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Lady Coalers will be back



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Unit 1 to ease traffic congestion at CCMS

BY ANN GILL
EDITOR

Summer break school construction season and the Unit 1 School District has a few projects scheduled to take place over the next two and half months.

One of the most visible projects will be \$920,000 to improve parking and traffic flow at Coal City Middle School.

A facility improvement plan commissioned by the Board of Education at the start of the 2022-2023 school year noted a need for additional parking.

The plan, presented by the district's architectural firm Cordogan Clark, will expand and reconfigure the existing lot located between the school building and district administration center, plus add 84 spaces in a lot to be constructed to the west of the baseball field located on the southside of the school building.

The project includes the construction of a new access drive off of Carbon Hill Road on the south side of the administration center. The drive will connect to both parking areas, but will not extend that point.

Architects said the additional access points would reduce vehicle congestion before and after school and create a better flow by separating bus and parent pickup and drop-off locations.



Courtesy image

THE UNIT 1 Board of Education has approved the cost of constructing an access road and new parking lot at Coal City Middle School, as well as the expansion and reconfiguration of an existing lot adjacent to the administration center.

The new parking lot will provide direct access to the outdoor playing fields—baseball and softball—as well as the athletic wing of the school. The \$920,000 cost will cover the construction of the parking lots and access road. D

Construction was the low bidder and was awarded the work earlier this month.

The local contractor was also awarded a second contract totaling \$368,238 for asphalt paving of additional district owned parking lots.

The facility improvement plan recommended multiple surface improvements across the district including the middle school's main lot located at the front of the building.

Proposed improvements outlined in the facility improvement plan for each of the district's five school buildings are under review by the Board of Education.

In addition to the parking lot project at the middle school, the Board authorized upgrades to the high school weight and fitness room.

As previously reported that project got underway over the spring holiday and is expected to be complete by the time classes resume in mid-August.

Superintendent Chris Spencer said the district is making progress on the facility improvements and is working with the architects to develop a timeline for other projects.

The overall improvement plan outlines multiple projects for each building including the construction of room additions, new roofs, reconfiguration of classroom spaces at the high school and intermediate school and a renovation of the high school football stadium.



Photo by Ann Gill

BILL MINCEY was sworn in as a Coal City Village trustee by village clerk Alexis Stone on Wednesday, May 24. Mincey was appointed by Mayor Dave Spesia to serve out the two remaining years of his term.

Mincey newest member of the CC Village Board

BY ANN GILL
EDITOR

One of the first decisions Dave Spesia had to make as Coal City's new mayor was selecting an individual to take his seat as town trustee.

The decision took him back to a chance meeting he had with Bill Mincey.

While campaigning for mayor, Spesia would drive around the village and through its subdivisions, and when he saw a resident outside he would pull over, introduce himself and engage in conversation.

One day, as he was travel-

ing down Fourth Street, Spesia observed Mincey bringing in his garbage cans, so he pulled over to introduce himself and the two ended up chatting in the driveway for about 40 minutes.

Mincey told Spesia to remember him if he was elected, as he would like to get involved in the community.

When the election results were finalized, Spesia reached out to Mincey and the two met for breakfast.

After a 90-minute conversation, the mayor put forth a

SEE MINCEY, PAGE 2

Making it through together

BY ANN GILL
EDITOR

It certainly wasn't a traditional three years of middle school for the class of 2023. But together they found their way and achieved success in academics, the arts and athletics.

"There were times it was definitely a struggle, but as we get to the end of your time at Coal City Middle School, I can see all of you growing and developing into the students and citizens that are ready for the next step in your journey," Principal Travis Johnson told the class.

After countless hours in the classroom, endless assignments and tests, the students were ready to be promoted to high school and on May 25 officially became high school students.

"When students enter CCMS, we have one main goal for all of them That is for our eighth grade students to be ready for high school when their time at CCMS comes to an end. Class of 2023, I can proudly say that you have reached that goal. You are ready for your next step in your education and I know that many of you will make a



Photo by Ann Gill

ALEX CARLSON [center] and his fellow classmates listen to the promotion address presented by student council president Kayla Stalter. Carlson and many of his classmates displayed their state wrestling and track medals during the May 25 ceremony.

positive difference during your high school years," Johnson said in delivering his remarks to the students seated before him.

During their time at CCMS, the student students found success in their varied extracurricular, athletic and academic activities. The

wrestling team placed second at the IESA state finals with two individual champions

SEE PROMOTION, PAGE 2

Coal City Police once again hiring

BY ANN GILL
EDITOR

Coal City's Police Department again is short staffed and the town's Board of Fire and Police Commissioners have been instructed to hire patrol officers.

The department lost two patrol officers this month. One resigned to take a position with another department

while the other, one of two probationary officers hired at the end of April, was let go.

"It was surprising because we had just sworn him in. But due to a medical issue that came up, they were not going to pass the power test [physical fitness exam] and so at that point we made the decision to let that probationary officer go," Village Administrator Matt Fritz said.

That individual was Tyler Grigus and he was set to depart for police training on May 8.

And, Officer Nicholas Mazzone resigned his position in mid-May and is now working for the Morris Police Department.

The departures come following the resignation of patrol officer Dave Kasher in March and the retirement of

Sgt. Tom Logan in April.

In keeping with policy, the Village Board authorized Mayor Dave Spesia to direct the Fire and Police Commission to fill the vacant

SEE POLICE, PAGE 2



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Promotion

and the track and field team has 13 students qualify for the state meet with eight earning medals.

The Scholastic Bowl team captured the regional and sectional titles and was a state final qualifier, CCMS was the IVC Conference Spelling Bee champions, the concert band earned an excellent rating at the IESA band contest and a large number of the eighth grade class took the stage for the school musical.

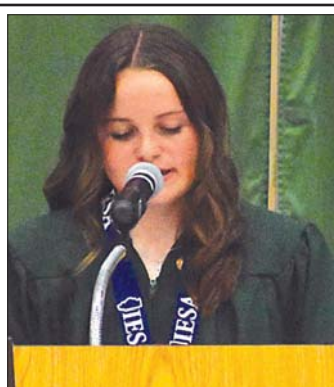
Johnson encouraged the student to continue to be involved during their high school years, by taking advantages of the opportunities available to them.

"Don't wait for things to happen, go out and make things happen for you and your classmates," the principal said.

And, he encouraged them to remain committed their education.

Special mention was given to recipients of the President's Award for Educational Excellence. The recognition was handed out to 26 the students who earned a cumulative grade point average of 4.0 for all three years of middle school.

Recognized were Lilliana Aguirre, Sean Bergin, Madelyn Castle, Wyatt Chase, Caroline Childers, Ethan Donnelly, Brody D'Orazio, Dylan Fatlan, Kellen Forsythe, Maisey Franklin, Ava Hone, Avery Housman, Madeline Hutchings, Parker Jacovec,



COAL CITY MIDDLE School student council president Kayla Stalter had the honor of addressing her classmates.

Anthony Kenney, Maxx Kramer and Vanna Libermann.

Also, Kieley Lowe, Kiam Marquez, Aiden Meister, Elizabeth Nadess, Logan Natyshok, Anastasia Papach, Laynah Pieard, Adia Serna, Sophie Smith, Kayla Stalter, Kyla Stark, Livia Sulzberger, Braden Walker and Lavila Wantroba.

These students and their fellow classmates will now move on to high school for the final four years of secondary education.

Before departing CCMS, Kayla Stalter, president of the middle school student council, stood before her classmates and reflected on their early years as Coal City students when their backpacks were bigger than they were and "our biggest fears were leaving our moms for the day and the dreaded clipping down," to entering middle school in the midst of a worldwide pandemic that found them wearing masks and sitting six feet apart.

"But slowly, life started to return to normal," she said and that allowed for the class to participate in clubs and sports, and close out their time as middle schoolers with a class trip.

"We have grown closer together and created friendships that I hope will last a lifetime. We have faced more than kids should have to, but...we made it through together," Stalter said.

In introducing the Coal City High School class of 2027, Johnson left them with a bit of advice, "open your heart, help others, help each other and do your best to make others proud of your place in the world."

Coal City Area Club beach opens for the season



Courtesy photos

IN ADVANCE OF the Memorial Day weekend opening of the Coal City Area Club beach, lifeguards for the 2023 season were hard at work preparing to welcome club members. There are a number of tasks the lifeguards undertake to make sure the beach area is clean and that water toys and rafts are in place. This year's lifeguards are [from left]: Mason Aldridge, Stephen Byers, Braiden Young, Gavin Carpenter, Connor Huston, Joe Watson, Derek Carlson, Jake Scerine, Sam Begler, Ethan Scrogam, Jim Feeny, Aubrey Mellen, Colten Sztapka, Landin Benson, Tessa Johnson, Ryne Phelan, Creide Skubic, Mateo Blessing, Alec Waliczek and Peyton Benson.



COAL CITY AREA Club lifeguards Tessa Johnson and Stephen Byers, Jr., clean the patio to get ready for opening day on May 27. The beach is open daily from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. through June 9. Beginning June 10 the beach will open at 10 a.m. and close at 7 p.m.

Coal Bin to dispose of property

PUBLIC NOTICE

LEGAL NOTICE
Notice is hereby given, that pursuant to Section 40 of the Self-Storage Facility Act, State of Illinois, a sale or other disposition of property by COAL BIN STORAGE, INC. will be held online at www.BID13.com, auction ending on June 7, 2023, 1 p.m. to sell or dispose of the personal property of the following person, ELIZABETH KOWALUK, 785 Mary Ln., Godley, IL Unit C7/Location #1, to enforce a lien for storage pursuant to the self-storage facility act, in the amount of \$410, plus attorney fees and costs.
Published in the Coal City Courant on May 24 and 31, 2023.

Attorney Black files Kenney estate claim

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT GRUNDY COUNTY - IN PROBATE No. 2023 PR 37
In the Matter of the Estate of LAWRENCE L. KENNEY, Deceased
CLAIM NOTICE
NOTICE IS GIVEN to creditors of the death of Lawrence L. Kenney. Letters of office as Independent Executor were issued to Lynn Kenney, 1309 Butler St., Morris, Illinois 60450, whose attorney is FRANK 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.
Lynn Kenney
INDEPENDENT EXECUTOR
Frank J. Black
Black & Black
201 Liberty Street
Suite 211
P.O. Box 148
Morris, IL 60450
815-942-0594
Published in the Coal City Courant on May 24, 31 and June 7, 2023.

Attorney Harrop files Wallace estate notice

PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, GRUNDY COUNTY, ILLINOIS
In the Matter of the Estate of FRANCES E. WALLACE, Deceased. Case No.: 2023 PR34
CLAIM DATE NOTICE
NOTICE IS GIVEN of the death of Frances E. Wallace, and Letters of Office were issued on May 11, 2023 to Cynthia L. Carr, 899 Meadowlark Circle, Sandwich, IL 60548 as Independent Executor, whose attorney is JOAN N. HARROP, 220 West Main Street, Suite 300, Morris, Illinois 60450.
The estate will be administered without court supervision, unless under 755 ILCS 5/28-4, any interested person terminates independent administration at any time by mailing or delivering a petition to terminate to the Circuit Clerk.
Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Circuit Clerk, Probate Division, Grundy County Court House, 111 East Washington Street, Morris, Illinois, 60450, or with the representative, or both, on or before November 27, 2023. Any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed.
E-filing is now mandatory for documents in civil cases with limited exceptions - to e-file, you must first create an account with an e-filing service provider. Visit https://efile.illinoiscourts.gov/service-providers.htm to learn more and to select a service provider. If you need additional help or have trouble e-filing, visit https://www.illinoiscourts.gov/FAQ/gethelp.asp, or talk with your local circuit clerk's office.
Cynthia L. Carr
Independent Executor
Joan N. Harrop, #6237262
GOMIEN & HARROP, LTD.
First Midwest Bank Building
220 West Main Street, Ste. 300
Morris, Illinois 60450
(815) 942-0071
joanharrop@sbcglobal.net
Published in the Coal City Courant on May 24, 31 and June 7, 2023.

Bisgrove named to president's list

Amy Bisgrove, of Diamond, was among students named to the winter president's list at Southern New Hampshire University. The winter terms run from January to May.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List.

Grundy County seeking bids to replace HVAC systems at courthouse

PUBLIC NOTICE

Grundy County is inviting sealed proposals from responsible and responsive vendors for the full removal and replacement of two (2) existing RTU HVAC systems located at the Grundy County Courthouse 111 E. Washington St., Morris, IL 60450. Sealed proposals must be submitted in an envelope and clearly marked on the exterior "HVAC Replacement" and contain four (4) copies of the complete proposal with one (1) original packet with an original signature. No responsibility or liability will be attached to any County official, employee or agent for the premature opening or failure to open any proposal not marked according to this instruction.

Sealed proposals will be accepted until 3:00 pm (cst.) June 21st, 2023, at the Grundy County Administration Building, 1320 Union St., Morris, IL 60450. At 3:00pm (cst.) June 21st, 2023; sealed proposals will be publicly opened and read aloud. Fax and electronic submissions will not be accepted.

Proposal documents are available at the Office of the Grundy County Purchasing Manager located at the Administration Building, 1320 Union St., Morris, IL 60450, and for inspection online at www.grundycountyil.gov/proposals-and-rfp/ or Demandstar at www.demandstar.com. The proposer remains responsible for obtaining all addenda, which will be posted at the same website. The "Technical" and "Procurement Procedures" contact for this project is Alec Macdonald, the Grundy County Purchasing Manager. Any inquiries that prospective firms may have regarding this RFP should be directed to the Grundy County Purchasing Manager in writing via e-mail at amacdonald@grundycounty.il.gov
Published in the Coal City Courant on Wednesday, May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 and June 7, 2023.

Foreclosure sale of 1923 Toller Road

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 13TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT GRUNDY COUNTY - MORRIS, ILLINOIS
LAKEVIEW LOAN SERVICING LLC; Plaintiff, -v.- ERIC D EVANS; Defendants, 21 CH 21
NOTICE OF SALE
PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on August 11, 2022, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 11:00 AM on June 21, 2023, at the Grundy County Courthouse, 111 East Washington Street front door entrance, MORRIS, IL, 60450, sell at a public sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate:

Lot 72, Rockwell Estates Subdivision First Addition, being a subdivision in the Southeast 1/4 of Section 31, Township 34 North, Range 7 East of the Third Principal Meridian, according to the plat thereof recorded May 24, 2004 and filed in Plat Cabinet H, Slide 63, EXCEPTING therefrom that part of said Lot described as beginning at the Northwest corner of said Lot; thence Southerly on the West boundary of said lot, being a 60 foot radius curve, concave Westerly, an arc length of 33.72 feet to the Westerly extension of an existing common wall; thence Easterly on said Westerly extension and on said common wall and on the Easterly extension of said common wall, 102.78 feet to the East line of said lot; thence Northerly on said East line, 104.56 feet to the Northeast corner of said lot; thence Southwesterly on the North line of said Lot, a distance of 133.96 feet to the point of beginning, in Grundy County, Illinois.

Commonly known as 1923 TOLLER ROAD, MORRIS, IL 60450
Property Index No. 02-31-478-034
The real estate is improved with a two car garage.

Sale terms: 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, in certified funds/wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court.
Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale. The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information.
If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1).
IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOME OWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW.
You will need a photo identification issued by a government agency (driver's license, passport, etc.) in order to gain entry into our building and the foreclosure sale room in Cook County and the same identification for sales held at other county venues where The Judicial Sales Corporation conducts foreclosure sales.
MCCALLA RAYMER LEIBERT PIERCE, LLC Plaintiff's Attorneys, One North Dearborn Street, Suite 1200, Chicago, IL 60602, Tel No. (312) 346-9088.
THE JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION
One South Wacker Drive, 24th Floor, Chicago, IL 60606-4650 (312) 236-SALE
You can also visit The Judicial Sales Corporation at www.jscc.com for a 7 day status report of pending sales.
MCCALLA RAYMER LEIBERT PIERCE, LLC
One North Dearborn Street, Suite 1200
Chicago IL, 60602
312-346-9088
E-Mail: pleadings@mccalla.com
Attorney File No. 21-07875L_722031
Case Number: 21 CH 21
TJSC#: 43-1799
NOTE: Pursuant to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, you are advised that Plaintiff's attorney is deemed to be a debt collector attempting to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.
Case # 21 CH 21
13220141
Published in the Coal City Courant on Wednesday, May 17, 24 and 31, 2023.

Gleaners plant trees



Courtesy photos

SULPHUR SPRINGS ARBOR of Gleaner Life Insurance met on a chilly and rainy day April 29, 2023 for an IMPACT event planting a total of 7 trees in 3 Coal City parks. There were 8 members and 22 guests present including 12 FFA and 4-H kids, 8 adult guests, and 2 city workers. After the hour or so of digging and planting 20 people went to Rachetti's for a pizza party. Mark Wills talked about Gleaners and Arbor Day then had a 20 question session for the kids giving a dollar to the ones with the right answers. It was a fun day of helping the community and fraternalism. Gleaners spent \$600 money for trees to Coal City Parks, and made a \$200 donation to the Grundy County FFA and 4-H. Pictured are members of the Coal City Maintenance Crew, the Grundy County FFA, Coal City Community 4-H members and Gleaner Life Insurance members.

Mincey

recommendation to appoint Mincey to complete the final two years of his term on the Village Board.

On Wednesday, May 24, the Village Board unanimously accepted the mayor's appointment of Mincey. In turn, he was administered the oath of office and took his seat at the board table.

Mincey will chair the town's Streets and Alleys Committee and will serve as the alternate representative to the Planning and Zoning Board.

Mincey and his wife, Donita, have lived in the community since 1996. They are the par-

ents of two children, Chase and Taylor.

Prior to moving into his current home, Mincey served on the Prairie Oak Estates Homeowners Association and the subdivisions water and sewer board.

Mincey grew up in Matteson, IL where his father was a police sergeant and his mother a small business owner.

In 1981, Mincey was hired as a part-time firefighter in Matteson and a few years later he went full-time specializing in vehicle maintenance and underwater search and recovery, and was a certified emergency medical technician and paramedic. He retired with 27 years of service. Mincey also served the village of Crete as a patrol officer.

Police

candidates from the eligibility list. They also have the capability to hire a lateral—a certified officer who would only require field training.

Police Chief Chris Harseim said there is a viable


candidate on the eligibility list and after that the list will be exhausted, "and we will get another going with the Fire and Police Commission."

The earliest a new officer could go to police training is August.

Harseim said there is a spot reserved for Coal City at the Macon County Law

Enforcement Training Center in September, and the Southwestern Illinois College Police Training in Belleville has spots open in August and September.

"Hopefully by the end of the year, if it all works out, we will have two more on staff," the chief said.



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Eric D. Fisher, publisher
Ann Gill, editor

Mayor says three years better than five when asking residents to serve on boards

BY ANN GILL
EDITOR

With the strike of the gavel, Dave Spesia called to order his first meeting as the mayor of Coal City.

In his new capacity, Spesia is responsible for making appointments to the various town boards and commissions.

The new mayor has found it difficult to find individuals willing to serve in various positions.

Commissioners on the Planning and Zoning Board and members of the Park Board receive five-year appointments.

"I have talked to several individuals about positions on these different boards and when you mention a five-year commitment they shut down right away," Spesia said.

Following a review with the village administrator, the mayor proposed reducing the terms from five years to three, hoping to entice volunteers.

The proposal to change the tenure of Park Board appointments to three years was unanimously approved.

A change in the length of terms for members of the Planning and Zoning Board will be brought to a vote, however that change would come as a text amendment subject to a public hearing prior to adoption.

In making appointments, Spesia started by setting board committee assignments.

Trustee Pam Noffsinger will serve as the representative to the Planning and Zoning Board and Trustee Bill Mincey will serve as the alternate.

Trustee Sarah Beach will continue to serve as chairman of the Park Board and will co-chair the Finance Committee.

The Finance Committee will continue to be overseen by Trustee Tim Bradley. He will also co-chair the Streets and Alleys Committee.

Trustee Dave Togliatti will serve as

chairman of the Public Health and Safety Committee and co-chair the Water and Sewer Committee.

The Streets and Alleys Committee will be overseen by Mincey.

Trustee Dan Greggain will chair the Water and Sewer Committee and will be the co-chairman of the Public Health and Safety Committee.

Noffsinger will be the vice chairman of the Park Board.

During the May 24 meeting, trustees also approved an amendment to the code that better clarifies the amount of payment the village's plumbing inspector receives.

"The current code suggests the inspector may receive only half of the total charge for this service. Coal City provides nearly 100% of the inspection fee collected to the plumbing inspector. With this amendment, the appointed inspector is entitled to at least half of the total fee charged," Fritz said.



Photo by Ann Gill

LONG TIME VILLAGE employee Linda Sula has been appointed as the village's deputy clerk. She took the oath of office from village clerk Alexis Stone at the start of the May 24 meeting of the Coal City Village Board.

Remembering those who gave their life for freedom

STAFF REPORT

Memorial Day, as writer/photographer Tamra Bolton said, "is the day we pay homage to all those who didn't come home."

The Memorial Day observance, organized by St. Juvin Post 1336 Veterans of Foreign Wars [VFW], was held Monday around the Community Veterans Monument on the campus of Coal City Intermediate School.

In keeping with tradition, the VFW's honor guard conducted its volley and the names of the community's 24 honored war dead were read by VFW life member and Korean War veteran Jack Micetich.

Of the 24 local soldiers called to serve among the 4.7 million in World War I, nine never returned home. Those men were William Bridle, Peter Cantu, John DeCco, Rudolph Hajek, Benjamin Kaplan, John Pavlis, Frank Schaw, Joseph Sisteck and Andrew Tallman.

Local men were once again called to serve in WWII. By wars end, 14 of the 381 called into action were killed. Those men were Albert Baima, Lane Bookwalter, Oresti Bottari, Bruce Campbell, Dominic Ciluffo, Ralph Girot, Edward Grinrod, Nicola Groff, Lester Johnson, William Krause, Raymond Murphy, Andrew Sabol, Glen Viano and Elmer Willis.

Five years later when the Korean War broke out 5.7 million soldiers were sent into battle, 48 were from the local community and each one returned home safely.

Paying the ultimate sacrifice in Vietnam was Cecil Russell, a U.S. Marine. He was one of 85 local residents called to serve in the war that was fought by 8.7 million American soldiers.

Micetich also paid tribute to Lance Corporal Steven Hancock, a crew chief with the



THREE GENERATIONS OF the Micetich Family participate in this year's Memorial Day ceremony hosted by St. Juvin Post 1336 Veterans of Foreign Wars. VFW life member Jack Micetich had the duty of reading the names of the community's war dead at the ceremony. Looking on were (from left) grandson Jonah Micetich, son Jon Micetich and grandson Julian Micetich.

Marine Medium Tiltrotor Training Squadron-2nd Marine Aircraft Wing, who died during a training exercise in North Carolina on May 20, 2014.

The names of those who paid the ultimate sacrifice, as well as community members who have served in the United States military are listed on the monument that sits on the southeast corner of the intermediate school campus.

A red, white and blue wreath placed at the base of the monument honors those who gave their lives to their country.

Following a reading of the names, Earl "Shorty" Fatlan raised the American flag from half to full-staff and with the assistance of scouts from Troop 466, post members raised the branch of service flags back to half-staff as well. Also assisting were Colin Schwier, U. S. Air Force, and Christian Micetich, with the Civil Air Patrol.

The public remembrance ceremony was attended by more than 50 community members.



THE COLOR GUARD of St. Juvin Post 1336 was lead to volley by member Earl "Shorty" Fatlan, a veteran of the Vietnam War.

Plan for bigger playground approved

BY ANN GILL
EDITOR

allowed in a side yard without a variance.

The final phase of Hope Helps All-Inclusive playground has been approved and accepted by the Coal City Village Board.

An agreement between the village and the non-profit organization was approved by village trustees last week. The village will assist with the installation and assume all future maintenance.

Additionally, the village will purchase the equipment outlined by the organization for the expansion.

The cost of the equipment and related improvements will be covered by the organization who will issue the funds to the village. This will ensure the warranty for the equipment is with the village and not the non-profit.

A community build for the park is anticipated to take place in early August.

In other matters from the May 24 meeting of the Village Board:

Trustees granted variances for signage at Coal City Liquors and Blu Taco located at 301 S. Broadway.

The approval will allow the business to have two signs mounted on the building and for signage to be placed over the village's right-of-way and that is due to the placement of the building on the corner lot.

Notice of the variance request drew comment with regard to the color scheme of the signs contrasting with the multiple colors of the building.

As a condition of receiving the variance, the building owner is required to paint the north and west facades to match the newly installed brick and black parapet on the building.

A variance allowing a deck to be constructed within the corner side yard of a home at 160 S. Mary St. was approved.

The petitioner, Demetrios Athanasopoulos, hired a contractor to construct a deck and in doing so requested the builder to post the construction permit.

After the contractor failed to provide a permit, the petitioner went to village hall to complete the necessary paperwork and it was then he discovered the improvement was not

Village Administrator Matt Fritz said the petitioner's request was supported by several neighbors.

Trustees awarded the 2023 crack sealing bid to Denler, Inc., at a cost of \$14,600. The project will be focused on improving the streets in Richards Crossing Subdivision and Spring Road from the railroad crossing east to Berta Road.

The Board authorized the village administrator to execute a contract with the lowest responsible electricity provider for the town's street lights.

The village is part of the Northern Illinois Municipal Electric Cooperative (NIMEC), a 125-plus member electric cooperative that puts the municipal accounts out for bid. In order to secure the lowest price, the village must sign on at the time the low bid is received.

At the request of the village's new auditor, Sikich, trustees approved conducting a review to determine if the village's other post employment benefits are material for the annual audit.

Lauterback & Amen will conduct the review at a preliminary cost of \$750 with a final cost of \$3,750 if the village needs a full calculation of the employee benefits.

The Board authorized the payment of \$24,987 to Gasvoda for an influent pump at the sanitary treatment plant. The cost will be covered by the bond issued for the plant modernization project.

Trustees authorized the mayor to sign a contract with the band Retro Circus to play at the village's fall festival in September.

Trustees approved purchase orders totaling \$104,854.23 Included in the bills were payments of \$66,354 to Chamlin & Associates for engineering work related to the wastewater treatment plant modernization, North Broadway bridge deck replacement and storm sewer and water main improvements and \$2,462.50 to Robinson Engineering for a preliminary quiet zone analysis.

The next meeting of the Village Board is scheduled for Wednesday, June 14.

Post 1336 awards scholarships

St. Juvin Post 1336 awarded two \$1,000 scholarships to graduates of Coal City High School.

This year's recipients are Carley Morris, who will pursue a career as a child occupational therapist specializing in speech and hearing; and Anabelle Ehman, who is studying criminal psychology.

Applicants for the St. Juvin scholarships must be Coal City High School graduates who intend to enter the medical professions or be first responders and submit letters of recommendation, a summary of their extracurricular activities and an essay. The applications are independently scored in a blind review by the Post Scholarship Committee. The finalists receive their \$1,000 grants after presenting their first semester transcript meeting the required grade point average.

Honorably separated veterans that have graduated from Coal City High School may also apply for these grants and can receive training or post-secondary education in any career where the course of study is approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Normally, St. Juvin pres-



ST. JUVIN Post 1336 Veterans of Foreign Wars offers scholarships to Coaler graduates and alumni entering the health care field. This year's financial awards of \$1,000 each were presented to Anabelle Ehman [left] and Carley Morris [right]. The recipients accepted their award from James "Hoppy" Phillips, St. Juvin's commander and chairperson of the scholarship committee. Those selected to receive the financial awards were made by scholarship committee members in a blind review of all applications submitted for consideration.

ents one scholarship each year but thanks to the generosity of the community, and the help of its raffle partners Babe's Tap, Don's Beer Store and Mustachios, the Post raised enough money to fund two awards over the past two years.

In the past, anonymous

donors have financed scholarships to be awarded to graduating seniors to be administrated by St. Juvin Post. Anyone wishing to sponsor a scholarship in any amount whether anonymously or otherwise can contact commander James (Hoppy) Phillips.

Children's used book collection

The Grundy County Land Use Department will be collecting used children's books for Bernie's Book Bank starting June 1 through July 14, 2023, at the Administration Building located at 1320 Union St., Morris from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Practicing one of the four R's is reuse. Children's books that are no longer being used can find their way into the hands of a child who is in need of a book. Studies have shown that reading is the most important skill a child needs to learn. However, studies also show that 61% of low-income families don't have any children's book for their families.

Bernie's Book Bank provides books to 25,000 children annually. Since 2009, Bernie's Book Bank has distributed more than 21 million children's books. Bernie's Book Bank will provide at least 12 books per year for each child that they serve.

For Grundy County the goal is 1,500 books again this year. Please help this worthy cause by donating children's books from preschool through 6th grade. No text books or workbooks will be accepted.

For questions or more information feel free to contact Beth Skoff, 815-941-3228, bskoff@grundcountyl.gov or Heidi Miller at 815-941-3229, hmiller@grundcountyl.gov .

Gleaners donate to Just Animals



Courtesy photo

SULPHUR SPRING ARBOR of Gleaner Life Insurance donated \$150 to Just Animal Shelter in Mazon on Friday, April 14. Pictured is Peggy Ganger receiving the check from President Mark Wills. Ganger gave a talk on the shelter in Mazon which is mostly cats and how they find homes for them.

Free Press Newspapers readers

SOUND-OFF

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

A joyful story

WILMINGTON—This is in response to a article from last week's Sound off "better news". What kind of miserable life must someone be living to complain about an article that honored the Braidwood paramedics who went above and beyond and brought a healthy baby into this world. If you don't like it read the Chicago Tribune, it's usually about people being shot at and killed. That sounds more your style. Get a life.

Move forward

BRAIDWOOD—To the small pool of people who have been complaining about the Braidwood election. Mr. Earley resigned for whatever his reasons were. He has not been in office for a month yet. If he can't take a few no's as his children are saying he shouldn't be mayor but whatever his reasons they are his. Ms Hart won her election by a large majority of votes. There is no conspiracy. She is being moved up to mayor because Earley resigned. That is all there is to it. If you want to blame someone it is on him. If you did not vote or you don't live here, keep your opinion to yourself. Quit the rumors you start when nothing has happened. The same select few have done nothing but bully the last council and are continuing the trend. Votes for every single person on our city council prove no one wanted any of you in any office here. Our city is in great shape now. Good luck to this city council and new mayor. Glad to see Braidwood will keep moving forward.

Miss the B&G

COAL CITY—Why does Subway no longer sell biscuits and gravy. I go there to buy some and they say they stopped. For the love of god why?

Move out

BRAIDWOOD— This is to the individual that repeatedly whines and complains on the Braidwood politics and news, the City of Braidwood, and Braidwood and surrounding areas Facebook page about not only the city elected officials, but any elected officials of any organization such as the Reed-Custer School board. If you dislike everything so much run for an office, or move back to Braceville and leave our town alone, it's that simple.

Just the opposite

BRAIDWOOD— There are two Braidwood residents on Facebook who are just plain downright ignorant, rude and demeaning. When others voice their opinions on the various local groups, these two residents go on the attack by belittling, degrading and cutting down others. However, when they post their opinions and others do unto them as they have done unto others, they play the victim card. These two residents are an embarrassment to our town and our citizens. They believe they are doing justice for those in political positions whom they support but in actuality, they are doing just the opposite. Obviously no names have been mentioned, but as the saying goes, if it walks like a duck and quacks like a duck, it should be pretty obvious to them.

Riding in fear

DIAMOND— Village of Diamond, today, Sunday 5-21-23 a young man with special needs was knocked off his bicycle by three young motorcyclists plus leaving him not knowing if he was hurt and his bike broken. You put this dangerous path in with no foresight so now you should be responsible. There are fewer walking it since all of the motorized vehicles have taken over out of fear of being hit. But obviously you don't care. I don't have a solution, maybe cement barriers. Maybe just close it? Maybe dissolve Diamond and become Coal City? We use their schools, library and fire dept. and zip code. Tired of sitting in fear that someone will be seriously hurt. If you can't control this maybe it's time to move on. A concerned citizen.

Lost an honest man

BRAIDWOOD—I've lived in Braidwood long enough to become disgusted with the elected officials. Mr. Alieri was in my neighborhood trying to convince everyone they should vote for his five puppets. Those of you who fell for his lies and voted for the four that won should be ashamed of yourselves. They refused to work with Mayor Earley. He is a great man. I met him and have talked to people who know him. Now that he is gone our town has lost honesty plus integrity. I say the real disap-

Sound-Off is a 24-hour phone line provided to give readers a chance to voice their opinions. Calls may be anonymous.

The Free Press Newspapers reserves the right to edit remarks for taste, length, personal attacks, racism, threatening, calls for boycotts and libel. In cases where the publisher selects not to pub-

lish these remarks the newspaper makes every effort to forward unpublished comments to the parties to whom they are directed.

The comments stated are the opinions and ideas of the callers and not that of the newspaper. Information may not constitute the actual events or facts of a particular topic.

Submissions by email to: courant@fpnusa.com with "soundoff" in the subject line or go to www.freepressnewspapers.com, -> Submit Sound-off or call 815-634-0317. Please state the town in which you are calling from or in regards to. Mail comments to Sound-Off, 271 S. Broadway, Coal City, IL 60416 or 111 S. Water St., Wilmington, IL 60481.

pointments are the ones who continue to be puppets and are blind despite the obvious.

Target on Target

DIAMOND—FYI - Target stores have embraced a trans gender line in their children's department. I'm sure most parents need this new information. Budweiser is losing money hand over fist since using a transgender in their TV ads . Each of us has purchase power whether we be left or right, just use it. Sharon

From what I've heard

BRAIDWOOD— I would just like to say that I have never heard of so much corruption coming out of Braidwood since the Al Capone days. I truly hope that this group of commissioners don't break so many laws that it ends up costing the tax payers tons of legal fees. I have never seen so much bullying and threats and just carrying on to get their way. It's like the tax payers don't even matter. I don't know what kind of personal gain they've got going on but all I can say is Al Capone would be proud.

Credit is due

WILMINGTON— Hey Margo, you forgot to thank President Biden for lowering prices after all you blamed him when prices went up. So give credit where credit is due. Your pal, Penny Lane.

Letting computers rule

COAL CITY—There was an article in the Sound Off column that the telecommunications industry is going to replace home land-line telephone service with computer telephone operations. Which does not even tell the story of how bad it will be for every American when the computers can be manipulated to listen to telephone calls of any individual. What I was wondering if anyone really thinks the public servants or the board of directors at the communication industry really care about anything but money when they have destroyed the life of one of their own employees. There have been illegal activities committed against that employee for years which has been documented. While public servants cater to their whim because of money. These people do not care about any Americans and will do anything to monitor their lives. According to the public servants and other industries they want the computers to run everything because they don't have to be paid any money which means more for their pockets and the American citizens can starve and live in the streets and if any work is needed they will hire people from foreign lands. Who runs the FCC and how much money are they paid to destroy the lives of the American citizens.

Slogan proves untrue

WILMINGTON—The Right like to say the only way to stop a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun. This is the one year anniversary of the Uvalde school shooting. As I recall there was a lot of good guys with guns but they were too afraid to go in and stop the bad guy with a gun. So maybe they can come up with a new meaningless slogan.

What boys do

WILMINGTON—I noticed that Sharon ignored the question about trans boys in boys sports in boys locker rooms. Maybe that is because we know what would happen. That trans boy would be beaten and raped because that's what boys do. If you think that is an exaggeration think back a few years when male playing field athletes were hazing other males by sexually assaulting them under the banner of team building and the excuse that boys will be boys.

Fact checked

SHADOW LAKES—To the person that said as a disabled vet that veterans benefits would be cut by the GOP, I, as a veteran using health care looked in to this. Fact check said no known truth to this. Thank you for your service. Eddie

No respect

WILMINGTON—There's no respect in Saint Rose operated Mt. Olivet Cemetery in Wilmington. A cemetery should be a special and unique place. When operating a cemetery, there are some basic rules that should be followed in respect to the visiting families as well as the departed who have been laid to rest. Our mother was buried in Mt. Olivet Cemetery in December 1994. At that time, the cemetery was kept up fairly well. Today, the cemetery is a disgrace. The lawn is rarely mowed and when they finally do mow, they leave grass clippings cov-



ering all the gravesites. The statue of the Virgin Mary as you enter has weeds and small trees growing up all around it. The fence that is on Kahler Road is barely standing and has been in need of tearing down for years. In speaking with other families while at the cemetery, there are many that have complained in the past and feel the same sadness and discontent as we do. As of current, there are multiple trees and tree branches that have fallen down and are laying over gravesites. Our family has been planting flowers and displaying appropriate small grave ornaments for the past 30 years. We planted in May of this year and visited about a week later to water only to find that all the flowers had been cut down and destroyed by a weed whip. Yes, destroyed with all the petals just left on the gravesite. This is not acceptable. It is disgraceful not only to us as a family, but to the people who have passed on and buried in the cemetery. We are going to reach out to the Catholic Diocese to see what can be done. We will not give up and will continue to have this issue rectified until something is done about this mess. Ernie and Jana Bianchetta

Another hoax

GARDNER—To the ever fearful reader all bent out of shape, ranting and raving about the so-called homeless vet/immigrant/hotel story. Sorry buddy, but it was all a lie as usual. It was a hoax, lie, made up, or "fake news" as you people like to call things. That's what happens when you only watch Fox lies. After going crazy with the story they finally said "whoops, sorry, we think it was a made up story, but we'll get back to you on that." Doubt if they ever did. The station and Republican party of lies, fear, grievance, and projection use it to make you even more scared of your own shadow. Please watch some real news once in a while or a newspaper. Also remember that the only true Americans are the Native Americans and look what we did and are still doing to them. Christian values?

Drag queens

WILMINGTON—I have read that the Catholic Church has continued to not report sexual abuse of children in Chicago. Maybe this is why some people think drag queens are a threat. To many of these people any man in a dress is suspect because of these sick priests.

Out of line for Braidwood

BRAIDWOOD—On Tuesday, May 23, the council approved the mayor's appointment and also approved the benefits package for the administrator which is way out of line for the city of Braidwood, \$115,000 a year for benefits? This job should pay around \$75,000 per year. The council stated they compared what neighboring towns are paying but there is no comparison. Braidwood is about 10-15 years behind their neighbors. Paying salaries like this is why our water and sewer rates continue to go up. If the city is in such great shape financially let's pass some of these savings onto the citizens of Braidwood. So citizens, there will be an election in less than two years. If you want change, remember to vote.

Bring on pickle ball

COAL CITY—Pickle ball is becoming one

of the fastest sports in the country. Everybody is into it. Morris has re-purposed tennis courts by the swimming pool for pickle ball and they have a total of nine courts in Morris. Coal City could do well to re-purposed one or both of their tennis courts at North Park. Just as in Morris, people can use the high school tennis courts. Coal City has six. It would be very cheap . The fence and the surfaces are already there. All they need is a few lines and a couple of nets.

Capitalism vs. Socialism

DIAMOND—Capitalism is a form of "economic democracy" with customers in charge of the economy. In capitalism people vote with their dollars while companies become profitable by meeting the needs of the people. Socialism involves the elites controlling the economy. ESG which means Environment Social Governments is a socialist form of investing in which the focus is on "accomplishing leftist political agenda" as opposed to enhancing investor's returns. It is simply a socialist plot by a group of "Corporate Elites" being falsely presented as the free market. Sharon

Pray for America

DIAMOND—I will faithfully pray for the binding and defeat of the demonic forces inspiring and motivating the wave of Socialism, Communism, Wokism, Atheism, transgenerism, and terrorism that has been sweeping across America. I will faithfully pray that God will give success to those who risk so much to defend America from destruction. I will faithfully pray that God's mercy and comfort will touch those who are grieving what they have lost. I will faithfully pray that America will stand as a strong defender against all threats. I will faithfully pray that God will continue to use the alliance of America, the navigators, the faith in freedom, the faith in family and the countless prayer warriors to stand in the gap as a defense to the American people and as a source of hope and a demonstrating of love to hurting hearts. Sharon

Honor those who serve

WILMINGTON—I would like to thank American Legion Commander Ken Watts, the men and women of the American Legion and the men and women of the VFW for the Memorial Day parade and ceremony. It's very important to honor those who served our country and no matter where I see a veteran no matter where I'm at I go up to them, shake their hand and say thank you for your service. It's truly amazing what those five words mean to someone who served their country. Because of the men and women who served our country and for those who paid the ultimate sacrifice I have the freedom to call into the Sound-off column, to worship any place I want to, grocery shop any place I want to, live any place I want to it's very important to honor those who served our country. So once again thank you to the American Legion and the VFW for the service in honoring your friends, your family, your neighbors and those who you served with. May God bless the United States of America and may God bless Wilmington. Sheri Michaels

Illinois ranks low for retirement

BY ZETA CROSS
THE CENTER SQUARE

Retirees are better off in North Dakota and Nebraska than in Illinois, according to a new analysis from WalletHub. Illinois came in seventh from last compared to other states, according to the ranking.

The study measured a state's affordability, quality of life and health care. WalletHub analyst Jill Gonzalez said Illinois wound up in the bottom 10 of the 50 states because of how its economy is made up.

Illinois ranked 44th overall.

"Illinois is much less affordable than the other Midwest states," Gonzalez told The Center Square. "In general, it costs more to retire in Illinois than it does in most other states in the country."

Despite Illinois not taxing retirement income, general tax policy and lack of taxpayer friendliness were the main factors in Illinois' low ranking, Gonzalez said.

"Taxes are a huge part of

why Illinois loses out to other states like Minnesota, North and South Dakota and Nebraska," she said. "Special tax breaks for seniors and tax policy for retirement income just aren't there in Illinois."

High sales taxes, high property taxes and high inheritance taxes are among the main reasons why Illinois came in 47th for affordability, she said.

Alabama, Tennessee, Arkansas, South Carolina, Georgia, Wyoming and Delaware all made the top 10 of WalletHub's list with Florida squeezing in at number nine. As far as good quality of life for retirees, Illinois climbs back up to the top half of states, Gonzalez said. Illinois ranked 22nd out of 50 states for quality of life in retirement.

Minnesota, Massachusetts, Florida and Pennsylvania all beat out Illinois for high quality of life in retirement, WalletHub found.

Looking at adjusted cost of living for retirees, Illinois ranked in the middle of the 50

states. The most expensive states for retirees are Alaska, New York, California and Massachusetts, with Hawaii taking the number one spot, the study said.

When states are ranked for access to health care, Illinois drops back down to 27th place, Gonzalez said. When states are compared for the number of family medicine practitioners per capita, and access to health care, Illinois comes up short, Gonzalez said. Illinois has top ranked health-care providers, but many residents do not have access to them, the study found.

The overall best states for retirement are Virginia ranked number one, followed by Florida at number two, and Colorado at number three.

WalletHub named Kentucky as the worst state, largely because of its problems with health-care access and affordability, Gonzalez said. New Jersey was named the second worst state for retirement, right behind Mississippi.

Commentary

While filming 'Schindler's List,' Spielberg took calls from Williams

THE FOUNDATION FOR A BETTER LIFE

Steven Spielberg is one of the world's most artful directors and storytellers. While he was in post-production with "Jurassic Park," he was also shooting the epic film "Schindler's List."

Recreating such a horrific part of history, one that personally affected his own family, weighed heavily on Spielberg. He describes his state of mind while jumping between the films as having a "tremendous amount of resentment and anger." The schedule alone would be stressful enough, but the subject matter of "Schindler's List" left Spielberg emotionally depleted after each day.

So he turned to the good doctor, or at least the funniest man ever to play one: Robin Williams. Patch Adams is right. Laughter is the best medicine. Williams would call Spielberg just to lift his spirits.

"Robin knew what I was going through, and once a week, Robin would call me on schedule, and he would do 15 minutes of stand-up on the phone," recounts Spielberg.

"I would laugh hysterically, because I had to release so much ... the way Robin is on the telephone, he'd always hang up on the loudest, best laugh you'd give him. He'd never say goodbye, just hang up on the biggest laugh."

Spielberg and Williams only worked together on one film: "Hook," starring Williams as the effervescent Peter Pan. They became friends, and later, William's sensitivity to Spielberg's emotions during one of his hardest times became essential.

All of us need a little pick-me-up now and then. Life is hard. A good laugh is good therapy. We should make the time to make each other laugh. To have a session of side-splitting therapy.

Friendship is best when we share the ups, the downs and everything in between. Delivering a good chuckle to a friend when they are down is a gift that makes the moment a little more bearable. Looking at the funny side of life requires our care and attention. As Robin said: "You're only given a little spark of madness. You mustn't lose it."

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FULL WEEKLY AD @ BERKOTFOODS.COM

Stamp Out Hunger nets 1,200 pounds of food

THE ANNUAL EFFORT by the National Association of Letter Carriers to Stamp Out Hunger generated 1,200 pounds of food for Kuzma Care Cottage, the Wilmington food pantry. City carrier Ryan Heath (left) and Wilmington Postmaster Regina Dickover roll out two bins of food to be loaded onto the Kuzma Care Cottage pickup van during the recent food drive. Wilmington residents were asked to place food donations beside their mailbox on the second Saturday of each May for postal carriers to collection and give to the local pantry. The Wilmington Post Office thanks everyone who participated.



The Village to hold a Mobile Food Pantry

The Village is a church that works with the community to help where it is needed the most. Many families are struggling to bring food to the table. That is why The Village is partnering with Northern Illinois Food Bank and will host a Mobile Food Pantry at the Reed-Custer Middle School, 407 Comet Drive in Braidwood on Monday, June 12 at 5 p.m. Families in the Braidwood and surrounding communities will be able to get enough groceries (bread, dairy, meats, veggies) for a week or two. Distribution will be first come first served. There is no registration, proof of income or I.D. required. Learn more about The Village at: thevillagechristianchurch.com.

Gas is 55/g cents cheaper downstate

To buy the cheapest gas in Illinois you'd have to drive to Pekin, IL where Monday's price was \$3.15/gallon. Locally, the best you could pay is \$3.68/g at one Lorenzo Road service station as the average price in Illinois rose 0.5 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.92/g, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,378 stations in Illinois. Prices in Illinois are 10.4 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 107.2 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. "Gasoline prices have drifted higher in the last week due to some relatively minor refinery kinks and low gasoline supply, but it may not be a trend that lasts

too much longer," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy. "As we unofficially start the summer driving season, the national average is likely to spend much of the summer in the range of \$3.35-\$3.85 per gallon, though it could go higher if unexpected refinery outages flare up, or we see a major hurricane or economic development." Area pump prices were within a dime of each other in Wilmington where stations were charging \$3.69 to \$3.79 depending on which side of town. Braidwood, Coal City and Morris stations were priced \$3.74/g to \$3.79/g while in Bourbonnais the lowest was \$3.59/g.

The national average price of gasoline is \$3.55/g. The national average price of diesel has fallen 4.9 cents in the last week and stands at \$3.91 per gallon. "While gasoline prices have inched up slightly, we're still faring much better than we did last year, when the national average started to soar after Memorial Day on its way up to the \$5 per gallon mark. In addition, gas prices may temporarily rally if there's a debt ceiling deal that passes through Congress in the week ahead, based on the optimism that such a deal could avert a major recession, keeping oil demand stronger this summer."

Free book reuse and recycle event this weekend

The Will County Land Use Department's Resource Recovery and Energy (RRE) Division will host its annual three-day book reuse and recycling event from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., June 2-4, at Joliet Park District's Pilcher Park Nature Center, 2501 Highland Park Drive. "Our goal for this event is twofold: to promote literacy and improve the environment through recycling," said Dave Hartke, Director of the RRE

Division of Will County's Land Use Department. "This is a popular annual event, and I'm grateful for Joliet Park District for hosting it again." Schools, libraries, and individuals may bring unused and unwanted books for reuse and recycling. Hardcover and paperback books will be accepted and shared for free to attendees. Categories include fic-

tion, non-fiction, children's, romance, hobby, travel, health and living, religion, textbooks, periodicals, and cookbooks. The annual event prevents thousands of books from going unused or dumped into landfills. Books are redistributed at no charge to promote literacy in the community. Books that are not reused will be shipped for recycling at

the end of the three-day event. The event is sponsored by the Resource Recovery and Energy Division of the Will County Land Use Department and is hosted by the Joliet Park District. For more information, residents can call event coordinator Tim Anderson at (815) 727-8834 or visit www.will-countygreen.com.

Hiking and yoga

The Forest Preserve will be hosting "Happy mornings yoga and hike" on Sunday, June 18 from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at the Four Rivers Environmental Education Center, Channahon. This outdoor program includes 35- to 45-minutes of all-levels yoga and a 35- to 45-minute hike. Bring a yoga mat, water and comfortable hiking shoes. Free, ages 14 or older. Register by June 17.

Support group helping Alzheimer's caregivers

The Alzheimer's Association, Greater Illinois Chapter would like to invite anyone caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's or dementia to a monthly Caregiver's Support Group held the first Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. at the First Baptist Church of Coal City, 4470 E. Rt. 113 in Coal City. The church is located one mile west of Coal City on Highway 113. Alzheimer's caregiver support groups have many benefits for both caregivers and patients. Caregiving takes a heavy toll on the caregivers' mental and physical health and the health of the patient

with dementia is directly related to the health of his or her caregiver: the healthier the caregiver, the healthier the patient, and vice versa. Support group participants benefit from social and emotional support while learning more factual information about dementia. Increased education about dementia makes caregivers more effective: they are better able to respond to patients' needs when they understand and can anticipate them. This meeting is for caregivers only. For more information, contact Becky Haldorson at 815-791-2658.

Braidwood Lions to host broom sale fundraiser

The Braidwood Lions Club will be holding a broom sale fundraiser on Friday and Saturday, June 9 and 10, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., during the Annual Braidwood All Town Garage Sale Days. Brooms can be purchased just inside the front entrance of the First Presbyterian Church located at the corner

of Main St. & Lincoln St. in Braidwood. House, Heavy Duty and Whisk Brooms will be for sale. Proceeds from the broom sales will benefit the club's sight and sound humanitarian services for the visually and hearing impaired. For more details, please visit www.braidwoodlionsclub.org.

Register now for Braidwood Garage Sale Days

The First Presbyterian Church of Braidwood will host the annual citywide garage sale days Friday and Saturday, June 9 and 10, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., with no rain date. All interested families and organizations who wish to be included in the town listing should return the entry form and \$7 in cash or check (payable to First Presbyterian Church of Braidwood) to: The Braidwood Garage Sale Days, 812 W. Main St., Braidwood, IL 60408, no later than noon Sunday, June 4. Each entry will receive town listings to post, hand out to customers and a special house marker for display to identify paid participants. The marker will also make houses easier to find. These items can be picked up at the First Presbyterian Church, 106 S. Lincoln St., on Wednesday, June 7, from 6-8 p.m. at the front entrance. Additional maps along with a luncheon will be available the church. Advertising for the garage sale days will be in local newspapers and on radio stations.

Braidwood Garage Sale Days
Complete this portion and return it along with a check (payable to First Presbyterian Church of Braidwood) for \$7 to the Braidwood Garage Sales, 812 W. Main Street, Braidwood, IL 60408, no later than noon Sunday, June 4
Name _____ Phone _____
Address _____
Partial listing of items to be sold _____

Reed-Custer Comets to host youth basketball camp

Reed-Custer will host a boys basketball camp for students entering grades 3-8 this summer. Camp will run from July 10 until July 13 at the Reed-Custer Elementary School. Grades 3rd-4th will run from 8 a.m. until 9:30 a.m., Grades 5th-6th will run from 10 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. and Grades 7th-8th will run from noon until 1:30 p.m. The goal of the Reed-Custer Basketball Camp is for the players to improve their individual and team skills through summer competition. The fundamentals of basketball will be stressed in a fun atmosphere where the players can develop a love for the game. High School players will also be assisting with camp. The campers will be grouped by ability and age. The purpose of the camp is to prepare the athletes for basketball competition at their respective grade levels. There will be skill contests for every age group as well as daily games. All youngsters are encouraged to attend camp regardless of their basketball background. Bring basketball shoes and a water bottle every day. The cost of the camp is \$40 per child. Cash or check made out to Reed-Custer High School or RCHS. Walk ins are welcome the first day of camp but you may not get a camp Tee shirt. Please return the camp form by June 30 to the Reed-Custer High School or Middle School offices or show up the day of the camp.

2023 Reed-Custer Comets Basketball Camp
Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
Grade next year: _____
T-shirt size (circle one): Youth - L
Adult - S M L XL
I hereby authorize the directors of the Comets Basketball Camp to administer first aid in case of an emergency. The participating student is physically fit according to our family physician.
Parent/Guardian signature _____
Date _____

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Simon Says: Take a Hike on the Wauponsee Trail



SIMON SAYS...
Marney Simon

There's a popular meme out there about how "we all have that one friend." The meme shows a map where the starting and ending points are several miles away, and the bottom caption reads "we can walk there," referring to the friend who has a vastly different idea from the majority of what "walking distance" means.

I am that friend.

In grade school, after missing the bus one day, I picked up the payphone to call my Mom for a ride, but no one was home. There was a sidewalk all the way back to the house, so I walked. It was only 1.5 miles, but that was far for an elementary aged child all alone. Turned out, I enjoyed it quite a bit, and "missed the bus" often on days when I knew my mother wouldn't be home.

When I was in high school, I would regularly walk home during the times when the weather permitted it. The distance was only slightly further than my elementary school—now it was 2 miles—but my friends often thought it was wild that I would walk that far without being forced to by a gym teacher yelling over my shoulder.

Since my youth, walking and hiking has always been my main form of regular exercise, with my outings usually lasting

anywhere from two miles to 10 miles. At one point I even walked 17 miles through Washington D.C. without even meaning to.

In 2022, following a stress fracture, I was diagnosed with psoriatic arthritis in my left foot and was sidelined for more than six months. Since that condition is chronic, my walks today have now been reduced to three to five miles at a time. Not as far as I wish they were, but still a good distance to stretch your legs.

It's with all this backstory that I want to invite you to come along with me as I visit the trails that make me love to lace up my shoes and get out there. I hike year round, but now that the weather is warming, I'll be writing about some of my favorite hikes, hoping to inspire some of you to get out there and enjoy nature and walking the way that I do.

For my first trail, I visited the Wauponsee Glacial Trail, from the trailhead in Custer Park.

For my walk, I only covered about three miles, a 1.5 mile out and back from the trailhead at Custer Park to the bridge over Route 102 and Forked Creek in Ritchie. I also spent some time at Rivals Park walking through the park and down to the riverfront, avoiding the disc golf course as play-

ers were out enjoying the afternoon.

The section of the Wauponsee Trail between Custer Park and Manhattan was originally part of the southern portion of the Wabash/Norfolk Railroad that ran between Chicago and Decatur. Constructed in 1880, the last passenger line departed Decatur in 1971, and the southern portion of the railroad was eventually abandoned in 1991. The northern portion between Manhattan and Chicago was acquired by Metra and is still in use. Conversion of the old line into the trail that exists today was completed in 2007.

The trail includes the old railroad trestle bridge over the Kankakee River, where there are lots of opportunities for photos and a place to sit and relax.

The trail is operated under the jurisdiction of the Forest Preserve District of Will County.

Know Before You Go
Distance to the trail
This portion of the trail can be accessed from two points—Custer Park, at the corner of Route 113 and Washington Street, or Rivals Lookout Park in Wesley Township. No matter which side of the river you start your hike, the drive will be roughly six miles or less, with the distance calculated from the Free Press offices, 111 S. Water Street in Wilmington.

Trail conditions
This portion of the

Wauponsee Glacial Trail is flat crushed limestone, perfect for walking, running, or biking. The trail is well shaded when the trees are fully in bloom, making it a great trail for sunny warm days. The trail is a total of 23 miles from Joliet to Custer Park, without loops, so plan for an out and back.

What to see
In addition to the riverfront, there is much greenery to see from trees and shrubs in warm weather months, with wildflowers common. During my hike, violets were prevalent, as well as Virginia Bluebells, native grasses, common ground ivy, garlic mustard, and dandelions. I also saw my first honeybee of the season enjoying a small bunch of yellow rockets just starting to bloom. The wildlife is what you'd expect, with red-winged blackbirds and bluejays being the most common birds I saw while out walking, as well as the first butterflies I have seen this season, but I am quite a novice at butterfly identification so I won't try!

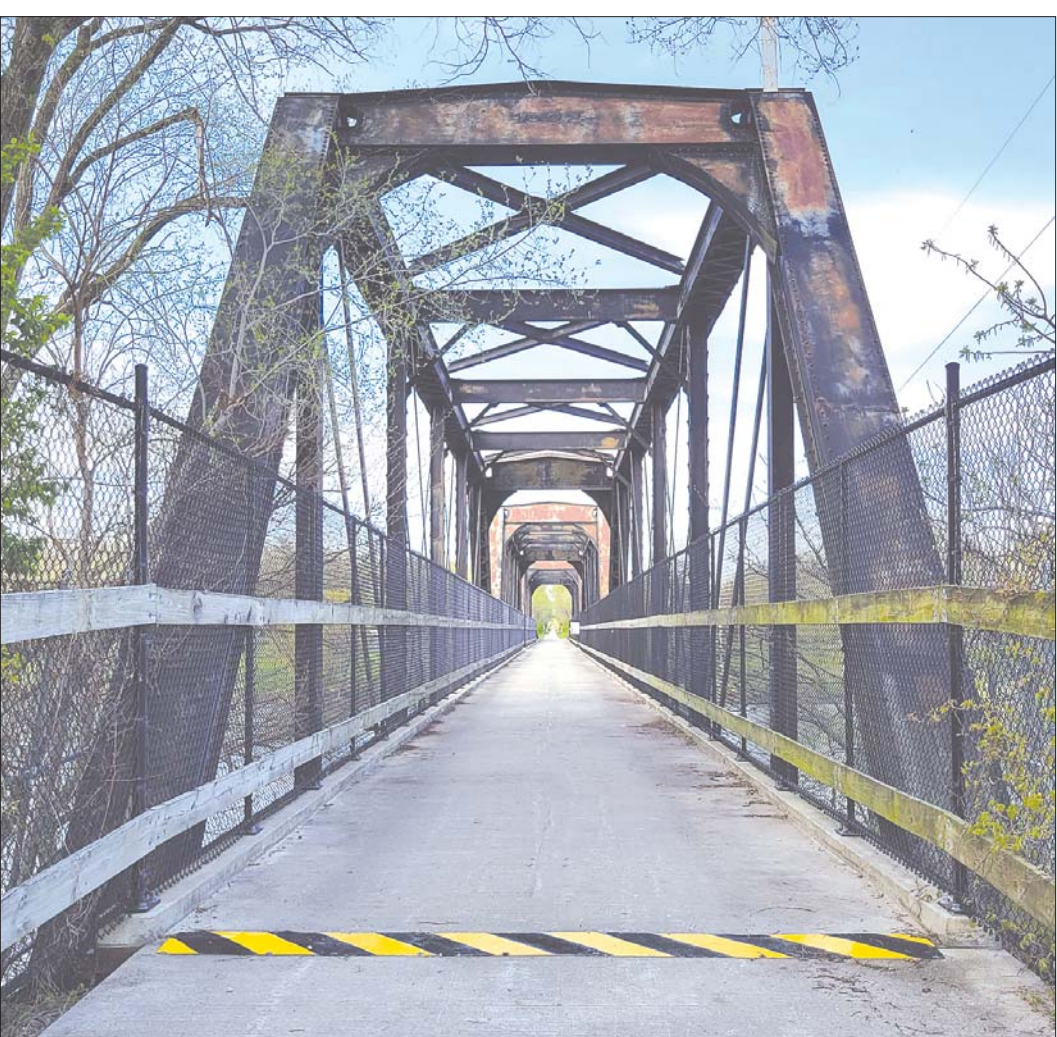
Considerations
Difficulty level is easy. The trail is well marked with mile markers so it's easy to calculate your distance for when to turn around. The trail is not heavily traveled but is utilized by hikers, joggers, bike riders, families, dog walkers, and for horseback riding, so always be aware of your surroundings. Just like on the highway, slower traffic should stay to the right.

What to bring
A water bottle, bug spray, sunscreen, and a charged up phone are always must-haves for any trail, but for this trail I'd also recommend comfortable shoes that fully cover your feet. Kicking up the limestone on the trail can always lead to those pesky pebbles in your shoes, especially if you're wearing sandals or mules. As a Type 1 Diabetic, I always recommend bringing extra snacks, just in case. There are no garbage cans along the trail, so plan to carry out anything you carry in.

Marney Simon is an editor with the Free Press Newspapers. Follow Marney's hikes and outdoor adventures on her Instagram page, @marneyike.



A LOCK MARKING this year's prom is one of several locks found on the trestle bridge over the Kankakee River.



Photos by Marney Simon

THE WAUPONSEE GLACIAL Trail runs 23 miles between Joliet and Custer Park, with the southern trailhead at the old railroad trestle bridge for over the Kankakee River. This portion of the trail was once home to the southern extension of the Wabash/Norfolk Railroad.

Annual Children's Fishing Derby
SATURDAY, JUNE 10, 2023
Catch the Biggest Fish or the Most Fish and WIN a Trophy!

- Registration begins at 9:00 am
- Fishing starts at 10:00 am
- Lunch served at 12:00 pm with awards to follow

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The 37th Annual Cabin Festival

June 3, 2023

A Day of Free Family Fun
From 10 AM to 3 PM
at Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area

See authentic pioneer crafts done by the Prairie Partners & Friends as they re-enact in authentic dress. Visit the Cragg Cabin history exhibit & the prairie life presentations.

The Food Tent will serve Beef Burgers, Brats & Hotdogs, drinks, chips & snacks for a nominal fee.

Park your car in the north end of the parking area. Walk the trail to the Cragg Cabin or catch the wagon ride

Driving Directions: From Morris, take Route 47 south to Pine Bluff Road; then east about 6 miles to Jugtown Road and watch for the stone park entrance sign on your left. From Interstate 55, turn on (Exit 240) Lorenzo Road west about 7 miles to Jugtown Road and watch for the stone park entrance sign on your right.
Park Address: 5010 N. Jugtown Road, Morris, Illinois 60450.

Presented by the **Goose Lake Prairie Partners & Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area.**

Visit <http://gooselakeprairie.org> & find us on Facebook

Presentations May Include:

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- Bobbin Lacing
- Children's Activities
- Crocheting & Beading
- Dream catchers
- Mountain Man
- Native American Crafts
- Native American Dancing
- Quilting
- Spinning
- Tanning
- Rug Weaving

All park amenities will be open: Butterfly Barn, Hiking & Flower Displays, Picnic in the Park and the Prairie Partner Gift Shop.

OBITUARIES

Ruth E. Herman

MORRIS—Ruth E. Herman, 86, of Morris, passed away peacefully with family on Sunday, May 21, 2023.

Born May 7, 1937, in Kentucky, she was the daughter of Lonnie and Thelma Bradley. When she was four they moved to Coal City. Ruth graduated from Coal City High School with the class of 1955. On June 25, 1955, she married Richard L. Herman at the Methodist Church of Coal City. Together they farmed in rural Morris and raised their five children.

Ruth was very active in the Morris community by serving on the Grundy County Board. She was a member of the First United Methodist Church and Church Circle, BPW, and she earned her 50-year pin from the Grundy County Home Extension. She served as Regent and Vice Regent for the Alida C Bliss DAR Chapter. When her kids were young and active in 4-H, Ruth was very involved in that as well. She always made sure to attend her kids and grandkids sporting events. Ruth loved reading, gardening, and vacationing at their cabin in Wisconsin, but her greatest love was working the fields with her husband, Richard. She worked alongside him and her children from 1956 until 1992 when Richard passed. In 1995 she sold their farm and moved to Morris.

Ruth is survived by her children: Roberta



(Ron) White, Rebecca (Mark) Sebby, Richard L. Herman Jr., Rodney Herman and Randy (Katie) Herman; her grandchildren: Jamie and Brad White, Jon (Tatiana) Sebby, Rick Sebby, Melissa (Jason) Abens, Robert (Brittney) Herman, Steve (Kendra) Herman, Matt (Amber) Herman, Clint (Delaney) Herman, Renee, Justine and Jeremy, Jacob and Brittany; 11 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

Ruth was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Richard Herman Sr.; her parents, her granddaughter, Marcy Herman; her brother, Velzie Bradley; her in-laws, Syrl and Arlene Herman; and numerous cousins, aunts, and uncles.

The family will be holding a private graveside service at Evergreen Cemetery on Sunday June 4.

The family asks that any donations be made to the First United Methodist Church in Morris or Lightways Hospice in Joliet.

An online guestbook can be found at www.ucdaviscallahan.com where memories and photographs can be shared.

Arrangements have been entrusted to U.C. Davis-Callahan Funeral Home, 301 W. Washington Street, Morris.

Vonda L. Stefancic

WILMINGTON—Vonda L. Stefancic, 83, of Wilmington, passed away Friday, May 26, 2023 at Ascension Saint Joseph Medical Center in Joliet.

Born Aug. 24, 1939 in Morris, Vonda Lea was a daughter of Emmett and Grace (Moats) Davis. She was raised and educated in Marseilles, and on Nov. 26, 1970 she married Anthony Stefancic, and together they moved to Wilmington where they would live and raise their family.

After marriage, Vonda worked for the Joliet Arsenal Ammunition Plant until she left to focus on raising her children. As her children grew, she gained employment with the Wilmington School District where she worked in the cafeteria and as a janitor. Vonda also worked for Brownie Products Inc. in Gardner. She took great pleasure in watching her grandchildren's sporting events, and later seeing her great-grandchildren come into the world. Vonda loved being a mother and grandmother, and will be missed dearly by those who loved her.

Survivors include her three children: Jonathan Stefancic, of Wilmington; Tammy (Kenny) Green, of Tennessee and Terry Carroll,

of Missouri; three grandchildren: Amanda, Stephanie, and Taylor Stefancic; three great-grandchildren: Camden, Cayden and Sienna, as well as several nieces and nephews and special friends, Kevin and Dawnna Kavanaugh, who took great care of Vonda.

Vonda was preceded in death by her parents, her brother and sister, Emmett Davis Jr. and Carol Colson, and one niece, Laura.

The family will receive friends for a visitation on Thursday, June 1, 2023 at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 E. Kahler Road in Wilmington, from 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. Interment will immediately follow at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood, where Vonda will be laid to rest with her husband, Anthony.

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

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



Diane Lange

NAPLES, FL—Diane Marie (Nagel) Lange, 71, of Naples, FL, passed away May 19, 2023. Diane was born to Robert E. and Mary Jane Nagel on Dec. 10, 1951 in Aurora, IL. She was raised on farms in Wheaton and Sugar Grove, IL. She graduated from Rosary High School in Aurora, and received her Bachelor and Masters degrees (in Special Education/Education and Educational Administration) from Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, IL.

She taught students with Learning Disabilities and Behavior Disorders at the Junior High and High School levels in Joliet, for seven years. The majority of her educational career (24 years) was spent in educational administration, notably in the Wilmington #209U school district as Special Education Supervisor and Principal at both the Elementary and Middle School levels. She also served as an Adjunct Professor for Governors' State University as well as Student Teaching Coordinator for Eastern Illinois University.

Diane fought cancer valiantly for years. She was originally diagnosed with Sarcoma in 1981. Later she had breast cancer three times, basal cell carcinomas nine times, melanoma skin cancer, and lastly Stage 4 lung cancer (without ever smoking). In 2019, she was diagnosed with TP-53, or Li-Fraumeni Syndrome,



which is a rare disorder that predisposes carriers to cancer development.

On June 20, 1987, she married "the love of her life," Brian E. Lange. Together, they provided a warm and comforting home to Brian's son, Jim. In addition to living in Minooka and Channahon, they enjoyed their summer homes at the Lake of the Ozarks in Osage Beach, MO. After retiring, they moved to Naples, FL.

Diane was an avid reader, loved playing cards and Mah Jongg, as well as doing needlecraft. Together with Brian, they enjoyed traveling and boating.

In addition to Brian, she is survived by her stepson, Jim (wife Ali), from Chesterfield, MO and her loving granddaughters, Jordyn and Casey, who lovingly called her "Omi." She is also survived by her sisters, sister-in-law, brothers-in-law, and several nieces and nephews. Personally and professionally, she touched so many people's lives and will be missed by all that knew her.

Per Diane's request, there will be no memorial service.

Donations can be made to St. Matthew's House of Naples, Florida or to St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital.

Lightways Hospice plans June 20 conversation at the Rialto

Lightways Hospice and Serious Illness Care is hosting "An Evening with Kelly Corrigan" at the Rialto Square Theatre in Joliet on Tuesday, June 20.

The lively conversation is billed as Telling Us More About Hope, Loss and Other Wonders. Much of the program will be a Q&A session on a wide range of topics.

Kelly is a New York Times bestselling author, a podcaster and the host of Tell Me More on PBS. Huffington Post calls her "The Poet Laureate of the ordinary" and O Magazine dubbed her the "voice of a generation."

Released in 2008, her first memoir, The Middle Place "was about going through cancer treatment simultaneously with her father and her father's subsequent death."

The San Francisco Chronicle called The Middle Place "more complex - and funny - than one would ever imagine." That's a fair assessment of all of Kelly's work.

When writing, speaking or interviewing, Kelly gets to the heart of the subject in a relatable, amusing and refreshing way.

On her podcast and TV show, Kelly brings together a diverse list of A-List guests to talk about subjects like grit, character, service,

hope and optimism. These straight-to-the-heart topics will be woven into the June 20 event.

"We fully anticipate An Evening with Kelly Corrigan to be a conversation that entertains and enriches," said Lightways' CEO Mary Kay Sheehan.

WGN radio personality John Williams will moderate the event. John hosts the midday show on WGN Radio 720 as well as several podcasts. He has recently written and spoken about his experiences caring for his elderly parents.

As the largest nonprofit hospice in Illinois, Lightways aims this event to be the first in a speaker series providing healthy conversation on death and dying, caretaking and grief. "Grief affects us all at some point and for so many reasons. This evening is a perfect opportunity for those grieving -- and those who love people who are grieving -- to get some fresh perspective," said Sheehan.

Reserved seats are available at ticketmaster.com or at the Rialto Square box office in person with no handling fee. The box office is open Monday-Friday from noon-4:30 pm at 102 N. Chicago Street in Joliet. Tickets are \$48.50 and \$68.50.

Sign-ups begin for WHS sports camps

Youth sports camps will be offered at Wilmington High School this summer and registration is underway. For questions call Wilmington High School at 815-926-1752.

Girls Basketball			
June 5 - 8	3rd - 5th	8 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.	\$40
June 5 - 8	6th - 8th	9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.	\$40
June 5 - 9,	9th - 12th	11 a.m. to noon	\$40
12-16, 19 -23		9 a.m. to 11 a.m.	
WHS main gymnasium with Coach Dillon			
Boys Basketball			
June 6 - 8	3rd - 5th	1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.	\$30
June 6 - 8	6th - 8th	2:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.	\$30
June 6 - 8	9th - 12th	11 a.m. to 1 p.m.	\$30
13 - 15, 20 - 22			
WHS main gymnasium with Coach Krop			
Wrestling			
June 6 - 8, 12 - 14	K - 8th	9:30 a.m. to 11 p.m.	\$40
WHS Mat room with Coach Dziuban			
Football			
July 5, 6, 11 - 13	9th-12th	8:30 to 10:30	\$50
17, 18			
Football field with Coach Reents			
Flag Football			
June 6 - 8, 12-14	1st - 8th	11 a.m. to 12:30 a.m.	\$50
High School with Coach Reents			
Cheer			
July 18 - 20	k - 8th	8 a.m. to 10 a.m.	\$40
WHS mat room/Aux gym with Coach Bejlovec			
Volleyball			
June 19 - 21	k - 4th	11 a.m. to 1 p.m.	\$45
June 19 - 22	5th - 8th	8 a.m. to 10 a.m.	\$45
June 13 - 15	9th - 12th	9 a.m. to 12 p.m.	\$60
July 11 - 13, 18 - 21 and 25 - 27			
WHS main gymnasium with Coach Van Duyn			
Soccer			
June 19 - 21	k - 4th	9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.	\$30
June 19 - 21	5th - 8th	11 a.m. to 1 p.m.	\$30
June 26 - 29	9th - 12th	10 a.m. to noon	\$30
WHS Soccer field with Coach Ivanoff			
Golf			
Schedule w/Coach Wilson		9th - 12th	\$0
Track			
June 19 - 23	k - 12th	9 a.m. to 10 a.m.	\$30
WHS track with Coach Stickel			
Softball			
June 7 - 8	3rd - 9th	9 a.m. to 11 a.m.	\$30
WHS softball field with Coach Skole			
Baseball			
June 21 - 23	3rd - 5th	9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.	\$40
June 21 - 23	6th - 8th	10:30 a.m. to noon	\$40
June 13 - 15	9th	10:30 a.m. to noon	\$40
WHS baseball field with Coach Bushnell			

Send completed registration form and check payable by May 26 to Wilmington High School to:

Wilm. High School 209 Wildcat Ct., Wilmington, IL 60481

Athlete's name: _____

Phone: _____ Grade (in fall 2023): _____

Parent/Guardian name: _____

Telephone _____ Camp: _____

T-shirt size (circle one): Youth S - M - L

Adult - S - M - L - XL - XXL

The need to avoid forever chemicals

Dear EarthTalk: Why are "forever chemicals" so bad, and how can I avoid them? -- M.N., via email



"Forever chemicals" are types of highly persistent and toxic synthetic chemicals widely used in many industries, including firefighting foam, non-stick cookware, food packaging and water-resistant clothing.

These chemicals are called "forever" because they do not break down easily in the environment and can persist for decades or even centuries, accumulating in soil, water and air.

The most common types of forever chemicals are per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), which include compounds such as perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS). PFAS have been linked to a range of health problems, including cancer, immune system damage, hormone disruption and developmental delays.

The problem with forever chemicals is that they can accumulate in our bodies over time, as well as in the bodies of animals and plants, leading to long-term health and environmental consequences. Because these chemicals do not break down easily in the environment, they can also contaminate soil, water and air, potentially impacting entire ecosystems.

To avoid exposure to forever chemicals, there are several steps you can take. First, avoid using non-stick cookware and other products that contain PFAS.

Instead, opt for stainless steel, cast iron or ceramic cookware. Secondly, avoid using products that are labeled water-resistant, stain-resistant or grease-resistant, as they may contain PFAS. Thirdly, use natural, organic and biodegradable cleaning products instead of conventional cleaning products that may contain PFAS.

When shopping for food, choose products that are packaged in glass, metal or paper containers instead of plastic con-



NON-STICK PANS like these are coated in so-called "forever chemicals" that can potentially flake off into your food.

tainers, as plastic can contain PFAS. Finally, if you live in an area where PFAS contamination is a concern, consider installing a water filtration system that is designed to remove these chemicals.

According to the non-profit Environmental Working Group, a watchdog organization that tracks contaminants and chemicals in food, health and beauty products, nearly all Americans, including newborn babies, have forever chemicals in their bloodstreams, while 200 million of us may well be drinking tap water contaminated with these toxins.

And we're not the only ones at risk. Researchers have found traces of forever chemicals in wildlife all over the world, including some endangered species. Who would've thought that such a risk would threaten polar bears in the Arctic let alone tigers, monkeys and pandas in milder locales and even dolphins and fish across the world's oceans?

Forever chemicals have been ubiquitous in our ecosystems and bloodstreams

for decades, but it wasn't until March 2023 that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) started to address the issue by setting Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) goals for PFAS and related persistent chemicals in drinking water supplies.

While this might be too little too late for those of us exposed to these toxins year after year, at least it's a step in the right direction. "Decades of unchecked use and releases of PFAS chemicals have devastated the planet by contaminating people, drinking water, and food, including fish and wildlife across the globe," says Tasha Stoiber, a senior scientist at EWG.

"The proposed nationwide standards to limit exposure to PFAS in drinking water are a welcome development to address the harms these toxic chemicals have already inflicted upon individuals and communities."

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

Olivet Nazarene deans list

Olivet Nazarene University announces it's Spring 2023 dean's list. To qualify for inclusion on the dean's list, a student must have been enrolled as a full-time undergraduate student and must have attained a semester grade point average of 3.50 or higher on a 4.00 grading scale.

Included were Alyssa Fautrot and Dylan Garrelts, of Braidwood and Conner Dempsay, Mary Henderson and Jacob Prescott, all of Wilmington.

SIUE spring deans list

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville has announced the names of students qualifying for the Spring 2023 Dean's List. To qualify, a student must maintain a grade-point average of 3.5 or better and have 12 hours calculated (B is equivalent to 3.0; A to 4.0).

Local students include Destiny Dodge and Colleen Feeney, of Coal City and Carley Wilkerson, of Wilmington.

SHARE A SHOT



MISS ZELDA thoroughly enjoying a little DQ with her family at the Braidwood Dairy Queen. Shout out to the Braidwood DQ for the free pup cup. If you have a cute photo of your pup, kids having fun or some local unique scene, email it to Share-A-Shot (in subject line) to news@fpnusa.com. Hard copies accepted at this newspaper's Coal City or Wilmington office.

USDA: Large crop estimates pressure prices

BY DANIEL GRANT
FARMWEEK

USDA projects some record-large crops in the U.S. and South America this year and into 2024.

If realized, ending stocks are expected to rise while crop prices could plummet in the coming year based on the Ag Department's May world ag supply and demand estimates.

USDA projects this year's corn crop, which U.S. farmers are still planting, could produce a record 15.3 billion bushels (up 10% from last year) with an average yield of 181.5 bushels per acre (up 8.2 bushels from last year).

Meanwhile, U.S. soybean production was pegged at 4.51 billion bushels this season, up 5% from last year.

The hefty crop production estimates pushed 2023-24 ending stocks estimates to 2.2 billion bushels for corn (up 805 million bushels from 2022-23) and 335 million bushels of beans, up 120 million bushels from the revised 2022-23 forecast. Ending stocks of wheat, though, could slip 11% to the lowest level in 16 years.

"We got the first look at the 2023-24 balance sheets and they were bearish for corn and soybeans," Joe Camp, market analyst with CommStock Investments, told the RFD Radio Network. "Ending stocks were up a bit more than anticipated."

USDA's season-average price estimates reflected the bearishness of the big crops with 2023-24 projections at \$4.80 per bushel for corn (down \$1.80 from 2022/23), \$12.10 for beans (down \$2.10) and \$8 for wheat, down 85 cents from last year's record.

This season's crop production estimates, of course, are based on weather-adjusted trends assuming normal planting progress and summer weather.

"We know we're going to go back to trading weather



Photo by Catrina Rawson

USDA PROJECTS THIS year's corn crop, which U.S. farmers are still planting, could produce a record 15.3 billion bushels (up 10% from last year).

here pretty quickly," Camp said as most crop markets were in the red following the May 12 release of the latest estimates. "That will be the big determinant of what the next crop looks like."

Elsewhere, USDA pegged 2022-23 production in Brazil at a record 130 million metric tons (mmt) of corn, up 5 mmt from last month, and 155 mmt of beans, up 1 mmt.

Soy production in Brazil for 2023-24 could soar to a record 163 mmt, according to USDA. Planting for that crop will begin in October.

"We didn't see any major changes on the global balance sheet," Camp said. "They're still sticking with big numbers in Brazil and a damaged crop out of Argentina."

As for demand, USDA

projects total corn use could increase 5% in 2023-24, with food, seed and industrial use up 55 million bushels, exports projected to rise by 325 million bushels to 2.1 billion and corn used for ethanol to edge 1% higher.

Meanwhile, demand for soybean oil as a biofuel feedstock was projected to accelerate by 900 million pounds to 12.5 billion pounds in 2023/24. But, U.S. soy exports could slip by 40 million bushels to 1.98 billion in the next year due in large part to competition from South America.

This story was distributed through a cooperative project between Illinois Farm Bureau and the Illinois Press Association. For more food and farming news, visit FarmWeekNow.com.

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Garden Club to learn about vertical gardening

The Wilmington Garden Club will learn from Juleigh Miller, a local gardener, who will be sharing how she grows more in less space utilizing different vertical gardening techniques. The meeting will be Wednesday, June 21 at 1 p.m.

The garden club meets monthly at the Wilmington Park District, 315 N. Water St. Meetings are open to the public so come along and bring a friend.

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

APARTMENTS FOR RENT

Braidwood, 2 BR, stove and refrigerator, w/d hookup, C/A, garbage included, \$1,000 month plus security, no pets, call 815-474-4407. ca20-23

Gardner - 1 bedroom apartment. \$575 per month. One month deposit required. No dogs. On second floor in downtown Gardner. Water, sewer and trash included. Tenant pays electric. Texts preferred at 815-277-6018. One year lease and criminal background check required. cc22-25

Wilmington - 2 bedroom apartment. Nice location. \$650/month. First, last & security. 618-383-6330. cc22-24

BOATS

10 foot aluminum John Boat and trailer. Two trolling motors & life jackets. \$500.00 Call 815-530-4479. ca21-22

GARAGE SALES

14th ANNUAL WILMINGTON ALL-TOWN GARAGE SALE
Thurs., June 1 (8 am-5 pm);
Fri., June 2 (8 am-5 pm);
Sat., June 3 (8 am - 2 pm)
Sponsored by First United Methodist Church,
401 E. Kahler Rd.,
Wilmington
Everyone is welcome to come out and explore all the great sales at the church and throughout the whole town. Stop by for lunch at the church Friday from 11:30-1:30. Listing maps will be available for pick up at the church beginning at 8 am on June 1 and throughout the sale dates. For more information, call 815-476-5474.

Braidwood Garage Sale Days

Friday & Saturday
June 9 & 10
8am to 3pm
Get maps at First Presbyterian Church Main & Lincoln St.
Look for bright blue pennants.
No rain date.

GARAGE SALES

Braidwood - 956 N Mabel Ct. Wed., May 31 & Thurs., June 1 from 8am-3pm. Fitbit charger, noise canceling headphones, bedding, shower curtains, throw pillows, mens clothes size m-xl, womens size m-xl, shinguards, paintball helmet, crockpot, home decor, much more.

Braidwood - 630 W. 1st St.

Wed, Thurs, Fri & Sat June 7 thru June 10. 8am to 4pm. Boys & girls clothes & shoes, over 50 gymnastic leotards, books & toys, misc household - furniture, rugs, dishes, sheets, pillows. cc22-23

Essex - HUGE multiple family garage sale.

185 Essex Way. Fri., & Sat., June 2 & 3 from 8am-3pm and Sun., June 4 from 8am-12pm. Household items, tools, women's clothing, young adult clothing, books, ceiling fans, tool chest, TONS of misc. items. cc21-22

Wilmington - Estate Sale

503 Roland St., June 8, 9, & 10, 9am to 3pm, tools, fishing, all furniture, collectibles. Everything must go.

GARAGE SALES

Wilmington - 34207 Wildwood Lane. Fri., & Sat., June 2-3 from 8am-4pm and Sun., June 4 from 8am-2pm. Large unique sale. Baby girl clothes, rugs, household things, chairs, pet things, camping chairs, some garage things, stadium seats, wall decor, bedding, kids chairs, low prices. So much unlisted. cc22

Wilmington - Pole barn sale.

210 Stewart St. Thur., Fri. & Sat., June 1, 2 & 3 from 8:30am-4:30pm. Wildcat stuff, crafts, signs. Girls softball equipment. Tent & air bed, kitchen island, flower ladders, 100 picture frames. Tools, hardware, chains, slings, ropes, 220 welder, 16' canoe, much more. Lots of free stuff. ca22

Wilmington - 1003 N Joliet St.

Wed., May 31 from 5pm-8pm, Thur., June 1 from 9am-2pm, Fri., Sat., Sun., June 2, 3, 4 from 9am-?. Toys, tools, fishing, clothes, misc. Lot of stuff, cheap prices.

HELP WANTED

Experienced laborer wanted. 815-634-3976 ca19-22

Coal City United Methodist Church has a position open to serve as treasurer. Job description available upon request. If interested in this position, please submit a cover letter and resume to revjaynr@gmail.com. ca21-22

Maintenance Technician

- Apartment Communities. Coal City & Braidwood, Full-time benefits. Call or text TM Associates at 815-634-8044. cc22-25

VanDuyn Motel is looking for part-time housekeeper.

working 8-15 hrs/week. Starts at \$11/hr. cash. Please call 815-476-2801 or stop by VanDuyn Motel at 107 Bridge St., Wilmington, IL. Come to office and fill out application. cc22b-25b

Village of Diamond is seeking a full-time water-waste water operator-in-training.

Water/wastewater experience is a plus but will train the right individual. Must be detail oriented with an excellent work ethic. Assist with maintaining plant compliance with EPA standards and state water Commission, read meters, charts, gauges and accurately maintain records of plant operations. Physical and technical skills. Background check, pre-employment drug screen and physical required. Wages based on experience. Application can be found at: www.villageofdiamond.org or in person at: 1750 E. Division St. Diamond, IL Email resume/application to: clerk@villageofdiamond.org ch22-23

The City of Braidwood is accepting applications for the position of City Clerk.

The position is part-time 20/24 hrs a week. Must be familiar with MicroSoft Word and have some knowledge of payroll. For further information contact City Hall at 1-815-458-2333 or email: khart@braidwood.us. cc22-23

Will County Sportsmen's Club is looking for a reliable Maintenance Worker.

Must be able to operate the Skidsteer, Backhoe and other equipment. Please call the office at 815-476-6561 or email: wscs1946@gmail.com.

MISCELLANEOUS

Clayton wood burning stove, \$250. Call 815-458-2004. ca22-24

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

HPZ Pet Rover Run performance stroller for dog.

Made in USA with heavy-duty tubing. Holds up to 50 lbs. Lifetime warranty. Retail for \$363. Asking \$125; also large plastic dog kennel, \$40. Call Eric 815-922-7966.

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Wanted: Stories about local people, organizations and events.

If you know a neighbor with an interesting hobby, collection or cause, give the editor a call at 1-815-634-0315 or 1-815-476-7966. tfn/47b

REAL ESTATE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 13TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT GRUNDY COUNTY - MORRIS, ILLINOIS LAKEVIEW LOAN SERV-ICING LLC Plaintiff, -v- ERIC D EVANS Defendant 21 CH 21 NOTICE OF SALE PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a Judgment of Foreclosure and Sale entered in the above cause on August 11, 2022, an agent for The Judicial Sales Corporation, will at 11:00 AM on June 21, 2023, at the Grundy County Courthouse, 111 East Washington Street front door entrance, MORRIS, IL, 60450, sell at a public sale to the highest bidder, as set forth below, the following described real estate: Commonly known as 1923 TALLER ROAD, MORRIS, IL 60450 Property Index No. 02-31-478-034

The real estate is improved with a townhouse with a two car garage.

Sale terms: 25% down of the highest bid by certified funds at the close of the sale payable to The Judicial Sales Corporation. No third party checks will be accepted. The balance, in certified funds or wire transfer, is due within twenty-four (24) hours. The subject property is subject to general real estate taxes, special assessments, or special taxes levied against said real estate and is offered for sale without any representation as to quality or quantity of title and without recourse to Plaintiff and in "AS IS" condition. The sale is further subject to confirmation by the court. Upon payment in full of the amount bid, the purchaser will receive a Certificate of Sale that will entitle the purchaser to a deed to the real estate after confirmation of the sale. The property will NOT be open for inspection and plaintiff makes no representation as to the condition of the property. Prospective bidders are admonished to check the court file to verify all information. If this property is a condominium unit, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and the legal fees required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(1) and (g)(4). If this property is a condominium unit which is part of a common interest community, the purchaser of the unit at the foreclosure sale other than a mortgagee shall pay the assessments required by The Condominium Property Act, 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1). IF YOU ARE THE MORTGAGOR (HOMEOWNER), YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN IN POSSESSION FOR 30 DAYS AFTER ENTRY OF AN ORDER OF POSSESSION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15-1701(C) OF THE ILLINOIS MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE LAW. You will need a photo identification issued by a government agency (driver's license, passport, etc.) in order to gain entry into our building and the foreclosure sale room in Cook County and the same identification for sales held at other county venues where The Judicial Sales Corporation conducts foreclosure sales. MCCALLA RAY-MER LEIBERT PIERCE, LLC Plaintiff's Attorneys, One North Dearborn Street, Suite 1200, Chicago, IL, 60602. Tel No. (312) 346-9088. THE JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION One South Wacker Drive, 24th Floor, Chicago, IL, 60606-4650 (312) 236-SALE (312) 236-SALE You can also visit The Judicial Sales Corporation at www.tjsc.com for a 7 day status report of pending sales. MCCALLA RAY-MER LEIBERT PIERCE, LLC One North Dearborn Street, Suite 1200 Chicago IL, 60602 312-346-9088 E-Mail: pleadings@mccalla.com Attorney File No. 21-078751L 722031 Case Number: 21 CH 21 TJSC#: 43-1799 NOTE: Pursuant to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, you are advised that Plaintiff's attorney is deemed to be a debt collector attempting to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. Case # 21 CH 21 I3220141 Published in the Free Press Newspapers on Wed., May 17, 2023 & 31, 2023

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County EMA launches new app 'Ready Will County'

The Will County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) has launched a new-and-improved version of the "Ready Will County" smartphone application. The app is an innovative tool to help residents receive timely alerts and to be able to effectively plan ahead for a wide range of scenarios.

"Will County EMA serves as a key source of information to plan ahead for emergency situations and emergency alerts," said County Executive Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant.

Substantial improvements were made to the app to improve navigation and provide new informational content. The app also now allows residents to register their loved ones to help first responders identify those in need of assistance in the event of a disaster.

"We want to make it as

easy as possible for residents to find the information that they need in emergency situations," said Will County EMA Director Allison Anderson. "We have so many new ways to stay connected as a society than we did 20 to 30 years ago. It was important for our department to create easy channels of communication to alert, inform, and prepare the public."

The new app provides a variety of resources to residents, including emergency alerts, emergency plan preparation tools, preparedness information, warming & cooling center locations, a tool for reporting damage to Will County EMA, and volunteer opportunities.

The Ready Will County app works with both Apple and Android devices and is available for free download through the Apple iTunes and Google Play stores.

Wild turkey harvest up over last year

Illinois turkey hunters harvested a preliminary statewide total of 16,121 wild turkeys during the 2023 Illinois spring turkey season. The total is a 17 percent increase over the 2022 statewide turkey harvest of 13,701.

The record harvest total for the spring season was set in 2006 when 16,569 turkeys were taken. The 2023 total includes the youth turkey sea-

son harvest of 1,309 birds, which compares with the 2022 youth harvest of 1,258.

This year, 80,643 permits were sold compared to 81,672 last year. Spring turkey hunting was open in 100 of Illinois' 102 counties.

The top five counties for the 2023 harvest were Jo Daviess, 595; Jefferson, 487; Pike, 419; Pope, 379; and Randolph, 370.

Illinois \$56.6 billion budget has no wiggle room

House and Senate Republicans claimed during budget-related floor debate last week that the supermajority Democrats had masked the true size of their plan by delaying the start of some spending until the second half of the upcoming fiscal year.

Yes and no.

Republicans pointed to the \$317 million cost of increasing Medicaid provider reimbursement rates, including for hospitals. But that new spending doesn't begin until January 1, the halfway point in the 2024 fiscal year, which begins July 1.

And, so, basic arithmetic means that the rate increase in Fiscal Year 2025 will be double FY24's cost because that 2025 spending will cover all 12 months, instead of just six. That means the state will start the following fiscal year with at least a \$317 million hole.

Sometimes, it takes time to stand up new programs, so state spending can't justifiably begin for a while. That's the case here as well, according to the governor's office, which says the higher reimbursement rates can't start until the state applies for and receives permission from the federal government. And that can take a while.

Also, \$317 million is only

0.6 percent of the \$56.6 billion state spending plan. Not much in the grand scheme of things.

While that \$317 million is small in context, just think about how much scrambling the Democrats had to do during the past couple of weeks of spring session to collect enough crumbs under the couch cushions to pull their appropriations bill together.

First, they blew well past their self-imposed May 19th adjournment deadline because they couldn't agree on a spending package. And even then, it took 24 hours after the state's top Democrats announced a budget agreement that an actual budget bill surfaced because of even more scrambling. And the budget agreement announcement itself was delayed by about an hour because of even more scrambling over relatively small amounts of money.

The Democrats also only built a \$100 million cash cushion into this plan, or about 0.2 percent of total spending. That doesn't leave them any room if their revenue projections are too low by a tiny frac-



CAPITOL FACTS
Rich Miller

tion, or if spending is higher than anticipated.

Some Republicans pointed to the \$550 million in increased spending to cover the exploding healthcare costs for undocumented residents as the reason why Democrats had to get so creative elsewhere.

Medicaid providers, they said, could've received more money if not for that.

That's true, but only in the abstract. Yes, proponents (including legislators) and the Pritzker administration vastly underestimated what the healthcare program would cost and how many folks would enroll. And, yes, the governor waited until this spring to turn to the legislature for either statutory relief or the full, guaranteed legal authority via authorized emergency rules to rein in costs in a way that can survive a barrage of lawsuits. Mistakes, as they say, were made.

In the real world, you can't just wish away problems. "If only," is a fine game for pundits and politicians. But it doesn't do you much good when building an actual state budget, which, unlike federal spending plans, can't rely on simply printing more dollars.

No matter how much some Democrats may have privately grumbled about those massively increased costs, they would not publicly trumpet any sort of solution which kicked thousands of people off healthcare coverage

("Healthcare is a right" is a longtime Democratic Party talking point, after all) and forced hospitals and other medical providers to go back to treating them without any reimbursements.

And even though there was definitely some resistance and bitterness about those unexpected costs, Black legislators have wisely not had an appetite to publicly inflame the current tensions in Chicago, where some local Black leaders and conservative whites are grabbing headlines by echoing angry Fox News talking points about the costs of caring for the influx of mostly Latino asylum seekers.

While some Democrats clung to the notion that Pritzker had the authority to rein in costs without their assistance, they also saw the almost daily and widespread court battles throughout the pandemic over the governor's use of emergency rules and executive authority.

Determined lawyers on the other side tied the attorney general's office up in knots throughout the pandemic and have so far succeeded at stymying the implementation of both the SAFE-T Act and the assault weapons ban.

Lawsuits over limiting enrollment, and putting undocumented immigrants into managed care programs might still be filed, but the state will be on much firmer legal ground by specifically allowing the governor to file emergency rules.

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

Musicians invited to Circle jam in Godley

There will be a circle jam Saturday, June 10, from 5 to 8 p.m. in the hall under the water tower at the Godley Park District, 500 S. Kankakee Street, Godley.

Bring your instrument and play, sing or just enjoy.

The free event is open to everyone including musicians

and listeners. Donations will be accepted.

Circle jams are social hours featuring a mix of music from classic country to bluegrass and more. For more information call Randy Kiefling at 815-237-8139 or 815-210-8563.

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506 S. WATER ST., WILMINGTON, IL 60481

Tax Deed filed for 34138 South Wildwood St.

PUBLIC NOTICE

TAX DEED NO.: 2023TX000105
FILED: 04-05-2023
TAKE NOTICE

TO: JOHN BARABAN, KATHLEEN BARABAN, WILL COUNTY CLERK; OCCUPANTS, PARTIES IN OCCUPANCY OR ACTUAL POSSESSION OF SAID PROPERTY; AND UNKNOWN OWNERS or PARTIES INTERESTED IN SAID LAND OR LOTS AND UNKNOWN OCCUPANTS

This is NOTICE of the filing of the petition for Tax Deed on the following described property: Property located at: 34138 SOUTH WILDWOOD STREET, WILMINGTON, ILLINOIS Property Index Number: 08-24-12-404-015-0000

On October 12, 2023 at 9:00 AM, in the Circuit Court of Will County, Will County Courthouse, 100 West Jefferson Street, Courtroom 905, Joliet, Illinois, the Petitioner intends to make an application for an order on the petition that a Tax Deed be issued. The real estate was sold on December 9, 2020, for delinquent real estate taxes and/or special assessments for the year 2019. Certificate No. 19-03874. The period of redemption will expire on October 4, 2023. ROCKCREEK, LLC PETITIONER 8139-932804

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, May 24, 31 and June 7, 2023.

District 209-U seeking bids for diesel fuel

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice is hereby given that the Wilmington Community Unit School District 209U, Will County, Wilmington, Illinois will receive bids for the purchase of diesel fuel for the 2023-2024 school year. Bid specifications may be obtained upon request from the Office of the Superintendent, Wilmington Community Unit School District No. 209U, 209U Wildcat Court, Wilmington, IL 60481 - Phone (815) 926-1751. All bids are to be received in the Office of the Superintendent at the above address on or before 2:30 PM. CDST, Wednesday, June 7, 2023 and will be opened publicly at that time. The Board of Education will make its decision on Monday June 12, 2023, and reserves the right to waive any technicalities or irregularities and to reject any or all bids or any parts thereof.

By and for the Board of Education
Wilmington Community Unit School District 209U
Peggy Kunz, Secretary, Board of Education
Published in the Free Press Advocate Wednesday, May 24 and 31, 2023.

Elwood Fire Protection District passes ordinance re-establishing ambulance fees

PUBLIC NOTICE

ORDINANCE NO. 01192023
AN ORDINANCE RE-ESTABLISHING AMBULANCE AND RELATED CHARGES OF THE ELWOOD FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Trustees of the Elwood Fire Protection District as follows:

Section 1. A fee will be charged for emergency medical services rendered by the Elwood Fire Protection District. All persons who are non-residents of the District who are provided with ambulance service by the District or any fire protection district or municipality which provides emergency medical services to the District pursuant to a contract or mutual aid agreement with the District will be charged as per **Appendix A**.

Beginning on January 1, 2023, and each successive January 1st thereafter, the fees set forth in Appendix A of this Ordinance shall be increased without any further action by the Board of Trustees by the then-existing ambulance billing rate(s) pursuant to any subsequent Cost Report(s) submitted by the District under the GEMT Program or otherwise. In the event the calculated fee for the upcoming year is less than the current fee being assessed, the current fee shall be assessed for the following calendar year. The Fire Chief is directed and authorized to update **Appendix A** with any subsequent changes to the District's approved ambulance billing rate(s). All revenue from the charges assessed pursuant to the emergency response portions of this Ordinance shall be credited to the Corporate Fund of the District.

Section 2. The Chief of the District, or designee, is authorized to assess the foregoing charges and to take any and all reasonable steps in the collection of the same.

Section 3. The Chief of the District, or designee, is authorized to adopt administrative regulations to implement this Ordinance and is authorized to waive any and all of the fees due to a person, business, or other entity under this Ordinance. The Chief, or designee, may do so by policy or on an individual basis.

Section 4. The provisions of this Ordinance shall supersede any prior ordinances establishing charges which are inconsistent with this Ordinance.

Section 5. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect as of January 1, 2023.

Section 6. If any section, paragraph or provisions of this Ordinance shall be held invalid or unenforceable for any reason, such invalidity or unenforceability shall not affect any of the remaining provisions of this Ordinance.

ADOPTED by the Board of Trustees of the Elwood Fire Protection District on the 19th day of January, 2023, by a roll call vote as follows:

AYES: 2
NAYS: 0
ABSENT: 1

APPENDIX A
NON-RESIDENTS FEES AND CHARGES

Basic Life Support	\$ 3,309.60
Advanced Life Support	\$ 3,309.60
Non-transport fee where treatment is administered	\$ 200.00
Mileage Charge	\$17.50 per mile

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, May 24 and 31, 2023.

Tax Deed filed for 585 West Main St.

PUBLIC NOTICE

TAX DEED NO.: 2023TX000108
FILED: 04-06-2023
TAKE NOTICE

TO: DAVID CLELLAND, SUSAN CLELLAND, MICHAEL REGAN, IRENE KYLES, BMO HARRIS BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, WILL COUNTY CLERK; OCCUPANTS, PARTIES IN OCCUPANCY OR ACTUAL POSSESSION OF SAID PROPERTY; AND UNKNOWN OWNERS or PARTIES INTERESTED IN SAID LAND OR LOTS AND UNKNOWN OCCUPANTS

This is NOTICE of the filing of the petition for Tax Deed on the following described property: Property located at: 585 WEST MAIN STREET, BRAIDWOOD, ILLINOIS Property Index Number: 02-24-07-407-033-0000

On October 12, 2023 at 9:00 AM, in the Circuit Court of Will County, Will County Courthouse, 100 West Jefferson Street, Courtroom 905, Joliet, Illinois, the Petitioner intends to make an application for an order on the petition that a Tax Deed be issued. The real estate was sold on December 9, 2020, for delinquent real estate taxes and/or special assessments for the year 2019. Certificate No. 19-03803. The period of redemption will expire on October 4, 2023. VOYAGEUR HOLDINGS LLC PETITIONER 10546-932806

Published in the Braidwood Journal on Wednesday, May 24, 31 and June 7, 2023.

District 209-U seeking bids for Building Trades work

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice is hereby given that the Wilmington Community Unit School District 209U, Will County, Wilmington, Illinois, will receive bids for excavating, concrete work, labor and material bids and/or proposals for the Wilmington High School Building Trades Project for the 2023-2024 school year. Bid specifications may be obtained upon request from the Office of the Superintendent, Wilmington Community Unit School District 209U, 209U Wildcat Court, Wilmington, Illinois—Phone (815) 926-1751. All bids are to be received in the Office of the Superintendent at the above address on or before 2:30 P.M. CDST, Thursday, June 8, 2023, and will be opened publicly at that time. The Board of Education will make its decision on Monday, June 12, 2023, and reserves the right to waive any technicalities or irregularities and to reject any or all bids or any parts thereof.

By and for the Board of Education
Wilmington Community Unit School District 209U
Peggy Kunz, Secretary, Board of Education
Published in the Free Press Advocate Wednesday, May 24 and 31, 2023.

103 Fossil Ridge sold for delinquent taxes

PUBLIC NOTICE

To: David Gerger, Gary W. Gerger as Trustee under the Gary W. Gerger living Trust Agreement dated October 23, 2003, MICHAEL F. TOMASEK as RA for Shadow Lakes II Association, Lauren Staley Ferry, County Clerk of Will County, Illinois, Unknown Occupants of 103 Fossil Ridge Rd., Wilmington, IL 60481, Unknown Owners and Parties Interested, Generally of 103 Fossil Ridge Rd., Wilmington, IL 60481
TAX DEED NO.: 2023TX000143 FILED: 4/25/2023

TAKE NOTICE

County of Will
Date Premises Sold: 12/9/2020
Certificate No. 19-03757
Sold for General Taxes of: 2019
Sold for Special Assessment of (Municipality): N/A
And Special Assessment Number: N/A
Warrant No. N/A INST. NUMBER: N/A

THIS PROPERTY HAS BEEN SOLD FOR DELINQUENT TAXES
Property located at: 103 Fossil Ridge Rd., Wilmington, IL 60481
Legal Description or Property Index No.: 02-24-04-153-013-0000

This notice is to advise you that the above property has been sold for delinquent taxes and that the period of redemption from the sale will expire on 10/11/2023.

The amount to redeem is subject to increase at 6 month intervals from the date of sale and may be further increased if the purchaser at the tax sale or his or her assignee pays any subsequently accruing taxes or special assessments to redeem the property from subsequent forfeitures or tax sales. Check with the county clerk as to the exact amount you owe before redeeming.

This notice is also to advise you that a petition has been filed for a tax deed which will transfer title and the right to possession of this property if redemption is not made on or before 10/11/2023.

This matter is set for hearing in the Circuit Court of this county in Joliet, Illinois, on 11/6/2023 at 9:00 am in Courtroom 905, Will County Courthouse, 100 West Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432.

You may be present at this hearing but your right to redeem will already have expired at that time.

YOU ARE URGED TO REDEEM IMMEDIATELY TO PREVENT LOSS OF PROPERTY.

Redemption can be made at any time on or before 10/11/2023 by applying to the County Clerk of Will County, Illinois, at the Office of the County Clerk in Joliet, Illinois.

For further information contact the County Clerk.

ADDRESS:
302 North Chicago Street
Joliet, IL 60432

TELEPHONE: (815) 740-4615
Everet, LTD.
Purchaser or Assignee

Dated: 5/2/2023
8139-932583

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, May 17, 24 and 31, 2023.

Elwood Fire Protection District accepting bids for a 2023 GMC Sierra and a 2024 GMC Sierra

PUBLIC NOTICE

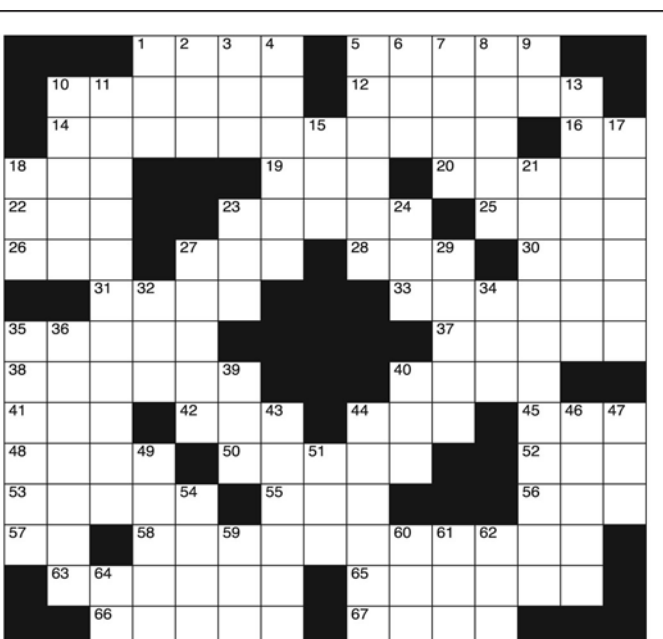
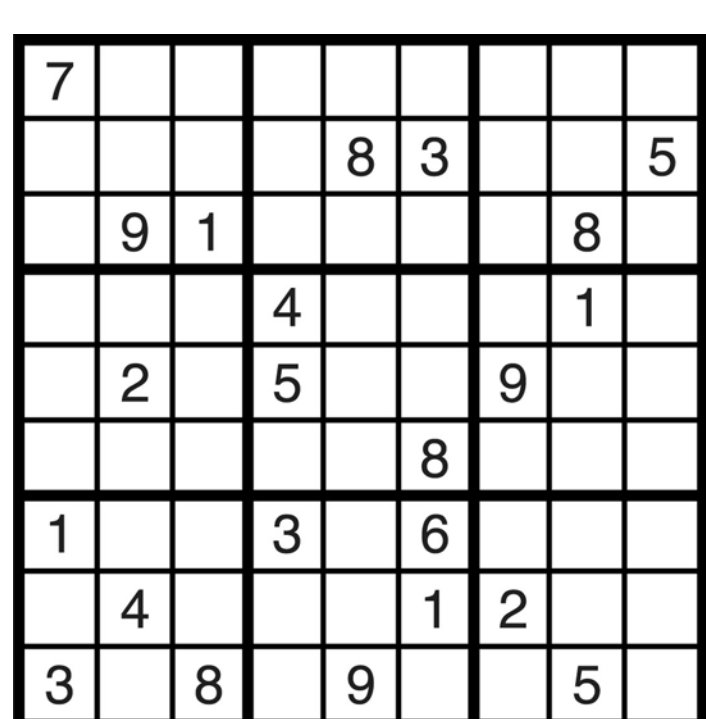
Notice is hereby given that the Elwood Fire Protection District will be accepting sealed bids for the following:

The purchase of (1) 2023 GMC Sierra 1500 (TK10543) 4WD Crew Cab 147" Pro.

The purchase of (1) 2024 GMC Sierra 2500 (TK20743) 4WD Crew Cab 159" Pro.

Bid specifications/packets are available for pick up at the Elwood Fire Protection District Mon-Fri, 9am- 3pm or you may email admin@elwoodfpd.com to request a packet. Bids must be submitted by 9am, June 5, 2023. Each submitted bid must be in a separate envelope, sealed and clearly labeled with vehicle type. The bids may be mailed to: Elwood Fire Protection District 309 Mississippi Street Elwood, IL 60421, or dropped off in person 9am-3pm, Mon-Fri. The Fire District will not receive bids after the June 5, 2023 deadline. All bids shall be opened at the Fire District on June 6, 2023 at 9am. The Elwood Fire Protection District reserves the right to reject any and all bids. Any questions should be directed to Chief Locacius at clocacius@elwoodfpd.com.

Published in the Free Press Advocate, Wednesday, May 24 and 31, 2023.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Sloping position
- 5. Descendant of a notable family
- 10. Following accepted norms
- 12. Root vegetable
- 14. Having a shape that reduces drag from air
- 16. Integrated circuit
- 18. Records electric currents of the heart
- 19. Used to anoint
- 20. Japanese city
- 22. After B
- 23. Muffles
- 25. Pass over
- 26. Vase
- 27. Soft touch
- 28. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
- 30. Patti Hearst's captors
- 31. Israeli politician
- 33. Degrade
- 35. Type of wrap
- 37. Polyurethane fabric
- 38. Avoids capture
- 40. Vegetarians avoid it
- 41. Decay
- 42. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 44. Vessel to bathe in
- 45. Inches per minute (abbr.)
- 48. Frosts
- 50. Dipped into
- 52. Controversial replay system in soccer
- 53. Comforts
- 55. Needed for yoga
- 56. Ands/
- 57. South Dakota
- 58. Printing system
- 63. Dramatic works set to music
- 65. Highest points
- 66. Social division
- 67. Used to treat Parkinson's disease

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Hill or rocky peak
- 2. Initial public offering
- 3. Type of light
- 4. Test
- 5. Flaky coverings
- 6. Former NFLer Newton
- 7. Part of the eye
- 8. Roman god of the underworld
- 9. Negative
- 10. Indiana pro basketball player
- 11. Replaces lost tissue
- 13. Denotes one from whom title is taken
- 15. Historic college hoops tournament
- 17. Hut by a swimming pool
- 18. Defunct European monetary unit
- 21. Feeds on insects
- 23. Adult male
- 24. Melancholic
- 27. Sheets of glass
- 29. Slang for famous person
- 32. Not good
- 34. "Ghetto Superstar" singer
- 35. The "World" is one
- 36. Used to make guacamole
- 39. Midway between south and southwest
- 40. Wet dirt
- 43. Ancient Egyptian name
- 44. Set of four
- 46. Strips
- 47. Wife
- 49. More dried-up
- 51. Socially inept person
- 54. Clusters on fern fronds
- 59. Bar bill
- 60. Prefix indicating "away from"
- 61. Very important person
- 62. Fiddler crabs
- 64. Special therapy

HOW SWEET THE SOUND NATIONAL CHAMPION STYLE



The Joliet American Legion Band will be holding their annual fundraising concert on Sunday, June 4th at 3:00 p.m. at the Jacob Henry Mansion 15 South Richards St., Joliet

In addition to a superb line-up of musical selections being conducted by Mike Fiske, the band's associate directors Rick Ellenberger (U.S. Army Major Retired), Dr. James Kruez and Jill Kohler will also take the podium to present fine patriotic arrangements. Tickets for this event will be available at the door one hour prior to show time at the cost of \$10 per person. Light refreshments will also be available in addition to a silent auction and drawings for raffle baskets which are being made possible through local merchant donations and band member contributions. Please consider attending and making this spring concert a successful one for the band who will be traveling to Charlotte, NC in August to defend their "National Champion" title once again.



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Coalers earn over \$91,000 in scholarships

As the academic year drew to a close for the Coal City High School class of 2023, the school held its annual Scholarship Awards Nights on Wednesday, May 3, an evening when \$91,971 was handed out to graduating seniors.

School officials report 34 members of the class of 2023 were selected as recipients of 37 local scholarships. The selections based on applications students submitted to the various scholarship sponsors.



IN MEMORY of its former police chief Dennis Neary, the Coal City Police Department has partnered with the Neary family to annually present the Dennis M. Neary Scholarship. The \$500 award is handed out to students enrolling in a degree program at a four year college or university and Natalie Appleton was this year's recipient. She will be pursuing a career in law enforcement. The scholarship was handed out by Coal City Police Chief Chris Harseim.



GRADUATING SENIOR Jadyn Cassani [right] was selected to receive a \$1,000 scholarship from the Bank of Pontiac. The financial award is presented to a student with an outstanding academic record. Cassani accepted the award from the bank's vice president of lending Nicole Albrecht. Cassani was also a recipient of a \$1,500 scholarship awarded by Bob's Advanced Auto & Tire and a financial award from the Unit 1 Educational Foundation.



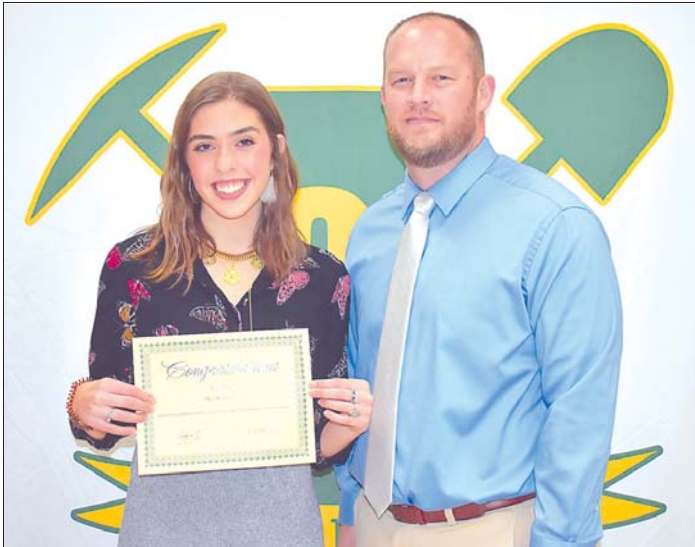
MEMBERS OF Coal City High School class of 1984, in partnership with the Unit 1 Educational Foundation, presented graduating senior Maya Dimitrijevic [right] with a \$500 scholarship. The funds provided by the members of the class. Jim Meyer had the honor of presenting the award on behalf of his classmates.



ASSOCIATED ORTHODONTISTS annually awards scholarships to current and former patients who are graduating and achieved a 3.0 or higher gpa. Recipients were selected based on an essay how orthodontics improved their life, as well as their academic achievements, school and community activities. This year, Julie Gardner, of Associated Orthodontists presented graduate Izzy Kostbade [right] with a \$1,000 scholarship. Kostbade will be attending Olivet Nazarene University.



ESTABLISHED IN 1988, the GFWC-IL Coal City Junior Woman's Club Scholarship has annually provided financial assistance to graduating seniors at Coal City High School. The awards are made possible through various fundraising projects sponsored by the community service organization. Derek Carlson [left] was recognized by member Marsha Vaughn [right], with a scholarship in the amount of \$500.



ESTABLISHED more than 20 years ago by the Unit 1 School District's teachers union, the Coal City Community Unit Education Association [CCUEA] Scholarship is awarded to graduates and alumni of Coal City High School, who are pursuing a career in elementary, middle school or secondary education. High school guidance counselor Keith Kiper [right] presented this year's \$500 award to Mia Ratajczak.



CONSTELLATION'S DRESDEN Generating Station has awarded Coal City High School graduate Kaelan Natyshok a \$1,000 scholarship. Each year the company's generating stations reward talented students who plan to pursue careers in science and engineering. Natyshok, pictured with high school guidance counselor Keith Kiper, will study electrical engineering at Missouri University of Science and Technology.



GRUNDY COUNTY LAW Enforcement Managers Association [GCELEMA] has established a scholarship program to assist graduates pursue a degree, preference is given to those entering the field of criminal justice/law enforcement. GCELEMA president Paul Clampitt of the Grundy County Sheriff's Department [left] joined Coal City Police Chief Chris Harseim [right] in presenting \$500 awards to [from left] Reagan Robson and Zakk Kramer, of Coal City High School and Kaiya Ziga, of Morris High School.

THE FIRST ANNUAL Aimee Gerhardt Outstanding Human Scholarships were presented to four graduating seniors. The \$1,000 awards are presented by Bob and Debbie Davis in honor of their niece, Aimee, who passed away in November 2018 following a courageous battle against rhabdomyosarcoma cancer. The recipients were selected based on their community service and essay focused on being a decent human being. Aimee's parents and sister presented the awards. Her father, Keith Gerhardt [from left] and sister, Sarah Gerhardt are pictured with recipients Brecken Johnson, Kerrigan Copes and Brady Ehman and Aimee's mother, Geil Kopkowski.



Additional scholarship photos will appear in upcoming editions of The Courant.

Trash pickup delayed

Trash and recycling services will be delayed one day this week in the villages of Diamond and Coal City. Due to the Monday, May 29 observance of the Memorial Day holiday, Environmental Recycling & Disposal will collect from residential households one day late, so trash will be collected on Friday, June 2 in the village of Diamond. Coal City residents with Thursday pickup will also have their trash, recycling and yard waste collected on Friday, and those with a traditional Friday pickup will have their trash collected on Saturday, May 31.

Coal City Coalers Team Pride
#1 Sports Fans Weekly Internet Winner

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MAKENZIE HENLINE makes a catch for Coal City. Henline will be back with the Lady Coalers next spring. Photo by Amy Walker

One thing is certain, Lady Coalers will be back

The Lady Coaler softball team ended its season Wednesday in the sectional tournament with one certainty: They will be back next year. Coal City finished the season with 29 wins and nine losses, a conference championship, and winning its second consecutive regional. They lose only one senior, Kerigan Copes, to graduation.

All was good throughout most of Wednesday's 9-6 loss to Herscher. Coal City took a 2-0 lead and was ahead 6-2 when Herscher came up for its last at-bat in the top of the seventh.

The Tigers ended up scoring seven runs in the frame as freshman pitcher Masyn Kuder tired after 6.1 innings of hard work. Bri Combes took over for the final two outs but fate had been determined.

Kuder was tagged for 13 hits, including a late home run which sparked the Tiger rally. She struck out two and walked five.

The Coalers tried to answer in the bottom of the seventh but couldn't get past Herscher's Fleischauer who was fresh after taking over in

the fifth inning. "It was a tough ending to a fantastic season for our girls," commented coach Rodney Monbrum. "I'm proud of the way they competed all season. On top of success on the field the girls took care of the classroom first carrying over a 3.8 team grade point average. I'm fortunate to coach such a talented group of young ladies."

Khole Picard (3-for-4) and Mia Ferrias (2-for-2, two RBIs) hit doubles for the Lady Coalers. Makenzie Henline ended up with two hits for two RBIs. Copes had a pair of hits while Addison Harvey had one.

The Lady Coalers, who had beaten Herscher twice during the regular season, finished with 10 hits total and no errors.

Herscher returned Saturday to Pontiac to play for the sectional championship but lost 5-1 to Beecher. That sent Beecher to the Lisle Super Sectional where they shutout Lombard Montini 4-0 to advance to the Final Four at state.

Lady Coaler soccer seniors, family members honored on Senior Night



COAL CITY soccer senior Ana Flores is being escorted by Yadira Serna. Ana is the epitome of a great student and has grown leaps and bounds this season. She will be attending Bradley University in the fall and will study nursing.



COAL CITY soccer senior Reagan Robson is being escorted by her parents Carol and Wendell Robson. Her positivity and spirit will be missed. She will be attending Eastern Illinois in the fall to study political science with a minor in pre-law.



COAL CITY soccer senior Azra Malovski is being escorted by Fatmira and Aisha Malovski. Azra's mobility and willingness make her a fantastic teammate. She will be attending JJC in the fall.



COAL CITY soccer senior Audrey Cooper is being escorted by her parents Tim and Kim Cooper. Audrey always leads by example and was a great captain. She plans on going to SIUC to study conservation science.



COAL CITY soccer senior Cara Planeta is being escorted by her parents Nikki and Brock Planeta. Cara will be missed for goal scoring, assisting and creativity of the field. She will be attending Concordia University Wisconsin in the fall to play soccer and study nursing.



COAL CITY soccer senior Mariah Pena is being escorted by her parents Michelle and David Pena. Mariah's willingness to play anywhere and calm demeanor make her a great player. She will be attending ISU in the fall to study psychology or business.



COAL CITY soccer senior Peyton Benson is being escorted by her parents Lisa McCure and Brandon and Melissa Benson. Peyton is a student of the game and always wanting to improve. She will be attending the University of South Alabama to study professional health sciences and minoring in emergency medical services.



COAL CITY soccer senior Beth Greene is being escorted by her parents Tabatha and Curtis Greene. Beth has been a wonderful addition to the team. She also plays basketball and is a member of NHS. She plans on studying forensic studies and psychology.



Bring your little princess out for

Princess Night

Friday, June 2

6:35 p.m. game time

Bring the family for a fun-filled night including fireworks. Tickets start at \$9 (lawn) or reserved seating at \$14.



SITCOM NIGHT
Saturday, June 3
KATE FLANNERY
(aka Meredith on The Office)
First pitch 6:05 p.m.



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See more game photos at freepressphotos.smugmug.com

Save MORE for what's next.

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2.25% APY*

*APY = Annual Percentage Yield. Balances up to \$30,000 may earn 2.25% APY. Balances above \$30,000 earn 0.25% APY. Rates effective as of 6/1/2023 and may change monthly. Qualifications apply. Federally insured by the NCUA.

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