rather than do anything for the veterans. Foreign individuals wallets are bulging while the U.S. citizens' wallets are becoming obsolete.

Start asking questions

WILMINGTON—In a quaint little town amongst the Kankakee River lies a two story limestone building in Wilmington, with historical artifacts known as the Wilmington Area Historical Society. It's been nearly a year since the board has changed hands. Since the change there has been no contact with lifetime members who paid their dues. Why are lifetime memberships not being notified and leaving us out of the equation and in the dark. Where are the meetings being held? The new Board has decided to have meetings quietly at different homesteads. One might think their reasons. Why is the Board not honest with its members? Questions for the Board. Do you think in one year all of you who were placed in your positions have been honest with its members or the public? What do you have to offer its members. Nothing. There has been no communication to Lifetime members who should have knowledge where the money from the land has been going. Is this the way the Board conducts their business? Maybe many of the members, the public, and lifetime members should FOIA its activities and start asking questions. If there's any doubt about its operation. I think the Inspector General of Illinois should be notified. This museum is owned by the residents and its members who donated their family artifacts. Not one person or its Board who thinks they have all the control over a city-owned dwelling

and its artifacts.

Since Biden arrived

COAL CITY—Let's look at how our president has helped the American citizens. He stopped the building of the Southern border wall, he paid a company not to build the wall, he sold the metal wall as scrap, he's allowing the taxpayers to pay all the expenses so migrants can live in comfort and don't forget the Fentanyl and crime that is allowed to run rampant in the U.S.A. while he ignores the plight of the American citizens with the raising prices for food and other products because of his shutting down of our fossil fuel industry and all of the rest of the wonderful things he has given the American citizens since he became president. What I enjoy most is how our president and his colleagues do not care about the grief they have caused the American citizens because they live on tax payers funds. They believe that the American citizens are lacking all forms of intelligence and only have an IQ of a peanut.

Twisting the law

DIAMOND—It has now happened that President Biden was not charged when he retained classified documents in different places. President Trump was charged for the same crime which shows how the Democrats will twist the laws. The justice system in the U.S.A. is so corrupt that they will dismiss legal complaints against any public servant except a Republican.

They're not idiots

BRAIDWOOD—I wanted to comment regarding "It's about results" that appeared in the Feb. 14 Sound-Off. The writer is correct to suggest that Mr. Altiery's job performance should be evaluated without regard to his educational status. The job does not require a degree. However, I disagree with the writer's suggestion that higher education in general has no value. To illustrate, let's look at the two individuals with law degrees who the author refers to as "idiots." In 2022, Mr. Biden and his wife, who holds an advanced degree in education, earned approximately \$579,514. Also in 2022, Ms. Harris and her husband, who also holds a law degree, earned approximately \$456,918. It's apparent that they are not idiots, regardless of what one might think about their politics. Mike Tomasek

Don't break the law

WILMINGTON—Why is it when politicians break the law, they always scream "politically motivated?" They also claim to be victims. How about this? Quit breaking the law.

Made in China

WILMINGTON—Over 20,000 illegals from China crossed the border last month wearing suits with luggage. They fly in from China, take a cab to the border and cross it. I wonder how much money Biden gets per person?

More than football

COAL CITY—I feel like the amount of money being spent on football in Coal City is too much. There should be more money put into education and other smaller organizations and sports rather than spending \$5 million on a new football field.

FYI—The \$5.07 million recently approved by the Unit 1 Board of Education includes turf surfaces for more than just the football field. Included are the CCHS baseball and softball fields, a new track and resurfacing of the six tennis courts.

It's on us

WILMINGTON—Think about this, we have an old man that can't talk to the American people without a TelePrompTer and even then he starts talking to dead people. He has sold his name for money as the VP against a shady egomaniac. I can't believe this is the best we have to offer. In the long run this is on us because people vote party not person.

Overwhelming evidence

SHADOW LAKES—Approximately three months ago, Trump was found guilty of fraud, because he falsified documents to get loans from banks. On Friday, the judge overseeing the case revealed Trump's punishment. He has to pay \$355 million in fines, and he is banned from conducting any kind of business in the state of New York.



Punishment, may be a little excessive even for a billionaire, but the judge explained the reason behind the excessive punishment, even though Trump and his business was found guilty of fraud beyond any reasonable doubt, by a court trial, with the best defense attorney in the country. Trump never showed any remorse. He never admitted guilt. He was arrogant throughout the whole trial. Worst of all he constantly insulted the prosecuting attorney, insulted the judge overseeing the case by calling them names making accusations, and sometimes even threatening. What kind of fool person does that to the people? They have the faith of your future in their hands. Besides that he was recently found guilty of raping a woman in the dressing room of a department store. The only reason that he didn't go to jail for that was because it was a civil case and the reason it was a civil case was because statute limitations have passed since the rape happened in 1990. He was liable for lawsuit in civil court. He was found guilty and he had to pay \$5 million in compensation to the victim. After the trial was over he went on national television accusing the woman of lying, calling her names and threatening her, so he found himself in court being sued for defamation. For that he was fine \$83 million. Next case coming up March 25 is the Stormy Daniels case. Stormy Daniels is the porn star which Trump was having an affair before he ran for president so he thought that it would be smart to bribe her to keep her mouth shut about the relationship by paying her \$125,000. Where is the crime in that? The crime is that he used campaign money to pay the bribe by giving the money to his attorney. Then his attorney gave the money to Stormy Daniels. Overwhelming evidence in this case, the attorney has already pleaded guilty in this matter and I'm not sure but I think it's in prison. This case is going on trial March 25. There are 91 criminal charges against Trump. He has been able to delay court proceedings with the army of the best attorneys in the country that he has. These criminal charges will not go away, and he will have his day in court for each one of them. People need to open up their eyes and see reality.

Heartwarming story

COAL CITY—What a heartwarming story about Aria and Mary raising and donating the funds to pay off the school lunch debt for our local families. Got to say though, I was a bit shocked when my eyes went to the right side of the paper to read the Coal City School Board is spending over \$5 million on artificial turf. Kinda wish the school board would spend our tax dollars feeding children, and do a fundraiser if they want artificial turf. Thank you so much Aria and Mary, and anyone who donated to such a great idea.

Can't do anything

WILMINGTON—I hope all the Trumpies saw the news that Republican Representative star witness against Hunter and Joe Biden was arrested for lying to the FBI. There goes the case for impeachment and further reinforces the opinion that the GOP can't do any-

Submissions by email to: courant@fpnusa.com with "soundoff" in the subject line or go to www.freepressnewspapers.com, -> Submit Sound-off 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.

thing right.

Trump the dunce

COAL CITY—Were you watching the news last week when Trump revealed three more times that he is a traitor? First he pokes fun at the husband of Nikki Hailey. Mr. Hailey happens to be wearing the uniform of his country serving overseas in the military. Of course Captain bone spurs would never understand that. I hope all you veterans are paying attention. Then Trump told the world that if he is elected he will let Russia do whatever they want in Eastern Europe. Do you want more proof that Putin has Trump in his back pocket? Trump told his puppets in Congress to defeat a bipartisan bill that would have solved the border crisis and given aid to Israel and Ukraine. Trump knows that aid to Ukraine would offend his sponsor Mr. Putin. Now do you understand why Putin spent millions helping Trump get elected in 2016? Putin is a very intelligent former KGB agent and he knows a dunce when he sees one. So take down those offensive Trump flags and banners or do you want people to think we live in a stupid hick town?

As a wedge

WILMINGTON—I've noticed Fox News reports on the border 24/7 but they don't mention the Republicans in Congress not doing anything about it because they want to use it as a wedge issue to run on. These people are the worst.

Not afraid

WILMINGTON—To the evangelicals who support Trump, I'm not afraid of your God, but you should be.

Competition

Jewel, please hurry and get your store opened. The call is coming from the Wilmington community. It is unfortunate when one community has only one store to meet their grocery needs and that is what has happened in our area. Berkots is the only grocery store in this large rural area including Coal City, Braidwood and Custer Park. They pretty much do as they please. They no longer insert their ads in area newspapers and if you do not have computer access the only way you can access the entire ad is going to the store, not always an option for seniors. If you have no smart phone or computer you are out of luck and seniors usually considerably less extra income to spend on groceries where these sales would be so beneficial to them. The new program that they are offering is not user friendly to say the least. It is the sincere hope when the Jewel Store opens in Diamond Berkots will be forced to be more customer friendly so that the needs of the people in this area can be met.

Senseless spending

COAL CITY—Regarding the athletic fields in Coal City, how much money is to be used for other things than football fields, baseball fields, track, etc. You could buy a lot of grass seed and fertilizer. I'd like to know how many students will end up in the NFL, Division I colleges, Major League baseball, the Olympics? Seems like this town is more worried about sports than it is about educating their kids.

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Mapes gets 30 months for protecting Madigan

“Everybody gets pinched, but you did it right; you told ‘em nothin’ and they got nothin’.” Jimmy Conway told a youthful Henry Hill in the classic gangster movie “Goodfellas” after the mob-connected teenager was arrested for selling stolen cigarettes, clammed up to the police and was then released by a corrupt judge.

“You learned the two greatest things in life,” Conway told Hill.

“Never rat on your friends, and always keep your mouth shut.”

Former Illinois House Speaker Mike Madigan’s people (and they weren’t alone in this, by the way) took that vow to heart.

It’s sometimes difficult to explain to Statehouse newbies how often the people in charge back then loved cosplaying as



CAPITOL FACTS
Rich Miller

mafiosi. And there are more newbies than you might expect.

Lobbyist and unofficial Statehouse historian John Amdor keeps track of stuff like this, so I asked him to run the numbers. Amdor found that a 55 percent majority of House Democrats - 43 of the 78 - have taken office since June 6, 2018, the day Madigan’s longtime chief of staff Tim Mapes was forced to resign after being accused of harassment.

To some of us, including journalists like me who are still covering politics today, the Statehouse #MeToo cataclysm of 2018 still feels recent. But most current House Democrats had nothing to do with any of it. They only know of Mapes’ autocratic reign and dramatic fall through the news coverage they’ve seen and the

stories they’ve heard from colleagues. He’s just not relevant to their lives.

Currently, 33 percent of House Democrats (26) never even served under House Speaker Madigan, who left office in early 2021. If trends hold, it won’t be all that long before a majority of House Democrats never served with him.

Anyway, it’s clear from reading wiretap transcripts that those folks delighted in pretending to be part of some secret society.

And that all caught up to Tim Mapes last week.

Speaker Madigan’s former chief of staff had been busted for lying during his grand jury testimony. The feds were fishing for information about Madigan, but Mapes wouldn’t even admit to knowing about totally legal activities.

Mapes had to have figured at the time that federal prosecutors knew he was lying (as literally everyone understands, the FBI and the US Attorney rarely ask questions that they don’t already know the answers to), but he did it anyway. And he was convicted.

Before pronouncing his sentence on Mapes, US District Judge John Kness called out the defendant for his almost cartoonish adherence to “the Law of Omertà,” the ancient mafia vow to never, as Judge Kness put it, “rat on your friends.”

That behavior “had no place” in a federal grand jury room, Kness told Mapes. “And you will pay the price for it.”

No lawyer, no matter how connected, could possibly spring Mapes from this trap.

The price Mapes paid was 30 months in federal prison. Thirty months for lying in response to innocuous grand jury questions that weren’t even about illegal acts while he had complete immunity from prosecution.

Thirty months away from his family plus who knows how many hundreds of thousands of dollars in crushing legal fees and lost income. For what?

There are probably only two explanations:

1) Mapes stupidly and stubbornly stuck to the “This is the life we chose” script on principle; or

2) Mapes knew of other illegal activities that the feds might have been interested in, so he took the fall on the little stuff to avoid exposing his former boss and others to even greater legal peril.

Either way, the result is the same. Personal carnage.

Henry Hill was met by all his gangster buddies as he walked out of the courtroom that day, and they wildly applauded him for being a stand-up guy. Mapes’ friends may throw him a similar party when he is finally let loose. Cold comfort.

In the end, Henry Hill realized his silence was no longer worth the pain it was causing and he flipped. Mapes never got there.

Let’s not ever go back to those days, please. Thanks.

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

Wilmington Library to hold seed swap

The Wilmington Public Library District, in collaboration with Proclamation Flowers, invites the community to its upcoming Seed Swap event. The event is scheduled for Wednesday, March 6, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the library, 201 S. Kankakee St.

Garden enthusiasts of all ages are welcome to attend this drop-in event. Attendees are encouraged to bring their favorite seeds for exchange, but it is not required. In addition to the seed swap, the

event will feature garden-oriented crafts suitable for both children and adults.

Families attending the event will also have the chance to receive a complimentary garden kit for children (limited one per family, available while supplies last).

Whether you are a seasoned gardener or just getting started, this event has something for everyone. For more information, contact the library at 815-476-2834.

Mobile food pantry coming to Kuzma

Catholic Charities of Joliet will be hosting a mobile food pantry at Kuzma Care Cottage on Friday, March 1, from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Kuzma is located at 635 S. Main St., Wilmington. When you arrive, please line up in the St. Rose Church parking lot by entering on the Main Street side. (Please do not arrive

before 9 a.m.)

Mobile food pantries use a “drive thru” method to distribute food. Please clear space in your trunk or backseat so volunteers can load boxes of food directly into your vehicle. Food is free to neighbors in need; no ID, proof of address or income is required.

Knights to hold breakfast

The Wilmington Knights of Columbus will be hosting a Boiler Breakfast on Sunday, March 17, from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. It will be held at St. Rose Parish gym at 626 S. Kankakee St. with proceeds to be used to upgrade the boiler for St. Rose

church.

Breakfast will serve pork sausage, biscuits and gravy, pancakes, French toast casserole, hash brown casserole and scrambled eggs. Cost will be by freewill donation.

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Earned income tax credit expanded

Illinoisans are reminded to take advantage of savings offered by the newly expanded Illinois Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), a benefit that helps low to moderate income workers get a tax break.

For tax year 2023, coverage has been expanded to include taxpayers with an IRS-issued Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN), as well as workers ages 18 to 24 and over 65 (without qualifying child).

In addition to expanded coverage, those claiming Illinois EITC this year will see their amount of tax relief increased to a 20 percent (previously 18 percent) match of the amount given federally.

To claim Illinois EITC for tax year 2023 (tax returns due in 2024), taxpayers must file an Illinois income tax return and have:

- Worked and earned income in 2023 under \$17,640 (\$24,210 if married filing jointly) with no qualifying children, or \$56,838 (\$63,398 if married filing jointly) with three or more qualifying children.
- Investment income of \$11,000 or less.
- A valid Social Security number or ITIN by the due date of the 2023v return, including extensions.
- Been at least 18 years of age or older by the end of 2023.
- Been a United States citizen or a resident alien all year.

Taxpayers eligible for the federal EITC automatically qualify for the Illinois EITC.

Despite that, in 2023, more than 53,000 Illinoisans claimed a federal EITC credit without also claiming the state EITC, leaving over \$24.6 million unclaimed. It is important to note that taxpayers may qualify for the Illinois EITC even if they did not qualify for the federal EITC.

Seniors invited to lunch

All area seniors are invited to a community senior time on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., for a free lunch and delicious desserts.

It is held at the First United Methodist Church on 401 E. Kahler Rd. in Wilmington.

There will be friendship, fellowship, games, bingo, speakers and entertainment. If you have any questions please call 815-735-0910.

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One ingredient for raising a good kid

BY ELAINE FISHER-OHLUND
FOOD FOR THE SOUL

Go to a Wilmington boys basketball game and you just might spot a JCA student obnoxiously cheering for the Wildcats. He walks in, shaking hands with long-time Wildcat fans as he makes his way to the students section. Despite being a Hilltopper, he's there to show support to his friends in the game. His name is Michael Hobbs.

The JCA senior is a friend to many in this town, including my son. And I think my little Layla believes Hobbs is her best bud too. He always takes the time to stop and watch whatever new magic trick Layla has mastered and acts dumbfounded everytime.

He is also the friend that always seems to show up around dinner time. In fact, he has walked into my house a few times saying "Mrs. Ohlund, what's for dinner tonight?" But I don't mind because every time he breaks bread with us he clears his plate, raves about my cooking and thanks me.

Hobbs is a talker, starting his own podcast and even had apparel to go with it. He is a real salesman too, bringing his "Hobbs Podcast" shirts and caps into our household convincing each of us to buy one.

What started as a sympathy purchase, knowing Hobbs needed some promotion and a little profit, has turned into my favorite t-shirt as it has a cool logo and I'm proud to support him.

Recently he went on a school retreat called Kairos and was picked to be a leader. As someone who went on the Kairos retreat myself at his age, I knew this was a big deal and asked him to read his speech.

He talked so lovingly about his mom and grandma, it brought me to tears. And he told all his JCA buddies how much he loves the small town he grew up in (Wilmington) and the people that live in it.

I was impressed and



Courtesy photo
HEATHER HOBBS, MICHAEL HOBBS and Sandy Hobbs (from left), grandmother to Michael and mother-in-law to Heather. Three generations that have helped run Kuzma Care Cottage.

started wondering what is it that is needed to raise our sons into good men? And considering he spoke so highly of his mom and grandmother, I thought I would start there.

His mother is Heather Hobbs and grandmother Sandy Hobbs. They are the women who run Kuzma Care Cottage, Wilmington's food pantry.

Kuzma Care Cottage was started back in 1981 by Sister Ann Ellen Quirk of St. Rose Parish. It started in the music room at St. Rose School and in 1984 they were able to expand through donations to a small house at 635 S. Main St.

Walking into Kuzma, Heather greeted me with a big hug. As I walked through the tiny building, food and canned goods stocked the shelves.

There was a bulletin board with pictures of volunteers from all walks of life. I smiled seeing what was probably a second grade homework assignment with Michael's picture next to it.

It read, "I have a dream..... my dream is that there are no more homeless people on the streets, I would

let them live in my house or my friend's houses."

Truth is it feels like you've walked into a family's home where everyone is welcome.

It all started when Sandy was under a lot of pressure when George O'Brien passed and sister Ann Ellen was in the hospital. So she called Heather for help. Heather was happy to lend a helping hand, but along with Heather came three-month-old Michael.

So she set up a Pack-and-Play portable crib and got to work. When Michael got fussy, he was cuddled by volunteers. It was a team effort to feed the people of Wilmington and to keep little Hobbs happy.

When he was old enough to start helping, his first job was to shred paper. He moved up in the ranks and this past year had his own project. His job was to make sure breakfasts and lunches were packed for kids during the summer.

And when he needed help he would call on his friends, bringing his generation in and showing them how to help others.

Not only was he running projects but he also was the hype man. In moments of

frustration and stress he reminds everyone, "we are doing it for the kids."

It's more than three generations coming together to run a food bank...it's one big family. Sandra and Heather spoke so highly of all the volunteers and the purpose it gave them.

We reminisced on stories with great lessons behind them and how much kindness they had seen from so many strangers. It wasn't just Sandy, Heather, Michael and the volunteers, but the people who give donations, the random truck driver that refused to throw away his shipment and took the time to find their food bank.

It was the faith that Sister Ann Ellen would have when they were running low on supplies, "thou shall not worry for the Lord always provides." Sandy said, "and he always did." There were so many pieces to this puzzle, each one equally important.

Leaving the pantry it made sense where Michael Hobbs' foundation started. I know I am not the only mother that lays awake at night worrying, have I taught my son everything he needs to know about becoming a good person.

Eighteen years is short for learning all of life's lessons, but Michael Hobbs, who has confidence, depth and cares for others, is proof that having two strong women lead by example, is off to a good start.

Michael is going to study at the University of Dayton in Ohio next year and Kuzma will have some big shoes to fill. Good luck kid.

If you are falling on hard times and need food please contact Kuzma Care Cottage at (815) 476-2030. And if you ever get the chance to take your kid to volunteer somewhere, I suggest you do.

Never did I think when I started writing a recipe column would I realize how much good can come from food, especially when you share it with someone else.

Mammal Madness offers a hair-raising adventure

How much do you know about your fellow mammals, especially those that might be out and about while you're snuggled in bed and snoozing?

Probably not as much as you think, and that's why the Forest Preserve District of Will County is beefing up this year's Mammal Madness event at Four Rivers Environmental Education Center in Channahon.

The free, family-friendly fun fest will take place from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, March 2. The event will feature two, one-hour live animal presentations by Big Run Wolf Ranch at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

The presentations will provide a good opportunity to view a live Canada lynx, porcupine, skunk and opossum. The Virginia opossum and striped skunk are local to Will County; the porcupine and threatened Canada lynx live in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Mammal-themed activities at Mammal Madness will include matching fantastic feats of warm-blooded marvels, creating magnificent animal masks and more.

Past Mammal Madness programs have been well attended, but this year, the Forest Preserve decided to expand the event to provide even more information and activities.

"We want to reach more people and focus on lesser-known mammals within our preserves," said Alexis Lyons, an interpretive naturalist at Four Rivers. "We loved helping our visitors create a connection between themselves and the wild mammals in Will County. We want to build even stronger connections this year."

Mammal Madness is designed to celebrate the many mammal species that live in Will County, including some that are obscure.

"We are hoping that visitors will discover at least one new mammal that lives nearby and find something new to appreciate about a mammal they can see in their backyard," Lyons explained.

As we all learned in grade school, humans are mammals, too, and we share the characteristics of this class of warm-blooded vertebrates

including hair or fur and the ability to nurse our young. And it's important to acknowledge this relationship, said Jess McQuown, a program manager at Four Rivers.

"Four Rivers often focuses on birds and fish, but this particular event really highlights what makes us and our wildlife counterparts connected," she said.

"We're highlighting the 13-lined ground squirrel, the least weasel and the bobcat as some of our lesser-known mammals in Will County. Each of these animals are secretive, so people can live in Will County and go their whole lives not knowing they have these animals as neighbors."

This year's event will have an expanded Mammalpics station along the outdoor trails where families can put their skills to the test against those of wild animals.

"We also will have a hands-on room with interactive games, furs and bones," McQuown said. "There will be a self-guided hike with information about some of our favorite Will County mammals along the way. Visitors can cre-

ate animal masks in a craft area. And there will be an outdoor s'mores station while supplies last."

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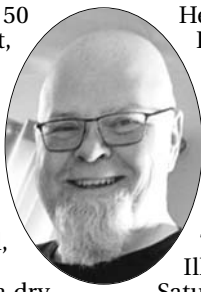
Jason Barker

COAL CITY—Jason Daniel Barker, 50 of Coal City, and formerly of Joliet, passed away unexpectedly on Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2024.

Born May 6, 1973, Jason is the son of Donna Barker of Coal City. He was raised in Joliet and graduated from Joliet West High School with the Class of 1991. He was previously employed with NorthPoint Intermodal in Elwood, IL.

Remembered as a funny guy with a dry sense of humor, Jason leaves behind a legacy of being a gentle giant who would do anything for anyone. He had a lifelong love for Dungeons and Dragons and took pleasure in reading and disc golf. Jason was a wonderful and engaged father to his son and created many memories cooking, building legos and spending quality time with his boy.

Survivors include his mother, Donna; son, Alex; aunt Barbara and uncle Sam Shaw who was like a father to him; uncle John (the late Carmen) Barker; special cousins: Kristin (Shane) Fitzwater and Samantha (Daniel)



Hendry who were like sisters, and Dallas Barker, and Alex's grandparents: Alex and Christine Klassek, as well as his lifelong best friend, Marc Luksa.

Jason was preceded in death by his grandmother, Edna Barker and one aunt, Billie Ann Johnson.

The family will receive friends for a visitation at Reeves Funeral Home, 75 N. Broadway (one block north of Illinois Route 113) in Coal City on Saturday, Feb. 17, 2024 between 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. Cremation rites will be accorded following the visitation.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Jason's memory to the Kidney Foundation or to the American Diabetes Association.

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

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

Christopher A. Harris

MORRIS—Christopher A. Harris, 66, of Morris, and formerly of Romeoville, IL, passed away Wednesday, Feb. 14, 2024 at Morris Hospital.

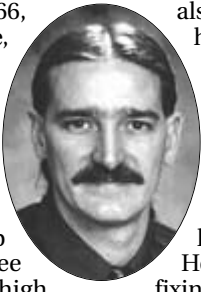
Born June 18, 1957 in Menomonee Falls, WI, Christopher Arthur was a son of Arthur Roy and Carolann Marie (Muench) Harris.

Christopher had a fulfilling life filled with diverse interests and deep connections. He grew up in Menomonee Falls and graduated from the local high school as part of the class of 1975. During his time in high school, he was an active athlete and known to many as the "freak and the jock." His friends came from all walks of life, reflecting his inclusive spirit.

After graduating high school, Christopher worked as an installer for stereos before finding employment at a Milwaukee bakery. Eventually, he joined the Wonder Bread Company where he dedicated 17 years of his life. His work at Wonder Bread brought him to Illinois where fate intervened in a bun room encounter with a young lady named Brenda. On Dec. 31, 1987, Chris married Brenda and together they made their home in Romeoville before eventually settling in Goose Lake.

Following his time at Wonder Bread, Christopher found a new career path at United Parcel Service (UPS) where he served for 23 1/2 years as a maintenance mechanic and head of the parts department. In addition to his work at UPS, he also served as a Union Steward with Machinists Local #701. Christopher took great pride in being recognized for his ongoing safety efforts and advocating for union rights. Notably, he played a crucial role in implementing mask usage among employees within the facility.

Throughout his life, Christopher had many passions that brought him joy. He had an unwavering love for music and eagerly looked forward to attending concerts - with Ozzy being one of his favorites. Growing up in Wisconsin, he developed a deep passion for ice fishing which he continued to indulge in through his involvement in a local fishery. Christopher was



also an avid car enthusiast and treasured his Corvette. Football held a special place in his heart, and he enthusiastically followed the game at all levels. He had a compassionate heart for animals and cared deeply about everything he held dear.

Known for his gift of gab, Christopher could entertain you endlessly with his wicked sense of humor. He was truly a "Jack of all Trades," always fixing something or working on a project. In his downtime, he enjoyed watching classic sitcoms. Above all else, Christopher was a devoted family man who found immense joy in the company of his loved ones. His children and grandchildren held a special place in his heart.

Survivors include his loving wife, Brenda (nee Nicholas); son, Joshua Lee Hurst; daughters: Miranda Susan Harris, Katelyn Marie (Kyle) Smith and Kristin Lynn (Ray) Keigher; five grandchildren: Fallon Mae Cavanaugh, Calvin Lee Harris, Raymond Arthur Keigher, Stone Ryan Leet and Amelia Joyce Smith; two brothers, Daniel and David; his aunt and God-mother, Susan Pokorny and numerous brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, nieces, nephews and cousins.

Chris was preceded in death by his parents; son, Zackary Arthur; brother, Charles Harris and uncles: Thomas Muench and Harry Pokorny.

Cremation rites have been accorded, and the family is planning a celebration of Chris' life in the Spring.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Chris' memory to Illinois Valley Industries, 1033 3rd Avenue, Morris, IL 60450.

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

Cremation services and arrangements have been made under the direction and care of Reeves & Baskerville Funeral Homes and Crematory in Coal City.

Nicole Walsh-Franklin

FLORIDA—Nicole Kathleen Walsh-Franklin, 39, passed away on Feb. 7, 2024 in Fort Walton Beach, FL.

Born Nov. 21, 1984 in Fort Walton Beach, FL, Nicole was the daughter of Elizabeth Walsh and George "Rick" Franklin. She graduated from Reed-Custer High School in Braidwood and eventually moved back to her home state of Florida. Nicole enjoyed sports, particularly baseball and softball which she played for much of her childhood. She was a big New York Yankees & Boston Red Sox fan, so much so, she named her dog Fenway. She loved music of all genres and had a tendency to play her favorite tracks endlessly, whether those around her wanted to hear 'Goodbye Earl' by the Dixie Chicks 10 times in a row or not, it was happening. She had a great sense of humor and always found a way to make people laugh. Those who knew Nicole, know that when she set her mind to it she could do anything. She will be remembered for her strength and passion to live life her way.

She is survived by her mother and step-father, Elizabeth (Dale) Walsh, and her father, George "Rick" Franklin; two sons, Aidan Drapeau and Abel Patrizi; brothers, George



"Ricky" Franklin II and Dru Walsh, and sister, Kaitlin Dell'Aquila.

The family will receive friends for a memorial visitation at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 E. Kahler Rd., in Wilmington, on Saturday, Feb. 24, 2024 from 9:30 a.m. until the time of memorial services at 11:30 a.m.

Those who wish to participate in the memorial service virtually may join the live stream of Nicole's services, which can be found on her memorial page starting at 11:30 a.m.

The family wishes to extend their gratefulness to the professionals there who helped guide us through this emotional and often overwhelming process.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guest book, upload photographs, and share Nicole's memorial page via social media at www.ReevesFuneral.com.

Cremation services have been provided by McLaughlin Mortuary in Fort Walton Beach, FL, and memorial arrangements have been made under the direction and care of Reeves & Baskerville Funeral Homes and Crematory in Wilmington.

Sharon Boynton

WILMINGTON—Sharon Boynton, 71, of Wilmington, passed away peacefully on Monday, Feb. 19, 2024 at her home. Sharon was an 18 year Breast Cancer survivor.

Born Jan. 8, 1953 in Joliet, Sharon Lea was a daughter of Donald B. and Rose M. (Alstott). She was raised and educated in Wilmington, where she attended the public schools.

On July 11, 1970, Sharon married Glenn O. Boynton in the First Christian Church in Wilmington and together they made a home and raised a family together.

Sharon instructed country and western dance for 16 years, and leaves behind a legacy of writing, which includes a copy of her book of poetry, which is proudly held in the National Library of Congress. She was a member of the Wilmington Lions Club and belonged to the Wilmington VFW Ladies Auxiliary, where she dedicated herself to honoring local Veterans with their flag line. Sharon was a talented painter and above all else cherished her family. She will be remembered for always being there for anyone in need.

Survivors include her three children: Glenn O. Jr. (Colette) Boynton, Matthew D. (Teresa) Boynton and Sara (Scott) Barbour; 10 grandchildren: Elizabeth, Lisa, Brendan, Brianna, Matthew II, Angelina, Rose, Glenn W., Alexander and Seth; four great-grandchildren: Aiden, Joshua, Jenna and Evan; and one sister, Donna



Nutt, of Kansas, as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

Sharon was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Glenn Sr. on Nov. 8, 2014; two brothers,: Daniel Frey and Lee Frey and one sister, Judith Capper, as well as her cousin, Joyce Williams, who was like a sister.

The family will receive friends for a visitation at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 E. Kahler Rd. in Wilmington on Friday, Feb. 23, 2024 from 4 p.m. until time of remembrance at 8 p.m.

Cremation rites will be accorded following the visitation and she will be laid to rest in Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery with her late husband, Glenn on July 11, 2024, which would have been their 54th wedding anniversary.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Sharon's memory to The Wilmington Lions Club or to the Illinois Veterans Home at Manteno.

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

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

Elizabeth Roark

WILMINGTON—Elizabeth Roark, 84, of Wilmington, passed away peacefully on Friday, Feb. 16, 2024 at the Arc of Dwight.

Born July 5, 1938 in New Haven, IL, Elizabeth Lorraine was a daughter of Vondalee (nee Wicker) Clayton-Bean. She was raised and educated in New Haven where she went on to graduate from the local high school.

On July 2, 1956, Elizabeth married Clyde Roark, and together they made a home and moved to the Wilmington area in 1962. She worked for the Joliet Army Ammunition Plant for a period and later took a position with Johnson & Johnson Personal Products in Wilmington, from where she retired.

Throughout the years, Elizabeth enjoyed vacationing on the Gulf Coast of Florida, and she took pleasure in reading and cooking. Family was always of utmost importance, and she cherished watching the kids and grandchildren in their school activities and sports.

Survivors include her son and daughter-in-law, Toby and Jodi Roark, of Wilmington; grand-



children: Tanner Roark, of Atlanta, GA; Samantha Lide, of Custer Park and Dillon (Becca) Roark, of Wilmington; great-grandchildren: Taylor, Madison, Kennedy, Brooks, Cam and Macie; two brothers, Jack Bean and Lester Lawson; her brother-in-law, Howard Roark; one sister-in-law, Hazel Browning and numerous nieces and nephews.

Elizabeth was preceded in death by her parents, husband, Clyde in 2005, and siblings: Ruth Bean, Karen Cashmore, Roy Bean, Jennie May, Mary Lesniewski, Kathy Bertolozzi and Jim Bean.

Cremation rites have been accorded, and the family is planning a celebration of Elizabeth's life at a later date.

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

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

Barbara Jarchow

Our beautiful Barbara Jean Jarchow, 83, was called home to the Lord on Feb. 14, 2024. She was surrounded by love with her family at her side.

She was born on March 13, 1940 in Oak Park, IL. She is lovingly remembered by her husband, Robert, married 64 years; three children: Karen, Steven, Christopher and their spouses; nine grandchildren: Tahlia, Colleen, Kyle, Benjamin, Zach, Laney, Ryan, Shelby, Molly and their respective spouses; three great-grandchildren, Ethan, Nora and Harper; along with her youngest brother, Thomas McCullough and many cousins.

She was preceded in death by her parents, LaVerne and Emma McCullough; her brother, John McCullough; and her best friend, Diane Dennis.



Barbara loved hummingbirds, cooking amazing meals for her family, margaritas, visiting her grandchildren and spoiling her twin great-granddaughters. Barbara always made time to help her family and friends.

We will miss Barbara dearly, but we are so grateful for the time spent with her. We will always feel her presence in our hearts.

Services will be private.

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

R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory, 401 E. Main St., Braidwood is entrusted with arrangements.

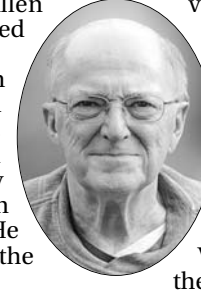
James Vandermark

BEECHER—James "Jim" Allen Vandermark, 85, of Beecher, IL, passed away Monday, Feb. 12, 2024.

He was born July 14, 1938 in Lawrenceville, IL to Blaine and Marian (Greenlee) Vandermark. Jim earned his Bachelor of Science in Teaching and Biology from Colorado State University and then his Master of Science in Geology from Indiana University. He taught Science and Biology within the Beecher School District for 35 years.

Jim is survived by his wife, Wilma (Schuldt) Vandermark, with whom he shared a lifelong passion for teaching and outdoor adventures.

He is preceded in death by his sister, Janet (Richard) Ely and survived by his sisters, Anita Huston and Marjorie Kay Dorton. He is also sur-



vived by his son, Douglas (Kristine) Vandermark; daughter, Amy (Clifford) Wilson; five grandchildren: Wade (Jessica) Wilson, Bethany (Nathan) Harrmann, James (Caitlin) Vandermark, Rebecca (Michael) Wilson, Kara (Brian) Ociepk; six great-grandchildren: Aubrey, Adelynn, and Wesley Harrmann, Charlotte Ociepk, and Oliver and Axel Vandermark. His memory will live on in the hearts of all those who loved him.

In lieu of flowers, it was Jim's wish to have research donations to the American Diabetes Association made in his name.

Hack-Jensen Funeral Home handled the arrangements.

Health care costs have risen 30%

Prices in America's economy are still high and getting higher across the board, and health care expenses are no exception. In fact, medical expenses have risen 30 percent over the past decade, according to Incredible Health.com.

"Medical inflation is far outpacing increased costs for other goods, and that's having a direct effect on Americans' health," Incredible Health said, citing Bureau of Labor

Statistics data.

About two in five Americans (38%) delayed medical treatment because of costs in 2022, an increase of 12 percentage points from 2021 and the highest share since 2001, according to Gallup. It was the highest increase in the past 22 years.

Sadly, those with serious conditions were more apt to put off care, the survey found. About 27% say the delayed medical treatment was for a

very or somewhat serious condition, with lower-income, younger adults and women most likely to report delaying care, Gallup said.

Health insurance prices are expected to rise more than usual in 2024, forecasting a 5.4% premium increase, up from a typical 3% to 4% increase, Incredible Health said. "Additionally, a Peterson-KFF Health System Tracker analysis found that plans available through Affordable Care Act marketplaces will likely have a 6% increase.

America's aging population is part of the reason for rising health care costs. According to the Peter G. Peterson Foundation, by 2030, one in five people will be a senior citizen, the group that spends the most on health care. Inflation and other factors, such as expensive new technology, higher administrative costs, and hospital consolidation are contributing to spiking health care costs.

Annual spaghetti dinner to be held March 2

The Men's Club of the First United Methodist Church of Wilmington will be hosting its 36th annual spaghetti dinner on Saturday, March 2, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the church located at 401 E. Kahler Road, Wilmington.

Come for the spaghetti, stay for the desserts! Carry-

outs will be available.

Invite your neighbors and better yet, pick them up! Free will offering, no set price.

Proceeds from this event are used to support local missions such as Kuzma Care Cottage, Our Caring Closet, Lamb's Fold and the Christian Help Association.

Climate benefits from having a four-day work week

Dear EarthTalk: What are the climate benefits of switching over to a four-day work-week?

-- P. Proby, Denver, CO



Nearly 200 companies across the globe have completed six-month trials of a four-day workweek with promising results. Juliet Schor, an economist and sociologist at Boston College, is leading the trials with the nonprofit group Four Day Week Global. Schor says, "Stress, burnout, mental health, physical health...job satisfaction...all of those are going in the right directions." While the four-day workweek seems to improve employee lives, the results of the trial also suggest that the shorter workweek has climate benefits as well.

The four-day workweek benefits the environment by lessening the environmental impacts of commuting, reducing energy consumption and cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

In 2021, the transportation sector was the leading contributor of greenhouse gas emissions in the U.S.,

accounting for around 28 percent of total emissions nationwide. By committing to a four-day workweek every employee could reduce their commute by 20 percent. Furthermore, during a six-month trial, workers spent less time commuting by car and more time biking and walking.

Another major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions is lighting, heating, cooling and generally powering up office buildings.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that commercial and residential buildings account for nearly 13 percent of total greenhouse gas emissions in the U.S. Keeping offices closed (or partially powered down) for an extra day per week could yield significant emissions reductions. Schor found that just a 10 percent reduction in work hours is linked to a 8.6 percent fall in carbon footprint.

Along with climate benefits, the four-day workweek provides employees with their own perks. During a 2022 trial in the U.K., of 70 firms, 56 said they planned to keep a four-day workweek in place after the trial ended.

The most commonly cited benefits of the trial were increased productivity and significant financial savings for employees. Employees saved money on both transportation and childcare during the trial.

The UK trial also found



A FOUR-DAY work week benefits the environment by lessening the environmental impacts of commuting, reducing energy consumption and cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

that during the four-day workweek daily production rose by 22 percent. This statistic exemplifies the main goal of four-day workweek which is the idea of improving efficiency by avoiding overworking employees. Rethinking the culture around work and the desire to constantly produce could not only benefit employees, but could yield reductions in carbon pollution.

The idea of the four-day workweek sounds great, but is it really viable? The fact is, most companies have been able to implement the four-day workweek without seeing a decline in productivity.

A case study in New Zealand focused on Perpetual Guardian, an estate management

company that started using the four-day workweek in 2018. The results were beyond expectations. Employees maintained their work output by eliminating unproductivity during work hours and working more efficiently.

Additionally, all 240 employees experienced a 24 percent improvement in work-life balancing, while maintaining their high productivity levels. The employee perks, combined with the climate benefits, make the four-day workweek an increasingly strong option for businesses.

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

Customers pay for utilities' lawyers and corporate donations. Advocates want to change that

BY ANDREW ADAMS
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

Illinoisans pay tens of millions of dollars each year to utilities to cover costs they accrue for lawyers, belonging to trade groups, making charitable contributions and purchasing advertisements meant to boost utilities' public image.

Consumer advocates are pushing for a change to state law that would bar utilities from collecting money from customers for those expenditures, liability insurance covering executives and for the cost associated with filing rate cases. The bill also explicitly bans charging customers for political contributions, a practice already disallowed in Illinois.

The proposal, contained in Senate Bill 2885 and House Bill 5061, is backed by AARP Illinois and the Citizens Utility Board, a nonprofit created by the General Assembly to represent customers in front of utility regulators.

The bill would also require public hearings whenever a gas, electric, water or sewer utility requests a rate increase. Rate cases, which generally take a year to complete, are currently conducted primarily online through writ-

ten testimony from utilities and advocates as well as written comments submitted by members of the public.

An analysis from CUB found that last year, companies spent about \$28 million for legal representation, expert testimony and other costs accrued in six Illinois Commerce Commission cases that resulted in electric and gas rates going up for most Illinoisans.

But since rate cases are required by state law, utilities argue such expenditures are necessary costs of doing business.

A representative of Commonwealth Edison argued that the state's current regulatory process ensures that "no unreasonable or imprudent costs" are passed to customers.

"As a regulated utility, ComEd must demonstrate to the Illinois Commerce Commission that the investments it recovers from its customers are prudent and reasonable," spokesperson Shannon Breyer said in a statement. "In months-long processes in which consumer, public interest, environmental, and governmental groups participate actively, the ICC reviews our costs and rates."

In total, the proposed leg-

islation would reduce the amount of "recoverable" costs - meaning costs chargeable to customers - for the six largest Illinois utilities by \$45 to \$63 million annually, according to a CUB analysis.

Reforming what costs utility customers pay for has been a consideration for Illinois policymakers for several years.

In 2020 - amid the early stages of a bribery scandal at ComEd that would eventually lead to its CEO's conviction on felony charges and bring down former Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan - Gov. JB Pritzker laid out an eight-part outline for energy policy and ethics reform.

But one element of that plan has yet to come to fruition: a prohibition on utilities recovering costs for charitable contributions from ratepayers.

These charitable contributions, according to Pritzker's 2020 policy statement, were often used "to curry favor with elected officials."

"Utility company charitable donations should be exactly that - charitable," Pritzker's office said at the time. "They should come from the pockets of the corporation or their executives, not from the pockets of ratepayers."

The governor has not taken a position on the legislation pending in Springfield.

ComEd's Breyer told Capitol News Illinois the company is proud to support organizations that improve workforce training, protect the environment and provide social services.

The consumer advocates pushing for this legislation stressed that they are not

seeking to end utilities' charitable contributions, but rather to require that shareholders bear the cost.

Nationwide, Illinois is one of a few states that allow utilities to charge customers for charitable contributions.

The number of states reexamining what costs utilities can recover is growing. Last year, Colorado, Connecticut and Maine all passed laws banning certain expenses from being charged back to ratepayers - including charitable giving.

Feds allocate \$75 million for IL mine reclamation

A federal program is helping Illinois communities clean up legacy pollution sites.

The sites, which include strip mine site plagued by acid run-off, groundwater pollution, and subsidence, dot the landscape of Illinois, and need millions of dollars in funding for cleanup efforts.

The state counts nearly 600 unfunded mine reclamation projects - those will need more than \$150-million to reclaim.

In a visit to Springfield last week, federal officials joined Illinois leaders to announce another round of \$75 million to keep reclamation projects going.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources, which administers the Abandoned Mine Lands Program, says their goal is to complete 81 reclamation projects, estimated to cost \$68 million, over the next 5 years.

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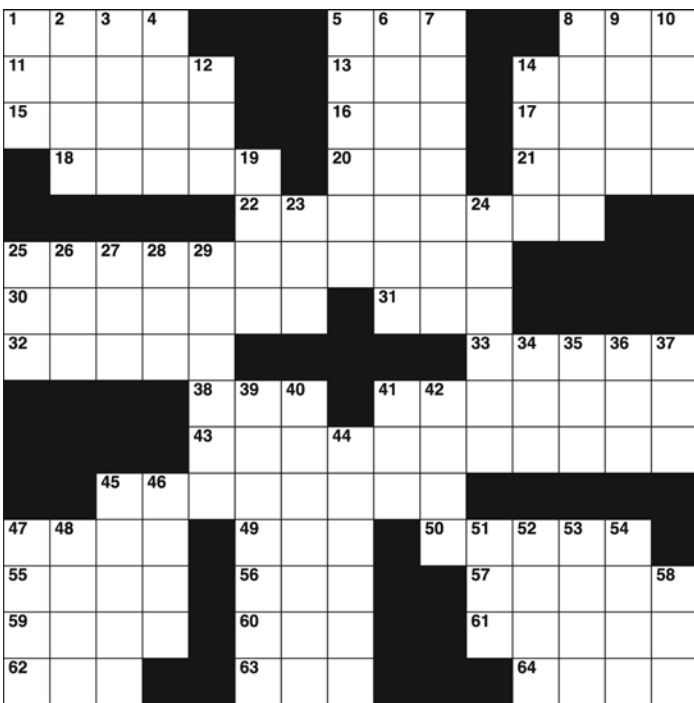
Mobile food pantry coming to So. Wilmington

Catholic Charities of Joliet will be hosting a mobile food pantry at St. Lawrence Church, 135 Rice Road, South Wilmington on Monday, Feb. 26, at 4 p.m.

Participants need to line up in the church parking lot. The mobile food pantry will use a "drive thru" method to distribute food.

Please clear space in your trunk or backseat so volunteers can load boxes of food directly into your vehicle.

Food is free to neighbors in need; no ID, proof of address or income is required.



- CLUES ACROSS**
- Golf scores
 - Shock therapy
 - Ballplayer's tool
 - Quench one's thirst
 - Female relatives of American war vets (abbr.)
 - Every one of two or more things
 - Member of Muslim people
 - Play
 - Type of cheese
 - Type of lounge chair
 - King Cole, musician
 - Fellows
 - North, Central and South
 - In an early way
 - Foes
 - Georgia rockers
 - Cryptocurrency
 - Narrow path along a slope
 - Disallow
 - Joyousness
 - Inaccessibility
 - Evoke emotions
 - Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea
 - Boston Celtic punk rockers (abbr.)
 - Sword
 - Actor Idris
 - Affirmative (slang)
 - Afflicted
 - One point north of northeast
 - Born of
 - Arabic name
 - Traumatic brain injury (abbr.)
 - Extremity
 - Post
- CLUES DOWN**
- Pacific Standard Time
 - Protruding ridge on nematodes
 - Indian king
 - Type of milk
 - One who brings home the bacon
 - More comprehensible
 - Connected with sense of touch
 - Red mineral
 - Breeze through
 - Therefore
 - Supplement with difficulty
 - Early kingdom of Syria
 - Satisfy
 - They confuse doctors (abbr.)
 - Brass instrument
 - Domesticated animal
 - Ribonucleic acid
 - Snake-like fish
 - Woman (French)
 - Economically-minded aircraft
 - When you hope to get somewhere
 - Tease
 - Actress Gretchen
 - Midway between northeast and east
 - Inoffensive
 - Yellowish cotton cloth
 - Consume
 - Does not tell the truth
 - Improved something
 - Spiritual leader
 - Abba __, Israeli politician
 - Fix
 - Evergreen tree genus
 - Swiss river
 - Prejudice
 - Major C. European river
 - Long, narrow strap
 - Male parent

Gas price up 50¢ since the new year

Average gasoline prices in Illinois have risen 12.1 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.48/g, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,378 stations in Illinois.

Prices in Illinois are 26.4 cents per gallon higher than a month ago and nearly 52¢/g since December. Compared to one year ago, prices stand 0.6 cents per gallon lower.

Coal City stations were showing the cheapest local price on Monday at \$3.30 and \$3.37/g. In Wilmington the price ranged from \$3.31 to \$3.49/g. Braidwood area stations were priced at \$3.59/g.

Bourbonnais motorists were paying \$3.15/g, Joliet \$3.25/g and Morris \$3.35/g.

"Roses are red, violets are blue, Valentine's is over, and gas prices are going anywhere but lower," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy.

"With Valentine's Day now behind us, we have officially entered the time of year when gas prices traditionally start their spring fling, but we've already seen the streak of consecutive increases in the national average hit four weeks. While the early start could also mean an early end, we still have as many as 8 weeks that gas prices typically increase, and anything can happen between now and then."

De Haan said one of the most critical elements to how much gas prices will climb is how quickly and effectively refiners can finish their pre-summer maintenance, start producing EPA-mandated summer gasoline and build up supply of it before Memorial Day.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Illinois was priced at \$2.91/g while the most expensive was \$4.69/g, a difference of \$1.78/g. The national average price of gasoline has risen 8.7 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.26/g.

The national average price of diesel has risen 10.0 cents in the last week and stands at \$4.09 per gallon.

Get new Illinois map

The Illinois Department of Transportation is offering a new Illinois Official Highway Map. The map includes route updates, detailed sections devoted to cities from Zion and Cairo as well as a feature that shows mileage between towns and marked route junctions to assist travelers as they explore Illinois.

"Paper maps remain an important resource and a valuable travel companion to keep in your vehicle," said Illinois Transportation Secretary Omer Osman.

The new map's cover features a brick section of Old Route 66 between Auburn and Chatham. The photograph was the winner of IDOT's employee map cover contest, submitted by Jeffrey Emrick, a condemnation engineer.

QR codes printed on the maps provide quick access to information on IDOT's Getting Around Illinois for travel conditions, Amtrak, the Office of Tourism's Enjoy Illinois campaign as well as historic sites and parks.

The Illinois Official Highway Map is paid for with funds from the Federal Highway Administration.

To request a map, contact DOT.maps@illinois.gov. Free copies are available at interstate rest areas and other IDOT facilities.

Notice of foreclosure for 202 Dusty Trail

PUBLIC NOTICE
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT
OF THE THIRTEENTH
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
GRUNDY COUNTY, ILLINOIS

GRUNDY BANK, an Illinois banking corporation,
Plaintiff,
V
DONNA J. GUINN, COUNTRY MEADOWS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, UNKNOWN OWNERS and NONRECORD CLAIMANTS,
Defendants.
NO. 2024 FC 12

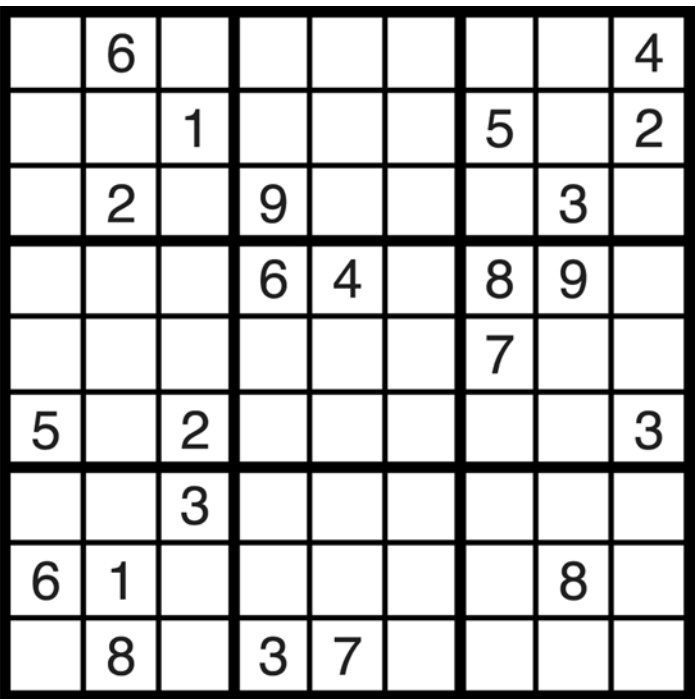
NOTICE OF PENDENCY OF ACTION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN TO UNKNOWN OWNERS and NONRECORD CLAIMANTS of the Complaint for Foreclosure filed in the above entitled case on January 24, 2024, and that they are named defendants in the above entitled case, and that the above entitled mortgage foreclosure suit is now pending in said court and the day on or after which a default may be entered against said defendants is March 7, 2024 and that the following information applies to said foreclosure proceeding:

- The name of the Court in which the action was brought, the case number and the name of the plaintiff are shown in the caption.
- Names of the title holder of record: Donna J Guinn.
- The common address or location of the real estate is: 202 Dusty Trail, Diamond, Illinois, and the legal description of the real estate is as follows:
UNIT 202 IN THE COUNTRY MEADOWS CONDOMINIUM AS DELINEATED ON A SURVEY OF PART OF THE SOUTHWEST QUARTER OF SECTION 36, TOWNSHIP 33 NORTH, RANGE 8 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN; WHICH SURVEY IS ATTACHED AS EXHIBIT A TO THE DECLARATION OF CONDOMINIUM RECORDED AS DOCUMENT NUMBER 382340 BY REFERENCE TO THAT SURVEY RECORDED JANUARY 23, 2001 AS DOCUMENT NUMBER 388200, SAID DECLARATION AND SURVEY EXHIBIT AS AMENDED FROM TIME TO TIME, TOGETHER WITH ITS UNDIVIDED PERCENTAGE INTEREST IN THE COMMON ELEMENTS, IN GRUNDY COUNTY, ILLINOIS (PIN: 06-36-357-004)
- An identification of the mortgage sought to be foreclosed is as follows:
Mortgagor: Donna J Guinn
Mortgagee: Grundy Bank
Mortgage Date: November 9, 2017
Recording Date: November 21, 2017 as Document No. 574058

CORRI TROTTER
Clerk of the Circuit Court
13th Judicial Circuit
Grundy County
Morris, Illinois
Jerry J. Justice #6313167
The Justice Law Firm, PC
511 E. Main Street
Streator, IL 61364
815/673-4344
jerry@thejusticelawfirm.com
8130-939399

Published in the Coal City Courier on Feb. 7, 14 and 21, 2024.



Elwood Fire Protection District accepting bids for 2024 GMC Yukon

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Elwood Fire Protection District will be accepting sealed bids for the following: The purchase of (1) 2024 GMC Yukon (TK10706) 4WD 4DR SLT. Bid specifications/packets are available for pick up only at the Elwood Fire Protection District Mon-Fri, 8:30 am- 2:30 pm.

Bids must be submitted by 9 am, February 27, 2024. Each submitted bid must be in a separate envelope, sealed, and clearly labeled with the following: "Bid for 2024 GMC Yukon". The bids may be mailed to: Elwood Fire Protection District 309 Mississippi Street Elwood, IL 60421, or dropped off in person 8:30 am - 2:30 pm, Mon-Fri. The Fire Protection District will not receive bids after the February 27, 2024, deadline. All bids shall be opened at the Fire District on February 28, 2024, at 9 am. The Elwood Fire Protection District reserves the right to reject any bids. Questions should be directed to Chief Locacius at clolocacius@elwoodfpd.com.

Published in the Free Press Advocate, Wednesday, Feb. 14 and Feb. 21, 2024.

District 209U accepting bids for waste disposal/recycling services

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice is hereby given that the Wilmington CUSD 209U, Will County, Wilmington, Illinois will receive bids for Waste Disposal/Recycling Services for the 2024-25, 2025-26, and 2026-27 school years. Bid specifications may be obtained upon request from the Office of the Superintendent, Wilmington CUSD 209U, 209U Wildcat Ct., Wilmington, IL 60481 Phone (815) 926-1751. Please call the Superintendent's office if you are interested in bidding. All bids are to be received in the Office of the Superintendent at the above address on or before 2:00 P.M. CDST, Friday, March 8, 2024, and will be opened publicly at that time. The Board of Education will make its decision at a later date and reserves the right to waive any technicalities or irregularities and to reject any or all bids or any part or parts thereof.

By and for the Board of Education
Wilmington CUSD 209U
Peggy Kunz, Secretary

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, February 14 and 21, 2024.

Attorney Wharrie files Gossen estate claim notice

PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS }
COUNTY OF GRUNDY }SS:
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE
THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
GRUNDY COUNTY - IN PROBATE
IN RE: THE ESTATE OF
DONALD E. GOSSEN,
Deceased
Case No. 2024PR8

**NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION
WILL AND CLAIMS**

Notice is given of the death of DONALD E. GOSSEN, Letters of office were issued on February 14, 2024, to DENNIS HUDSON, P.O. Box 1157, Kincaid, IL 62540, as Independent Executor, whose attorney is Larry G. Wharrie, 105 S. Broadway, Coal City, IL 60416.

Notice is given to all known and unknown heirs that 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 E-filing or delivering a Petition to Terminate to the Circuit Clerk.

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 <http://efile.illinoiscourts.gov/service-providers.htm> to learn more and to select a service provider. If you need additional help or have trouble E-filing, visit <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/FAQ/gethelp.asp> or talk to your local circuit clerk's office.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the office of the Clerk of the Probate Division, at Grundy County Courthouse, 111 East Washington St., Morris, IL 60450 or with the representative, or both, within 6 months from the date of issuance of letters of office. 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 had been filed.

Dated: Feb. 15, 2024.

DENNIS HUDSON,
Independent Executor
Larry G. Wharrie
The Wharrie Law Firm, P.C.
105 S. Broadway,
Coal City, IL 60416
Phone: 815-634-8990
ARDC #2996146

Published in the Coal City Courier on Feb. 21, 28 and March 6, 2024.

Attorney Wharrie files Hyde estate claim notice

PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS }
COUNTY OF GRUNDY }SS:
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE
THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
GRUNDY COUNTY - IN PROBATE
IN RE: THE ESTATE OF
EDDIE JAMES HYDE,
Deceased
Case No. 2024PR2

**NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION
WILL AND CLAIMS**

Notice is given of the death of EDDIE JAMES HYDE, Letters of office were issued on February 8, 2024, to JESSICA TOMASIC, 5048 Mary Louise Court, Morrow, OH 45152, as Independent Executor, whose attorney is Larry G. Wharrie, 105 S. Broadway, Coal City, IL 60416.

Notice is given to all known and unknown heirs that 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 E-filing or delivering a Petition to Terminate to the Circuit Clerk.

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 <http://efile.illinoiscourts.gov/service-providers.htm> to learn more and to select a service provider. If you need additional help or have trouble E-filing, visit <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/FAQ/gethelp.asp> or talk to your local circuit clerk's office.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the office of the Clerk of the Probate Division, at Grundy County Courthouse, 111 East Washington St., Morris, IL 60450 or with the representative, or both, within 6 months from the date of issuance of letters of office. 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 had been filed.

Dated: Feb. 9, 2024.

JESSICA TOMASIC,
Independent Executor
Larry G. Wharrie
The Wharrie Law Firm, P.C.
105 S. Broadway,
Coal City, IL 60416
Phone: 815-634-8990
ARDC #2996146

Published in the Coal City Courier on Feb. 14, 21 and 28, 2024.

Prom Dress Collection

Please donate your prom dresses at Whitmore Ace Hardware for our dress event on Saturday March 2nd at Godley Park District where all dresses are \$5.00 All students should be able to afford prom!

All students welcome

Melissa's Closet & Crystal's Jewelry Box has dressed over 4,500 students for prom

Please donate gently worn prom dresses purchases after 2019, purses, jewelry, shoes or any prom attire.

WILDCAT Music Ball

HOSTED BY THE WILMINGTON MUSIC BOOSTERS AT WHS

The evening of Friday, March 1st, from 7 to 9 PM.

ALL STUDENTS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT

Dress to impress or just put on your dancing shoes!

ALL PRE-K - 8TH GRADE ARE INVITED

SNACKS
RAFFLES
PHOTOS
FUN

ADULTS \$10 STUDENTS \$5

Color Guard will have corsages and boutonnieres for sale while supplies last.

Pre-register with the form below or get your tickets at the door!

WILDCAT MUSIC BALL PRE-REGISTRATION

Student's Name: _____

of children attending: _____

of adults attending: _____

Please submit this filled form along with the ticket fee to your child's school by Friday, February 23rd. Checks payable to Wilmington Music Boosters.

Total \$ amount included

CLASSIFIEDS

CLASSIFIED DEADLINES

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

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Fridays - 5 p.m.
Classified Word Ads
Mondays - noon



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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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3 wks. - \$25; 4 wks. - \$29*
\$1.00 Extra per line for bold or caps on classified
*plus .0399% with credit card

APARTMENTS FOR RENT

Wilmington, 2nd floor, efficiency/studio, \$575 month plus security, plus utilities, no pets, no smoking, Text 815-768-5020. cc6-9

ESTATE SALES

Estate Sale in Godley, 704 E Rose Ln. Sat. & Sun. February 24-25, 10AM-5PM. Cash only. No holds, must be taken same day. Holiday decor, collectibles, crystal glass wear, houseware, tools, furniture. cc8

FOR FREE

Free half grown beautiful kittens, nearly tame. Born in a woodpile. Well fed but needs new homes. Text for details and pictures. 815-458-6002. fr7-8

FOR RENT

Garage/Shop/Storage for rent. 50 x 20 building, private. 4 overhead doors. Peotone Road in Wilmington. Please call 708-274-6153. cc8-11

HELP WANTED

Coal City Area Club, hiring all positions. Gatekeepers, Lifekeepers, Area Maintenance and LG Supervisors. Applications @ our website or main office. 285 S. Broadway Street. www.coal-cityareaclub.net ch8-11

The City of Braidwood is accepting applications for a maintenance worker in the water department. Applications are available on our website at www.braidwood.us or at City Hall M-F 9:00 am - 5:00 pm. Please return applications to City Hall at 141 W. Main St. Braidwood, IL 60408 or by email to trumnurses@braidwood.us by March 8, 2024. ch8-9

HELP WANTED

Hiring General Manager. Oversees daily operations of the log yard. Duties: Liaise with customers (mainly in Asia) re needs and pricing on projects and orders; grade logs to customer specifications and distribute to factories; coordinate export logistics and prepare customs documents; maintain inventory records and track log movement in and out of yard; manage crew including scheduling and training as needed; serve as log buyer, compute and report to Chinese parent company all expenses related to the log yard operation (labor costs, equipment maintenance/repair); review and analyze log yard operation data to identify improvement and cost reduction opportunities. 5 years experience in the logging industry. 3 years experience with project and stakeholder management. Experience may be concurrent. Fluency in Chinese and Japanese. \$172,000-\$177,000 per year. Full time, 40 hrs per week. Email: herman@apexforest.com Herman Wong, HR. Sunway Forest Products, 32625 IL-53, Wilmington, IL. cc51-10

Now hiring sales assistant. Flexible hours. Will train in all job aspects. Call Ruth at 815-941-2800 for details. cc7-13

Will County Sportsmen's Club is looking for a part-time receptionist. Must be available on weekends. If you have any questions or inquiries, please call the office at 815-476-6561 or email wccs1946@gmail.com. cc6-9

HELP WANTED

Old man needs help. Somebody with a tiller to till my garden. 815-476-3645. ca7-8

Spectrum Nurses, Inc. is looking for Director of Nursing for Home Health. Experience preferred. Please call 630-771-9069 or 630-330-4590. ch8-19

The Braidwood Recreation Club is hiring for the 2024 Season; Concession Stand - Must be at least 16 years old. Operating hours are from Memorial Day Weekend to Labor Day; open daily 10:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. 7 days per week. Must be willing to work flexible hours and duties include stocking, cleaning, and customer service. Shifts will be approximately 5 hours each.

Custodians - Must be at least 16 years old and be open to a flexible schedule. Certified Lifeguards - All applicants must be CPR and Lifeguard Certified and be at least 16 years of age. Proof of Certification must be provided at time of application. Gate Guards - Average 5-hour shifts. Applications can be printed off the Club Website at braidwoodrecreationclub.com (on Club Documents page) and emailed or picked up at the office. Please call with questions (815) 458-2150. ch7-11

Offering CNA classes, days, evenings and weekends. Home health nurses needed. CNA instructor needed. Call for class dates, 630-771-1162 or 630-771-9069, www.speccnurses.com cc45-18

HELP WANTED

The City of Wilmington, IL seeks an experienced, team-oriented, and community-focused Building Permit Technician to process building permit applications, schedule inspections, and answer questions regarding the permit, inspection, and zoning processes and procedures. The wage range is \$25-\$28 per hour depending on experience. This is a full-time, non-exempt, permanent position. The City also offers an outstanding benefits package that includes medical, dental, vision insurance, wellness program, IMRF, vacation leave, paid holiday and personal time, sick leave, tuition reimbursement, and basic and optional life insurance. To apply, fill out an employment application form (www.wilmington-il.gov) and submit it with a cover letter and resume. Applications can be dropped off, mailed, or emailed to the City of Wilmington, Attn: Deputy City Clerk, 1165 S. Water Street, Wilmington, IL 60481 or via email to jjziller@wilmington-il.gov on or before March 4, 2024. A full job description can be found on the City's website at www.wilmington-il.gov. ch7-8

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LOST & FOUND

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MISCELLANEOUS

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

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REAL ESTATE

SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE OF 804 Laurel Avenue, Wilmington, IL 60481 (Residential). On the 29th day of February, 2024 to be held at 12:00 noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 904, Joliet, IL 60432, under Case Title: **Deutsche Bank National Trust Company, as Trustee for GSAMP Trust 2005-SD1, Mortgage Pass-Through Certificates, Series 2005-SD1** Plaintiff V. **Robin Veseli a/k/a Robin D. Veseli; et. al.** Defendant. Case No. **22 FC 0149** 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

REAL ESTATE

SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE OF 31563 E Frontage Rd, Wilmington, IL 60481 (Single Family Home). On the 14th day of March, 2024 to be held at 12:00 noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 904, Joliet, IL 60432, under Case Title: **SELECT PORTFOLIO SERVICING, INC. Plaintiff V. BEVERLY S. ROACH A/K/A BEVERLY ROACH; UNKNOWN OWNERS GENERALLY, AND NONRECORD CLAIMANTS.** Defendant. Case No. **23 FC 0513** 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: **KLUEVER AND PLATT, LLC.** 200 N. LASALLE ST. STE 1880 Chicago, Illinois 60601 P: 312-201-6765 F: 312-236-0514 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 21, 28 and March 6, 2024

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A Thousand Words Photography
385 N. Second Ave.
Coal City
Mandy Eaton
815-791-2913

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SERVICE & REPAIRS

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SITUATIONS WANTED

Wanted: Stories about local people, organizations and events. If you know a neighbor with an interesting hobby, collection or cause, give the editor a call at 1-815-634-0315 or 1-815-476-7966. tfn/47b

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WANTED
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Ph. 815-476-7966

REAL ESTATE

SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE OF 547 N English St, Braidwood, IL 60408 (Single Family Home). On the 14th day of March, 2024 to be held at 12:00 noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 904, Joliet, IL 60432, under Case Title: **U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, AS TRUSTEE FOR J.P. MORGAN MORTGAGE ACQUISITION CORP. 2005-WMC1, ASSET BACKED CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2005-WMC1** Plaintiff V. **JEFF URBAN A/K/A JEFF A URBAN, AMANDA URBAN A/K/A AMANDA C URBAN, MICHAEL ZWIEZEN, TONI PICCIOLA, INDIVIDUALLY AND AS SPECIAL ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ESTATE OF MICHAEL WILKEY; UNKNOWN OWNERS GENERALLY, AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS** Defendant. Case No. **22 FC 1272** 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

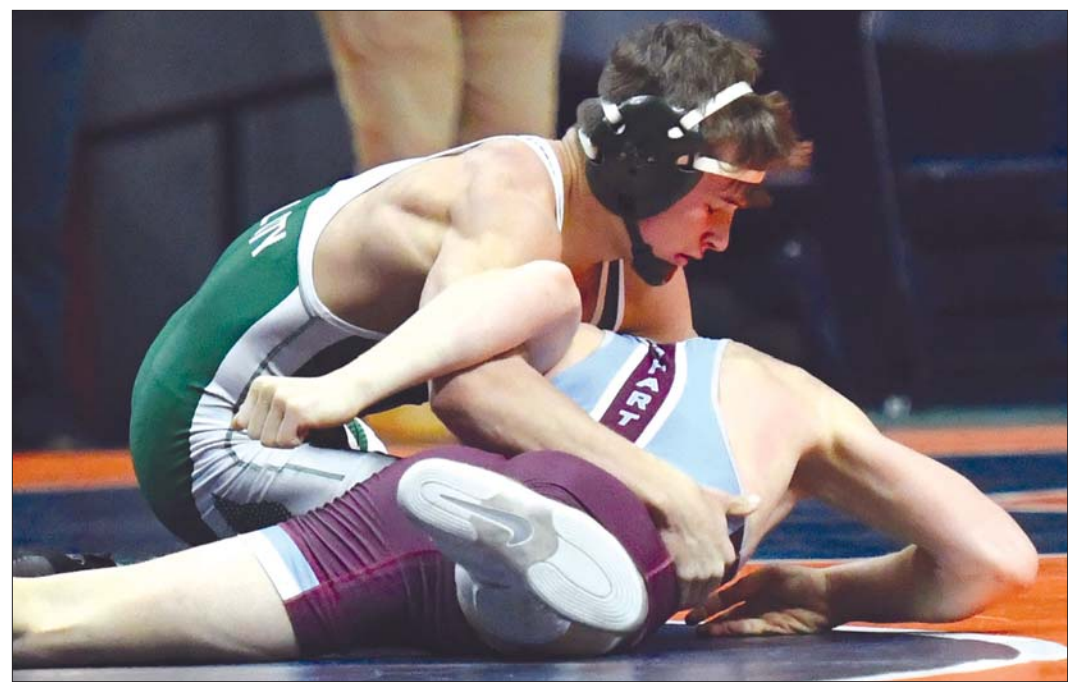
a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the purchaser of the unit, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and legal fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 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: **KLUEVER AND PLATT, LLC.** 200 N. LASALLE ST. STE 1880 Chicago, Illinois 60601 P: 312-201-6765 F: 312-236-0514 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 21, 28 and March 6, 2024

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SECOND IN STATE—At 126 pounds, Brody Widlowski made it to the championship bout on Saturday, settling for second place.



COAL CITY SENIOR Brant Wildowski ended up winning fifth place at 150 pounds during the state wrestling finals held Saturday.

Benson is a state champion

BY ERIC FISHER
PUBLISHER

The newest sign on the highway leading into Coal City may soon read “Coal City—Home of Class 1A 165 State Champion Landin Benson.”

The junior Coaler became the 17th wrestler in school history to claim a state champion on Saturday during the IHSA State Individual finals held in Champaign.

Benson (30-2) defeated Bowden Delaney from Tremont (45-2) by 3-1 decision to lead five medalists for Coal City. Finishing second was sophomore Brody Widlowski (126), in fifth place were freshman Cooper Morris (113) and senior Brant Widlowski (150) and in sixth place was freshman Owen Peterson (106).

The last time Coal City celebrated a state champion was in 1966 when Riley Kauzlaric brought home the gold.

Benson started with back-to-back pins of 3:49 and 1:36 to make it to the semifinal. He battled hard against Max Astacio from Woodstock Marian (39-8) who he edged 3-2. That put him in the Grand March Saturday night when he

outscored Delaney in front of a packed Assembly Hall crowd.

Also making the Grand March was Brody Widlowski (29-5) who was tested by Auburn's Anthony Ruzic (50-1) in the championship at 126 pounds. Ruzic was just too good, winning it 6-1.

Coalers Morris and Brant Widlowski took the long road to medal. Each endured six matches in order to finish fifth in their weight classes. Morris opened with a 6:00 fall before suffering a 7-2 setback in the quarterfinal. He entered the wrestlebacks where he fought his way back with a 1:25 fall, 9-1 major decision before falling to Marian's Anthony Alanis 9-3. He finished on a sweet note, beating Cohen Sweeley (Benton, 41-10) by 5-2 decision after losing to him 7-2 earlier during the quarterfinal.

Brant “Buddy” Widlowski (51-7) did away with his first round opponent in 1:00 fall. He needed a takedown against Grant Brewer (Oakwood, 41-6) in the second round but ended up losing by a slim 6-5 margin. The Coaler senior had wins of 12-6 and MD 14-4 in the wrestlebacks before getting outscored 8-2 by

Riverdale's Blake Smith (50-3). He got paired up with Brewer in the match to decide fifth place and this time Widlowski came out on top with a 5:37 pin.

Petersen (48-10) placed 6th after losing twice to Princeton's Augustus Swanson (35-3) including a 6-4 loss in the battle for fifth place. The Coal City freshman opened with a 5:40 fall, lost 8-5 to Swanson, and then pinned his next two opponents in 3:18 and 1:12. His consolation semifinal was close against Austin Hagevold (Marian, 37-18) which he lost 3-1.

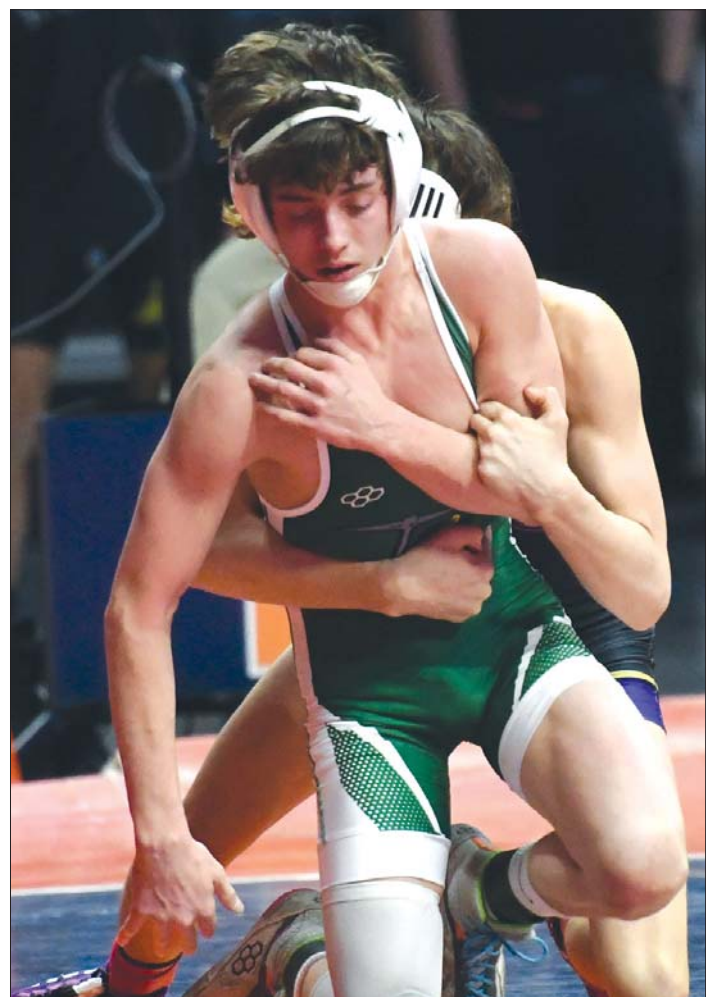
Six other Coalers qualified for the state finals but did not place. Wrestling at 120 was junior Culan Lindemuth who went 2-2 to end the individual season with a 35-18 record. Sophomore Noah Houston suffered to straight losses at 132 to end up 36-14 overall. Another sophomore, Mason Garner (138) finished the tournament with two wins and two losses to make his record 39-8.

At 144, sophomore Brock Finch (39-16) fell in the prelims 10-3 before getting a 3:24 fall in his second bout. He bowed out with a 5-3 loss to

Miles Corder (Sandwich) in the end. At 175, James Keigher (35-18) started with a 20-2 TF loss before recovering with a 10-6 decision over Jamal Lasenby (Kewanee, 18-7). In the next match he was shutout 6-0.

Sophomore 190-pounder Cade Poyner (44-11) won his first match by 3:26 fall. His second match ended in a 19-4 loss but he rallied in his third match by winning with a 1:55 fall. He was pegged in the next match in 3:46 by Danny Murphy (Canton, 47-4.)

While the individual season ends for the Coalers, they advanced in Dual Team by hosting the sectional on Tuesday (last night). If they beat Chicago (De La Salle) they travel to Bloomington on Friday for the Elite Eight quarterfinal round inside Grossinger Motors Arena. They have to win that 5 p.m. match against Port Byron (Riverdale) or Sandwich in order to wrestle among the Final Four on Saturday. The Dual team semifinal will be at 9 a.m. Saturday. Win or lose, the Coalers would then wrestle at 6 p.m. in either the championship or third place match.



ON THE ESCAPE—Coal City's Cooper Morris stands up for an escape while battling for fifth place at 113 during the state finals.



LADY COALER Makayla Henline keeps control of the ball while being pressured by a Manteno defender during Thursday's regional championship game.

Lady Coalers lose title game to Manteno

The Coal City girls basketball team came up four points shy of winning a regional championship on Thursday against Manteno.

The Lady Coalers lost 30-27, ending their season with a 23-4 record. But give them credit for limiting the hosts to just two points in the final quarter as they battled their way back from a 28-19 deficit to pull within three points.

Coal City couldn't seem to get its offense clicking, scoring in single digits during each of four quarters. Their worst was the second period when they

managed just three points. That hurt as they lost the lead and never recovered.

They shot 2-for-26 in three-points attempts and 8-for-32 in two-point range.

Leading the Lady Coalers in scoring was Mia Ferrais with 10 points and six steals. Abby Gagliardo contributed eight points and six rebounds. Kylee Kennell scored five points and had five steals. Makayla Henline chipped in with two points and five rebounds. Emma Rodriguez also had two points.



QUICK PASS—Coal City senior Abby Stiles dishes off the ball during Thursday's regional championship game played at Manteno.

Coal City Coalers Team Pride

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We will have a new Internet winner each week throughout the school year, so watch the Courant each week for the lucky Coaler Fan Winner.

“Support Coal City High School Athletes”

CCMS netters down Bishop McNamara

The Coal City eighth grade volleyball team defeated Bishop McNamara on Tuesday, 25-19 and 25-18.

Lady Coaler Ashlyn Siron led with nine points, two aces, three kills, 10 assists and three digs. Maggie Carlson had eight points, two aces, one kill and one dig. Victoria Morales had eight points, three aces, three kills and one dig.

Lilly Gerrish played great defense for Coal City with two kills and six digs.

The Coal City seventh grade volleyball team defeated Bishop McNamara 25-11 and 25-9.

Lady Coaler Avery Male was hot at the serving line with six aces and a total of 16 points. Male also helped with 13 assists and one kill. Ava Mills and Kenlee Bauldauf each had seven points. Bauldauf also had four aces and one dig while Mills had three aces and one kill. Emma D'Orazio played a big game at the net for Coal City with six kills and two digs.

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