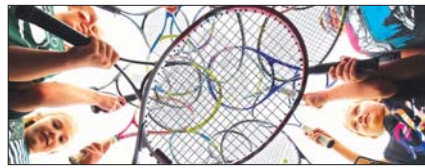


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## Lives turned upside down

Livingston County couple dies in wrong-way crash



Courtesy photo

A LIVINGSTON COUNTY couple were killed and three of their children were injured in a wrong-way crash on Interstate 55 in Wilmington Township on Tuesday, June 27. Ronald Dube, 35 and his wife, Kelly Quinlen-Dube, 34, were pronounced dead at the scene of the crash reported just before 10 p.m. A Gofundme has been established to assist the couple's four children, and a series of other fundraisers and events are being held for the family.

BY ANN GILL  
EDITOR

Tragedy struck a young family from Livingston County, a head-on traffic crash claiming the lives of a mother and father who leave four children behind.

For the children who range in age from 12 years to two years, "their lives have been turned upside down at this point," said Jennifer Jones, of Coal City, a witness to the crash that killed Ronald Dube, 35 and his wife, Kelly Quinlen-Dube, 34, of Emmington.

It was just before 9:50 p.m. on Tuesday, June 27 that the Dubes' GMC Yukon was struck head-on by a wrong-way driver in the south-bound lanes of Interstate 55 at the 238 mile marker—Route 129—in Wilmington Township.

The Dubes and three of their children—seven year old twins and a two year old boy—were heading home after visiting family in Plainfield.

The children's physical injuries consisted of broken bones, cuts and bruises. All three were

treated at Morris Hospital and transferred to Lurie Children's Hospital in Chicago. They have all since been released and are in the care of family.

"Physically, they will heal. I just hope they are going to be OK. They are the sweetest kids," said Jones, who came to know the children on a dark stretch of the interstate.

On the night of the crash, Jones was traveling with her husband and daughter in a car not far behind the Dubes.

"All of a sudden I see headlights, I see headlights coming towards us on the curve at the 129 exit," Jones said.

Her husband was driving and was able to get into the right hand lane behind a semi-truck.

As they were making a move to get out of the way of the wrong-way vehicle, the Yukon attempted to switch lanes but made contact with the semi ahead of them and were then stuck by the approaching Ford F-150 pickup.

"I saw them hit and I saw the truck come in and hit them," Jones said.

The SUV spun around and a semi approaching from behind in the left lane made a strategic move to avoid contact with the Yukon, instead striking a utility trailer the Dubes were pulling. From what Jones could see the trailer had detached from the SUV prior to it being hit by the semi.

Jones' husband, Kevin, a local police officer, immediately jumped out of the car to check on the victims of the crash. She dialed 911 and handed the phone off to her daughter, Korynne and went toward the Yukon.

"I could hear the kids screaming and crying. We couldn't get the doors open and I had nothing to break a window," she said.

A screwdriver she found in their car wasn't enough to break the glass, the doors to the vehicle were locked and the older kids were trying to get out.

A man passing by on the frontage road had stopped, jumped over the wire fencing and came through the thick vegetation with a tool to

SEE CRASH, PAGE 2

## New roadway to ease traffic congestion



Photo by Ann Gill

THE UNIT 1 School District is investing \$920,000 to improve parking and traffic flow at Coal City Middle School. 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 a new 84-space parking lot being constructed west of the baseball field located on the southside of the school building, as well as an expanded and reconfigured parking lot between the school building and district administration center. The project is part of the district's facility improvement plan that was developed by the district's architectural firm, Cordogan Clark. D Construction began excavating the site last week. The Coal City contractor has also been awarded a contract for asphalt paving work of additional district owned parking lots.



Photo by Ann Gill

COAL CITY POLICE officer Mike Imhof is part of team Rollin Coal, a stock car racing duo that is putting the pedal to the medal to raise funds for Special Olympics Illinois. Rollin Coal is one of more than 20 teams that will put their driving skills to the test in the upcoming 5-0 Racing event at the Grundy County Speedway in Morris.

## The fuzz are ready to roll

BY ANN GILL  
EDITOR

The fuzz are ready to roll in the Five-0 and when the green flag waves team Rollin Coal will put the pedal to the metal for a good cause.

Officers with the Coal City Police Department are trying something new and it won't be long before they get the call to start the engine on car 900, their entry in the upcoming Law Enforcement Torch Run Five-0 Racing event to benefit Special Olympics Illinois.

Coal City Police officers Brandon Larson and Mike Imhof have stepped up to put their driving skills to the test in the race that includes over 20 law enforcement agencies including the Grundy County Sheriff's Office and Illinois State Police.

This is Coal City's first year participating and Larson will be behind the wheel for the inaugural race on Saturday, July 22.

The Five-0 is a stock car race that puts law enforcement officers in race vehicles customized for their department.

Coal City's entry is a Ford Crown Victoria that was purchased and modified for their use by Bob and Debbie Davis, the owners of Bob's Advanced Auto & Tire.

"Bob's Auto has gone above and beyond for the police department," Police Chief Chris Harseim said.

Not only did the business provide the vehicle, it has prepped the vehicle for racing from stripping out the interior and taking out all of the glass windows to installing a roll cage and welding all the doors together.

The officers have also had

SEE FIVE-0, PAGE 2



## Priority #1—hiring new patrol officers

BY ANN GILL  
EDITOR

The first task for the newly appointed board of fire and police commissioners is to establish an eligibility list of potential police hires.

A week after being sworn-in to their newly appointed positions, commissioners met to specifically get the police department back to a full roster and that starts with updating the eligibility list.

There are 11 on the department's roster—10 certified officers including one still in training and the chief.

Police Chief Chris Harseim said a staff of 14 is a great number, but 15 is even better. The goal is to get the department back to that number.

The department is currently vetting the final candidate on the existing eligi-

bility list, an individual who, based on the outcome of a background check and medical, psychological and polygraph tests, could be offered employment within the month. However, the earliest that candidate could report for training is September and that means they would not be on solo patrols until completing all of their training sometime next spring.

Based on actions taken by the previous board of commissioners, a new list is forthcoming, beginning with a written test scheduled for Aug. 6.

The earliest someone could be selected from the new list and scheduled for training is 2024. As of right now, there are no academy spots available unless something was to open up.

New officers are required to complete police training through a state certified program.

There is the potential to hire a lateral candidate, certified officers looking to make a move from one department to another.

Although they still have to meet certain requirements, if hired they can go directly into the department's field training that takes about six weeks to complete.

The starting salary for a patrol officer—new or lateral transfer—in Coal City is just under \$56,000.

Mike Lareau, the board's outgoing chairman, shared he had received some inquiries on the lateral position that was posted on The Blueline, a job bank for law enforcement.

The initial deadline to submit applications for the lateral position was July 1, SEE PRIORITY, PAGE 2

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