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egg the town



Lady Coalers go  
4-4 in ICE play



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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10, 2021 | A FREE PRESS NEWSPAPER

## Illinois Central buses will keep rolling in Unit 1

BY ANN GILL  
EDITOR

At a cost of \$7.4 million, Illinois Central School Bus will continue as the Unit 1 School District's transportation carrier.

The three year contract will add about \$1.2 million in additional transportation costs, according to Shawn Hamilton, the board's vice president and member of the district's Finance Committee.

Unit 1 announced in January that it would accept bids for transportation services, the carrier to provide the district with regular, special and vocational education and extra-curricular transports.

With the current contract set to expire in June, the board sought to execute a provision that would extend the terms of the existing agreement, but the carrier denied the request.

Although the company did not agree to

extend the terms of the current contract, it's apparent Illinois School Bus didn't want to cease its relationship with the district as it was one of two carriers to seek the district's business with a formal bid submission.

As noted, the cost of services increased with the new contract and the first year came in at \$2,417,634.90. The costs will increase by 3% in each of the following contract years. So, the cost to transport students for the 2022-2023 school year is set at \$2,490,189.62 and \$2,564,941.51 for the 2023-2024 academic year.

Illinois Central was the low bidder beating out First Student who had a relatively close bid, according to Unit 1 Superintendent Dr. Kent Bugg.

The three year contract was unanimously approved by the Board of Education on a recommendation from the district's Transportation Committee.

But prior to that vote, Hamilton chimed in that there were a couple of things that needed

to be said prior to approval.

He began by noting the Transportation Committee, that includes board members Robert Bianchetta and Mary Gill, had addressed some important questions through the bid process, that focused on concerns he and fellow board and Finance Committee member Quint Harmon have had in the past.

"I am very thankful for the questions you asked in the committee, because it was very important that we got the bidders to go on record," Hamilton said in regard to the costs outlined in the bid being fully turn key.

The company, he said, confirmed the costs for which the contract is based include all equipment, personnel, vehicle maintenance, storage facilities and fuel.

Hamilton said the information is important for a number of reasons, because as he said, "the board has a long history of taking the financial high road," with the carrier.

"What I mean by that, when fuel costs were

escalating the current vendor wanted to renegotiate that portion of the contract and we did," he said.

Hamilton went on to point out that when the district found efficiencies by changing hazardous bus routes and eliminating others, the carrier asked to renegotiate the contract and requested to maintain 35% of said route, and the company's newest bid includes being paid that 35% for eliminated routes.

He went on to say that when the company was faced with collective bargaining issues only a couple of days before the school year, district administration had to quickly research and scramble for transportation alternatives unless some concessions could be made.

"If that's not holding the district hostage before a school year, I don't know what it is," Hamilton said.

He went on to remind the board and public

SEE BUSES, PAGE 2



THE UNIT 1 Board of Education intends to sell a 31,230-square foot parcel of land it owns at the corner of North Broadway and East Third Street. The site originally purchased by the district for use as a parking lot for the elementary school located across the street.

## Property for sale

Unit 1 seeking bids  
for vacant  
North Broadway site

BY ANN GILL  
EDITOR

The Unit 1 Board of Education intends to sell a parcel of vacant property, and the minimum selling price is \$80,000.

Located on the southeast corner of North Broadway and East Third Street are four platted lots the district intends to dispose of by sealed bid.

At the close of its March 3 meeting, the board adopted a resolution declaring the property unnecessary, unsuitable and inconvenient for a school and unnecessary for the uses of the district.

The resolution clears the way for the district to sell the 31,230 square foot property to the highest bidder.

An appraisal of the property was completed in 2016 that placed the value at \$78,000.

Superintendent Dr. Kent Bugg said the board place an escalator on the price rather than go to the expense of an updated appraisal.

The district has held ownership of the property for more than two decades, the site originally purchased for use as a parking lot for the elementary school located across the street.

At the time of the land purchase the elementary school housed five grade levels, but now with the current structure of the elementary as second and third grade building, coupled with safety concerns of people crossing

Broadway, Bugg said the board determined it would not be utilizing the land and it was in the best interest of the district to sell it.

A legal notice appearing in this week's edition outlines the bid process, noting sealed bids will be accepted until 2 p.m. on March 31 and the highest bidder, should one be selected, named at the April 7 meeting of the board.

Individuals interested in the terms and conditions of sale can obtain contact information posted in the legal notice that appears on page 3.



Courtesy photo

TARYN TROTTER HAS BEEN named principal of Coal City Elementary School starting with the 2021-2022 academic year.

## Trotter to assume principal's post

STAFF REPORT

Taryn Trotter will be moving to a new school building later this year to serve as principal of Coal City Elementary School.

Currently in her third year as assistant principal and athletic director at Coal City Middle School, Trotter was named to oversee the second and third grade building starting with the 2021-2022 school year.

Trotter will assume the post from Jennifer Kenney who after three years as elementary principal, is transferring back to the high school to serve as co-principal alongside Chris Spencer.

It was announced last month that the Board of Education picked Spencer to take over the role of superintendent when Dr. Kent Bugg retires in June 2022. For the next nine months he will be mentoring Bugg, so Kenney is moving back to the high school where she began her tenure providing administrative support in the building.

The administrative transitions announced last month, also included an additional role for Trotter who will become the district's transportation director in July.

Trotter served as assistant principal and mentor coordinator for District 60C at Saratoga School in Morris prior to joining the Unit 1 staff. She started at Saratoga in 2002 as a fifth grade teacher and moved into administration in 2012.

A life-long resident of the area, Trotter attended Coal City Schools and earned a bachelor's degree from Carthage College and a master's in educational

SEE TROTTER, PAGE 2

## Grundy to host mass vaccination clinic

STAFF REPORT

Grundy County will soon have an on-going mass COVID-19 vaccination site.

The state announced Monday afternoon it would be deploying members of the Illinois National Guard to support vaccination teams in two counties, one being Grundy.

"I'm proud to deploy Illinois National Guard teams and additional state resources to Grundy and Rock Island to ensure residents in these counties can receive their vaccines as efficiently and equitably as possible," Gov. JB Pritzker said.

The former Shabbona School at 725 School St., in Morris will serve as the vaccination site and it will be managed by the Grundy County Health Department and supported through the Illinois National Guard and contractual providers. The site will be operational up to six days each week, by appointment, to those persons eligible in the current phase.

Michelle Pruum, the county's public health administrator, said her

"THE GRUNDY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT IS GRATEFUL FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE ILLINOIS NATIONAL GUARD TO ASSIST IN LOCAL VACCINATION EFFORTS. THROUGH THIS PARTNERSHIP, ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ARE EXPECTED TO ARRIVE IN GRUNDY SO AS TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO CAN RECEIVE COVID-19 VACCINE EACH WEEK."

MICHELLE PRUUM

GRUNDY COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH ADMINISTRATOR

department is working with the state and Illinois National Guard leadership to finalize details, and initial appointment dates will be released soon with priority given to those residents and members of the workforce who have already submitted an interest survey and have been awaiting an appointment time.

The site is intended to expedite the delivery and administration of vaccine to local residents, and then be available as a regional mass vaccination site.

Appointments scheduled at the First Christian Church location will still be honored at the church at the expect-

ed time. The mass vaccination site is in addition to the clinic set up at the church.

Prior to Monday's announcement, the health department reported it was anticipating an allocation of 1,900 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine in the next two weeks, roughly 19% of what is needed to meet current demand.

The health department reported late last week there are more than 10,000 people on the county's waiting list.

"If you are still waiting to hear from us regarding an appointment, you are among the majority," Pruum stated.

In order to get on the county's vaccine list, individuals who live or work in the county and are eligible to receive the vaccine as part of Phases 1a, 1b or 1b-plus must complete the on-line interest survey at grundyhealth.com. As of March 5, the department was contacting residents who had completed the survey on or before Jan. 15.

Weekly, each local health department is provided a maximum allowable allocation by the Illinois Department of Public Health [IDPH], and Grundy County consistently requests the full allocation.

The anticipated allocation for this week is 900 first doses of the Moderna vaccine and 1,000 doses of the same were slated to arrive Monday.

With an increase in allocation, Pruum said she is hopeful the health department can move through the waiting list at a much more rapid pace.

She adds the health department is eager to be able to offer an appointment to everyone.

A local effort has been underway to

SEE VACCINATION, PAGE 2



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# Coal City donating vehicle to Pro-Act unit

BY ANN GILL  
EDITOR

The black Chevy Impala parked behind the Coal City Police Department has seen its time on the road and it will soon be discarded by the village, however it will continue to serve as a law enforcement vehicle. Coal City trustees declared the 2006 vehicle as surplus property and intend to donate the vehicle to Grundy County's new Pro-Act unit, and the village's police department as

signed on to participate. Led by the Grundy County Sheriff's Department, the Pro Act Unit is comprised of six police units from across Grundy County with assistance provided by the state's attorney's office. The unit was conceived by Sheriff Ken Briley on the concept of working cooperatively to combat the multi-jurisdictional trafficking of illegal narcotics, controlled substances, dangerous drugs, guns, illegal street gang activity and other crimes.

The purpose of the unit, that officially began operations on March 1, will be to coordinate the enforcement of drug, gun and gang related laws without regard to jurisdictional boundaries within Grundy County and to cooperate with local, state, and federal enforcement groups with particular emphasis in cooperation and joint parenting of operations with the Metropolitan Area Narcotics Squad [MANS]. The unit will perform law enforcement operations on a county-

wide level to combat crime, and assist member agencies on major crimes, routine assistance and special duties as assigned. Additionally, the unit will focus on investigating drug related offenses and other offenses when the use of uniformed personnel is not safe, effective or efficient. Members of the Pro Act Unit could may also be called to handle the execution of warrants and surveillance as necessary. Along with the donation of the used police vehicle, the village made

an initial \$500 contribution to establish the unit and will provide, as time allows, an officer to work with the group. The donation of a vehicle deemed as surplus property is not new to the village. In the past it has provided squad cars to the Grundy Area Vocational Center's criminal justice program and donated a vehicle to the Morris Hospital and Healthcare Centers security team in memory of long-time police chief Dennis Neary.



Courtesy photo

**GANNON'S BEEN EGGED**—Grundy County Heroes & Helpers, Inc. were sent out to bring a bit of spring to the Carbon Hill home of three-year-old Gannon Struck. The non-profit organization is hosting a You've Been Egged fundraiser through March 28. For a nominal fee, an individual can send the organization out to egg a yard with filled or unfilled Easter eggs. Proceeds from the event will be used for the annual Shop with Hero Christmas event.

## Grundy County Heroes & Helpers egg the town

### Easter fundraiser supports holiday shopping event

The non-profit Grundy County Heroes & Helpers, Inc. is egging the county with colorful Easter eggs.

Egging's started Feb. 27 and will continue through March 28, as the You've Been Egged, spring fundraiser surprises individuals and families throughout Grundy County.

Community members have an opportunity to order candy filled or unfilled eggs and designate a recipient to have their lawn egged.

The egging's begin at \$25—based on number and type of eggs requested—and include signage that lets the recipient know they have been egged for charity. All proceeds go towards Grundy County Heroes and Helpers 2021 Shop with a Hero Christmas event.

"We have had to get really creative with our fundraisers due to COVID 19," said Tammy Moran, of Coal City, a GCHH board member and co-treasurer.

"This is a fun way to bring some Easter joy to families throughout our community while also helping towards our big event in December. We appreciate everyone who is participating," Moran said.

There is plenty of time to join in on the fun. You've Been Egged fundraising forms can be found on the organization's Facebook page at Grundy County Heroes & Helpers Inc.

or by contacting the organization via phone at 815-575-9525 or by e-mail to tammy@gchhinc.org.

Filled Easter eggs were generously donated by Exelon Nuclear's Dresden Generating Station. Servpro of Morris and Ottawa also generously donated Easter candy to fill eggs.

Continuing on the Easter celebration, GCHH is proud to support fire protection district's throughout Grundy County as the GCHH Easter Bunny will be making a meet and greet appearance at several departments.

Residents are invited to drop by and say hello to their local firefighter heroes and the Easter Bunny on Saturday, March 27 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Mazon Fire Protection District and 2-4 p.m. at the Morris Fire Protection & Ambulance District.

The bunny will be out again on Saturday, April 3 with stops at the Gardner Fire Protection District from 10 a.m. - noon and Coal City Fire Protection District Station 1 from 2-4 p.m.

There is no cost to take part in the Easter Bunny visits, cameras are welcome and everyone attending is required to wear a mask.

GCHH's 2021 Shop with a Local Hero partners local children in need with community heroes from local police, fire and emergency medical service departments, as well as the Grundy County Sheriff's Office, for a shopping spree and Christmas celebration event Santa Claus.

## No waivers granted, students will take annual assessments

BY ANN GILL  
EDITOR

The Illinois State Board of Education had hoped to obtain waivers for state testing, but the U.S. Department of Education announced that state assessments would proceed this spring.

The annual assessment tests were waived during the 2019-2020 school year due to the pandemic and the state had advocated for blanket waivers of the federally required assessments this spring.

The communication shared by the state board did note the federal agency would make waivers available for accountability, and it would apply for the maximum flexibility available.

Tammy Elledge, director of curriculum and instruction for Coal City schools, reports the district awaits more guidance on whether accountability will be lifted. In the meantime, the district will begin gearing up for testing.

Students in third through eighth grade will take the Illinois Assessment of Readiness exam between March 15 and May 14.

The Illinois Science Assessment is slated to be given to students in grades five, eight and 11 between March 15 and May 14.

High school juniors are slated to take the SAT on April 13.

"While testing will be a challenge this

spring, we welcome the feedback we can obtain from doing it," Elledge said.

In other matters from the board's March 3 meeting:

- Lite Construction was awarded a mechanical project bid for work to be completed this summer at a total cost of \$960,437

- At the recommendation of the district's chief business official, the board approved entering into a three-year agreement with MNW Telecom for internet access.

- Board members accepted a \$737 donation from the Knights of Columbus for use by the elementary school special education program.

- The board approved filing of the quarterly drop out report with the Regional Office of Education for the quarter ending December 2020.

- The board accepted the resignations of high school math teacher Colleen Wagner, effective at the close of the current school year.

- A retirement request submitted by Celeste Sheridan, curriculum and assessment secretary, was accepted effective Oct. 1.

- The resignation of temporary elementary school custodian Hannah Kochenberger was accepted, and the employment of Matthew Ramirez was approved for that position.

Additionally, the resignation of mid-

dle school custodian Alan Oder was approved, as was the employment of Michael Rivera to the vacant post.

- Mary Macaluso was hired as a three-hour per day cafeteria server at the elementary school and Erica Rich for a three-hour server position at the high school.

- Full time one-on-one aide Lisa Hootselle was transferred from the middle school to the elementary school.

- Taylor Meents was approved as sophomore softball coach, Zach Edgar as volunteer football coach, and Bob McGuinn as volunteer wrestling and freshmen football coach.

- Board members adopted a resolution authorizing the honorable dismissal of Matthew Perry and Kari Lukancic.

- Two Lewis University students will be completing their student teaching requirements in the district this spring. Catherine Burke has been assigned to work with special education teacher Lindsey Watters at the middle school and Kaitlyn Bloom will be working with fourth grade teacher Becky Housman and special education co-teacher Angela Roudis at the intermediate school.

The next meeting of the Board of Education is scheduled for 6 p.m., Wednesday, April 7 in the district's administration center.

## Cop calls

STAFF REPORT

In the first two months of the year the Coal City Police Department's activity log exceeded 1,070—a combination of calls for service and officer-initiated activity.

The department's monthly report to the Coal City Village Board shows total officer activity in February at 469, down 22% from the prior month. There were fewer calls for service—129 compared to 201 in January—and a reduction in officer-initiated activity down from 402 to 293 in February. Of the total calls last month, 192 required a report.

During the month officers conducted 78 traffic stops and issued 16 traffic citations, they responded to 10 accidents and issued five citations for violations of municipal ordinances. Additionally, there were five criminal charges leveled in February.

## Vaccination

address the state allocation of vaccines and advocating for more vaccine to be allotted to the county health department, and it appears from Monday's announcement that endeavor—championed by local legislators, school and county officials—has been successful.

"The Grundy County Health Department is grateful for the support of the Illinois National Guard to assist in local vaccination efforts. Through this partnership, additional resources are

expected to arrive in Grundy so as to increase the number of individuals who can receive COVID-19 vaccine each week," Pruim said. "The Illinois National Guard will be working alongside the Grundy County Health Department, partner agencies and local volunteers to safely and effectively administer doses as they become available to Grundy County."

To date, the health department has received 320 first doses of the Pfizer vaccine with the initial 120 doses provided by a neighboring county. Grundy has received 5,000 first doses of the Moderna vaccine and has yet

## Smith named to UIC fall dean's list

Zachary Smith was recently recognized for academic excellence at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Smith, of Coal City, was named to the College of Applied Health and Sciences dean's list for a third consecutive semester having achieved a perfect 4.0 grade point average during the fall 2020 semester. His perfect scores during the fall 2019 and spring 2020 semesters also earned him dean's list recognition.

A sophomore at UIC, Smith is enrolled in the Department of Kinesiology and Nutrition studying kinesiology—the study of human movement.

## Buses

that at the start of the pandemic, the carrier requested and the board agreed to continue to pay them.

And with that in mind, he said it was after that approval the district found out the carrier was granted a Paycheck Protection Program loan.

In a published report from December it notes the parent company North America School Bus, based in Joliet, received a \$10 million PPP loan from the Small Business Administration.

With all of that on the table, Hamilton again commended the committee for vetting the vendors saying, "I know it's good they are on record, it's good that it's clear and it's good that we will know as a board we will never be put in a situation again to have to consider taking the high road."

Representatives from Illinois Central were in atten-

dance at the meeting, but did not respond to Hamilton's comments.

Illinois Central has provided the district with transportation services for more than 15 years.

As noted in the meeting, student transportation represents the district's largest annual expenditure outside of payroll.

## Trotter

leadership from the University of St. Francis.

An amended contract for Trotter was approved by the Board of Education at its March 3 meeting.

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to receive or be allocated any of the recently approved one-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

Roughly 6.65% or 3,391 of the county's 50,000-plus population is fully vaccinated, a number that includes those who have been vaccinated in Grundy, as well as outside counties based on vocation and other factors.

Over the next several weeks, as vaccine allocation increases, health department staff will be reaching out via e-

mail or phone to schedule appointments. E-mails will come from Grundy Health Department Vaccine Information.

As of March 5, the county's test positivity rate was 5.9% and Region 2 had a reported rate of 2.7%.

Pruim noted that for the first time since mid-October, the county was off the state's COVID warning list as its test positivity rate for the week ending Feb. 27 dropped below 8%.

**Assumption Church** **Saturday, March 20**  
**Drive Thru Dinner** **5-7 p.m.**

Pizza burger meal with pasta salad, glazed carrots, chips and cookies \$10.  
Hot dog meal with chips and cookies \$4  
Contact Judith Kaluzny 815-325-8969 or Katy Kaluzny 815-474-4977 for pre-order meal tickets

**This is strictly a drive through meal. Present your ticket and we will deliver your meal to your car in the Berst Hall parking lot.**  
180 S. Kankakee St. Coal City

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**EARLY VOTING SITE - GRUNDY COUNTY COURTHOUSE**  
**CONSOLIDATED ELECTION - APRIL 6, 2021**

Early Voting will begin on Thursday, February 25, 2021 and continue through Monday, April 5, 2021

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

TIME - Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (extra hours noted below)  
Saturday March 6 9:00 a.m. to Noon  
Tuesday March 9 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Saturday March 27 9:00 a.m. to Noon  
Tuesday March 30 8:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.  
Thursday April 1 8:30 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.  
Friday April 2 CLOSED - SPRING HOLIDAY

Please call the Grundy County Clerk's office at (815) 941-3222 - Option 1, if you have any questions.

**Please Note: Face masks required and cell phones are not allowed in the Grundy County Courthouse.**

KAY T. OLSON  
GRUNDY COUNTY ELECTION AUTHORITY

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Display Advertising: Thursday, 2 p.m.  
Classified & Public Notices: Thursday 5 p.m.

**Deadline for The Free Press Advocate, Braidwood Journal and Coal City Courier**  
News and Advertising: Monday, noon

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

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Eric D. Fisher, publisher  
Ann Gill, editor

# In the finals

## Third grade teacher in the running for Golden Apple Award

BY ANN GILL  
EDITOR

It was another exciting Tuesday morning at Coal City Elementary School, as Amy Foley and her third grade students hosted some rather special guests.

Exactly two weeks after announcing this year's finalists in the Golden Apple Awards, representatives of the selection committee visited the elementary school yesterday [March 9] to observe the nominated teacher in her classroom.

As previously reported, Foley is one of 32 finalists out of 708 nominated teachers from across the state in the running for one of the 10 awards to be given later this spring.

"This is a very prestigious award in Illinois, and given to those that have a long lasting impact on their students lives and school community, and I couldn't see anyone more fitting of that award than Amy," principal Jennifer Kenney said in introducing Foley for recognition by the Unit 1 Board of Education.

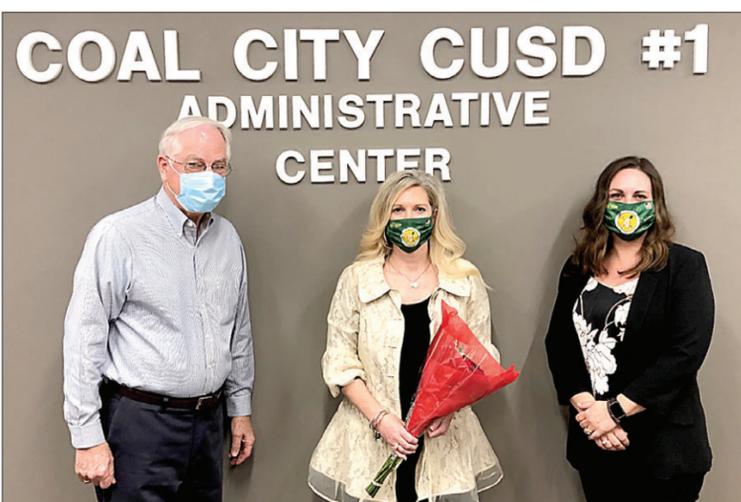
"This year especially I have really seen her shine. She has done some things I am astonished by," Kenney told the board, sharing how she made sure the class Elf on the Shelf had a hearing aid to match one worn by a student in the class.

"She takes care of her kids, and goes above and beyond," said the principal, who also had the opportunity to share these qualities and others during an on-site interview with the award's selection committee.

The evaluators also spent some time during their Tuesday visit talking with a handful of Foley's colleagues and classroom parents, as well as current and former students.

Upon receiving notification that she had been selected as a finalist, Foley said she was completely shocked. "Never in my wildest dreams did I think I would be nominated, let alone get this far in the process," she said.

The nomination process began in August, and from that initial group of teachers the selection committee sent



Coal City ELEMENTARY School teacher Amy Foley [center] is one of 32 educators from across the state to be selected as a finalist in the prestigious Golden Apple Awards. This spring 10 recipients will be selected for the awards that include a \$5,000 cash prize and one semester paid sabbatical to attend Northwestern University. Foley was recognized during the March 3 meeting of the Unit 1 Board of Education by president Ken P. Miller [left] and elementary school principal Jennifer Kenney [right].

Courtesy photo

out applications to be completed by the nominated teacher.

Foley said she was so taken back to receive the application, she questioned the principal if it was real or spam.

With the encouragement of Kenney and her former building principal, Chris Spencer, Foley set out to complete and submit the application.

Through that process, Foley said it made her stop and think about her career in education and how far she has come, a career boosted by those she has worked alongside of and the administrators she has worked for.

"Every student I've had, and every person I've worked with has made me the teacher I am today. My goal has always been to treat my students like my own, and to deliver the type of learning that fits their needs."

This year, Foley had the unique

opportunity to loop with her students. When Kenney asked last year if she would move along with the class to third grade she jumped at the chance.

"The most unique thing about it is we've gone through the pandemic together, so it's nice to see where they've come. I remember what they were before [the pandemic] and I remember the struggles they had, and we are so pumped for Thursday [the return to full day instruction] that we can't wait for that," said Foley.

One thing that appears to have caught the attention of the Golden Apple committee is Foley's way of using current events to engage her students in their learning.

The committee shared, "to help her students better understand the importance of civic engagement, Foley leveraged the 2020 election and used it

to educate her students about their rights and responsibilities as citizens. After discussing the fundamentals of government, Foley created an online ballot and provided students with a privacy screen to place around their Chromebooks to simulate a voting booth. After the votes were cast, an all-school announcement was made about who the students had elected. Foley emphasized that regardless of who won, we all need to do the best job they can for all Americans."

Further noting that after the exercise, numerous parents sent messages relaying how excited their children were to be able to "vote" in the election and how engaged they were in the election as a result.

"I've said all year long, and Jen Kenney has said it many times as well, you've been a tremendous leader at the elementary school especially through a tough time. Your goal has always been, let's do what's best for our kids, so I just want to let you know how much I appreciate this and how I am looking forward to this process moving forward," Superintendent Dr. Kent Bugg, told Foley during board's recognition.

The teacher expressed her appreciation for the kind words and recognition.

"I am very, very humbled by this. When you do what you love you don't expect to get recognized, and I am very thankful for it and representing Coal City is something I am excited for," Foley said.

Recipients of the award receive a \$5,000 cash prize, a paid semester sabbatical at Northwestern University, and appointment as a Golden Apple mentor.

Foley said being selected to participate in the process, being selected as a finalist has been an honor and to witness the excitement in her students upon receiving word of her selection, "warmed her heart."

"This award has helped me realize the impact I am making. I've heard from former students that I am the reason they became a teacher, and honestly, there is nothing greater than that," she said.

## Cinotto helps raise \$1.4 million for Children's Hospital

IOWA CITY, IA—Gabrielle Cinotto, of Coal City, was one of more than 1,400 current University of Iowa students who participated in the 27th annual student-led Dance Marathon which raised more than \$1.4 million for the University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital.

Cinotto, a 2020 graduate of Coal City High School, is a freshman at the university.

The final tally raised by the students—who were inspired by the theme of this year's Dance Marathon: "Rise with Resilience"—was \$1,422,443.27, a total which pushed the amount of support generated by Dance Marathon over the course of its history to more than \$31 million.

"A very popular spark word this year has been resilience," DM27 executive director Elizabeth Jackson told the University of Iowa's Daily Iowan. "But for our families, they've been resilient as they received a diagnosis, got treatment, entered remission, or lost their child. The epitome of resilience is to have to go through all those challenges."

Dance Marathon's Big Event is the celebration of UI students' year-round dedication to the children and families who have received treatment at the University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital. Dancers and Dance Marathon leadership fundraise for 365 days to reach their individual fundraising goal.

Dance Marathon works to create special projects to provide emotional and financial support to families treated at the UI Stead Family Children's Hospital with an emphasis on pediatric cancer and bone marrow transplant patients. It committed \$5 million of support to the construction of the UI Stead Family Children's Hospital where the 11th floor is named the University of Iowa Pediatric Oncology Unit.

## Unit 1 Students of the Week Snow, a bit of rain and warmer temperatures



**DREDAN RICH**  
Intermediate School

**LEAH JENSEN**  
Intermediate School

**KATHERINE VERONDA**  
Intermediate School

**KADEN BROWN**  
Intermediate School



**HAILIE KING**  
Elementary School

**OLIVIA VIRONDA**  
Elementary School

**KAMDEN GABEHART**  
Elementary School

**JOSHUA SOCHA**  
Elementary School



**JONNY MITCHELL**  
Elementary School

**LIAM JONES**  
Early Childhood Center

**MASON HUBBS**  
Early Childhood Center

**ADDISON BLAKE**  
Early Childhood Center

### STAFF REPORT

The monthly climatological data summary from the Grundy County Emergency Management Agency's [GCEMA] weather data division provides an unique overview of the county's weather from the month of February, a month that saw below zero temperatures and 11 days of measurable snowfall.

According to data collected at the GCEMA's office in Morris, 12.9 inches of snow fell last month bringing the seasons snowfall total to 26.6 inches. In addition to the snowfall, the county recorded .96 inches of liquid precipitation putting the total for the year at 2.89 inches.

As for February's temperatures, the daily average was 18

degrees. The coldest day of the month was recorded at minus-10 on Feb. 7. In total there were nine below zero days, but warmer temperatures blew in and the month closed out at 53 degrees as recorded on Sunday, March 28.

### Attorney Black files Grenell estate claim notice

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
GRUNDY COUNTY - IN PROBATE  
No. 2021 P 18

In the Matter of the Estate of John Hall Grenell, Deceased

### CLAIM NOTICE

NOTICE is given to creditors of the death of John Hall Grenell. Letters of office as Independent Administrator were issued to Teri Wargo, 1675 Schubert Dr., Morris, IL 60450, whose attorney is TIMOTHY J. BLACK, BLACK & BLACK, 201 Liberty Street, Suite 211, Morris, Illinois 60450.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Court at Grundy County Courthouse, 111 E. Washington St., Morris, IL 60450, with the representative, or both, within six months from the date of the first publication of this notice or, if mailing or delivery of a notice is required by Section 5/18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed.

**TERI WARGO**  
INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATOR  
Tiomothy J. Black  
Black & Black Lawyers  
201 Liberty Street  
Suite 211  
P.O. Box 148  
Morris, IL 60450  
815-942-0594

Published in the Coal City Courant on March 10, 17 and 24, 2021.

### Honest to Goodness Culinary Creations files as new business

### LEGAL NOTICE

#### Assumed Name Publication Notice

Public Notice is hereby given that on February 24th, A.D. 2021, 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 Honest to Goodness Culinary Creations, located at Hive Creative Kitchen, Unit D, 25520 S. Pheasant Ln., Channahon, IL 60410.

Dated this 24th day of February, A.D. 2021.  
Kay T Olson, Grundy County Clerk  
Published in the Coal City Courant on March 3, 10 and 17, 2021.

### Attorney Wharrie files estate claim notice

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
GRUNDY COUNTY - IN PROBATE  
No. 2021-P-17

In Re: the Estate of TODD M. SANDENO, Deceased

### NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION - WILL AND CLAIMS

NOTICE is given of the death of TODD M. SANDENO. Letters of office were issued on February 18, 2021, to RICHELLE SANDENO, 1488 S. Broadway St., Coal City, IL 60416, 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 Circuit Court, Probate Division, at Grundy County Courthouse, 111 E. Washington St., Morris, IL 60450, or with the representative, or both, within 6 months from the date of issuance of letters and any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed.

Dated: February 18, 2021  
RICHELLE SANDENO,  
Independent Executor

Larry G. Wharrie  
The Wharrie Law Firm, P.C.  
105 S. Broadway, St.  
Coal City, IL 60416  
815-634-8990  
ARDC #2996146

Published in the Coal City Courant on Feb. 24 and March 3 and 10, 2021.

### Village of Coal City to host public hearing on closure of downstate small business stabilization application

### LEGAL NOTICE

#### DOWNSTATE SMALL BUSINESS STABILIZATION PROGRAM GRANTEE CLOSURE PUBLIC HEARING

The Village of Coal City will hold a public hearing on March 24, 2021, at 7:00pm, in Coal City Village Hall to provide interested parties an opportunity to express their views on the closure of the Downstate Small Business Stabilization application funded by Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for two applicants. Persons with disabilities or non-English speaking persons who wish to attend the public hearing and need assistance should contact Pam Noffsinger, the Village Clerk, at Village Hall via phone at 815-634-8608 or email at [pnoffsinger@coacility-il.gov](mailto:pnoffsinger@coacility-il.gov) no later than Noon on Monday, March 22, 2021. Every effort will be made to make reasonable accommodations for these persons.

The Village of Coal City applied to the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity for a grant from the State CDBG program to provide working capital assistance in order to address a serious and immediate threat to two small businesses within the community - Gymnastics X Callbur and the Broadway Dance Center. This program is funded by Title 1 of the federal Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended. The total amount of CDBG funds utilized were \$46,600 due to the COVID-19 emergency.

Information related to this application will be available for review prior to the public hearing as of March 10, 2021 at Coal City Village Hall, 515 S. Broadway in Coal City. Interested citizens are invited to provide comments regarding these issues either at the public hearing or by prior written statement. Such comments may be mailed or emailed to Pam Noffsinger, the Village Clerk, at Village Hall, 515 S. Broadway, via phone at 815-634-8608 or email at [pnoffsinger@coacility-il.gov](mailto:pnoffsinger@coacility-il.gov) no later than Noon on Monday, June 22, 2021, to ensure placement of such comments in the official record of the public hearing proceedings. This project resulted in no displacement of any persons or businesses. For additional information concerning the proposed project, please contact Ms. Noffsinger via one of the aforementioned methods.

Published in the Coal City Courant on March 10, 2021.

### Coal City School District to sell Broadway property

### LEGAL NOTICE

#### NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on Wednesday, the 7th day of April, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. Central Time, the Board of Education of Coal City Community Unit School District No. 1, Grundy and Will Counties, Illinois, will sell at public sale the following described real estate, to-wit:

LOTS 4, 5, 6 AND 7 IN BLOCK 8 OF SUFFERN'S SUBDIVISION IN SECTION 35, TOWNSHIP 33 NORTH, RANGE 8 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, IN GRUNDY COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

In accordance with Section 5-22 of the Illinois School Code, the Board of Education will receive sealed bids until 2:00 p.m. Central Time on Wednesday, March 31, 2021, the date of sale. Said sealed bids are to be delivered to the Office of the Chief School Business Official, Coal City Community Unit School District Number 1, 550 S. Carbon Hill Road, Coal City, IL 60416. Immediately thereafter, all bids received will be opened and read. The Board of Education is scheduled to consider bids received and take any action it deems appropriate at a meeting to be held on Wednesday, April 7, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

The Board of Education has established a minimum selling price of \$80,000. Other terms and conditions of sale are contained in the Information Brochure, Bidding Instructions and Specifications which can be obtained by calling Ms. Denise McKinney at (630) 897-8875. All questions must be submitted in writing to the Chief School Business Official by noon on March 26, 2021. An addendum addressing all questions and answers will be posted to the District's Bids & Requests for Proposal tab of the District's website by the end of business on March 26, 2021.

The Board of Education reserves the right to waive irregularities in the bids and in the bidding process, to continue the sale from time to time, to reject any or all bids, and to take such other action as it deems in its best interests.

Dated this 3rd day of March, 2021.  
Mary Gill, Secretary, Board of Education  
Coal City Community Unit School District No. 1  
Published in the Coal City Courant on March 10, 17 and 24, 2021.

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Free Press Newspapers readers

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*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. If mailing comments please direct them to Sound-Off, 271 S. Broadway, Coal City, IL 60416 or 111 S. Water St., Wilmington, IL 60481.*

## \$3 and rising

COAL CITY—Have you checked the price at the gas stations lately? Closing the Keystone pipeline from being built plus fracking much to the delight of Russia and OPEC. President Biden prefers we import our oil rather than produce our own.

## So absurd

ELWOOD—Read last week where ComEd is going to split into two companies and change it's name. Same with parent company Exelon. Seems to me like a big waste of money with all the expense behind changing all their signage, checks, trucks and equipment with the new name. Will the rate payers foot the bill for this absurdity? They'll still be the company guilty of paying a \$200 million fine for ghost payroll for Democrats and friends of ex-leader Michael Madigan. The guilt will never go away so man up and stop playing games. Us rate payers will never forget.

## Supporting blue

WILMINGTON—Read an editorial in Kankakee Daily Journal "The good, bad, and ugly of House bill 3653". In the survey taken by the Illinois Fraternal Order of police 66 percent of the 1,500 active police officers who participated claim they'll retire early if the bill was passed and it did. That's downright scary! 600 pages of changing criminal justice legislation in Illinois, some good - some bad and some ugly. Who would want their loved ones to become police officers in today's society? Thanks governor!

## Know the candidates

WILMINGTON—Attention voters, don't let those yard signs influence you. Just because a politician throws a lot of money at buying signs doesn't mean they deserve your vote. Pay attention to what has or hasn't happened and ask yourself if our town can go on like this anymore. I see it as this election is the most important local one in years so pay attention, learn what each of the candidate is about and make a wise choice. This town deserves better.

## Shopping where safe

WILMINGTON—Bars have bouncers to enforce the rules. Why can't grocery stores and small businesses? Wilmington has more defiant non-mask wearers than both Joliet and Kankakee, per capita. So I have adopted the following attitude towards the non-maskers. If I see a store employee or a customer without a mask or a mask below the nose, I will leave that business immediately. Why plaster entrances with "masks required" if you don't enforce it? I will spend my money elsewhere. If every consumer did this, businesses might actually start enforcing the guideline since they'd be losing money. Texas Roadhouse in Bradley has a sign that reads "No mask, No service." I want to support our local businesses but if they don't care about my health, why should I give them my money?

## Tax refund?

WILMINGTON—Just wondering about the 209U school district refunding tax money? Since school buildings were not used while students and teachers stayed home I would think that the school district saved a lot of money. Extra heat and light bills should have saved a lot of money? And also are your coaches still receiving full stipends for having a shortened season? A lot of questions need to be answered.

## The loan

BRAIDWOOD—Attention members of the Braidwood Recreation Club. Do you realize that your board of directors has stolen over a \$150,000 from your general fund throughout the years and has given it to the Silver Oaks golf course? According to the BRC's 2020 annual financial report which can be found on the club's website, the balance of the "loan" to Silver Oaks golf course stands at \$150,520.06. It's a classic "rob Peter to pay Paul" scenario. A BRC member who does not hold a golf membership is not allowed to play on the course but they will sure take a part of your general membership dues to pay for it. The members of the BRC have voted in the past to stop this practice but the board of directors decided not to listen and continue to do it anyway. If the golf course can't support itself then it needs to go. Run it like a business and live within your means without having to borrow from the general fund.

## Caught on camera

COAL CITY—Last Friday morning flooring debris and nails were discovered on Spring Road between Jugtown Road and Gorman Road. Fortunately the debris was removed before anyone was injured or killed. A hunter's trail camera nearby captured those involved, the vehicle and license plate number of the

thoughtless event. Please contact the Maine Township road commissioner to arrange restitution. Otherwise the images will be forwarded to the Grundy County state's attorney for prosecution.

## Don't get it

WILMINGTON—I always shop local because I'm old and don't like driving on roads full of semis. While driving into town I always pass a sign on Baltimore Street that says Just say no to Joe and his hoe. Now to me a hoe is a garden tool implemented to dig in the ground. So what's the big deal about the sign? I don't get it. Grandma Mary

## Not being childish

WILMINGTON—This is for Eddie who lives in beautiful Shadow Lakes. There, Eddie. Feel better? So I was just wondering if you think it's childish to call President Biden "Communist Biden" or "China Joe" or all Democrats are not safe. So that's OK with you Eddie? That's not being childish?

Always, Jo

## This isn't justice

SHADOW LAKES—A 14-year-old girl was arrested for the third time in Chicago for car-jacking. The first time she was set free with a court date, the second time she got an ankle bracelet, the third time she was grounded until her court date. This is called criminal justice in Illinois. If she goes out and kills someone who is responsible? Life in a Democratic run state. Eddie

## Pay attention

BRAIDWOOD—Wake up people of Braidwood! The city passes it deficit budget and then the good old boys are trying to amend it to boost up payroll for some. Start paying attention and go to the next council meeting and see what's going on.

## American pride

BRAIDWOOD—It's good to know that we are standing up to bullies such as dictator Putin again without shaking in our boots and that we are defending democracies such as Ukraine once more without using bribery and extortion. Gone is the coward, Trump, who trembled as he kissed Putin's ring, who never to this day confronted Putin regarding the bounty Putin placed on our soldiers' heads. Gone is the weirdo, Trump, who had a creepy relationship with North Korea's Kim Jong Un, the most ruthless dictator in the world, while Trump at the same time snubbed our valuable ally South Korea. We need not be embarrassed any longer by Trump's dangerous foreign policies and affiliations with dictators. It's a proud thing once again to be American. Doug K.

## Still the boss

Former House Speaker, Democrat Michael J. Madigan, 78, announced he will retire from the Illinois House of Representatives after 50 years in office. If you believe he will not remain "The Boss" we have a bridge to sell you. It's called power!

## Puffed up politicians

WILMINGTON—Three years in prison for corruption and influence peddling. That's the sentence for former French President Sarkozy because apparently the people of France aren't fooled by car artists like Trump and they don't tolerate cheating by puffed up politicians. In other words, the spirit of the French Revolution lives on in France where requirements of the common people are held high above the rich and privileged. Hopefully our Constitution and the arm of justice will likewise prevail during legal procedures against Trump considering that corruption and influence peddling were in our news constantly exposing one White House scandal after another for four long years. Trump, his family and his staff trampled over democratic norms and the rule of law while they howled with derisive mockery and laughter as the wealthy were favored and the needs of everyday people were ignored and belittled. Irene D.

## Nothing to hide, much to gain

COAL CITY—Kudos to the community member who wrote into Sound-off regarding a Coal City school board member's remarks at the Feb. 3 board meeting regarding the teacher's union forming a PAC and requesting that all those members up for re-election as well as new candidates fill out a survey indicating their stance on a number of important issues. The writer pointed out that the teacher's union has a right to ask questions and a right to endorse candidates. Mr. Hamilton suggested that the right to endorse candidates somehow violates the limits on receiving "gifts" as written in board policy 2.105 Ethics and Gift Ban. Also, per Mr. Hamilton's statement, he blasted the teacher's union for trying to "politicize" things happening in the Coal City schools. Endorsement of a candidate does not violate policy 2.105, particularly when the policy states as exception to the gift ban "any contribution that is lawfully made under the Election Code." To suggest that somehow these actions are illegal or questionable is laughable. The Coal City Teacher's Union local is part of the IEA-NEA, and I am confident they know what they can and cannot legally do. Furthermore, one definition of "politicizing" is "to make politically aware or active." I firmly support the teacher's union effort to do this for the betterment of the entire CCCUSD #1 community. The taxpaying public and district parents have a right to be made politically aware of who is making the final decisions for us. A school board member who does not support the rights of the teachers does not inspire confidence in me. However, as



this year the incumbent seats are contested, the taxpaying public should have a right to know just what each person running stands for, particularly when we are faced with potential large scale shifts in revenue sources with the possible closing of the nuclear plants. If Mr. Hamilton and (potentially) the other school board members aren't willing to answer simple questions about their stance on things that affect our schools, then I would like to suggest that the public be offered a debate-style forum so that we can actually hear what those running stand for when it comes to our schools. It is unfortunate that this is not common practice, and since this is a contested election, I think it is due time. Our parent and taxpayer community deserve better from a school board that touts their "transparency." There should be a clear forum to hear what both Mr. Rogers and Mr. Brncich will bring to the table, as well as what the incumbent candidates believe. Also, I would like to point out that it is not uncommon for school board members and candidates to answer questions posed by the teacher's union. This happens in many districts. As a Coal City parent, I very strongly want to know how our teachers feel about the candidates. With a public forum, I may or may not agree with their endorsement in the long run, but as they are the front lines and have the greatest impact on the success of our schools, their opinions and their needs are paramount. To the Coal City teacher's union, I know I am not the only parent/taxpayer who supports you and your request for answers to questions regarding the school board candidates. I'd be curious to know if you had any candidates fill out the survey that Mr. Hamilton refused to answer. Basing my vote on quality answers and perspectives that will affect the children and the community at large is a much more educated way to vote. It is true, one certainly doesn't have to respond, but my question is why wouldn't you? Why would you not want to continually give "transparency" to those who would elect you? Instead of feeling that the teacher's union is bringing in inappropriate levels of political action to this election, I am left wondering what's to hide?

## Crazy society

COAL CITY—We are truly living in a crazy society when Lady Gaga's dog walker is shot in the lung and her two dogs are stolen. She offers \$500,000, that's a one-half million dollar reward, no questions asked, just return her dogs. The next day her dogs are returned. Crime does pay.

## Sworn to oath

WILMINGTON—The Democrats in Washington D.C. are suppose to be intelligent individuals that swore an oath to the sovereignty laws of the USA. But it seems on state took their oath to become part of Congress they have decided to reject the USA and their oath. The people in the Democrat party are doing some of the most childish, immature activities that any American citizen has ever seen throughout history which wastes tax payers funds. Are all the Democrat politicians going through there second childhood? Or is it that they have all been auditioning for a loony tunes movie.

## Back in full force

Wow, I see in this week's paper all the leftists are back in full force. Why is their mantra, still about President Trump? When are you going to give up on him and start telling the people who read this paper, the wonderful things China Joe is doing. When is he going to have his State of the Union Address or a press conference? The answer, probably never. What has he got to say? Nothing. I see one great thing he has done so far...have you seen the gas prices? Look how wonderfully he plans so far. First, we stop an order from Saudi Arabia for fighter planes (killed a lot of jobs there.) Then he puts the bad finger on a prince for killing that newspaperman. Now that he has slowed our oil supply, we can buy oil from the Saudis again. I am sure that will work well. How long do you think it will be before we have troops again in the Middle East? Keep an eye on Iran. Maybe he can solve that problem by dropping a few more plane loads of money there. Are you enjoying the cancel culture? I see the latest victim is Dr. Seuss because he is racist. Remember this: Long ago, Rev. Jesse Jackson, read this on SNL, "green eggs and ham," your from president Obama, read the same story, plus books praised by his charming wife, Now they are racist. Boy, oh boy these people better get their stories straight. Did you know that Dolly Parton is apolitical? This lady just donated \$1 million to Moderna to pay for more vaccines. Do you see any lefties from Hollywood donating to anything? She must be a wonderful woman. When I heard this I went out and purchased two of her CDs. Here is something for all you climate change followers. ...that Goofus John "Catsup" Kerry flying around the world we have 9 more years to live before we are all

dead. Telling everyone it will come quicker by throwing a plastic straw in the ocean. Go on YouTube to this address, and look at "History of Russian Nuclear Submarine Graveyard." If that does not bother you look up the "Salton Sea," in California and see what is located at its bottom. Do we worry about this? Not at all...always, Margot Lane

## Whites only

WILMINGTON—If the recent hateful rhetoric at the Republican CPAC conference wasn't disturbing enough, a far-right conference just down the street in Orlando made CPAC seem like an ice cream social with cookies and cake for the kiddies. The America First Political Action Conference (AFPAC) is strictly a white nationalist group that believes our nation should consist of whites only. Quite a concept considering that Africans were forced to come here unwillingly by the lash of a whip, then doomed for 400 years to fatten everyone's wallet except their own and still struggle today for equal recognition under the law. Who was AFPAC's keynote speaker? It was Republican Congressman Paul Gosar of Arizona which is further evidence that AFPAC is a GOP cancer that's not only growing but metastasizing until it consumes and destroys democracy. The question is, what will be destroyed first? The Republican Party or the republic of the United States of America? Kate L

## Bad information

COAL CITY—To "Price Gouging" in last week's paper: I would really like to know how you concluded that the Texas energy problem was anyway a Democrat Party problem? Texas is the only state not on any of the national grids. Republican politicians in Texas chose that system so they didn't have to follow federal regulations. Ten years ago Texas was told that that energy grid needed upgrading for weather, but they chose to do nothing. The deaths and property damage are all on Republican politicians and the energy company. No Democrats caused this problem. No presidential orders. Just free market Republicans. Disinformation is a problem in the United States, don't you agree? So again, Where did you get your bad and unfounded information? MD

## Pizza cook-off

COAL CITY—Hey Coal City, we got a lot of pizza places. Isn't it time for a pizza cook off? Geo's claims they are the best pizza. I think it's time to see who is the best pizza in Coal City. We got a lot of pizza places, a lot of good ones. Let's have a little cook off, pizza contest, what do you think?

## Conservative news

SHADOW LAKES—Hello my name is Doug, D-O-U-G, calling from Shadow Lakes, the abominable subdivision, who are decedents of bad people. When Obama became president he did state, and this is fact, that he wanted to get rid of conservative, conservative news. And now under the Biden administration, which is actually Obama's third term, they want to get rid of Newsmax. Why is it these leftist, not liberals, want to get rid of conservative news? Maybe it's because they do tell the truth.

## Sad but true

SHADOW LAKES—A family was on TV last night waiting to find out if they would have to pull the plug on their 12-year-old daughter shot in a drive-by. A minister said something I think we have all thought and no one from the president down would say. If a cop had shot this girl BLM would be here and you would be rioting but we are doing this to ourselves and no one cares. Sad but true.

Eddie

## Good, bad and ugly

WILMINGTON—It's good that the American people and small businesses will receive assistance during the pandemic. It's bad that not a single Republican in Congress voted to help everyday people and yet they voted to put us deep in debt four years ago to give the rich a huge tax cut. It's downright ugly that Republicans have the unmitigated gall to claim undocumented immigrants will be getting stimulus checks which is an outright lie.

Ralph D.

## Truth equals cancer

WILMINGTON—I realize Fox News is like tobacco. It's not good for you, but it is a legal product and there is a market for it. So Rupert Murdoch sells it and to bring this metaphor to a finish the truth equals cancer for these people.

## Let's talk

SHADOW LAKES—This is regarding the article in the sound-off column called "Fair play," signed by Penny Lane. Well Penny, you've got my name wrong. First of all it's not Dun Hill, it's Dan Hill. I'm not Margo, I'm not Ed. You claimed that Ed didn't use his or her last name. Well, you don't use your real name. You did

CONTINUED ON PAGE

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# It's late but it's still Homecoming Week

BY BRIDGET KNOWLES  
WHS STUDENT REPORTER

Although it's six months past its normal time, Homecoming is still on for the 2020-2021 school year.

Homecoming week starts on Monday, March 15, leading up to the season-opening football game on Friday, March 19. This year's theme is "Cinematic Masterpiece."

The traditional Homecoming dance will not be held, due to the pandemic, but there are still many activi-

ties to bring on some Wildcat spirit.

Campaigning for homecoming court began on Monday of this week. Students will vote for the winners through a Google form on March 10 and 11. A male and female will be chosen from the freshman, sophomore, and junior class to be on the court. Seniors can run as couples, and four pairs will be selected as senior court, but only one will be crowned king and queen.

The homecoming court winners will be announced on Monday, and the King and Queen will be announced on Tuesday.

Students will also be able to participate in the Mr. WHS

contest. Students wishing to compete will record and submit a short video showcasing their talent. The videos will be uploaded to YouTube and played during wildcat time for students to watch. Students will then vote for their favorite. The winner of Mr. WHS will be crowned on March 15 with the homecoming court.

Homecoming isn't only contests. There will also be dress up days for all students to participate in the week of March 15-18. The week of dress up days kicks off with Favorite Movie character day on Monday. Tuesday is stunt double day. Students will find someone to "twin" with to trade places with at a moment's notice. Wednesday

is formal/red carpet day. Since there is no dance, students can wear their homecoming attire to school. Students can also choose to dress as their favorite celebrity walking the red carpet. Thursday is class movie day. Freshman can dress up as *Toy Story*, Sophomores as *Finding Nemo*, Juniors as *Star Wars*, and Seniors as *Marvel*.

There will be no student attendance on Friday March 19, so there is no dress up day. All of these events lead up to the homecoming football game that night vs. Lisle.

Although it is very different than past years, Homecoming week is still an exciting tradition at WHS.

## Named to Millikin dean's list

Millikin University in Decatur, IL has named two local residents on its dean's list.

Danielle Gibson of Wilmington, and Chloe White, of Carbon Hill earned the academic honor for the fall 2020 semester.

Students who complete 12 graded classes and earn a grade point average of 3.5 or higher earn dean's list honors.

Millikin is a private, comprehensive university with a population of approximately 2,000 undergraduate and graduate students.

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## Garden Club to welcome guest speaker

The Wilmington Garden Club will meet at 1 p.m. on Wednesday March 17, at the Wilmington Park District building, 315 N. Water St.

Special guest will be Sandy Ascot from Muddy Paws Nursery on Highway 113, in Custer Park. Ascot will be describing the cultivators of Hydrangeas, she will be adding to her line up. She will also be discussing exciting perennials for butterfly gardens.

Like to garden? Then come sit in a Garden Club meeting and bring a friend. For more information call Carol at 815-476-2469.

## Weather spotter training offered

The National Weather Service has one additional severe weather spotter training program scheduled this season.

Presented virtually, the webinar will cover severe weather hazards including thunderstorms and tornadoes. This includes safety concerns, planning for and anticipating severe thunderstorms, general storm structure and movement and identification of important storm features.

The final session is scheduled for Wednesday, March 10 at 6:30 p.m. There is no cost to participate, however registration is required and can be completed by selecting a webinar date from the on-line schedule at [weather.gov/lot/spotter\\_talk](http://weather.gov/lot/spotter_talk)

The session will last about two hours and is appropriate for all ages with those age 10 and older likely to get the most out of the training.

## Electronics dropoff event Thursday in Wilmington

Will County's free electronics drop-off event will be held Thursday, March 11 from 5-7 p.m. at the Wilmington City Hall parking lot, 1165 S. Water St.

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

Items accepted include: Televisions, monitors, printers, computers (desktops, laptops, notebooks, tablets), electronic keyboards, fax

machines, videocassette recorders, portable digital music players, DVD players, DVD recorders, video game consoles, small scale servers, scanners, electronic mice, digital converter boxes, cable receivers, satellite receivers, cell phones, computer cable, portable digital assistants (PDAs) and zip drives.

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

The recycling takes place in Wilmington the second Thursday of each month.

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# Bills address tollway rates, future railway infrastructure

BY GRACE BARBIC  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

SPRINGFIELD – A House transportation committee on March 8 advanced two bills, one lowering toll rates for small trailers and another creating a forum on future railway infrastructure.

House Bill 394 and House Bill 399 were both sponsored by Representative Martin Moylan, D-Des Plaines. Both received a unanimous 13-0 vote to move to the House floor.

HB 394 states that the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority shall not charge a toll for a vehicle pulling a single axle trailer at a rate higher than twice the regular car rate. For example, if a toll is \$1.40, then the small trailer should only be charged an additional \$1.40 for the extra axle, Moylan said this would be more reasonable.

"If you're driving your car on the tollway and you're pulling a small motorcycle, a small trailer with a four wheel-er or a jet ski, or even if you're going to cut your grandmother's lawn, and you're hauling a lawn mower, you are paying between \$6.80 and \$9.25 per toll, sometimes as high as \$18," Moylan said.

When the Tollway changed to open road tolling in the early 2000s, I-PASS systems only accounted for passenger cars, and a second category for small trailers, medium sized vehicles and medium trailers, which are all charged a higher rate than cars. Drivers pulling a single-axle trailer are being charged the same as a double-axle trailer, which is equivalent to pulling a large boat or small semi-truck.

Moylan said he presented an identical bill in 2018, but ended up holding it from going to a full vote because of concerns from the Toll Highway Authority, which agreed to work on a resolution.

Two and a half years later, the Tollway is still opposed to the legislation due to concerns of the General Assembly setting toll rates and the inability to differentiate between trailer sizes with existing technology.

Kevin Donahue, the government and legislative affairs manager for the Toll Highway Authority, said in his testimony the Tollway lacks the funds to upgrade its technology to identify the difference in trailer sizes.

"If the Tollway was to have to implement a \$100 million

weighing technology program it would take away our ability to do such projects as I-294, I-57 Interchange Project," Donahue said.

The Tollway considered in-person cash collectors as a solution because they could identify the different sizes of trailers when vehicles would pull up to the toll booths to pay.

But in an effort to combat the spread of COVID-19, cash collectors were pulled from toll plazas and the Tollway decided recently that cash collectors will not be returning, he said.

"So, the one viable solution that we thought would be consistent is no longer even an option because we won't have cash collectors returning," Donahue said.

Several representatives questioned whether there was a simpler solution, one that would not require a complete overhaul of the tollways' existing technology. Representative Jawaharial Williams, D-Chicago, suggested tying transponders, or I-PASS devices, into trailer license plates where drivers could purchase a second transponder to tag their different sized trailers.

Donahue said per that agreement, the Tollway, not the General Assembly, has the exclusive right to set toll rates, as the revenues the rates create are used a guarantee that the Tollway can pay its bonds.

He said in a worst case scenario, changes in revenue could open the Tollway to litigation from bondholders.

"If we're not meeting the revenue and all of a sudden we're not able to make our bond payments on time, or we're able to but we're having to put bond money towards other purposes and not what they were promised for, is where they [the bondholders] could potentially come after us," Donahue said.

Committee members urged the Tollway to consider their solutions as the bill moved to the House floor.

**Railway Commission**  
HB 399, which would create the High Speed Railway Commission to explore new infrastructure for electrified trains and buses, also advanced Monday.

The commission would create a statewide plan for a high-speed rail line and feeder network connecting St. Louis and Chicago that includes current existing Amtrak and Metra services. It would also

connect the cities of Rockford, Moline, Peoria and Decatur and use inner city bus service to coordinate with the rail line.

Rick Harnish, executive director of the High Speed Rail Alliance, said in his testimony that the commission would create a forum for people to talk about what the statewide transportation network looks like and how it can be implemented.

"As we reinvent ourselves as a state post COVID, trains and buses can play a major

role in creating new connections," Harnish said. "In some cases, it might mean upgrading the existing Amtrak service, it may mean reinventing the way Metra operates. Certainly feeder buses play a major role and we believe that new infrastructure for electrified high speed trains need to play a major role."

HB 399 advanced to the House floor with a unanimous 13-0 vote on Monday.

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## Sound-off, continued from page 4

state that you deal with real facts not supposition. Well, why don't you give us your phone or email address in the sound-off column. It would save a lot of us a lot of time and trouble watching and reading news because we could just call you to get the actual facts.

Dan Hill

## Record gun sales

COAL CITY—I read there's no slowdown in sight for the recent surge in gun sales. The FBI conducted more than 4.3 million firearm background checks in January exceeding December's count of 3.9 million checks which was the all time monthly record. Illinois led the nation in gun sales with more than one million, more than double Kentucky's 422,000, the second highest count. Last year FBI saw 40 million background checks, the most on record. The pandemic, civil unrest and fears about President Biden's tighter gun restrictions are the likely causes of higher sales. Also, some Democrats wanting police forces defunded has caused high anxiety over one's safety.

## Going to get worse

COAL CITY—Our southern border has become a crisis thanks to President Biden with all his executive orders and promises. I saw on television a car filled with 25 people at the Mexico/California border ran a stop sign, pulled in front of a semi truck and 15 died and others seriously hurt. It was smuggler involved. Smugglers don't care if they live or die. They all pay smugglers to get to the border from all over. It's only going to get much worse and we have a Covid pandemic going on.

## It's nearly over

It took an entire year, but the lockdowns and mask mandates are officially incredibly unpopular with half of the country to the point that governors, 16 states and counting, are rapidly making sweeping changes to their year-long Covid policies. But still, the pro-maskers exclaim the "science" as some kind of declarative statement when what they really mean is "you must obey my preferred policy position." The "science" has become so abused as a phrase it is beyond recognition. In reality there's data and there's decision making. They are not the same thing. In 30 years people will look back and see Covid as the name for a widespread mental illness that killed people's ability to think rationally.

## Dictate as they wish

COAL CITY—We live in a fear-mongering state of Illinois. The numbers dying from Covid have dropped considerably. It's called control and power held by our governor and the Chicago mayor. As long as they can terrorize the public they have power to dictate as they wish. It's time to open up our state and our churches. Wear a mask for the rest of your life if you wish. Your choice.

## Why not a tattoo?

History informs us that when powerful figures tell a society to treat other human beings as mere vectors for disease, a common occurrence is physical attacks of one citizen against another as in mace.

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**- MARCH EVENTS -**

<b>EVERY TUESDAY</b> 5:00-9:00 p.m. <b>TACO NIGHT</b>	<b>Every Wed. Queen of Hearts</b>	<b>EVERY WEDNESDAY</b> 5:00-7:00 p.m. <b>BURGER NIGHT</b>
Tues. March 9 Sat., March 13 <i>GRANDPA WILLY</i> Sat., March 20 Tues. March 23 Sat., March 27 <i>DA DJ's</i>	7 p.m. 5-7 p.m. 7-11 p.m. 8-11 a.m. 7 p.m. 3-7 p.m. 7-11 p.m.	Board Meeting Corn Beef & Cabbage Breakfast Board Meeting Wing Day
<b>EVERY THURSDAY</b> BINGO 6:30 p.m. Kitchen Open	<b>EVERY FRIDAY</b> FISH FRY 5-7 p.m. Karaoke Contest	

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**Chancel Choir Director Needed**

Music has long been one of the strengths of the First United Methodist Church of Wilmington. Following the retirement of our long-time Chancel Choir Director, Marcia Mellott, our Church is in search of a replacement who will maintain the quality of our vocal music program.

The director's duties include providing vocal music for Sunday worship, working with the pastor and the worship committee to select music and prepare presentations for Advent, Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, and other special events during the church year.

Qualifications for the position include a strong music education, experience in directing choral music, and the ability to play the piano. Because the job requires interacting with a number of people in the church, the person serving in this position must be flexible and willing to work with others to promote the church's music program.

Submit letter of interest and resume by mail to:  
First United Methodist Church of Wilmington  
401 East Kahler Road  
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or  
By email submit letter of interest and resume to  
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# Which is the better Margarita, fresh or frozen?

National Margarita Day came and went this year, it was February 22 and it was largely uneventful. Bar service remains nonexistent in some areas, and it seems that over half of the country was covered in snow for the 2021 installment of National Margarita Day.

My annual tradition is to provide a Margarita refresher course on or around National Margarita Day. Whether you are washing down Baja tacos with a Margarita on the rocks or enjoying happy hour with a Frozen Margarita, there are a few basic principles that separate the good Margaritas from the bad.

By the way, everyone should have a Margarita recipe filed away somewhere. At some point we will get back to entertaining, cooking out, hanging out by the pool, etc. If you entertain, you will need a solid Margarita recipe.

We are not going to get into the frozen vs. rocks debate, the "correct" Margarita recipe is the one that works for you.

You make the call: frozen, or on the rocks?

Whichever way that you decide to take your margarita, know that it is only going to be as good as the tequila that goes into the drink. Your Margarita is DOA if you use bad tequila, and there is plenty of tequila out there.

How can you tell the good tequila from the bad tequila? It's quite simple. The good stuff will have "100% agave" printed on the label. Beware that some tequila producers will try to use vague language to trick you, such as "made from pure agave". Only 100% means 100%, and if the bottle does not say 100% agave on it, put it back on the shelf.

Why does this matter?



**THE SUNDAY COCKTAIL**  
**Brian Rynn**

Tequila that is not 100% agave contains artificial caramel coloring, artificial sweeteners, and it's anybody's guess as to what else is in that bottle. Those artificially colored gold tequilas look great in the bottle, but the coloring and the artificial flavoring in the bottle virtually guarantee that you will have the worst hangover that you have had since college.

The tequila aisle is not the place to "save a few bucks". You are going to pay a bit more for the 100% agave tequila, but you will absolutely get what you pay for. Some of my favorite 100% agave tequilas are Don Julio, El Amo, Tesoro, Olmeca Altos, and Fortaleza.

When it comes to lime juice, fresh is always best. Avoid the temptation to buy bottled lime juice. I realize that juicing limes for a few pitchers of Margaritas is labor intensive, but it's absolutely worth it. If you have a juicer, use it! The manual lime squeezer works as well, but the juicer is faster.

Pro tip: think as many limes as you think that you will need for a few rounds of drinks, and then store the fresh lime juice in a storm pourer on ice. If you are standing in the citrus aisle at your local market and need to do some quick mixology math,



plan to get approximately 1 oz. of juice out of an average lime.

Take your time when selecting limes from the bin at your local market. Always choose the limes that feel "heavy" compared to the others. More weight = more juice.

Salt, or no salt? If you are going to use salt on your Margarita, use kosher salt. Kosher salt granules are larger than table salt granules and will adhere to the glass better.

There is a proper way to rim your Margarita glass, and it's not mashing the top of the glass into one of those sombrero-shaped Margarita salt dispensers. To properly rim your glass with salt, start by pouring some kosher salt onto a small plate. Then, run a lime wedge along the edge of the glass. Once the lime juice has been applied to the rim of the glass, gently roll the side of the glass with the lime juice on it in the kosher salt.

I leave half of the rim of the glass unsalted, just a personal preference.

Speaking of salt, why limit salt to the rim of the glass if you know that you are a fan of salt? Don't be afraid to drop a pinch of kosher salt into your Margarita. A pinch of quality

kosher salt gives the drink a little "something extra", experiment until you find the ideal "pinch" of salt.

One note on triple sec: It the unsung hero of the Margarita. The bittersweet orange liqueur tames the burn of the tequila and adds sweetness to an overtly sour drink. If a high-end triple sec is in your budget, go with Cointreau. For quality on a budget go with Bol's triple sec.

Once you have mastered the Margarita basics you may want to experiment. Add a splash of orange juice, a shot of mezcal, blue curacao, or some prickly pear syrup. Make it your own, you may stumble on to something great.

You have almost one full year to prepare for National Margarita Day, 2022. Will you be ready?

The classic Margarita (rocks) is built in a shaker and served in a chilled rocks glass.

Combine in shaker:  
2 oz. blanco tequila  
1/2 oz. triple sec  
1 oz. fresh lime juice  
1/2 oz. sweetener (simple syrup or agave nectar)

Shake with ice, strain into chilled rocks glass over fresh ice

Garnish with lime wheel  
The Frozen Margarita is built in a blender, served in a goblet or coupe glass. The recipe below serves 4.

Combine in blender:  
1 cup 100% agave tequila  
1 cup fresh lime juice  
1/2 cup triple sec  
2 tablespoons sweetener (simple syrup or agave nectar)  
6 cups crushed ice  
Blend until smooth

Pour into prepared glasses, garnish with lime wedge  
Until next week, enjoy responsibly.

# Soy burns better

If you want to enjoy a romantic candle-lit meal, be sure to use soy candles. These have many advantages over common paraffin candles.

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than paraffin candles and soy wax burns with little to no soot

Locally produced candles are available at Mark's Country Store inside the Farm Bureau, located at 100 Manhattan Road, in Joliet.

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## Golf outing to support childhood cancer research

Team Megan Bugg is set to host its 2nd annual golf outing to raise funds for childhood cancer research.

The outing will take place Saturday, June 12 at Nettle Creek Golf Course in Morris with a shotgun start at 10 a.m.

All proceeds from the event will go towards Megan Bugg's fundraising efforts to support research through the Children's Cancer Therapy Development Institute.

The cost to play is \$400 per foursome and includes best ball, longest drive, hole in one, closest to the pin and longest putt for both men and women. Lunch and dinner is also included.

Sponsorships are also being sought and donations are being accepted.

Non-golfers can also take part by joining the group for dinner and raffles at a cost of \$25 per person.

Those interested in participating as a player, dinner guest, sponsor or donor can contact Tim at 815-679-8149.

Foursomes are filling up fast.

## Hines Hospital offers COVID-19 vaccine to veterans of all ages

Hines VA Hospital in Hines, IL is now offering the COVID-19 vaccine to Veterans of all ages. Approximately 35 percent of its enrollees have been vaccinated to date.

If veterans are interested in receiving a COVID-19 vaccine at the main campus or one of its Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs), they should call to schedule an appointment at 708-202-2707 or 708-202-7000.

Veterans need to be enrolled in health care at Hines or one of its six CBOCs to be eligible for the vaccine. However, to receive care in VA, enrollees must meet certain eligibility requirements under

current law, which may include income limits.

For enrollment information, visit [www.va.gov/health-care/how-to-apply/](http://www.va.gov/health-care/how-to-apply/).

"VA has done an exceptional job at offering a streamlined COVID-19 vaccination process for Veterans, and Hines is proud to help Veterans get closer to normal life," said Lorry Luscri, Hines VA Hospital COVID-19 vaccine coordinator.

Veterans may learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine and receive updates at [www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine/](http://www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine/).

## Assumption Church to host drive-thru pizza burger dinner

The Assumption Church in Coal City will be hosting a drive-thru pizza burger dinner on Saturday, March 20, from 5-7 p.m. at the Berst Hall, 180 S. Kankakee St., Coal City. This is strictly a drive-thru meal. Present your ticket and your meal will be delivered to your car in the Berst Hall parking lot. All proceeds go to the Assumption Church.

The pizza burger meal includes chips, pasta salad, glazed carrots and cookies for \$10 also available will be a hot dog meal which includes a hot dog, chips and cookies for \$4.

Tickets can be preordered by contacting Judith Kaluzny, 815-325-8969 or Katy Kaluzny, 815-474-4977. A limited num-

ber of meals will be made for people without a ticket.

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Due to a limited live audience presence, we invite you to join us virtually! Gather safely with friends and family to view the WHS production of Cinderella. Streaming links are \$25, and one purchase of the link is required per viewing party.

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# OBITUARIES

## David A. Cooper

David A. Cooper, 77, passed away on March 3, 2021, at Joliet Area Community Hospice in Joliet. He was born on March 4th, 1943, the eldest child of Alexander and Mildred (Jacovec) Cooper. A 1961 Reed-Custer High School graduate, David worked a variety of jobs during his lifetime. Most recently he tended to cemeteries and plowed snow through Cooper Maintenance Service.

Dave married Shirley Dare on June 26, 1964 at the Coal City Methodist Church. He lost the love of his life on July 11, 2017. Dave was a former member of the Braidwood Volunteer Fire Department and served on the Braidwood Grade School Board of Education in the 1970's. Dave was also a 32nd Degree Mason. During his free time, Dave enjoyed gatherings at the Braidwood Recreation Club and the Coal City Area Club with family and friends. He and Shirley enjoyed attending Cushman Motor Scooter conventions, John Deere tractor shows, and visiting his sister in Wisconsin. Above all he enjoyed attending his granddaughter Zoriana's events basketball, track, softball games, and speech contests.

Dave is survived by his daughter, Dawn Cooper and his granddaughter, Zoriana; his "Munchkin" and the apple of his eye. He is further survived by his sister, Kathleen (the late Donald) Gerz, of Oshkosh, WI; and his in-laws,



Georgiean Benson, of South Wilmington; George E. (Kathy) Dare Jr., of Morris; Beverly McKee, of Cape Coral, FL; Betty (William) Booras, of Plainfield and Donna (Joey) Ferrari, of South Wilmington. Numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and friends survive.

Preceding Dave were his wife, Shirley; his parents, Alexander and Mildred Cooper; his brother, Daniel; his brother in-law, Don Gerz, and his parents in-law, George and Marie (Benson) Dare Sr.

Dave's family would like to extend a thank you to Provena St. Joseph ICU nurses, doctors, and staff. Additionally, they thank the staff of Joliet Area Community Hospice, especially nurse, Mary. We appreciate all the support from our family and friends during this difficult time.

Visitation was held at the R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory on Tuesday, March 9. Rev. Dale Tolly officiated. Cremation rites were accorded.

For more information and to sign her online guestbook log on to [www.rwpatterson-funeralhomes.com](http://www.rwpatterson-funeralhomes.com) or find them on Facebook at R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory.

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

## Lucille E. Lenzie

SOUTH WILMINGTON—Lucille Elsie (nee Mahler) Lenzie, 93, of South Wilmington, passed away Wednesday, March 3, 2021 at Heritage Manor in Peru, IL. Born Feb. 29, 1928, she was the daughter of Wilhel and Ida (nee Balzerick) Mahler.

Lucille was a devoted member of the St. Lawrence Catholic Church in South Wilmington where she served as lector, and member of the Women's Club and Quilter's Club. She previously worked for Ideal Manufacturing and the Senior Center in Gardner. Lucille loved gardening.

Surviving are one daughter, Lou Anne Lenzie, of LaSalle, IL; two sisters, Helen (Don) Lamons, of Palo Alto, CA and Edna (George) Cressey, of St. Catherine's Ontario, Canada; three sisters-in-law, Marge Mahler, Mary Mahler, and Marguerite Mahler and several nieces and nephews.

Preceding her in death was her husband, Lester James Lenzie (2008); three brothers: Harold Mahler, Leonard Mahler and William



Mahler and six sisters: Dorothy Lind, Mildred Dinelli, Ruth Payne, Gertrude Krueger, Erna Kline, and Freita Halfakre.

Cremation rites have been accorded.

Memorial visitation will be at the R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory on Saturday, March 13, 2021 from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. with memorial service at 12 p.m. Rev. Stanley Drewniak will officiate. Inurnment will be in Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood, IL.

All attendees are required to wear face coverings, follow social distancing guidelines, and due to the capacity requirements, please be brief with your condolences to allow other guests to pay their final respects.

For more information and to sign her online guestbook log on to [www.rwpatterson-funeralhomes.com](http://www.rwpatterson-funeralhomes.com) or find them on Facebook at R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory.

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

## Virginia Diederich

MORRIS—Virginia "Gin" Diederich, 79, of Morris, passed away Wednesday, March 3, 2021 at the Joliet Area Community Hospice Home.

Born Oct. 27, 1941 in Aurora, Virginia Mary was a daughter of John P. and Mae Anna (Pillatsch) Becker. She was a graduate of Aurora East High School with the class of 1959, and on Nov. 10, 1962, Virginia married Gerald J. Diederich in St. Nicholas Catholic Church in Aurora.

Gin was a devoted wife, mother and grandmother. One who loved children, and whose focus was always on kids, Gin served as a Girl Scout leader in years past, and took pleasure in being active with her girls when they were growing up and beyond. She was a member of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Morris, and enjoyed volunteering at Immaculate Conception School, The Morris Public Library and with Meals on Wheels.

Survivors include her husband of 58 years, Jerry; four children: Debra (Robert) Gregorash, of Glen Ellyn, IL; Lisa (Jeffrey) Cooper, of Danville, IL; Cheryl (Robert) Spanske, of Normal, IL and Karen (Jason) Casey, of Plainfield, IL; 12 grandchildren: Ty Gregorash, Andrew Gregorash, Teresa Cooper, Alora Cooper, Lee Cooper, Sara Cooper, Jeremiah Cooper, Christopher Spanske, Jordan Spanske, Ryan Casey, Grant Casey and Norah Casey; one great-grandson, Brecken Morgan; one sister, Frances Ann (the late Arthur) Sittler, of Newark, IL and one brother, Robert John (the late Bonnie) Becker, of Huntingdon, TN; brother-in-



law and sister-in-law, Robert and Diane Diederich, of Minoqua, WI and nieces and nephews: Jill (Mark) Dunne, Amy (Jake) Schoeder, Tracy (Steve) Santelman, Jeff Sittler, Scott (Nina) Sittler, Brad (Danielle) Becker and Dawn Becker, as well as numerous cousins and many friends.

Gin was preceded in death by her parents, John and Mae Becker and her father-in-law and mother-in-law, Al and Marcella Diederich.

Funeral services were held Saturday, March 6, 2021 in Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Morris. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated with Reverend Jason Stone presiding.

Burial was in Mount Carmel Catholic Cemetery in Morris, and Gin's grandchildren acted as both pallbearers and honorary pallbearers.

Preferred memorials in lieu of flowers may be made as gifts in Gin's memory to: Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, 514 E. Jackson St., Morris, IL 60450; Joliet Area Community Hospice, 250 Water Stone Circle, Joliet, IL 60431 or to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital <http://www.stjude.org>.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the guest book, upload photographs and share Gin's memorial page online through social media by logging onto: [www.ReevesFuneral.com/obituary/Virginia-Diederich](http://www.ReevesFuneral.com/obituary/Virginia-Diederich)

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

## John Kauzlaric

COAL CITY—John Kauzlaric, 58, of Coal City, passed away unexpectedly on Saturday, March 6, 2021 due to complications from COVID-19.

Born Dec. 28, 1962 in Morris, John Joseph was the son of Joan (Eschenbaum) Kauzlaric and Kenneth Kauzlaric. He attended Immaculate Conception School and graduated from Morris Community High School with the class of 1981. On Dec. 19, 1992, John married Kelly Green in Joliet, and together they made their home and raised their family in Coal City.

John was a member of IBEW Local 176 and has been employed with Exxon Mobil for the past 12 years. He was a member of the Coal City Area Club and attended Living Word Bible Church in Morris.

John was a great cook; took pleasure in barbecuing and smoking and enjoyed craft beer. He had an ear for music and was accomplished on the guitar. His family was his greatest hobby, and John will most be remembered as his kids' biggest fan. Family was of utmost importance, and his biggest source of pride was his children, their accomplishments, and their education.

Survivors include his wife of 28 years, Kelly; three children: Clay Kauzlaric, of Portland, ME; Riley Kauzlaric, of Coal City and Bridget Kauzlaric, of Stevens Point, WI; his mother, Joan Kauzlaric and one sister, Diane Biasella, both of Morris; his mother-in-law, Ingeborg Green, of



Shorewood and her dear friend, John Reick; one sister-in-law, Wendy Green, of Albuquerque, NM; one nephew, Alex Biasella, of Chicago and one niece, Iris Horner, of Albuquerque.

John was preceded in death by his father, Kenny Kauzlaric and his father-in-law, William Green.

Per John's wishes, cremation rites have been accorded.

The family will receive friends for a COVID observant walk through memorial visitation at Reeves Funeral Home, 75 N. Broadway, one block north of IL Rt. 113 in Coal City on Thursday, March 11, 2021 between the hours of 5 and 8 p.m.

A celebration of life open house is also being planned for John later in the year.

"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." (2 Corinthians 5-8)

Preferred memorials may be made to the family for the continuation of John's legacy in providing Bridget's final year of college education.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the guest book, upload photographs and share John's memorial page online through social media by logging onto: [www.ReevesFuneral.com/obituary/John-Kauzlaric](http://www.ReevesFuneral.com/obituary/John-Kauzlaric)

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

## Evelyn M. Ewers

BRAIDWOOD—Evelyn Mary (nee Walz) Ewers, 76, of Braidwood, and formerly of Glenwood, IL passed away Tuesday, March 2, 2021 at her home. Born Feb. 21, 1945 in Evergreen Park, IL, she was the daughter of Walter and Joyce (nee Dory) Walz. She married John Ewers Jr. on Aug. 23, 1963 in Harvey, IL. She was a former member of the St. John Roman Catholic Church in Glenwood, where she was active with the Women's Club. Evelyn was also a member of the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Braidwood. She enjoyed gardening, cooking, and most of all baking, especially for her family. Evelyn also loved her beloved dogs, Alex, Rowdy and Taz.

Surviving are her sons, John (Cynthia) Ewers, of Braidwood and James (Donna) Ewers, of Mokenca, IL; daughter, Joyce (Carl) Frederick, of Scottsdale, AZ; four grandchildren: Cari and Jamie Frederick and Jacob and Joshua Ewers; one brother, John (Carol Ann) Haulotte, of Bonita Springs; two sisters-in-law,



Patricia Walz, of Houston, TX and Margaret Walz, of Matteson, IL; numerous nieces, nephews, and their families; and her four legged companion, Rowdy.

Preceding her in death were her parents, husband, John Ewers Jr. (3-6-2011) and two brothers, Kenneth and Robert Walz.

Funeral services were held at the R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory on Friday, March 5, 2021.

Interment followed at Braceville-Gardner Cemetery, Braceville.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in her name may be directed to Joliet Area Community Hospice or the Alzheimer's Association.

For more information and to sign her online guestbook log on to [www.rwpattersonfuneralhomes.com](http://www.rwpattersonfuneralhomes.com) or find them on Facebook at R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory.

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

## Betty Trotter

COAL CITY—Betty Jean Trotter, 91, of Coal City, passed away Friday, March 5, 2021, at Carriage Crossing in Champaign, IL.

Born Dec. 15, 1929 in Braceville Township, Betty was the daughter of William J. Sr. and Frances Elizabeth (Hutton) Bonucci. She was raised in Carbon Hill and graduated from Coal City High School with the class of 1947. On Sept. 11, 1948, Betty married Freeman J. Trotter in New Hope Presbyterian Church, and together they made their home and raised their family in Coal City.

Betty worked as a bookkeeper with the Coal City Unit #1 School District for 25 years. She was an active member of New Hope Presbyterian Church, where she served as a Deacon and Elder, taught Sunday School, and was a member of New Hope Women's Association. In addition, Betty was active for numerous years with the Coal City Women's Club.

Betty loved bringing family together whether it was for a first birthday "shoe cake" celebration, a 4th of July themed yard-party, Christmas morning around the tree, or an afternoon of chatting and playing a game of cards. She enjoyed searching for antiques and knitting lace. There was always an occasion to gather together, set the table with special treasures, share stories and laughter, and make memories with those she held dear.

Betty is lovingly remembered and survived by her daughter, Deborah Ann (Stephen) Kasak, of Champaign and two sons, Mark Lane Trotter and Noel Robert (Debi) Trotter, both of Coal City and her nine grandchildren: Christopher Kasak, of Maui, HI; Emily Kasak (Adam Austin), of Champaign; Katherine (Larry) Kargol, of Lockport; Matthew (Autumn) Trotter, of Brandon, FL; Terri (Randy) Earley, of Le Claire, IA; John Trotter, of Coal City; Dana (Chad)



Grunwald, of Coal City; Benjamin (Abby) Trotter, of Chillicothe, OH and Nicholas (Shelby Ader) Trotter, of Coal City. Her great-grandchildren are: Isabelle and Cecelia Earley, Aubrey, Ellison and Caroline Grunwald; Parker and Isaac Trotter; Logan, Jackson and Anthony Kargol; Finley Ader; Dannzi Kasak and Gigi and Briggs Trotter. Also surviving are two sister-in-laws, Amy Louise (Trotter) Anderson, of Kalamazoo, MI and Gladys Bonucci, of Lake City, MN as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

Betty was preceded in death by her husband, Freeman; son and daughter-in-law, Neil Lee and Honor Trotter and siblings: Peter Bonucci II, Wilma (Mike) Karol and William J. Jr. (Jean) Bonucci.

The family will receive friends for a visitation at New Hope Presbyterian Church, 80 N. Garfield St. in Coal City on Friday, March 12 from 9-11 a.m. with the funeral service following officiated by Reverend Mark Hughey. Burial will be in Braceville-Gardner Cemetery, where Betty will be laid to rest with her late husband, Freeman. Pallbearers and honorary pallbearers will be her grandchildren.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Betty's memory to New Hope Presbyterian Church.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the guest book, upload photographs and share Betty's memorial page online through social media by logging onto [www.ReevesFuneral.com/obituary/Betty-Trotter](http://www.ReevesFuneral.com/obituary/Betty-Trotter).

The family would like to thank the staff at Carriage Crossing in Champaign, IL for their attention and care over the last five years.

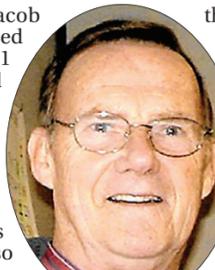
Funeral services and arrangements have been made under the direction and care of Reeves Funeral Homes, Ltd. in Coal City.

## Herman J. VanDuyne

WILMINGTON—Herman Jacob VanDuyne, 85, of Wilmington, passed away peacefully, Friday, Feb. 19, 2021 surrounded by his loving family and close friends at his residence in Panama Republic, Panama.

He was born Dec. 26, 1935 in Wilmington, to Peter and Gertrude (nee Glass) VanDuyne. Herman graduated from the University of Illinois receiving his bachelor's degree in civil engineering and also graduated from the University of Iowa receiving his master's degree in civil engineering. He retired Aug. 8, 1990 from HQ AMC Plan Operations Rock Island Arsenal, IL. He was a member of the St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church in Wilmington. Herman was a running enthusiast, he was a member of the Cornbelt Running Club and thoroughly enjoyed running the Bix 7 in Davenport, IA. He loved to play the guitar and entertain residents in nursing homes and play for the Irish Folk Festival in Bettendorf, IA. Herman's family was the world to him, the dedication and unconditional love he has shown them throughout the years will never be forgotten.

Surviving are his beloved wife of 36 years, Martina Murgas VanDuyne, who he married March 17, 1984; two sons, Matthew VanDuyne, of the Philippines and Peter (Shonda) VanDuyne, of Gainesville, FL; one daughter, Victoria VanDuyne, of Peoria, IL; children from



the heart, Michael (Lori) Wright, of Littleton, CO and Cindy (the late Jim) Schick, of Davenport, IA; eight grandchildren: Megan, Marilia and Johanna VanDuyne, of the Philippines; Megan VanDuyne, of Florida; Amanda and Trae Schick, of Iowa and Emily and Michael John Wright, of Colorado; one brother, Dennis (Shirley) VanDuyne, of Coal Valley, IL; brother-in-law, Virgilio (Adela) Murgas, of Panama Republic; sisters-in-law, Joan VanDuyne and Margaret VanDuyne, both of Wilmington; Fernanda Morales, of Panama Republic; Esperanza Hathway, of Missouri and Juana Ruben, of Florida; and many dear nieces, nephews, and their families.

Preceding him in death were his parents, two sons, Mark VanDuyne and Johnny Wright; seven brothers: John, Jerry, Tommy, Richard, Leo, Peter and Vincent VanDuyne and five sisters: Bernice, Marcela, Evelyn, Marie and Rita.

A private Mass of Christian Burial was held March 8, 2021 at St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church in Wilmington. Interment was in Mt. Olivet Cemetery, Wilmington.

For more information and to visit his online guestbook, log on to [www.rwpatterson-funeralhomes.com](http://www.rwpatterson-funeralhomes.com) or find them on Facebook.

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

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April 13	September 14
May 11	October 12
June 8	November 9
	December 14

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# OBITUARIES

## Velma M. Rhodes

WILMINGTON—Velma Mae Rhodes, 87, of Wilmington, passed away Thursday, March 4, 2021.

Born June 15, 1933 in Ramsey, IL Velma was a daughter of Ora and Elsie (nee Carlock) McCaslin. She retired from the Wilmington Post Office, and was an active member of the Women of the Moose in Wilmington. Velma enjoyed life to the fullest and loved spending time with her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

Survivors include her five children: Darlene (Lester) Geiss, Jim (Karen) Rhodes, Rita (Dave) Lovell, Billy Joe Rhodes and Barbara Rhodes; seven grandchildren: Sandi (Tim) Stallard, Shauna Crawford, Markus Nielsen, Kristin Rhodes, Travis (Candiece) Robinson, Kara (Rick) Felske, and Lindsay (Mike) Powers; seven great-grandchildren: Rylan, Kylie, Tommy, Logan, Tyler, Brooklyn, and Zach; and one sister, Angie (Charles) Carr.

Velma was preceded in death by her parents, husband, Jim Rhodes on Aug. 4, 2007; one daughter, Elsie Jane, in infancy and one brother and several sisters.

A private family interment was held Monday, March 8, 2021 at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood, where Velma was laid to rest with her husband.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Velma's memory to: Alzheimer's Association, 255 North Michigan Avenue, Floor 17, Chicago, IL 60601 or Uplifted Care, 482 Main Street NW, Bourbonnais, IL 60914.

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

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

## Daniel Yeates

WILMINGTON— Daniel E. Yeates, 63, of Wilmington, passed away peacefully with his family by his side, Monday, March 1, 2021.

He was born June 7, 1957 in Oswego, NY. Soon after graduating high school he enrolled into the United States Coast Guard, serving for four years. He was an avid reader and greatly enjoyed science fiction and westerns.

Surviving are his mother, Marjorie (nee Gentile) Yeates, of Wilmington; two sisters, Maureen Yeates, of Wilmington and Jean (Mark) Jackson, of Essex; two nephews, Seth Fox and Keith Jackson; three nieces: Roni Fox, Kimberly Yeates and Gini Fuhrmann; many great-nieces and nephews; and sister-in-law, Liz Yeates, of Texas.



Preceding him in death were his father, Thomas E. Yeates; brother, Thomas Russell Yeates and sister, Kimberly Yeates.

Cremation rites have been accorded.

A celebration of his life will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, Daniel would have wanted any memorial donations to be directed to his mother to help with any expenses that she would incur.

For more information and to visit his online guestbook, log on to [www.rwpatterson-funeralhomes.com](http://www.rwpatterson-funeralhomes.com) or find them on Facebook.

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

## Helen E. Logan

MORRIS—Helen E. Logan (nee Jaworski), 99, of Morris, passed away Wednesday, March 3, 2021 at the Manteno Veterans' Home in Manteno.

Born Nov. 18, 1921 in Milwaukee, WI, Helen Elizabeth was a daughter of Adam and Filomine (Spejwski) Jaworski. She was raised and educated in Milwaukee, and attended Teacher's College in Conway, AR. In 1943, Helen enlisted in the United States Women's Army Corps and served as a general clerk until her honorable discharge in 1945. While serving her country, she met Felix J. Logan in El Biar, Algeria and they were married on June 25, 1949 in Milwaukee. Helen and Felix then moved to Morris where they would live together their entire married life and raise their family. She was an active member of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Morris and volunteered at Immaculate Conception School for



25 years. Helen's faith was an important part of her life, and she was proud to be an associate with the Sisters of the Holy Cross religious order.

Survivors include her two sons, Tom Logan, of Chicago and John (Laurie) Logan, of Morris; four grandchildren: Amanda Davis, Ashlee Sinnott, Emilie Logan and Elizabeth Logan; one sister, Lucy Murphy, of Milwaukee; as well as numerous nieces and nephews across the country and in England.

Helen was preceded in death by her parents, her husband on March 7, 1993, one brother, Walter Boris and two sisters, Jen Wisniewski and Hattie Froehlich.

Per Helen's wishes, cremation rites will be accorded, and a Memorial Mass will be held at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Morris at a later date. Helen will be laid to rest in Mount Carmel Catholic Cemetery, Morris, with her husband.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Helen's memory to Immaculate Conception School in Morris.

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

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

## Helen M. Veronda

COAL CITY—Helen M. Veronda, 93, of Coal City, passed away peacefully at her home on Sunday, March 7, 2021.

Born Nov. 2, 1927 in Braidwood, Helen Marie was a daughter of Joseph and Anna K. (Voboril) Kaiser. She was raised in Braidwood and graduated from Reed Custer High School with the class of 1945. On Dec. 2, 1950, Helen married Anton Veronda in Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Braidwood.

One who always remained focused on family, Helen's primary role was that of a dedicated wife, mother, and in later years much to her love, a grandmother and great-grandmother. She worked for the family business, Veronda Plumbing in Coal City until the passing of Anton in 1988, and also held employment with L&J Fashions in Coal City.

Helen was an active member of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Coal City, where she belonged to The Martha's and enjoyed working on the annual MardiGras fundraiser throughout the years. She was a member of the Coal City Area Club, and the family was a founding member of the Miners Area #1 Club.

Helen was an absolute avid Chicago Cubs fan, and also enjoyed dancing on Sunday evenings at the Croatian Club in Crest Hill up until recent years.

Gone from our sight, Helen will be remembered as a true woman of class and grace, who cherished her home and her family. She leaves behind a priceless collection of memories to all those who knew and loved her.

Survivors include her two sons and daughters-in-law: Joseph E. and Deb Veronda, of Coal City and Jeffrey A. and Elizabeth Veronda, of Carbon Hill; four grandchildren: Jeff (Maggi) Veronda, of Morris; Kyle (Christina) Veronda, of Mazon; April (Colton) Wiegand, of Diamond and Tony (Alyssa) Veronda, of Marseilles; great-grandchildren: Colby DeGrush, Brentley



Veronda, Eliana Wiegand, Aiden Wiegand, Mackenzie Veronda, Easton Wiegand and Hunter Veronda; one sister, Marilyn Bueschel, of Coal City and numerous nieces and nephews.

Helen was preceded in death by her parents, husband, Anton in 1988 and three brothers: Ed (Rosella) Koca, Frank (Adeline) Koca and George (Lenore) Koca.

The family will receive friends for a COVID observant walk through visitation at Reeves Funeral Home, 75 N. Broadway, one block north of IL Rt. 113 in Coal City on Saturday, March 13, 2021 from 10 a.m. until the time of funeral service at 1 p.m. Deacon William Dunn from Assumption Parish in Coal City will preside.

Those wishing to participate in the funeral services virtually, are welcome to join the live-streamed services beginning at 1 p.m. on Saturday, March 13, 2021 at 1 p.m. A link for the event is available on Helen's memorial page.

Burial will follow in Braceville-Gardner Cemetery, where Helen will be laid to rest with her late husband, Anton.

Pallbearers will be: Joe Veronda, Jeff Veronda, Jeff Veronda Jr., Kyle Veronda, April Wiegand, Tony Veronda, Ed Koca and Brad Bueschel; Honorary pallbearers will be: Colby DeGrush, Brentley Veronda, Eliana Wiegand, Aiden Wiegand, Mackenzie Veronda, Easton Wiegand and Hunter Veronda.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Helen's memory to the Alzheimer's Association, Joliet Area Community Hospice or to a charity of the donor's choosing.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the guest book, upload photographs and share Helen's memorial page online through social media by logging onto: [www.ReevesFuneral.com/obituary/Helen-Veronda](http://www.ReevesFuneral.com/obituary/Helen-Veronda)

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

## Dorothy Erickson-Smith

GIBSON CITY—Dorothy Erickson-Smith, 93, of Gibson City, and formerly of Morris and Coal City, passed away Thursday, March 4, 2021 at Carle Foundation Hospital in Urbana.

Born Jan. 4, 1928 in Coal City, Dorothy was a daughter of James and Rose (Sistek) Lamie. She married Eugene Erickson who preceded her in death. She later married Robert Smith who also preceded her.

Survivors include her four daughters: Rita (Rick) Meyer, of Gibson City, IL; Jackie (Frank) Dohman, of Canton, MO; Wendy (Larry) Boundy, of Melvin, IL and Beth Lemons (Michael deceased), of Mount Vernon, IL; stepchildren, 17 grandchildren, 35 great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren (one on the way).



Dorothy was preceded in death by her parents, son, Greg Erickson; two granddaughters, Chondra Dohman and Shelly Rae Meyer; grandson, David Zeller; sister, Sylvia Reeves and her special little friend, Meeka.

Per Dorothy's wishes, private graveside services will be held at Lisbon Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to the family or to charities of their choice.

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

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

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## Mobile food pantry coming to South Wilmington

On Monday, March 15 from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. (or until food runs out) Catholic Charities' Mobile Food Pantry will be distributing food at St. Lawrence Church, 135 Rice Rd., South Wilmington, in the church parking lot, rain or shine.

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

Participants are asked to stay in their cars. The Mobile Food Pantry will use a "drive thru" method to distribute pre-packed groceries to ensure that all participants are safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

You do not have to be Catholic to participate. Catholic Charities helps people of all faiths and beliefs. For more information about Catholic Charities, please visit [catholiccharitiesjoliet.org](http://catholiccharitiesjoliet.org).

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**- MARCH EVENTS -**

Fri., March 5 5-7:30 p.m. Fish Fry  
Fri., March 12 5-7:30 p.m. Fish Fry  
Sat., March 13 5-7:30 p.m. Steak Fry

Wed., March 17 - St. Patrick's Day 5-7:30 p.m.  
Corn Beef Dinners and Corn Beef Sandwiches

Fri., March 19 5-7:30 p.m. Fish Fry  
Sun., March 21 9-11:30 a.m. Breakfast  
Fri., March 26 5-7:30 p.m. Fish Fry

**WEDNESDAY TACOS**  
5:00-7:30 p.m.  
MARCH 3, 10, 24, AND 31  
No Tacos March 17

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# Pritzker needs to figure out why losses keep happening

When legal questions were raised about U.S. Rep. Robin Kelly's campaign for state Democratic Party chair last week and Kelly only got stronger, that should tell you a couple of things.

One, Kelly is a genuinely well-liked, well-known and trusted person within the Democratic Party and her alliance with U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin was crucial. They were quickly able to believably reassure her supporters and those leaning her direction that she'd find a way around the admission by her own attorney that the state party couldn't raise or spend "soft," non-federal campaign money as long as she had even "indirect" control of the party apparatus.

Two, and perhaps more importantly, the hit solidified the contest as a referendum on Gov. JB Pritzker, and not in a good way.

When the potential loss of millions of dollars in campaign contributions, plus the possible loss of as much as \$300,000 in postage discounts per cycle for the Illinois House Democrats alone, and the pub-

licly expressed fears about Kelly's election from the party's most dependable ally, organized labor, and the very real possibility of alienating a sitting liberal billionaire governor weren't enough to stop Kelly, you're dealing with a heck of a candidate, a clever sponsor and no fear of reprisal from the other side.

Granted, the state central committee is a strangely unique voting universe populated with some odd sorts. But everybody knew that going in. Also, people lied. But that's not new. In the end, however, the governor got rolled. Again.

Pritzker's foray into the 2020 Illinois Senate President election caused a backlash that ended in defeat and lingering resentment on both sides. His "Fair Tax" was so thoroughly beaten last year that Democratic legislators all over the state who voted to put it on the ballot were running away from it throughout the fall. January's lame duck session was a gubernatorial disaster. And now this.

Last week's narrow but convincing thumping of

Pritzker's candidate Michelle Harris won't matter at all to actual 2022 voters, who are far more concerned right now with staying alive, healthy and employed. But these losses have a cumulative effect under the Statehouse dome.

Losing is like a disease in politics. People usually don't want to have anything to do with you when you lose. So, the governor needs to start putting some points on the board or this could morph into something that voters might eventually care about. Someday, this pandemic's gonna end.

Pritzker is starting to take some positive steps. The governor just finished two weeks of events with Legislative Black Caucus members enthusiastically supporting the new criminal justice reform law and aggressively rebutting its many critics. The Black Caucus passed three of its four "pil-

lars" in January (education and economic reform were the other two), so expect another four weeks of similar whistle-stops.

Gov. Pritzker has also done a few recent events announcing projects from 2019's massive capital construction program.

With the way things stand now, though, the legislature will roll over him like he's not even there on the new district maps, the budget or whatever.

For instance, Pritzker's failed efforts for more than a year to pass a cleanup bill for the cannabis legalization law are encountering even more resistance. Rep. Sonya Harper, the chair of the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus, insisted to the Cook County Cannabis Commission last week that the Pritzker administration's implementation of the 2019 law is the main problem, not the law itself.



**CAPITOL FACTS**  
Rich Miller

And then, of course, there are the ongoing problems at the Illinois Department of Employment Security a full year since the economic crisis began. Legislators receive more gut-wrenching calls about this topic than pretty much everything else combined.

The best path forward for the governor boils down to good governance, good politics and much better "member management."

One thing that encompasses all three of those is the state's capital program, which needs to be rolled out more. Nothing generates more legislative goodwill than projects. Make lots of people happy and create some jobs, already.

Above all, though,

Pritzker's gotta figure out why these losses keep happening. Stop talking and start listening.

He wouldn't confirm it, but I'm told one of the last people to declare his state party chair allegiance was millennial committeeperson Tom Maillard moments before the voting began. Maillard had just enough weighed votes to put Kelly over the top. A phone call to that young man to hear him out is probably the last thing anyone on Team Pritzker wants to do right now. But it wouldn't be a horrible first step.

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

## OPEC's decision keeps Illinois gas prices rising

Illinois gas prices have risen 4.8 cents per gallon in the past week, averaging \$2.88/g, according to GasBuddy's daily survey of 4,378 stations in Illinois. Gas prices in Illinois are 28.4 cents per gallon higher than a month ago and stand 48.6 cents per gallon higher than a year ago.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Illinois is priced at \$2.55/g while the most expensive is \$3.29/g, a difference of 74.0 cents per gallon. The lowest price in the state is \$2.55/g while the highest is \$3.29/g, a difference of 74.0 cents per gallon.

The national average price of gasoline has risen 3.4 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$2.77/g. The national average is up 29.8 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 41.1 cents per gallon higher than a year ago.

The Mohsen and Shell off Lorenzo Rd. exit has the lowest price for gas within a 15 mile radius at \$2.79/g. As for in town gas, for Wilmington, the Phillips 66, on 1105 S. Water St., has the lowest price at \$2.84/g. In Braidwood, all gas stations are at \$2.99/g. In Coal City, the Casey's and Shell on 10 W. Divison, both show the price of \$2.87/g.

"OPEC surprised oil markets last week by extending oil production cuts for another

month, ignoring the resurgence in global demand as economies recover from COVID-19. Markets responded by pushing oil prices up some 12%. As a result, motorists should prepare for further gas price increases in the weeks and potentially months ahead, with a \$3 per gallon national average potentially less than a month away," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis for GasBuddy.

"At the start of this year, it was somewhat outlandish to predict a \$3 per gallon national average for the summer driving season, but thanks to the speed of recovery from the pandemic pushing demand higher and OPEC's reluctance to raise oil production, we're on the cusp of making that a reality.

"It's extremely frustrating as a consumer to feel helpless as prices soar and as millions remain unemployed, so the only advice I can offer consumers is prepare for further increases, and to mitigate rising prices, shop around for the low prices every time you need to refuel. I'm hopeful OPEC will see the error in their ways at next month's meeting, but with demand exceeding supply, the longer the imbalance continues, the longer it will take for any rise in oil production to offset it."

## Rules in place for remote criminal hearings

BY CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

The state's highest court issued new rules last week to help courts transition to remote hearings for criminal cases as the pandemic continues to disrupt court operations statewide.

Illinois Supreme Court Chief Justice Anne Burke said the order "provides guidance for our courts to address the backlog of criminal cases created by the COVID-19 pandemic," in a news release last week.

Courthouses shut their doors last March, allowing only essential matters to be held in-person and temporarily halting jury trials in criminal and civil cases and affecting criminal defendants' right to a

speedy trial.

In May, the Illinois Supreme Court issued an order that directed circuit courts to return to normal operations on June 1 and gave local judges discretion to allow for remote or in-person hearings.

In-person civil and criminal jury trials have slowly resumed with social distancing and other public health guidelines in place in nearly all counties, except Cook County where in-person jury trials are still on hold.

The Feb. 11 order states that certain criminal hearings, such as initial appearances or non-substantive status hearings, can be held remotely, even if the person charged with a crime objects to a remote hearing.

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

### SUDOKU - Here's how it works:

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

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

### CLUES ACROSS

- Large dung beetle
- Representation of a plan
- In a fervid way
- The Book of Psalms
- Morning
- Exactly the same
- About
- Brown and basmati are two
- Swiss river
- Philippine island
- Expressions of surprise
- An ant
- Common Japanese surname
- Deoxyribonucleic acid
- Car mechanics group
- A person's brother or sister
- Ancient pharaoh
- Quantitative fact
- Vividly colored bird
- Your home has one
- Organic compound
- Section at the end of a book
- Flat tableland with steep edges
- Criticize
- Split pulses
- Brief trend
- Cool!
- Purposes
- Brews
- Skin condition
- Pops
- American air travel company
- Minute bug
- Anno Domini (in the year of Our Lord)
- One who rides in your car
- One of the Gospels
- City in southern Spain
- Inquisitive
- Jean Paul \_\_, author
- Pop singer Harry

### CLUES DOWN

- An ape or monkey
- Chemical element
- Zodiac sign
- Removes
- Brew
- Nickname
- Architectural structures
- Trigonometric function
- Postmodern architectural building in Vienna
- Henderson and Fitzgerald are two
- Mountain (abbr.)
- Landscaping practice
- Capacitance unit
- Redirect
- Hat for women
- In a way, dressed down
- Granny
- Feed
- Endpoint
- Indian instrument
- Bleated
- Cablegram (abbr.)
- Root mean square (abbr.)
- Jellyfishes
- Individual TV installments
- Talk
- More (Spanish)
- Leaseholder
- Monetary units
- Hostility
- Work stations
- Linguistics giant
- Female sheep
- Calendar month
- Seasoning
- Lofty nest of a bird of prey
- Single Lens Reflex
- A way to remove
- Virginia
- Old English

☪ ☩ ☨ ☧ ☦ ☥ ☤ ☣ ☢ ☡ ☠ ☟ ☘ ☗ ☖ ☕ ☔ ☓ ☒ ☑ ☐ ☏ ☎ ☍ ☌ ☋ ☊ ☉ ☈ ☇ ☆ ★ ☄ ☃ ☂ ☁ ☀ ☁ ☂ ☃ ☄ ★ ☆ ☇ ☈ ☉ ☊ ☋ ☌ ☍ ☎ ☏ ☐ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗ ☘ ☙ ☚ ☛ ☜ ☝ ☞ ☟ ☠ ☡ ☢ ☣ ☤ ☥ ☦ ☧ ☨ ☩ ☪ ☫ ☬ ☭ ☮ ☯ ☰ ☱ ☲ ☳ ☴ ☵ ☶ ☷ ☸ ☹ ☺ ☻ ☼ ☽ ☾ ☿ ♀ ♁ ♂ ♃ ♄ ♅ ♆ ♇ ♈ ♉ ♊ ♋ ♌ ♍ ♎ ♏ ♐ ♑ ♒ ♓ ♀ ♁ ♂ ♃ ♄ ♅ ♆ ♇ ♈ ♉ ♊ ♋ ♌ ♍ ♎ ♏ ♐ ♑ ♒ ♓

## CRYPTO FUN

☪ ☩ ☨ ☧ ☦ ☥ ☤ ☣ ☢ ☡ ☠ ☟ ☘ ☗ ☖ ☕ ☔ ☓ ☒ ☑ ☐ ☏ ☎ ☍ ☌ ☋ ☊ ☉ ☈ ☇ ☆ ★ ☄ ☃ ☂ ☁ ☀ ☁ ☂ ☃ ☄ ★ ☆ ☇ ☈ ☉ ☊ ☋ ☌ ☍ ☎ ☏ ☐ ☑ ☒ ☓ ☔ ☕ ☖ ☗ ☘ ☙ ☚ ☛ ☜ ☝ ☞ ☟ ☠ ☡ ☢ ☣ ☤ ☥ ☦ ☧ ☨ ☩ ☪ ☫ ☬ ☭ ☮ ☯ ☰ ☱ ☲ ☳ ☴ ☵ ☶ ☷ ☸ ☹ ☺ ☻ ☼ ☽ ☾ ☿ ♀ ♁ ♂ ♃ ♄ ♅ ♆ ♇ ♈ ♉ ♊ ♋ ♌ ♍ ♎ ♏ ♐ ♑ ♒ ♓

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to nutrition.  
Each number corresponds to a letter.  
(Hint: 15 = E)

**A. 14 6 18 16 5 15 14 18 21**  
Clue: Vitamins and minerals

**B. 12 8 8 10**  
Clue: Nourishment

**C. 26 17 3 8 16 5 15 21**  
Clue: Food energy

**D. 10 5 15 18**  
Clue: The food a person eats

Answers: A. nutrients B. food C. calories D. diet

## WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to nutrition.

**GKCONIO**

--	--	--	--	--	--

Answer: Cooking

## Guess Who?

I am a singer born in Oklahoma on March 10, 1983. When I was a child I sang with a church choir and also participated in talent shows. I gained fame while participating in a popular American singing competition, which I ultimately won.

Answer: Carrie Underwood

## NUTRITION DATA WORD SEARCH

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

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

## WORDS

ASCORBIC ACID  
CALCIUM  
CARBOHYDRATE  
CHOLESTEROL  
DAILY VALUE  
ENZYME  
FIBER  
FLAVONOIDS  
FOLATE  
FOLIC ACID  
IRON  
LIPIDS  
MACRONUTRIENT  
MAGNESIUM  
MICROGRAM  
NIACIN  
NUTRITIONAL  
PHOSPHATE  
PROTEIN  
RETINOL  
SELENIUM  
SODIUM  
SUGAR  
THIAMIN

# CLASSIFIEDS

## CLASSIFIED DEADLINES

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

### Deadlines

**Classified Display**  
The Prairie Shopper - Thurs., 4 p.m.  
Paid Newspapers - Fri., 5 p.m.  
**Classified Word Ads**  
All Newspapers - Thurs., 4 p.m.  
Paid Newspapers - Mon., Noon

**Reach over 19,300 homes with a classified ad in The Free Press Newspapers**  
• The Prairie Shopper  
• The Braidwood Journal  
• The Coal City Courant  
• The Free Press Advocate

**Cost**  
Line Ads are up to 30 words (20¢ for each word over 30)  
1 wk. - \$21; 2 wks. - \$25;  
3 wks. - \$28; 4 wks. - \$30  
\$.120 Extra per line for bold or caps on classified

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

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

### APARTMENTS FOR RENT

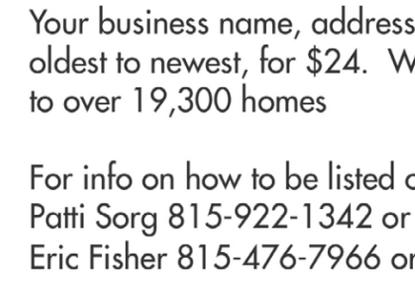
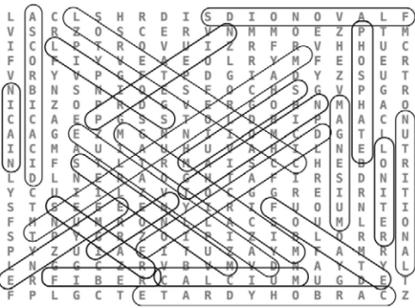
Wilmington, ground floor unit, 2 bedrooms, central air, in unit washer/dryer hookup, garage, no pets, 18 month lease, security background check, Rent \$900.00 per month. Security deposit \$900.00 Call 815-791-1002 ca8a-11b

### FOR RENT

For rent - 1 car garage, storage only. \$100 month. 815-476-2805. ca9a-11b

### GARAGE SALE

Heated barn sale, 8615 E. Spring Rd in Diamond. Saturday, March 13th and Sunday, March 14th. 9am-4pm. Furniture, glassware, antiques, worth the trip. Something for everyone. cc10a-10b



### HELP WANTED

Cinder Ridge Golf Course is now hiring for Deli, Pro Shop, Car Attendants & Rangers. Please come in for an application at 24801 W. Lakepoint Dr., Wilmington. Call 815-476-4000 for more info. ch10b-14a

Dawn of a New Day Care Center in Mazon, is now hiring qualified teachers. Call now, 815-448-2530. cc10a-13b

Hiring Worker; part-time, must be 21 or older, at Riverfront Lanes, 402 S. Water St., Wilmington. Obtain application at front counter. ch10a-11b

Hiring at Polk-A-Dot Drive In, 222 N. Front St., Braidwood. Hiring for all positions. Apply in-person daily from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

### HELP WANTED

Morris Trailer Sales, Inc. is now hiring an Office Assistant to assist our Office Manager with filing and general office duties along with assisting with parts. Must be able to work 2-3 days a week, help with filing paper work and moving files to various locations, help with pricing and storing parts in various locations, and able to work straight through without leaving for lunch. Stay at home Moms, Veterans or those only wanting to work limited hours may apply. 25 years or older. Call Suzanne at 815-954-9777 or send your resume to smapply@yahoo.com. cc10a-11b

The Coal City Area Club is now accepting applications for summer maintenance. Must have a driver's license. The club is also accepting applications for life-guard & a lifeguard supervisor. Apply at the club office at 285 S. Broadway, Coal City or go to www.coalcityarea-club.net. ch 10b-12a

### LOST & FOUND

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

### MISCELLANEOUS

Dry, seasoned oak firewood \$139, cherry BBQ firewood \$169. Wood racks \$49, The best firewood & quick, friendly service. 815-260-0108. cc5a-16b

### GET HELP APPLYING FOR A FOID CARD

We take color photographs for gun owners' cards (FOID) for \$10 and help you complete the application online. Illinois State Police won't answer the FOID hotline but you can complete your application with our computer. Call for an appointment most days (but Tuesdays) 9a.m. to 4p.m. Do not wear white or very pale colors. Call 815-476-7966. The Free Press office, 111 S. Water St., Wilmington. Please wear a mask.

### HOMEMADE POTICA

Nut, poppy seed, apricot, raspberry; order now for Easter. Banana, Pumpkin and Zucchini mini breads also available. Pick up at the Wine Cafe in Wilmington and receive \$3 off a bottle of wine. Call Charlotte 815-545-8767. cc9a-12b

### 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

### MOBILE HOMES FOR RENT

Braidwood: 2 BR, 2 BA, no pets. Security deposit. 815-693-9141. ck9b-13a

Brand new 1, 2 or 3 BR mobile homes available for rent or sale. Rent from \$709-\$909. Includes water, sewer & trash removal. Please call & talk to Eric about financing options. Call 815-237-2290 for more information. ch10a-13b

### PETS

Large Selection of Dog and Cat Food, treats, accessories, health aids, clothing, Birthday treats, wall art, jewelry, gifts, greeting cards and Home of Fritters for Critters Pet Treats. New! Brew and Chew Dog Treats. Trinity Barkery 240 W. Baltimore Wilmington, IL 60481 815-476-5104 slewis@trinity-services.org. ch22b-tfn

### REAL ESTATE

Private party wants to buy waterfront home on acreage in the Wilmington, Braidwood or Coal City area. Call 708-308-1293. cc9b-13a

### SERVICE & REPAIRS

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

Bradley Pest Control Termite/Pest Specialist. Real estate inspection Rodent Control and Exclusion Call Phil at 815-405-5020 cc42a-42a

Gas Fireplace Repair. 38 years experience. Licensed, insured & bonded. Call Margo at 708-712-5012 to schedule an appointment. Can repair most brands. Weekends available. Thank you. cc49b-22a

Ron's Drywall, Hang, Tape & Paint, 25 years experience. Reasonable rates including drywall repairs, plaster repairs, cracks, holes, & patches. Carpenter available by request. 815-549-5136. cc6a-13b

### SERVICE & REPAIRS

**Julie's Remodeling**  
Siding, soffit, roof repairs, painting, welding repairs, seamless gutters, fencing, tree removal, lawn care, Complete Handyman service! Bonded and Insured, 20 yrs., call 815-791-5731. cc28b

**Mike Collins Roofing**, re-shingles and modified rubber and gutter cleaning, aluminum gutter screen, blown-in insulation in attics.

**INSULATION**. Get a free estimate for blown in insulation for attics from Mike Collins Roofing. Keep your house cooler in summertime and warmer in the winter. lic # 104.007296. Ask for Mike at 815-730-1303. cc41b-12a

**GOT GRASS Lawn Care**  
**Jim Baudino**  
815-342-6394  
cc10a-21b

Local cleaning lady with 15 years of experience has openings. Call or text Eva for a free estimate 773-671-5643. cc10a-13b

### STORAGE

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

### WANTED

**WANTED SCRAP METAL**

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

**Free pickup 7 days**  
815-210-8819

### ILLINOIS CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING NETWORK

#### HEALTH

**HERNIA REPAIR? DID YOU RECEIVE A HERNIA MESH PATCH** between 2009-present? Did you suffer complications from removal surgery, bowel perforation, infection, abdominal wall tears, puncture of abdominal organs or intestinal fistulae after placement of this device? You may be entitled to compensation. Attorney Charles Johnson 1-800-535-5727

#### MISCELLANEOUS

New Discovery Eliminates Prostate Problems! Natural Prostate Relief Solution! More Control, Less Bathroom Trips, Better Sleep, Improved Performance 60 Day Guarantee & FREE Shipping 15% Discount Coupon: control01 Visit: FloZyte.com

#### WANTED

**FREON WANTED:** We pay \$\$\$ for cylinders and cans. R12 R500 R11 R113 R114. Convenient. Certified Professionals. Call 312-291-9169 or visit RefrigerantFinders.com

**WE ARE OPEN AND SERVING OUR CLIENTS!**

- WE ARE STILL SHOWING HOMES TO BUYERS.
- WE ARE STILL LISTING HOMES FOR SELLERS.
- WE ARE SELLING HOMES EVERY DAY!

**21 CENTURY 21**  
Coleman-Hornsby

Our office is still open seven days a week and we continue to work full time serving our clients!  
**815-942-9190**  
1802 N. Division St. Morris

# Stand up and be counted 2021 BUSINESS HONOR ROLL

Published March 29

What year does your business fall under?  
Call us now to be included on this full page

The Free Press Newspapers would like to celebrate the businesses and people who continue to make southern Grundy and Will counties the success it is today through years of hard work and perseverance.

Your business name, address, logo and website will be listed, oldest to newest, for \$24. We will promote your business to over 19,300 homes

For info on how to be listed contact  
Patti Sorg 815-922-1342 or email: fpnpatti@comcast.net or  
Eric Fisher 815-476-7966 or email efisher@fpnusa.com

## The Free Press Newspapers

111 S. Water St  
Wilmington, IL 60481  
(815) 476-7966

271 S. Broadway  
Coal City, IL 60416  
(815) 634-0315

**2021 HONOR ROLL OF BUSINESSES**

The beginnings and growth of some of the area's **LEADING BUSINESSES**

**Congratulations to these many businesses!**

156 YEARS <b>GRUNDY BANK</b> Morris • Wilmington	150 YEARS <b>THE FREE PRESS ADVOCATE</b> 815-476-7966 111 S. Water St., Wilmington freepressnewspapers.com	125 YEARS <b>WHITMORE</b> ACE Hardware Braidwood • Coal City • Wilmington	120 YEARS <b>THE COAL CITY COURANT</b> 815-434-0215 271 S. Broadway St., Coal City freepressnewspapers.com
100 YEARS <b>YOUR BUSINESS HERE</b>	90 YEARS <b>YOUR BUSINESS HERE</b>	80 YEARS	70 YEARS
65 YEARS	64 YEARS	63 YEARS	62 YEARS
61 YEARS	60 YEARS <b>Poland's Furniture &amp; Appliances</b> 140 S. Broadway, Coal City • 815-634-2312	56 YEARS	55 YEARS <b>Paraphernalia Antiques</b> 815-476-0041 112 N. Water St., Wilmington
54 YEARS	53 YEARS <b>Community GMC</b> WE ARE PROFESSIONAL GRADE 315 S. Water St., Wilmington	52 YEARS	51 YEARS <b>Nelson's Home furnishings &amp; OUTLET CENTERS</b> 289 Bridge, Wilmington • (815) 476-7200 www.nelsonsfurniture.com
50 YEARS <b>Wee-Sip Liquors</b> 815-476-2704 1096 S. Water St., Wilmington	49 YEARS <b>YOUR BUSINESS HERE</b>	48 YEARS	47 YEARS

## SIUE dean's list

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville named Koren Frideres, Allison Norris and Mackenzie Smith, all of Coal City and Carley Wilkerson, of Wilmington to the fall 2020 dean's list for having a grade-point average of 3.5 or better.



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



Deanna McDowell  
860 E.Z. St.,  
Braidwood  
815-458-3300

# The importance of bees to our environment and ways to stop the decline of their population

Dear EarthTalk: How are bee population numbers doing these days?  
- B. Turner, via e-mail

Whether you've noticed it or not, there are far fewer bees around nowadays. One-quarter of the world's 20,000 bee species are in precipitous decline or have already gone extinct since 1990. A range of causes are to blame, including indiscriminate overuse of pesticides, loss of plants, and habitat destruction from human encroachment. But the latest and greatest threat is

## EARTH TALK

Questions & Answers About Our Environment

now climate change, which is warping the bees' environments (blooming seasons, plant diversity, etc.) at a faster rate than they are able to adapt.

Today in the U.S. only eight bee species are afforded protection under the Endangered Species Act. Seven are found only in Hawaii while the other, the Rusty patched bumble bee, occupies the tall-grass prairie of the Upper Midwest, most of which has been lost to farmland, strip malls and housing developments. Rusty patched bee populations have fallen off by 87 percent as a result.

In February 2021, conservation groups petitioned the Biden administration to grant the American bumblebee endangered species protection as well. Once the most common type of bee from coast-to-coast, this iconic bee has declined by some 89 percent in just the last two decades alone. Conservationists are worried about the implications for bee-pollinated plants and the animals (like us) that depend on them.

While the bees' decline worldwide is unquestionably due to human activity, the silver lining is that human activity can also help bring them back. A new map of global bee distribution and density created by researchers from the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the University of Georgia aims to help conservationists track the health of various bee



Courtesy photo by James Johnston

**AMERICAN BUMBLEBEE NUMBERS** have fallen by 89% over the last two decades across the U.S., and conservationists want the Biden administration to add this little flying stinger to the Endangered Species List.

populations across the U.S. and around the globe.

As for what readers can do to help bees, plant some native plants that attract them to your backyard. Regardless, if you happen to see bees nearby, snap some photos of them with your phone and upload them to iNaturalist so researchers can use your sighting to help track population dynamics. For more ideas on how you can help bees rebound locally, check out the website of the Bee Conservancy, a U.S.-based non-profit that is coordinating efforts to save bee populations around the world.

The good news is that bee populations in the U.S. and globally have seen a slight increase during the course of

the COVID pandemic, due to reduced human activity. But the problem is hardly solved—especially as we all get back to business as usual.

They may be small, but if we do not care for bees, we lose natural pollinators for the vast majority of cultivated crops and wild plants. If we can't save bees now, fresh fruits and vegetables could be scarce worldwide, which could in turn lead to massive social upheaval, even wars. It seems well worth our time, money and effort at this point to protect bees now, if not for their own sake, then for ours.

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## Thank You

The family of Megan Riley would like to thank everyone who gave cards, flowers, food, gifts, or other expressions of condolences, during and after her passing. All of these acts of kindness by so many people are greatly appreciated, as we go through this difficult time that has changed our lives forever. We will miss our little angel, as we cherish the time we had with her and are comforted in knowing she will be looking down on us from Heaven. We would like to also express our sincerest gratitude to Greg and Kris from Ferrari Funeral Services who went above and beyond expectations to make sure everything was perfect.

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# COALER SPORTS

## Lady Coalers bitten by Bulldogs

BY SHAWN LONG  
SPORTS WRITER

The Coal City girls basketball team needed a stronger second half Thursday when they fell to Streator 47-36 to end the season.

Streator beat the Lady Coalers the first time around and they used a second half run to finish them off.

The first and second quarters didn't offer a lot of points for either side although Coal City stayed close, trailing 19-15 at the half.

The Bulldogs turned it on to extend their lead with a 15-9 run in the third and cruised past the Coalers in the final frame to hold on.

Even though Coal City didn't win, they shot the ball a lot better, making 33 percent of their shots from the floor with two threes. They even made 6-of-12 from the line.

They were led by senior Colleen Feeney, who put up 13 points, hitting 3-of-4 from the charity stripe as she was their most consistent shooter from the line. Feeney corralled a team-high, six boards.

Sophomore Audrey Cooper had 10 points, making 2-of-6 from the line and the other four on lay ups at the basket. Cooper finished with five boards and three assists from her point guard spot.

Meghan Onsen, another senior, added five points, including one of their two threes. She also made a rebound with two assists.

Junior Magen Planeta and sophomore Molly Stiles chipped in three points. Planeta drilled the other three, collecting two rebounds while Stiles made 1-of-2 from the line with a rebound and two assists.

Abby Payton, a senior, pulled down five boards with two assists

Junior Grace Norris and sophomore Kerigan Copes added four boards Copes dished out three assists while Norris added another.

Kayla Peters collected two boards while Hayleigh Roach added another.

The defense stole five away.

The steals were picked up by Mia Ferrias, Norris, Cooper, Onsen and Copes.

The Lady Coalers finished their season 4-6 (4-4). They will look to benefit from a strong JV team next year. The JV team was 10-2. They'll have to do it without Abby Payton, Hayleigh Roach, Colleen Feeney and Meghan Onsen, who will all graduate in May.



FROM BEHIND-THE-ARC—Coal City senior Abby Payton attempts a three-pointer during Monday's game.



ACCURATE AT THE LINE—Junior Grace Norris was Coal City's best free-throw shooter, making 4-of-6 shots from the charity stripe on Monday.



Photos by Shawn Long

MY BALL!—Coal City junior Carson Shepard secures the loose ball during Tuesday's game at Reed-Custer.

## Coalers wrap up season with a loss

BY SHAWN LONG  
SPORTS WRITER

The Coal City boys basketball team had their season come to an end Friday falling to Streator, 63-45.

Coal City trailed 25-8 in the first quarter, unable to slow down the Bulldogs' scoring attack led by Jack Haynes, who put up 16 points.

Streator had a 37-19 lead into the break and had the momentum throughout the second half.

The Coalers attempted to comeback in the third but mustered just 10 points as Streator outscored them 13-10 to extend their lead.

Coal City outscored the Bulldogs 16-13 in the final frame but it was too little too late.

Kyle Burch led the Coalers with nine points. Cason Headley and Carson Shepard added eight while Riley Ponio scored seven.

The Coalers finish the 2021 season with a 3-6 record and will hope to improve on that in the winter of 2021. They'll have to do that without the senior help of Kyle Burch, Riley Ponio, Griffin Johnson, Trent Sandeno and Harley Felker.

**Coal City 39**  
**Reed-Custer 42**

The Coalers couldn't get by Reed-Custer on Tuesday.

After they gained the lead 13-6, the Comets went on a 21-6 run that made it a 27-19 score at the half.

"We got in foul trouble



Photos by Shawn Long

A FREEBIE—Coal City senior Kyle Burch saw no defenders so he take a three-point shot during Tuesday's game.

## .Final boys ICE bball standings

Here are the Illinois Central Conference final standings for boys basketball.

	Overall	Conf.
Streator.....	8-3	7-2
Wilmington ....	8-3	6-2
Herscher .....	8-6	7-3
Lisle.....	4-2	4-2
Reed-Custer ...	4-6	4-6
Coal City .....	3-6	3-6
Manteno .....	2-5	2-5
Peotone .....	1-9	1-8

early on," said CCHS coach Glenn Pacek. "That hurt us with Burch especially and that really affects what we can do offensively. Defensively, we had a couple poor rotations where we had miscommunication defensively and we left their best shooter wide open for a couple threes and that

swung the momentum of the game. Communication is step number one to be a good team and we failed that purpose. The biggest part was once Burch got into foul trouble, we weren't able to what our game plan was."

The Comets continued to score in the third, sparking a 16-6 run to open it up.

The Coalers outscored them in the final frame but at that point, it was already too late.

The Coalers were led by Headley, who had 12 points. Shepard had another 10 points, including a three-pointer.

Burch had five points. He probably would have had more had he not been in foul trouble.

"He had two early on and then went and picked up a third really quick in the first half so we took him out as long as we could. It was getting late for us. We put him back in and picked up his third so that's a major factor."

Reed-Custer was led by Lucas Foote, who had 19 points.

## Final ICE girls basketball standings

Here are the Illinois Central Conference standings for girls basketball as of Feb. 22.

	Overall	Conf.
Lisle.....	7-0	7-0
Peotone .....	9-1	7-1
Streator .....	5-3	5-2
Reed-Custer ...	6-4	6-4
Coal City .....	4-5	4-4
Manteno .....	2-7	2-7
Wilmington ...	2-8	2-8
Herscher .....	2-9	1-7

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# Experienced Coalers out to defend conference title

BY SHAWN LONG  
SPORTS WRITER

There's little to loose this season with only five football games and no hopes for a playoff. But that doesn't mean the boys wearing gold and green won't be giving it their best.

The Coalers return March 19 for the home opener after a 12-1 campaign in 2019 when they made it to a semifinal defeat to Richmond Burton that left a young group wanting more.

Football coach Dan Hutchings said they've got a lot of pieces back that were vital to the team's success last season, including Austin Ellis (OL/DL), Daniel Cueller (OL/DL), Chase Wasielewski (OL/DL), Asa Cooper (RB/DB), Ashton Harvey (RB/LB) and Kyle Burch (TE/LB).

"We return some quality kids," added Hutchings. "We return three starting offensive linemen. We return our running back in Asa Cooper. We have Ashton Harvey returning and Kyle Burch. They were several key players who contributed in 2019."

Cooper combined for 829 all-purpose yards with six touchdowns. Cooper was also a solid corner with a pick six and 26 tackles. Harvey was a wrecking ball at linebacker, second on the team with 90 tackles. He also collected nine tackles for a loss, a sack and four interceptions. Burch was good at defensive end, tallying 46 tackles, four TFLs and one sack.

On offense, Hutchings said Cueller, Ellis and Wasielewski will open holes on the line.

"They're very good offensive linemen so they should anchor our line and they had a year of experience so they'll do a nice job up front and that's where the game is won in the trenches and it's just nice to have those guys back."

He's also really high on juniors Nick Latta (OL/DL) and Josh Mikel (OL/DL), and senior Logan Mills (OL/DL) who will look to fill other slots on the offensive line for a balanced attack.

Hutchings also said he'll have some tall pass catchers in Jake Cholico (6-1) and Burch (6-5) at the tight end positions.

Both were on JV last year and helped that team immensely.

The only spot up for grabs right now is the quarterback spot but Hutchings says it is a competitive battle between a number of young players.

"It's going to be by committee," commented Hutchings. "You can't have one guy getting all the reps because if something happens or something were to happen, you've got to be ready and that's what we're looking at in all of our spots. We're just trying to build depth in every position. At quarterback, we're coaching kids up. We had a three-year starter so we've got to find somebody. It's got to be that combination of athleticism and leadership and somebody who can manage the game for us. We're not looking for a 5,000 yard passer. We're just looking for someone who can control the huddle and manage the offense for us. We'll be fine."

Keegan Crater, who is a junior, will likely get reps at the quarterback spot. Crater took a couple snaps last year but his activity was limited on varsity.

It's no surprise there is a position battle after three-year starter Payton Hutchings (his son) graduated. It's hard to replace a three-year, 1,000 yard passer, who ran the offense as well as Payton could. The Coalers want to find the same kind of player, who can throw and run when needed. Joining Cooper in the backfield



File Photo  
**THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME** – The Coalers come out of the helmet during a home game in 2019. They'll get two chances at this during the 2021 shortened season. They start on Friday when they will host Streator.

## So how many fans will be allowed at football games?

BY SHAWN LONG  
SPORTS WRITER

Don't expect a full house when the Coal City football team takes the field March 19 for the season opener.

Covid restrictions under the Illinois Department of Public Health will allow for only 20% of capacity. While that may disappoint a lot of Coaler fans, it could have been worse.

Prior to Monday's 20% capacity ruling by the IDPH for all sports, the number of fans was going to be limited to 50. That would have been a nightmare for Coal City where over 1,000 fans typically show up for the action under Friday Night Lights.

"Twenty percent of your capacity is definitely better than the 50," said Coal City Athletic Director/football coach Dan Hutchings.

So how many fans will 20% capacity mean? Right now that's unsure.

Schools are hoping for better clarity. Does that mean in the stands only? Or does that include the fence-leaners who line up from goal post to goal post?

"It depends when you talk

"TWENTY PERCENT  
OF YOUR CAPACITY  
IS DEFINITELY BETTER  
THAN THE 50."

DAN HUTCHINGS  
COALER HEAD COACH

bleachers and you talk people standing around the fence," said Hutchings. "We usually have a thousand to a couple thousand fans at games at a time."

Even without the cutback there will be fans who prefer to stay home for their own protection. They'll be able to watch the games online just like they did with basketball games. Hutchings said football games will be streamed on the GAVC YouTube site for those fans who won't be able to come.

Football players will be required to wear face coverings while playing. The Coalers will have masks attached by Velcro onto the cage of their helmet. Hutchings said the masks are different but the players are doing well with them.

"It's an adjustment. They don't

complain. They go along with their business, do what they're supposed to do and we've got to coach them up to keep the masks on. That's what we have to follow."

Varsity-only contests will be held at 6 p.m. as the frosh-soph games will be played on a different night of the week. The goal is to keep crowds at a minimum during the five-game season with no playoffs.

All but one of the five games will be on Friday night except April 1 for Coal City's home contest against Lisle. That will be a Thursday to avoid Good Friday on Easter weekend.

Hutchings said that despite the snow and cold that plagued the area the previous two months the football field is in decent shape.

"The field is fine," commented Hutchings. "It's soft because you're still getting the frost on the ground but it's a different time of year than playing in the fall. We'll get some cold nights and warm days. The field will be soft but that's mother nature in the spring."

Coal City seniors are just glad to have some type of season even if it's reduced to five games in front a limited number of fans. So turn in those Friday Night Lights.

will be Plainfield Central transfer Kyle Gockman.

"He'll play some running back and some defense for us."

One thing's for certain, Hutchings said they'll be strong on defense, should be able to control the clock and have a skilled special teams squad.

Adan Murphey (TE/LB), Nick

Seplak (RB/DT), Brady Best (RB/DL) and Tony Conterez (RB/LB) are younger players that will be expected to step up.

"Aydan Murphey is finally healthy. He had some injuries his freshman and sophomore years. He's a junior now so he'll handle most of our kicking duties but he's a good athlete, good tight end and good line-

backer. Nick Seplak is back to anchor our defensive line. Brady Best is a junior who got a lot of action as a sophomore. We'll look for some things from him. Tony Conterez is another guy that we'll look to step up."

It's no secret the Coalers will be the top team in the conference which means there are several teams that will look to knock them off. Hutchings

mentioned Manteno, Wilmington, Lisle and Peotone as being some of the top teams in the Illinois Central Eight Conference.

"I think Manteno will be up there," added Hutchings. "Wilmington, Lisle and Peotone will always be good."

In the five-game season Hutchings said he wants to be competitive but also wants to get younger players some much needed repetitions.

"It's an opportunity to get our kids the chance to play some football in a short season. Getting those younger kids and getting them some experience so when we move into the fall, we'll be ready for next fall. But kids have had great attitudes. We're fortunate that we're playing and looking forward to it. We'll be competitive too. You always want to be competitive whether you're doing drills or but we want to be fundamental. Teams that block the best and tackle the best usually win the football games. We want to work on the fundamentals of the game."

The Coalers host Streator March 19. They'll hope to cage the Bulldogs like they did last season when they were up 49-0 at half-time and went on to win by that score.

"Yeah, they'll be athletic. They've got a new coach in Kyle Tutt and we'll have to expect the unexpected in Week 1. We don't know what they're going to do offensively and defensively. We have some ideas but you just expect the unexpected but you've got to be ready for anything."

The Coalers travel to Manteno where they will hope to slow down the air attack led by junior Caleb Borkenhagen as well as they did last year in a 41-7 victory during Week 6 of the 2019 season.

"Manteno is always a really well coached team. RJ Haines is a good coach. He does a nice job over there. They're always very athletic. They like to throw it around but they've also been running it a little more over the last few years."

In Week 3, they'll host Lisle on Thursday, April 1. The Coalers mauled the Lions in a 36-7 victory. They'll hope to be as well prepared as they were.

They get rivalry road matches with Wilmington (4/9) and Reed-Custer (4/16) where they might be challenged more than they would be early on. The closest of those two matches was a 29-14 win over Wilmington in Week 9.

They upended Reed-Custer 54-6 in Week 10. They'll hope to continue that success but it's never a surprise when rivalry games go right down to the wire.

Week in, week out, they'll have the same approach. One game at a time.

"We don't look ahead," added Hutchings. "We take it one game at a time and we're focused with Streator right now and we haven't really looked too much at Manteno or anybody else."

Hutchings, is in his fourth year as head coach, will be assisted by varsity coaches Francis Loughran and Jim Looper; sophomore coaches Ryan Bunton and Corey Mikula, freshmen coaches Mark Masters and Corey Egan, and volunteer assistant coach Zach Edgar.

"Francis is a guy who has played in the system. He's been coaching for probably 12 years now and has done a great job. Continuity in a program. That's how some programs are good. Stability and continuity."

Coal City certainly has both.

# Coalers ready to kick things into high gear

BY SHAWN LONG  
SPORTS WRITER

The Coal City soccer team that went deep into the playoffs is welcoming back many of those key players this season when the first match will be played March 16.

The big question will be how well will they adapt to a shortened 12-game season under Covid restrictions.

"I think it's going to be new to everybody including all of us coaches," said CCHS coach Steven McCleary. "We kind of get used to this experience knowing with the girls soccer. But getting the boys onto everything is going to be kind of new to them so I think everything is kind of a wait-and-see mode and so that should make things very interesting for not knowing how good of shape kids are in and how much the masks are really going to affect things so it will definitely be interesting and I think we're all trying to do the best we can to prepare them for everything."

The Coaler kickers finished 8-11-3 thier last time playing. They engineered a strong run winning 6-of-9 matches near the end. Their season ended in a 4-1 loss to a stellar Peotone team during the regional championship.

"Last year was the fact that we were able to make a late season push," said McCleary. "It gave us a little bit of experience and then some bigger games which was nice. The

kids got a feel with what a good win is. And being able to lose in a regional final, I think ultimately helped them get that kind of experience into this season."

The Coalers want to be respected in the Illinois Central Eight when this is all said and done.

"We just want to be competitive. We want to earn the respect of the other teams in our conference that have been good for many years now and we hope to be competitive with them. That will allow us to hopefully be somewhere towards the top of the conference. I think we're all kind of on the boat of I don't think anybody really knows what to expect and I think it will make things a little bit more interesting this year."

Coal City graduated six seniors and McCleary said just one of them was a starter so he's confident they'll be in good shape with most of their starters back.

"We've got a lot of experience coming back and ultimately it will make them stronger. With everything going on, I think they're pretty hungry for it so hopefully that will turn into some wins for us this year."

"We lost one starter from last year, Collin Meece, and he was our MVP and an all-conference player so he was a big miss but we had a couple guys off the bench that had quite a bit of playing time so other than that, everybody is back. We have a lot of guys that have 3-4 years experience, all of our defense is back, including

our keeper and we've got the kid who scored the most goals for us is back and we should have some pretty good experience that may help us get through the tough times we are going through."

McCleary said he's going to rely on some of his top defenders to lead the team. He predicts they'll be strong in goal with junior Collin Hart leading the way.

"Our defense really will be our strong suit with Hart in goal for his second year as a junior. He's really taken a big leadership role for us this year."

Two centerbacks that will play a huge role in defending the goal are senior Bobby Milne and junior Alex Baudino.

"They are returning conference players and they have been playing back there on defense for the last two years. That should solidify a pretty good defense for us right there. Those guys are physical, they're smart and they know exactly how much they can do without overthinking it. Bobby is our captain so he's going to bring back some leadership. They're very experienced. That's the main thing. I just think you really can't compete with experience a whole lot."

Nick Sullivan is going to be a big part of their offense after playing a huge role last year.

"He started to score a few goals for us last year and he was kind of like that complementary player that could always be involved so we're

hoping he can kind of take that big step for us."

McCleary can't wait to see what freshman Timi Shabani can do on the soccer field. He said he's young but he's heard good things about him.

"We're excited for what he can do," added McCleary. "He knows the game very well and he does not look like a freshman in any way so we're hoping he can see some playing time on the field and step in and do some good things for us offensively."

Even though the Coalers made it to the regional championship game, they did not perform generally well in the Illinois Central Eight Conference. They were just 2-5 in conference play, trailing Streator, Peotone, Herscher, Manteno and Lisle so if there's one thing to say about being at the bottom of the totum poll, there is nowhere to go but up.

"Those teams have been the five powerhouse teams that always seem to be competing every year and we've competed with them very well. We just can't get that W against a lot of them so we're hoping to see what we can do this year against a lot of them but I know Lisle has a lot of returners I believe. Peotone still has some really good players who we saw last when they beat us in the regional championship. Manteno, Streator and Herscher are always very good so we'll see what they have. It's never a year off with those teams."

McCleary, who has been a student of the game his whole life, never

strays away from doing research on conference opponents. McCleary says Ion Barrio (25 goals) and Drew St. Aubin (9 goals) from Manteno; Bascom Jackson (13 goals) and Logan Lundsford (11 goals) from Herscher; Germaine Lopez (16 goals) from Peotone; and Josh Hammer (10 goals) from Lisle are players to watch.

The Coalers will have to deal with Peotone right off the bat. Last year, the Blue Devils beat them twice. That game will be their home opener on Tuesday.

They'll see Streator on the road on Thursday and return home for two against Reed-Custer ((3/22) and Manteno (3/23) the following week.

The Coalers will have a road battle at Lisle on March 25 before coming home to battle Herscher on Tuesday, April 6. Even though they're playing their conference, that was the toughest part of their schedule. There are no easy games in the ICE. The conference schedule will be tough but the hardest part according to McCleary will be the uncertainties.

"The challenge will be the unknowns not knowing how the mask will affect them and just not knowing how good of shape everybody is from being off for so long."

McCleary, who is in his fifth season coaching the boys team, will be assisted by Todd Painter and Tommy Fatigante. He's excited to have both guys back to help, especially Painter.