



Photo by Patti Sorg

THE WATER TOWER in North Park was completely refurbished over the past 10 weeks, returning clean drinking water to the residents of Coal City. The project included lots of sandblasting, grinding, cleaning and then painting inside and out. The mayor and village board offered thanks to residents in the neighborhood for their patience during the oftentimes loud work. The paint job boasts of Coal City's wrestling state championships of 2023 and 2025 with hopefully many more to come.



AT ONE POINT the village water tower at North Park looked more like a grain silo than a water reservoir. It was draped during restoration to allow for sand blasting and painting. Work started in early June and completed last week.

## Water tower is as good as new

BY MIKE LOOMIS  
CORRESPONDENT

Repainting and maintenance on a water tower on the north side of Coal City is finished, officials said at the village board meeting last week.

Village Engineer Ryan Hansen said the updating of the water tower, which started in June, is completed and the tower is back in service.

After draining the tower, located in North Park, the interior was stripped, reprimed and repainted. Hansen estimated that it had been about 20 years since the tower last received significant maintenance.

Water service for Coal City residents was not disrupted while the tower was out of commission during the maintenance work, Hansen said.

Contractor for the project was Dynamic Industrial Services, based in Lansing, IL. Village Administrator Matt Fritz said the cost was about \$693,000. The tower has a capacity of 300,000 gallons, while another water tower on the south end of Coal City can hold up to 500,000 gallons.

Other issues addressed at the Aug. 13 Village of Coal City Board of Trustees meeting include:

- Work on the utility system and erosion control at the Hunter's Run senior housing development is underway, Hansen report-

ed to the trustees.

The \$12 million project is on an 11.5-acre site at the southwest corner of West Maple Street and South Marguerite Street. Villa Park-based North Arrow Partners is the developer.

- Trustees approved updates to local ordinances regarding public intoxication so they now conform with changes to state statutes.

"Public intoxication can no longer be the basis for an officer stopping a person on public property," Administrator Fritz stated in a memo to the trustees. "Officers will need to evaluate the actions being exhibited by the person and public intoxication will no longer be an additional charge..."

- Students received free school supplies, ice cream and enjoyed games and a petting zoo at the Second Annual Back to School Bash, held at Campbell Park on July 26. Organizers of the event said over 600 hot dogs were served, and two new bicycles, donated by Grundy County Heroes & Helpers, were raffled off to students.

- Trustees approved a request from the Knights of Columbus Council #1574 to hold their yearly Tootsie Roll Drive at business locations in Coal City. Set for Sept. 19-21, volunteers from the organization will be collecting donations that go toward supporting programs that help people with special learning and life needs.

## Coalers make history with unprecedented AP results

Coal City High School is celebrating a record-breaking year for Advanced Placement achievement.

In the 2024-2025 school year, 216 students enrolled in AP courses took at least one AP exam, completing a total of 372 tests — a 61.74% increase over last year. This marks the highest number of AP exams taken in school history.

Students have the opportunity to enroll in Advanced Placement [AP] courses — rigorous, college-level classes. A passing exam score of 3 or higher can earn students valuable college credit, demonstrating to admissions teams that they are motivated and better prepared for college.

AP success not only saves families on college costs, but can also allow students to bypass introductory courses, opening doors to more specialized study, and even pave the way for early graduation.

Of the 372 AP exams administered in spring 2025, 276 earned scores of 3 or higher, resulting in a pass rate of 74.9% — yet another record-breaking achievement.

Coal City High School Assistant Principal Corey Mikula reports 35 exams received a perfect score of 5—beating a previous school record of 24—an achievement made by 23 students. One student, Jacob Cimino, earned a perfect score in six subject areas.

"Once again, our students are performing at high levels, and we are extremely proud of their hard work," said Jennifer Kenney, the district's director of curriculum and instruction.

To start the new school year, Coal City High School recognized students earning the honor of AP Scholar at its opening day assembly. AP Scholars are recognized in three categories—

AP Scholar, AP Scholar with Honor and AP Scholar with Distinction. At 55 students this is the largest number of AP Scholars in school history.

"Thank you to all the teachers and students. You are always striving to become better and it shows," Mikula said during the Wednesday morning assembly, adding, "keep up the amazing work."

The most prestigious award given is AP Scholar with Distinction which is granted to students who receive an average score of at least 3.5 on all AP Exams taken and scores of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams.

The average score for Coalers in this category of recognition is 3.91.

The College Board is recognizing from the class of 2026—Jacob Cimino, Carter Gill, Austin Harding, Aidan Kenney, Mackenzie Lovell, Liam Seeley and Rhaina Vanek.

Honorees from the class of 2025—Anthony Aultz, Corinna Barkley, August Burns, Aylianna Castle, Riley Clements, Mackenzie Croxton, Melody Kinder, Weston Kucera, Deborah Lynch, Mackenzie Messina, Ava Meyer, Mason Natyshok, Trevor Perino, Shaun Polarek, Owen Quarles, and Molly Ramsen.

The second level of recognition is AP Scholar with Honor and this is awarded to students who receive an average score of at least 3.25 on all AP Exams taken and scores of 3 or higher on four or more of these exams.

The average score among this group of honorees was 3.45. The following students in the class of 2026 received the AP

SEE AP RESULTS PAGE 2



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a Vanek  
with Distinction

- Statistics
- US History
- World History



Coal City School District photo

**THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS** Advanced Placement award given by the College Board is AP Scholar with Distinction. A total of 23 Coalers were recipients of the award for the 2024-2025 school year. Recognized from the class of 2026 were [from left]: Rhaina Vanek, Liam Seeley, Mackenzie Lovell, Aidan Kenney, Austin Harding and Jacob Cimino.

**Coal City Fire Protection District audit report on file**

## PUBLIC NOTICE

**NOTICE**  
**LEGAL NOTICE**  
**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF AUDIT REPORT FOR THE COAL CITY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

The Board of Trustees of the Coal City Fire Protection District, Grundy County, Illinois, hereby provides public notice that an audit of its funds for the fiscal year beginning on May 1, 2024 and ending on April 30, 2025 was prepared by our auditors, Mack & Associates, 116 E. Washington Street, Suite One, Morris, IL. The fiscal year 2024-2025 audit has been filed with the County Clerk of Grundy County in accordance with 30 ILCS 15/0.01 et seq. The entire audit report and the annual statement of receipts and disbursements are available for public inspection at the Fire District Fire Station #1 located at 35 S. DeWitt, Coal City, IL from 9:00 a.m. through 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Coal City Fire Protection District  
Published in the Coal City Courant on August 20, 2025.

**Ziad Aiyash applies for property variance**

## PUBLIC NOTICE

**NOTICE**  
**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN,** that a Public Hearing will be held by the Coal City Zoning Board of Appeals on the Zoning Ordinance on the 15th day of September, 2025 at 7:00 o'clock p.m. in the office of the Board of Appeals, Coal City Village Hall, 515 South Broadway, Coal City, Illinois on the following matter:

To consider: A variance to allow multi-family within C-3 zoning class. At the following address: 685 E. Division St.  
Legal description of property: Assessors Subdivision of part northern half, NW 1/4 Sec 2-32-8, .45 AC Blk 1 Sec 2-32-8  
Request for the above appeal was applied for by: Ziad Aiyash.  
Said Board of Appeals will be at said time and place to hear all persons in support of such matter or any objection thereof.

Persons may appear in person or by agent.  
Dated this 13th day of August, 2025.  
Published in the Coal City Courant on Aug. 20, 2025.

**Attorney Wharrie files Paul estate claim notice**

## PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS )  
 )SS:  
COUNTY OF GRUNDY )  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT-GRUNDY COUNTY - IN PROBATE )  
IN RE: THE ESTATE OF )  
SANDRA LEE PAUL, )  
Deceased )  
Case No.: 2025 PR 57 )  
**NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION CLAIMS**

Notice is given of the death of o of SANDRA LEE PAUL. Letters of office were issued on July 21, 2025, to LEANNE TJELLE, 6205 Hilltop Dr., Coal City, IL 60416, as Independent Administrator, whose attorney is Larry G. Wharrie, The Wharrie Law Firm, P.C., 105 South Broadway Street, Coal City, IL 60416.

Notice is given to all known and unknown heirs that the estate will be administered without court supervision, unless under 755 ILCS 5 28-4, any interested person terminates independent administration at any time by E-filing or delivering a Petition to Terminate to the Circuit Clerk.

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

Claims against the estate may be filed in the office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, Probate Division, at Grundy County Courthouse, 111 East Washington St., Morris, IL 60450 or with the representative, or both, within 6 months from the date of issuance of letters of office. Any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it had been filed.

Dated: August 4, 2025  
LEANNE TJELLE,  
Independent Administrator  
Larry G. Wharrie  
The Wharrie Law Firm, P.C.  
105 South Broadway St.  
Coal City, IL 60416  
815/634-8990  
ARDC #2996146  
Published in the Coal City Courant on Aug. 6, 13 and 20, 2025.

**Felted Vines files as new business**

## LEGAL NOTICE

**Assumed Name Publication Notice**

Public Notice is hereby given that on August 1, A.D. 2025, a certificate was filed in the Office of the County Clerk of Grundy County, Illinois, setting forth names and post-office addresses of all of the persons owning, conducting and transacting the business known as Felted Vines, located at 26420 W. Stephanie Dr., Channahon, IL 60410. Dated this 1st day of August, A.D. 2025.  
Kay T Olson, Grundy County Clerk  
Published in the Coal City Courant on August 6, 13, & 20, 2025.

**Attorney Frobish files adoption petition**

## PUBLIC NOTICE

**ADOPTION NOTICE**  
STATE OF ILLINOIS )  
 )SS:  
GRUNDY COUNTY )  
CIRCUIT COURT OF GRUNDY COUNTY )  
In the matter of the Petition for Adoption of:  
HUDSON ADAM HIGGINS, a male child  
Grundy County Case Number 2025-AD-1  
To: ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Take notice that a petition for adoption was filed in the Circuit Court of Grundy County, Illinois on August 4, 2025, for adoption of the child named, HUDSON ADAM HIGGINS. Now therefore, unless ANY UNKNOWN PUTATIVE FATHERS or ANY OTHER PERSON WHOM IT MAY CONCERN files an answer to the Petition in said action or otherwise files an appearance therein in the said Circuit Court of Grundy County, 111 East Washington Street, in the City of Morris, Illinois, on or before the 29th DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2025, a default may be entered against you at any time after that day and a judgment entered in accordance with the prayer of said Petition.  
Dated: 8/7/2025

Corri Trotter AC  
GRUNDY COUNTY CIRCUIT CLERK  
THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
GRUNDY COUNTY, ILLINOIS

Eric P. Frobish  
ARCD#6230921  
Mueller, Lawson & Frobish, P.C.  
124 W. Washington Street  
Morris, Illinois 60450  
Telephone: (815) 942-0635  
Facsimile: (815) 942-0647  
Email: [staff@muellerlawson.com](mailto:staff@muellerlawson.com)  
Published in the Coal City Courant on August 13, 20 and 27, 2025.

**Attorney Meents files Gonzalez estate claim**

## PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS )  
 )SS:  
COUNTY OF GRUNDY )  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT-GRUNDY COUNTY, ILLINOIS )  
IN RE: THE ESTATE OF )  
SANDRA LEE PAUL, )  
Deceased )  
Case No.: 2025 PR 57 )  
**NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION CLAIMS**

Notice is given of the death of of Ramon Colon Gonzalez, Letters Testamentary as Independent Executor were issued on August 5, 2025, to Paul D. Gonzalez, whose address is 719 Casey Drive, Minooka, Illinois 60447; whose attorney is Meents Law, P.C., 25158 W. Eames Street, Unit A, Channahon, Illinois 60410. Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Grundy County Courthouse, 111 East Washington Street, Morris, Illinois 60450; or with the representative, or both, on or before February 23, 2026, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a Claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

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

Paul D. Gonzalez  
Independent Executor of the Estate of Ramon Colon Gonzalez, Deceased  
Frank J. Meents  
Meents Law, P.C.  
25158 West Eames Street, Unit A  
Channahon, Illinois 60410  
Telephone: (815)534-9515  
Facsimile: (815)534-9516  
Attorney Code: 06298859  
E-mail: [Frank@MeentsLaw.com](mailto:Frank@MeentsLaw.com)  
Published in the Coal City Courant on Wednesday, Aug. 20, 27 and Sept. 3, 2025.

**BY ROSE PANIERI STAFF WRITER**

Dumping used motor oil is a big no-no. Whether pouring oil down a drain or burning it, oil is a significant pollutant, damaging the environment in a number of insidious ways.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), just one gallon of used motor oil potentially contaminates up to one million gallons of fresh water.

Contamination has significant impact on all aquatic life, animals and plants, drinking water, and overall ecosystem health.

Used motor oil is also classified as carcinogenic to humans. In other words, there is evidence it may cause cancer.

**The recycling process**

The recycling process begins locally. Many if not most mechanic and oil change shops, accept limited (usually up to five gallons) amounts of used motor oil free of charge.

Danielle Brown of BTI Tire and Alignment of Wilmington (200 E. Baltimore St.) said the shop definitely accepts used motor oil.

"As long as customers bring the oil in some kind of container, we just dump it into our storage barrel," Brown said.

"Some people just pour it back in container that the oil came in. That works pretty well."

Ryan Boyd of Oilmen's of Wilmington (31911 W. River Road) also chimed in.

**Attorney Meents files Gonzalez estate claim**

## PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS )  
 )SS:  
COUNTY OF GRUNDY )  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT-GRUNDY COUNTY, ILLINOIS )  
IN RE: THE ESTATE OF )  
SANDRA LEE PAUL, )  
Deceased )  
Case No.: 2025 PR 40 )  
**NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION CLAIMS**

Notice is given of the death of Diane Gonzalez, Letters Testamentary as Independent Executor was issued on August 5, 2025, to Paul D. Gonzalez, whose address is 719 Casey Drive, Minooka, Illinois 60447; whose attorney is Meents Law, P.C., 25158 W. Eames Street, Unit A, Channahon, Illinois 60410. Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Grundy County Courthouse, 111 East Washington Street, Morris, Illinois 60450; or with the representative, or both, on or before February 23, 2026, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a Claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

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Paul D. Gonzalez  
Independent Executor of the Estate of Diane Gonzalez, Deceased  
Frank J. Meents  
Meents Law, P.C.  
25158 West Eames Street, Unit A  
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Telephone: (815)534-9515  
Facsimile: (815)534-9516  
Attorney Code: 06298859  
E-mail: [Frank@MeentsLaw.com](mailto:Frank@MeentsLaw.com)  
Published in the Coal City Courant on Wednesday, Aug. 20, 27 and Sept. 3, 2025.

# AP results, continued from page 1

Scholar with Honor Award—Kamryn Hansen, Dane Noffsinger, Cade Poyner, Colin Schimandle and Sam Vota. And from the class of 2025—Hunter Nettles and Madison Wilson.

Coal City has 25 students who earned AP Scholar recognition. This is granted to students who receive scores of 3 or higher on three or more AP Exams. The average score achieved by Coalers taking AP tests was 3.1.

Students in the class of 2026 earning AP Scholar recognition—Gavin Berger, Rowan Fitzpatrick, Nathan Foster, Aubrey Grunwald, Noah Houston, Lana Larsen, Devon McVey, Julian Micetich, Layla Miller, Jordan Olson, Hunter Pedigo, Lance Perino, Olivia Sage, Nicolas Votta, and Evelyn Wills. Honorees from the class of 2025—Brandon Baut, Nathan Brodnick, Kyle Cheever, Lilly Feisley, Peyton Gibson, Alyssa Hray, William Johnke, Owen Kent, Mayson Wantroba and Dylan Young.

AP Courses offered to Coal City students in 2024-2025 were World History, US History, US Government, Spanish Language and Culture, Calculus, 2-D Art, Statistics, Chemistry, Human Geography, English Literature, English Language, Computer Science, 3D Art and Drawing Portfolio. Additional courses have been added for this school year including computer science and additional courses are being considered for the 2026-2027 school year.

Mikula also recognized 13 current Coalers who achieved a 5 on at least one AP Exam. Those students were—Xavier Baer, Abigail Rose, AJ Kenney, Aidan Meister, Jacob Cimino, Kamryn Hansen, Austin Harding, Aidan Kenney, Dane Noffsinger, Cade Poyner, Olivia Sage, Liam Seeley and Sam Vota.

# Giving used motor oil a second life

"People are welcome to just bring it, up to a certain amount," Boyd said. "There is a small charge after five gallons."

The charge depends on supply and demand. It's best to call for the going rate before divesting yourself of large quantities of used motor oil.

In Coal City, Bob's Advanced Auto and Tire (60 E. Chestnut St.) is happy to relieve you of used motor oil.

Debbie Davis, wife of Bob Davis, for whom the shop is named, explained that used oil is not only surrendered, but possibly recycled one more time before being turned in.

"Sure, we take used oil, and it's picked up by a recycler called Turn-Key," Davis said. "We also have local businesses that will come and get it because they have oil burning heaters."

Used motor oil in quantities of three gallons or less is also accepted by Advance Auto Parts, AutoZone, O'Reilly Auto Parts, and Walmart.

**The next step**

Used engine oil can be recycled, re-refined into new lubricating oil, or processed for use as fuel. It can also be used in industrial furnaces and power plants for heat and electricity generation.

Shops are paid the "going rate" for used oil, which is collected by tanker trucks. Used oil is defined as any oil that has been refined from crude oil, and as a result of use, is contaminated by physical or chemical impurities. It's

considered non-hazardous waste.

In this area, shops tend to surrender used oil to Turn-Key Environmental of Kankakee or Southwest Oil of Morris. These sources specialize in used oil recovery and also offer services for used antifreeze, oil filters, and wastewater.

**Recycling process**

At oil recycling facilities, used oil undergoes a process to remove contaminants like water, dirt, and metal particles. The cleaned oil can then be re-refined into new lubricating oil, meeting the same standards as virgin oil.

This process can be repeated, extending the life of the oil resource indefinitely. The following steps are taken to turn dirty oil into clean, usable oil.

**Filtration:** Removing large debris and sediment from the oil.

**Distillation:** Oil is heated under vacuum to separate it into different fractions by boiling point, removing lighter contaminants.

**Clay Treatment:** The oil is exposed to hydrogen gas to remove sulfur, nitrogen, and other impurities and poured into clay to remove remaining contaminants.

**Re-refining:** This involves processing to create a high-quality base oil.

**Repurposing:** Used oil may be processed and burned for energy recovery.

Recycled motor oil is often used to produce diesel fuel. The diesel fraction may undergo additional treatment, such as filtra-

tion and odor/color removal to meet quality standards. In some cases, recycling oil is a more cost-effective way to produce fuel compared to traditional refining methods.

A portion of the oil may be converted into a residue similar to asphalt, which is then utilized for paving roads.

Household Hazardous Waste Event

Keeping used oil out of landfills is a priority for Will County Land Use who holds collection drives at various locations including their next one Saturday, Sept. 13 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. in New Lenox.

Residents can make appointments to drop off all automotive fluids, along with electronics, mercury and mercury containing items, all types of paint (limit 15 gallons), pool chemicals, cleaners, all sizes of fluorescent lights (limit 15), rechargeable batteries, pesticides, fertilizers, and hand held gas cylinders.

Even scrap metal—nuts, bolts, screens, metal tools, metal doors, metal cabinets—are accepted.

Also good clothing, clean bed linens and small home goods such as cookware, utensils, picture frames, collectibles, books, toys, bicycles, with a separate area for worn American Flags, donations for the Troops, donations for animal shelters.

# CCMS softball starts with a bang

The Coal City Middle School softball team came out swinging in a big way, shutting out the Morris Braves 17-0 on Aug. 7

The Lady Coalers garnered 18 hits while pitchers Haileigh Caise and Mackenna Cuddy threw two innings each of no-hit softball.

Leah Aldridge went 4-for-4 including a double to finish with four RBIs for Coal City. Contributing two hits each were Caise with a double and a single with timely hitting from Hailey Fisher, Elly Nicholson, Abbey Mills, Cuddy and Aldridge.

The Lady Coalers suffered their first loss to Minooka on Aug. 11, 16-12, despite out-hitting the Indians 10-9. They com-


mitted nine errors and couldn't recover. Charly Gray and Aldridge led with two three hits and two RBIs each. Caylee Lynn had two hits including a double.

On Wednesday they upended Peotone 5-1 thanks to some fine pitching by Caise and Cuddy who held the Blue Devils to just three hits.

Mills (triple) and Nicholson had a pair of hits to drive in two runs each. Gray contributed three hits while Leah Aldridge had two.

On Thursday they gave up 12 hits and six errors in a 13-5 loss to Channahon.

Mills had two hits while Nicholson doubled in two runs.



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Eric D. Fisher, publisher



# More than just a hardware store

Steinhart & Whitmore. What more do I need to say? At the beginning of last century it was a name that meant business in Wilmington, big business. If they did not have what you needed, you really didn't need it at all.



TIME WAS....  
Sandy Vasko

Each week's paper had a half page ad. It was apparent they catered to every taste. They sold farm equipment and kitchen stoves, heating and plumbing fixtures and harness for buggies, they sold two types of horse drawn buggies and in 1904 they started selling automobiles.

E. W. Steinhart was a progressive and aggressive man. He believed, along with W. H. Whitmore, that advertising and carrying the newest innovation would move merchandise. We have every reason to believe it did.

In early 1904 5,000 automobiles left Chicago in one group, headed for Pontiac. The autos had come all the way from the Northwest, and their route led right through Wilmington. After that

inspiration, the demand for the horseless carriage in Wilmington shot through the roof.

Steinhart himself already owned a Cadillac, although we have no evi-

dence that Whitmore owned an auto. But the firm acquired the right to sell Ramblers in early 1904. Quite soon after they also started selling Cadillac's. In 1904 they sold more than two a month, or all the factory, located in Kenosha, Wisconsin, could produce. Strangely enough, the firm did not advertise the cars in the Wilmington papers. The ads were carried in the Joliet papers, perhaps to reach a wider audience.

The store did not stock the cars, they just ordered them on demand, and when the car was ready, they drove them down themselves. We read on August 11, 1905 in the Wilmington Advocate, "W. H. Warner, A. B. Towle and S. R. Moore were invited by E. W. Steinhart to accompany him to Kenosha, Wis., and enjoy an automobile ride from that place to this city. The party

left here Tuesday evening over the Chicago and Alton and arrived home Wednesday evening. The machine is a fine one and was purchased for William Morgan, of Jackson Township."

Their customers included such famous men as the pioneer Coal City aviator, William Somerville. Somerville would go on to design his own automobile, after purchasing a Rambler from Steinhart & Whitmore.

Then as now, a new sporty car was a real chick magnet. When Rambler came out with an 18-horse power car, an increase of 10-horse power over the previous year, one young man from Florence was the first to purchase it. We read in September of 1905, "George Baskerville now sports a fine new 18 horse power Rambler automobile. The machine is a fine one and was purchased of Steinhart & Whitmore. George is kept quite busy showing the girls how fast the machine can go."

By early 1906 the automobile business was doing so well the men moved the headquarters to Joliet and acquired another partner. We read in February, "Incorporation papers of the Steinhart-Jensen

Automobile Co., were filed in the recorder's office Wednesday. The capital stock of the company is \$5,000, divided into fifty shares of \$100 each. C. F. Jensen owns 25 shares, E. W. Steinhart thirteen, and W. H. Whitmore, twelve. These gentlemen constitute the incorporators and the first board of directors. The concern is doing business in the Masonic Temple building on Jefferson Street. - Joliet News"

The business grew at a rapid pace. In 1910 Steinhart made an announcement, "Edward W. Steinhart, of this city, president of the Steinhart-Jensen Automobile Company, of Joliet, has sold his interest in the company to Charles B. Garnsey and Mason R. Towle, who have been associated with him in the business, and will leave here next week to assume the State agency for the Cadillac Automobile Company in Indiana. A corporation has been formed under the name of the Cadillac Automobile Company of Indiana, with headquarters in Indianapolis, and Mr. Steinhart, as president, will have entire charge of the company's output in the State of Indiana."

# Coal City Miners face Reed-Custer

The Coal City Miners Superlights showed grit and resilience, overcoming early offensive struggles with explosive plays in the fourth quarter. Oakley Parks and Ryder Delk were standouts on both sides of the ball, leading the team to a thrilling 20-18.

Oakley Parks opened with a solid 10-yard run. Ryder Delk broke outside for a 20-yard gain. Overall, the offense struggled to find rhythm early.

For defense Billy McMillian delivered a clutch 4th down tackle to halt a drive. Jacob Thill made a critical goal-line stop to deny the extra point.

There was a second quarter momentum shift. Oakley Parks kept the chains moving with an 8-yard gain. A 15-yard QB keeper by Parks set up 1st and goal with 11 seconds left.

Behind key blocks from Ruger Hodgen, Ryder Delk, and Braxton Roed, Parks scored on a 10-yard TD run. Parks ran in the extra point, thanks to a big block by Roed.

For defense and spe-

cial teams: Oakley Parks made a big 3rd down tackle to force a punt. He also returned that punt 20 yards to set up the offense.

The offense struggled in the third quarter with penalties and couldn't gain traction.

for defense Clubb and Merick led the charge with tackles at the line. Parks shut down a 3rd down attempt with a strong outside tackle. Henry Livermore made a hard-hitting 4th down stop after a 10-yard run.

In the fourth quarter Oakley Parks exploded for a 55-yard run on 4th down to keep the drive alive. Ryder Delk followed with a 20-yard TD run to give the Miners the lead. Delk ran in the extra point.

Later, Delk sealed the game with a 50-yard QB keeper for another touchdown. Delk also contributed defensively with a 5-yard sack.

For the Lightweights the Miners earned a hard-fought 18-6 victory putting together a balanced effort on both sides of the ball to secure the win.

Offensively, the Miners

spread the scoring across their playmakers. Brady Loughran opened the action with a touchdown to give the team early momentum. Cooper Lardi added another score, extending the lead, and Eddie Gergits capped the effort by finding the end zone to put the game out of reach.

While the offense delivered points, the Miners' defense was equally impressive in controlling the pace of the game. Led by Mikey Tworek, Elliot Munsell, Aaron Evans, Cole Watson, Eddie Gergits, Jacob Harris, and Oliver Edmonds, the defense stood strong throughout the contest.

The 18-6 result highlighted the Miners' ability to win as a team, with multiple players stepping up in key moments. With contributions on both sides of the ball, the Miners walked away from Sunday's matchup with confidence and momentum heading into the rest of the season.

The JV miners endured a difficult outing, suffering a 22-0 defeat against a dominant Reed Custer Jr.

Comets. From the outset, the opposing team controlled possession and capitalized on nearly every opportunity. Despite the lopsided scoreline, the local squad showed determination by playing through to the final whistle and supporting each other throughout the match.

Abraham Agurrie, Austin Newman, and Collin Ness had a tough road against the comets defense.

The defense had a tough time staying with the ball. The team will look to bounce back against Chanooka Braves next week

Miners Varsity lost 12-8. The team fought hard late in the 4th to make a comeback. Zack Babcock returned a kickoff back for a touchdown to make a 12-6 game. Then a long snap from Tucker Nowicki, held by Ryan Carpenter, and kicked by Cooper Winke made it a 12-8 game. Miner kicked a onside and recovered it to get the ball back. We fell short of scoring again. The team showed heart and will put in the work to keep getting better.

# Operation St. Nick celebrates a milestone with military program

Every year for the past 15 years Operation St. Nick has assisted military personnel and Veterans to improve their family situations by giving their financial aid in their time of need.

"Financial need alone is not the only criteria that drives our military program," stated Kathy Lambros, chairman of this event. "We have always fol-

lowed our founder, Joe Schmitz' dream of saluting military men and women along with Veterans who have made our country the land of the free because of the brave by granting them any wish they hold in their hearts."

This year 14 Veterans were granted wishes bringing the total for the 15 years since the program's existence to over \$500,000.





Guy Christensen, who will become president of Operation St. Nick beginning in 2026 pointed out "The success of St. Nick's Military Program is due in a main part to a sizable donation from Gerry and Loraine Davidson's family in their memory with instructions to help Military Veterans. With this donation and the funds raised through the St. Nick Auction we have been able to assist 198 Veterans and current military personnel since the program began in 2011."

This year Operation St. Nick helped an Army Veteran from Gardner with two months rent and catching up on other bills. A Marine Veteran from Minooka requested help with his mortgage plus assistance with his two children's pre-school costs. A totally disabled Veteran in Morris needed help moving into a new and larger apartment. A female Navy Veteran from Morris was struggling to pay her real estate taxes which were paid for to give her some financial relief.

Another Navy Veteran from Gardner needed a new septic system. An Army Veteran from Braceville needed help catching up on some past due bills. A disabled Army Veteran from Diamond with four children found themselves needing a new air conditioner unit during the hottest days of July.

Operation St. Nick granted all these wishes plus eight more including

another navy Veteran who requested some sorely needed home repairs. Lombros concluded, "Helping our Veterans is one of the most rewarding parts of Operation St. Nick's seven programs and I feel truly blessed to help the Veterans improve their lives granting them their wishes."



## Coal City Coalers Team Pride

### #1 Sports Fans Weekly Internet Winner



# Michelle Williams

## Winner of a large 2-item Pizza, carry-out only

Must redeem by August 18, 2025

"Proud to be serving the community for the past 40 years!"

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

"Support Coal City High School Athletes"



**"Proud to be serving the community for the past 40 years!"**

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See the Patented Reversible Glass Reservoir before you buy.

# STEINHART & WHITMORE COMPANY

AN AD FROM the early 1900s for Steinhart & Whitmore store.

## LAWN MOWERS.



SEE THE ECLIPSE! It is really the only self-sharpening Lawn Mower on the market. Call and look it over and see how simple it is. Look at the adjustment too--no screw driver, no wrench, nothing but a thumb screw and you cannot get one side tighter than the other. It is years ahead of any other mower.

## Buggies and Harness.

We can give you a good Buggy with the best Goodyear rubber tires and full leather top for \$75.00. This particular buggy is a bargain. In Harness we are making a specialty of a Single Harness of our own make at a price of \$15.00. Nobody can make a better Harness than this at our price. Call and see it. It is our own make and only the best oak tanned leather is used.

# STEINHART & WHITMORE,

Dealers in Everything Pertaining to Hardware, Harness, Implements and Vehicles.

An ad from Steinhart & Whitmore store.

# Coal City Public Library News

Check online event calendar at [ccpld.org](http://ccpld.org) for a description of the events and to register.

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

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

**Thursday, Aug. 21-**  
Terrific Tots - 10am - Storytime for 2-3 year olds.  
Family Story and Play Time - 11am  
Terrific Tots - 6pm - Storytime for 2-3 year olds.  
Tea Cup Gnome - 6pm  
**Friday, Aug. 22-Family**  
Caregivers Support Group - 10am  
Movie of the Month - 1pm  
Teen Take and Makes - 3:30pm  
Gamers Guild - 4pm  
Bunco - 6pm  
**Saturday, Aug. 23-**  
Midtown Market - 9am-3pm - CCPLD will be hosting an outdoor farmer's market. Vendors will include farmers, crafters, and artisans. We will highlight the vendors prior to each market.  
Stitch Group - 9am-4pm

**Monday, Aug. 25-**  
Maker Mondays - All Day  
Terrific Tots - 10am - Storytime for 2-3 year olds.  
Preschool Storytime - 11am - Storytime for 3-5 Pre-K.  
Eager Readers - Homeshool Edition - 1pm - Class for K-5th grade.  
Eager Readers - 4pm - Class for K-3rd grade.  
Family Lapsit - 6pm - Storytime for 3 months to 23 months.  
**Tuesday, Aug. 26-**  
Happy Scrappers - 9am-4pm  
**Wednesday, Aug. 27-**  
SHIP - 9am-12pm - by appointment only.  
Family Lapsit - 10am - Storytime for 3 months to 23 months.  
Preschool Storytime - 11am - Storytime for 3-5 Pre-K.

# Rivera graduates

Evan Rivera of Coal City, graduated with a M.B.A. in Management from Millikin University. Spring Commencement ceremonies at the Kirkland Fine Arts Center on May 18, 2025.



Free Press Newspapers readers

# SOUND-OFF

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

## No response required

BRAIDWOOD—Residents of Braidwood need to understand exactly how the public comment section of a city council meeting works. People think it's their time to have a back and forth discussion with the council members, and it's not. You step up to the microphone, state your comment and then go sit down. The council members are not supposed to respond to you. It's your time to say your peace and go sit down. If the council member chooses to address a concern later on in the meeting under their respective portion of the agenda, then that's their prerogative. Too many people think they can ask questions of the council during public comment and then just stand there waiting for an answer. You're not going to get it because they are not supposed to answer you at that time so quit expecting them to do so.

## Illinois gas tax

WILMINGTON—Calling in regards to the Sound-Off, topic "Does not exist." The individual inquired as to why the president hasn't done something about the gas prices in Illinois. I just wanted to respond by letting you know in other states gas prices have fallen, however our governor in Illinois, J.B. Pritzker, and the Democrats, are the ones who increased taxes on Illinois' gas. So if he is wondering if it's the president, it is not the president's fault it is on a governor's level.

## Better than 2022

CUSTER PARK—Last week's soundoff about not finding gas for \$1.99 around here. It might may not be that low in Illinois (thanks to the second highest gas tax in the nation) but prices now under Trump are better than when Joe Biden was president. Look back at Aug. 14, 2022 when gas in Illinois was \$4.28/g average and Biden was president.

## The brain drain

BRAIDWOOD—Once upon a time but not too long ago, America was the most accomplished nation in the world to which brilliant people aspired to live from all over the globe. It ended when Trump became president and now we are on a downward spiral leading to the emigration of our best and brightest and aptly called the 'brain drain'. The elimination of the Department of Education by Trump is an indicator of the Trump catalyst to dumb down the country which is spreading like a cancer. Trump attacks respected institutions of higher learning; Trump forbids scientists who work for the federal government from expressing their truth; and certain subjects are discouraged or entirely removed from pursuit. Examples are the National Institute of Health (NIH), the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency (NOAA) all of which have been eviscerated by Trump. Our talented people are welcomed abroad which is frightening because China is one superpower that is happy to scoop up our best and brightest. Although we already know that Trump is not the sharpest knife in the drawer, does Trump have a nefarious reason for doing all this or is he really that stupid?

## A good question

SHADOW LAKES—This is a legitimate question for the people who voted for Trump. Do you still support him, and if you do can you please tell why? And please be specific about it. Don't say because things are better or because we got our country back. Say things like you're paying less for gas and groceries or something like that but tell the truth. On the other hand if you voted for him but no longer support him, why don't you? Same thing here, be specific. Please only people that voted for Trump answer this question.

## J.B.'s hypocrisy tour

MORRIS—Governor Pritzker spent much of the past couple of weeks speaking to national audiences about the redistricting controversy in Texas. But everywhere he went, it seemed like everyone

just wanted to ask him "What about Illinois?" Illinois has the most unfair, partisan gerrymandered district maps in the country. Under these district maps, Democrats won a super-majority of the seats. The unfair district maps give Democrats a stranglehold on power in Springfield, which they have used to ram through their agenda, regardless of the wishes of the voters. When asked repeatedly in these national interviews about how he can criticize another state for considering doing the same thing he already did in Illinois, the Governor deflected, changed the subject, and even made a joke about the Illinois map (which he signed) looking like it had been drawn by kindergartners. The Illinois district map was drawn behind closed doors by Democrats to maximize their power in Springfield. It was the exact opposite of a transparent process. It's time for an independent redistricting commission to draw fair maps. But these reforms have been blocked by Democrats in order to keep their hold on power.

## What dictators do

WILMINGTON—Trump's new nominee for the Bureau of Labor Statistics, A. J. Antoni, is a guy who believes we should get rid of the monthly jobs report specifically to keep information about the effect of tariffs from the American people. This is what dictators do. Trump weaponizes the Justice Department by ordering investigations on widely admired people such as Obama, Beyonce, Taylor Swift, Kamala Harris. This is what dictators do. Trump launched a bloody coup on Jan. 6th during which 140 cops were injured. Trump fanned his nose at America by pardoning more than 1,500 lawbreakers including those who brutally attacked the police. This is what dictators do. Now four years after Trump's violently criminal insurrection, Trump has the audacity to complain about crime in Washington despite the fact that crime is at a 30-year low today. For the purpose of mere divisiveness and perhaps distraction from the Epstein files, Trump is deploying military troops against residents of our nation's Capitol. This is what dictators do. Irene

## In the dark

WILMINGTON—I live in the old part of Wilmington and trying to bring up a safety issue. The U.S. Bank in the old part of Wilmington off of Main St., they have no lights on at night. It's dark and I just wanted to bring it to the attention of the police or somebody in town here. They should turn the lights on so it's not so dark out there for people walking and people that live in the area.

## We demand peace

WILMINGTON—The people of Gaza are starving before our very eyes and nobody is doing anything about it. Netanyahu claims "there is no hunger" which indicates he is living in an alternate reality. Trump must put pressure on Netanyahu, the war criminal, considering that Israel is indebted to Trump. A compassionate peace in Gaza as well as an honorable peace in Ukraine is expected from Trump who fancies himself a great deal-maker. Meanwhile Trump should keep in mind that Putin is a war criminal and the first leader since Hitler to invade a democracy, annex territory and kill civilians yet Trump treats Putin like a buddy. If Trump decides in Putin's favor, it's an indication of Trump's continuing shabby treatment toward the middle class here in our own country. And it's Trump's further opportunity to distract from the Epstein files by resolving world problems and thereby earn the Nobel Peace Prize he needs to satisfy his inflated ego. If Trump doesn't come through for the good of those who suffer, he should hang his head in shame. After all, Trump promised peace on day one of his presidency and so far has broken that promise as well as many others months ago.

## Follow the rules

BRAIDWOOD—To the upset resident who spoke out at the recent city council meeting regarding the Code Enforcement department enforcing code violations in

Sound-Off is a 24-hour phone line provided to give readers a chance to voice their opinions. The Free Press Newspapers reserves the right to edit remarks for taste, length, personal attacks, racism, threatening, calls for boycotts and libel. The comments stated are the opinions and ideas of the callers and not that of the newspaper. Information may not constitute the actual events or facts of a particular topic. Submissions by email to: [courant@fpnusa.com](mailto:courant@fpnusa.com) with "soundoff" in the subject line or visit [www.freepressnewspapers.com](http://www.freepressnewspapers.com), or call 815-634-0317. Please state the town in which you are calling from or in regards to. Mail comments to Sound-Off, 271 S. Broadway, Coal City, IL 60416 or 111 S. Water St., Wilmington, IL 60481. There can be only one submission of 250 words or less per person during any given week.



town, it's apparent that you just don't want to clean up the junk in your yard. It sounds like a case of sour grapes because you believe the rules shouldn't apply to you. In your comments, you kept deflecting to other violations in town, like yours shouldn't matter. How about you clean up your junk, get your vehicles plated and follow the rules.

## Volunteers needed

SHADOW LAKES—Where are all the volunteers? We have the same senior volunteers at Shadow Lakes; we are older and getting health issues. Many young families are moving into Shadow Lakes which is very good but they are too busy to volunteer. Surely you can find time at least once a month. Get off the couch and put down the phone. We put our time in; it's your turn.

## Not in Illinois

DIAMOND—Someone's looking for the \$1.99 gas in Illinois. Gas could get down to \$1.59 in another state and still not get below \$2 a gallon in Illinois and do you know why? Because you voted in a billionaire governor who raised numerous taxes and fees on his first day in office giving Illinois the second highest gas tax in the country. Next, you'll vote for him to be president so he can raise federal taxes on his first day. Way to go!! By the way, how do you all like your retirement accounts? The only other time I've seen my accounts perform this well was between 2016 through 2020.

## Red Carpet treatment

BRAIDWOOD—When Putin came to Alaska, he literally and figuratively got the red carpet treatment despite the fact that he's a war criminal who should have been arrested on the spot. Because no details of the conversation between Trump and Putin were recorded, analysts surmise that the winner of the summit was Putin because no ceasefire was declared which coincides with Putin's desire to continue the war with Ukraine. For those of us who watched the televised video, it was embarrassing to see the body language of Trump and Putin giddy with affection like two school chums going on a date. It was noteworthy that Trump dispensed with protocol by repeatedly addressing Putin by his first name and it was cringeworthy to see Trump figuratively licking Putin's boots. It exposed Trump's deferential treatment toward sex traffickers, murderers and war criminals in contrast to his rude attack on Zelenskyy, a true hero, during the Oval Office meeting months ago. And Trump claims he is a great dealmaker? Ask the writer of the "Art of the Deal" who is the true author of Trump's book.

## Little difference

WILMINGTON—What is the difference between the Ku Klux Klan and the ICE agents? Only difference I see is one

had white hoods and the other has face coverings. Otherwise, the purpose of both groups is the same.

## A lot nicer

COAL CITY—Just a big thank you for the cleaning of the Coaler Drive retention pond. It will be nice to sit outside in the evening without being a human blood bank. Now if only Unit 1 School District would do the same with the Oak Street pond. We would rather donate our blood to the Red Cross.

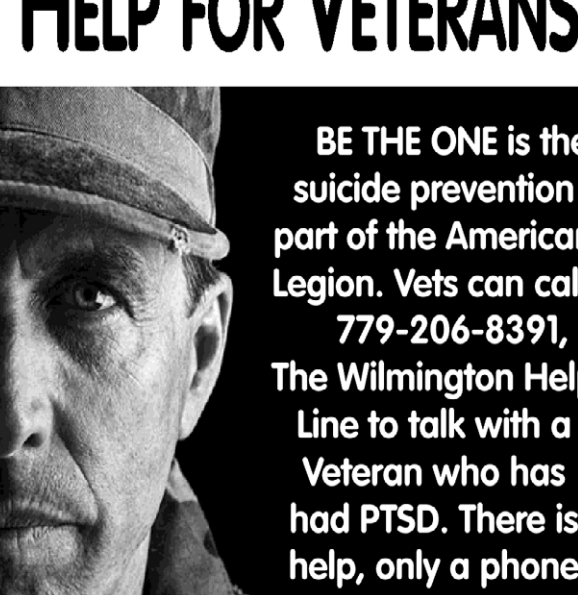
## Let's make a steal

Trump expresses his proposed "deal" between Ukraine and Russia as a simple "land swap." If I have a piece of property of a certain value and my neighbor and I agree to the exchange of an equally valued property we have the makings of an equitable swap. Trump's proposal for Ukraine is nothing of the sort. The people of Crimea were forced to choose between becoming Russian citizens or facing jail sentences. Education in Ukrainian and Crimean languages was restricted and only Russian cultural practices were allowed. Media outlets were closed and protests were banned. Many had property seized without compensation. Religious freedom was restricted and arbitrary detention, torture and other human rights abuses were and remain common. Healthcare and pensions were and remain arbitrarily doled out. There is little doubt that the same fate would be in store for Ukrainians freshly subsumed by Trump's "swap." We've had one Monty Hall on "Let's Make a Deal." We don't need another in the form of Donald Trump who continues to trivialize the fate of the people of Crimea and those in more recently Russian occupied Ukrainian territory by framing this as a simple "swap" of real estate. It's about infinitely much more than the land itself. Nobel Peace Prize indeed. More like "Let's make a steal." George Bednarczyk

## Burning ordinance

COAL CITY—The burning of leaves, grass and brush is prohibited within the village limits between March 1 and Oct. 31 of each year. The burning of any rubbish, leaves, hay, grass, brush or other materials outside the village limits is prohibited so long as the smoke from such fire emanates into the village limits. So does this ordinance only apply to the residents and not the village of Coal City maintenance department? Tree branches and debris northeast of the maintenance department building continue to be burned regardless of the wind direction so the smoke/smell emanates into the north end of town. Hard to enjoy a morning or evening on the patio in the months of July/August while their smoke invades our neighborhood.

# HELP FOR VETERANS



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

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

## SUNDAY FUNDAY!

DOORS OPEN AT NOON! FIRST RAFFLE AT 2PM!  
It's NOT BINGO but a RAFFLE like BINGO... You play it like BINGO!! Lots of cash prizes!!! BIG PRIZES!!!

## QUEEN of HEARTS

Every TUESDAY at 553 W. Kennedy Rd. Braidwood  
You must play BINGO to participate.  
Doors open at 4pm. Drawing is held at intermission.  
Queen of Hearts Pot is \$11,800.00  
For BINGO players only on Tuesday nites and see the QUEEN rules at the BINGO hall for rules and regulations.

### Braidwood Post 039

# BINGO

### Tuesday Night Flash Max Bingo

Pull Tabs	6:30pm	Hot Food, Snacks & Beverages
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# DUI driver crashes into State Trooper squad car

Illinois State Police (ISP) officers investigated a traffic crash that occurred on I-88 westbound at milepost 139 in DuPage County involving an ISP trooper. The trooper was assisting another motorist when their squad car was struck by a driver who failed to move over. On Aug. 17, at approximately 4:02 a.m., an ISP trooper was parked on the

right shoulder of I-88 behind a tractor-trailer that was broken down; the squad car had its emergency lights activated. A Tesla failed to move over and struck the rear passenger side of the trooper's squad car, pushing it forward into the rear of the tractor-trailer. The trooper was inside of the squad car at the time of the crash and sustained

injuries. The driver of the Tesla, 24-year-old Sebastian G. Rodriguez of Romeoville, IL, and trooper were transported to area hospitals with injuries. The trooper's squad car was towed from the scene due to disabling damage sustained from the crash. Rodriguez was charged with Driving Under the Influence and

Aggravated Scott's Law/Move Over Law violations. In 2025, ISP has already suffered nine Move Over Law-related crashes. In 2024, ISP suffered 27 Move Over Law-related crashes with 12 troopers injured and one death. In 2023, ISP had 21 Move Over Law-related crashes with seven troopers injured. ISP reminds the public the Move Over Law, also known as "Scott's Law" in Illinois, requires all drivers to move over when approaching an emergency vehicle or any vehicle with its emergency or hazard lights activated. A person who violates the Move Over Law faces a fine of no less than \$250 and no more than \$10,000 for a first offense. If the violation results in injury to another person, the violator's driver's license will be suspended for a mandatory period of anywhere between six months and two years.



AN ILLINOIS STATE Trooper was injured Sunday when a driver failed to move over and crashed into the back of the parked squad car. It was the ninth time since the beginning of the year an ISP Trooper was involved in a Move Over Law-related crash.

## Stroke support group to meet at Morris YMCA

Morris Hospital is hosting its Stroke Support Group on Tuesday, Sept. 9, from 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at the Morris Hospital YMCA, 2200 W. Dupont Avenue, Morris. Individuals who have a history of stroke or any

neurological event are invited to attend along with caregivers, spouses, and loved ones. The Stroke Support Group meets quarterly with a goal of providing support and education while bringing together people who

are facing similar issues. Those planning to attend are asked to register online at [www.morrishospital.org/events](http://www.morrishospital.org/events), or call Morris Hospital's Speech Language Pathology Department at 815-705-7440.

## Registration underway for Morris Hospital Corn Fest 5K

Morris Hospital & Healthcare Centers will host its annual Corn Fest 5K as part of the Grundy County Corn Festival on Saturday, Sept. 27, with runners taking off from Morris Grade School, 2001 Dupont Avenue, Morris. The race begins at 9 a.m. and is preceded by a Youth Fun Run for children 10 and under beginning at 8:15 a.m. Early bird registration for the 5K run is currently underway through August 23 for \$28 per person. From Aug. 24 - Sept. 25, the registration fee increases to \$30. Race day registration is \$35. The first 300 pre-registered 5K participants will

receive a t-shirt available in unisex adult sizes. The 3.1 mile USATF certified course starts on Dupont Avenue in front of Morris Grade School and winds through residential neighborhoods. Awards will be presented to the top three overall male and female finishes, as well as the top three male and female finishers in each age group. The Youth Fun Run is \$10 per child whether registering in advance or on race day. Children ages 6-10 will run a half mile course around the grounds of the school starting at 8:15 a.m., followed by a 100 yard run for children 5 and under at

8:30 a.m. Children registered for the Youth Fun Run will receive a short sleeve cotton t-shirt available in youth sizes only. Online registration is available now through Sept. 25 at [raceroster.com/100810](http://raceroster.com/100810) or by going to [morrishospital.org/events](http://morrishospital.org/events) and clicking on the Special Events category for the link to Race Roster. After September 25, participants may register in person on race day at Morris Grade School between 7:30-8:45 a.m. For more information, call the Morris Hospital Wellness office at 815-705-7358.

## Augustana dean's list

Augustana College announced more than 1,100 students were named to the Dean's List for the 2024-2025 spring semester. Students who have earned this academic honor have maintained a grade point average of 3.5 or higher on a four-point scale for courses taken during the term.

Local students include: Alexandra Bohac, a Graphic Design and Business Administration-Marketing major, Caelan Cole, a Kinesiology and Biology major, and Gabriella Davies, a Neuroscience major, all of Braidwood. Also included was Braiden Young, a Kinesiology major, of Coal City.

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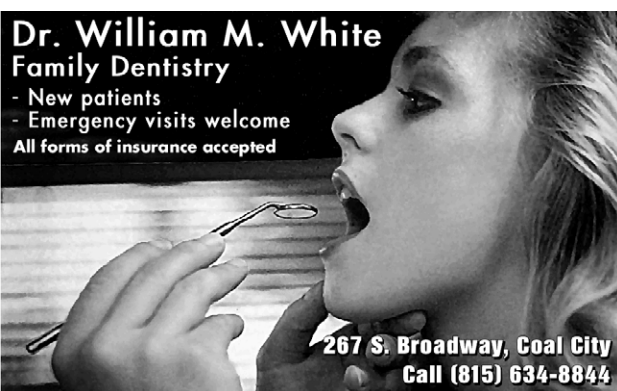
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## Republicans better realize unions are always here

Some Republicans in Illinois have taken to regularly bashing Republican state legislative leaders for seeking support from the Illinois Education Association, a teachers' union that has for decades worked to help elect Republicans who are sympathetic to their issues.



Rich Miller

With longtime wealthy Republican contributors and fundraisers dying, moving to warmer climes and/or retiring, the IEA and more conservative labor unions can help close the funding and precinct worker gap. But those who do are instantly declared to be persona non grata

"Republicans in Name Only" by some folks who want no ties whatsoever with public employee unions.

On the surface, at least, it's a legitimate policy dispute. Former Gov. Bruce Rauner wiped out years of hard work by the

IEA when he insisted that Republican legislators reject the teachers union because he hated public employees unions and believed all Republicans should do the same.

But by relying mainly on money from Rauner and some of his pals, the Republicans lost a more permanent revenue source.

Politicians may come and go, but the unions are always there. So when Rauner and his ilk pulled up stakes after suffering humiliating statewide defeats, it was only natural that at least some Republicans would renew their relationships with the IEA and others.

When asked about this schism at the Illinois State Fair's Republican Day, Senate Republican Leader John Curran pointed out that he lives in a "purple" district and will work with anyone who works with him. Curran said he looks at the mem-

bers of the IEA who live in his district, not the union itself.

"I think it's incumbent upon Republicans to represent your districts," Curran said. "This is a very diverse state. A one size fits all is not the path to ultimate victory and success in this state."

"We have got to reflect the communities we represent, first and foremost" Curran said. "That's success. It is not a blanket party one way or another."

House Minority Leader Tony McCombie told my associate Isabel Miller that 46 percent of the IEA members in her district are Republicans. "I think you find that in a lot of our rural areas," she said. "I think, like with every organization, especially as a leader, it's important that I have a relationship with every organization," McCombie said, adding that the IEA has "been helpful to the caucus."

McCombie differentiated the IEA with the National Education Association, however, saying the NEA "has gone too far left for us." She said the IEA is different.

Failed 2022 attorney general candidate Tom DeVore has attracted thousands of online followers and regularly attacks both Curran and McCombie for their IEA ties. He's gone so far as to repeatedly claim that the IEA represents Chicago teachers, even though the Chicago Teachers Union is most definitely not part of the IEA.

DeVore has endorsed a primary opponent against McCombie and against at least one other House GOP member, Rep. Charlie Meier (R-Okawville).

McCombie and her allies will likely have to spend significant money to defend the leader and Meier - money which could've been used to

defend against a predicted House Democratic onslaught next fall. That prospect only buttresses McCombie's claim from earlier this summer that DeVore is a "Democrat operative." Whatever he says, the end result is Democrats benefit.

Americans for Prosperity Illinois is expected to go all-in for Leader McCombie in the primary. The group will also help her caucus fend off the Democrats next year.

Meanwhile, Downstate Republicans often complain that urban Democrats turn up their noses at rural Illinois. During Republican Day, however, Republican DuPage County Sheriff James Mendrick made a claim about rural Republicans that could haunt his announced gubernatorial bid.

Like Darren Bailey in the 2022 governor's race, Mendrick is running for governor on a tough-on-crime agenda. But he said Bailey just didn't get it.

"He had no ability to really do anything about [crime]. No offense to him, but he's a farmer," Mendrick said about Bailey.

That "farmer" crack didn't sit well with Bailey's former campaign manager Jose Durbin.

"Taking a swipe at farmers in a state built on agriculture is a strange way to ask for votes - especially in a GOP Primary largely made up of rural voters," Durbin told Isabel. "Perhaps Jim should try other ways to promote his failing campaign. Darren Bailey's roots in farming mean he knows hard work, responsibility, and how to deliver results - exactly what Illinois needs to fight crime and get back on track."

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

## Volunteers needed at Custer preserve

The Forest Preserve District of Will County's next volunteer opportunity will take place Sunday, Aug. 24 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Custer Township.

Seed collection will take place Aug. 24 at Kankakee Sands Preserve in Custer Township. Seed collection. Ages 8 and older.

Then on Thursday, Aug. 28: 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Braidwood Dunes and Savanna Nature Preserve in Reed Township. Seed col-

lection will be held for ages 8 and older.

Wear clothes appropriate for the weather, getting dirty and being near a fire for brush control events. Bring water and snacks. For more information visit the Volunteer page at [reconnectwithnature.org/get-involved/volunteer](http://reconnectwithnature.org/get-involved/volunteer).

Volunteers contribute their time, energy and skills - often with just a few hours of commitment - to improve habitat in the preserves.

## St. Rose Parish to hold Feast Day event

St. Rose of Lima, for whom Wilmington's Catholic Church was named, will be remembered and celebrated around the world on her feast day Saturday, Aug. 23.

St. Rose Catholic Church of Wilmington invites the community to a Feast Day High Mass and parish dinner on Aug. 23.

Join in a celebration of the 170th year of St. Rose Parish and the gathering of the new parish with Immaculate Conception

Church in Braidwood.

St. Rose Catholic church in Wilmington opened its doors in 1855 named after the patron Saint Rose of Lima. St. Rose of Lima is remembered for her piety and chastity.

Following the 4 p.m. High Mass there will be food, fellowship, games and music by Ray Koncar and the Boys.

Those interesting in attending should register at the church office, 603 S. Main St., Wilmington.

## Homeschool Day coming to Four Rivers

Homeschool Day will be held by the Forest Preserve District of Will County on Wednesday, Sept. 3, from 10-11:30 a.m. at the Four Rivers Environmental Education Center, Channahon.

The program called Animal Signs will include a naturalist-led field trip exploring tracks, feeding scenes and other wildlife signs. It will be free for anyone age 5 and older. Adults

must accompany each participant. Register by phone by Tuesday, Sept. 2: 815-722-9470.

There will also be a Tracks, Scat and More program from 10-11:30 a.m. at the same time, featuring a naturalist-led field trip investigating wildlife clues and patterns. Ages 11-18; free; adult must accompany participant. Register by phone by Sept. 2: 815-722-9470.

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# Penguin's possible problems

Dear EarthTalk: How are the world's penguin species faring these days and what can we do to help them?

-- Brad Gordon, Methuen, MA



Penguins are some of the most recognizable and beloved birds in the world. Penguins are found across the Southern Hemisphere, with 18 different species adapted to a variety of environments, from the icy shores of Antarctica to the rocky islands of the Galapagos. Some penguin populations remain stable, but others are in steep decline, raising concerns about their future.

Understanding the challenges penguins face and the efforts being made to protect them is crucial to ensuring their survival.

One of the biggest threats to penguins is climate change. Rising temperatures are melting sea ice in Antarctica, which is essential for Emperor Penguins. Emperor Penguins are the largest of all penguin species.

A recent study warns that if current trends con-



**UNDERSTANDING THE challenges penguins face and the efforts being made to protect them is crucial to ensuring their survival.**

tinue, over 90% of their colonies could be lost by the end of the century. Warmer ocean temperatures also reduce the availability of krill, which is a major key food source for many penguin species.

"We're seeing entire penguin populations struggling because their food sources are shifting due to climate change," says Heather Lynch, a penguin ecologist at Stony Brook University. Galapagos Penguins are one of the rarest penguin species. They are particularly vulnerable because their survival depends on cold ocean currents, which are becoming increasingly unpredictable.

Aside from climate change, human activities such as overfishing and pollution are also putting

penguins at risk. Many species rely on fish and krill to survive, but industrial fishing operations are depleting these resources, leaving penguins with less to eat.

Pollution is another major issue. Oil spills, plastic waste, and other contaminants poison the waters where penguins live. In some regions, penguins also face threats from invasive predators like rats and cats that prey on their eggs and chicks.

Despite these challenges, conservation efforts are making a difference. Organizations like the Global Penguin Society and the World Wildlife Fund are working to establish marine protected areas, that safeguard penguin habitat.

Some breeding pro-

grams and habitat restoration projects have helped stabilize certain populations. Scientists and conservationists continue to push for stronger protections, and better policies to ameliorate climate change and overfishing.

There are also ways for individuals to help. Supporting sustainable seafood choices can reduce pressure on fish populations that penguins depend on. Reducing plastic waste helps keep oceans clean, and prevents pollution from harming marine life.

Moreover, advocating for stronger climate policies and supporting conservation organizations can

contribute to long-term solutions. While penguins face significant challenges, ongoing efforts and public awareness can help ensure these remarkable birds continue to thrive in the wild.

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## Parents can register children under 5 for Dolly Parton's free book-gifting

Parents in Will County can now register to have free, high-quality, and age-appropriate books mailed directly to their children from birth until their fifth birthday.

The Imagination Library Program is supported by the Dollywood Foundation, a nonprofit organization founded by Dolly Parton in 1988.

Since launching in 1995, the Imagination Library has become the preeminent early childhood book-gifting program in the world. Recently celebrating its 30th anniversary, the program has gifted over 250 million free books in the

United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, and The Republic of Ireland.

The state program matches every dollar raised locally, improving the ability of county-wide programs to raise funds and register children. With the state match, every \$16 raised locally sponsors one child to receive a full year of free books tailored to their age.

"I'm incredibly proud to announce that every child in Will County under= the age of five now has access to this free, book-gifting program," said Will County Executive Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant.

The announcement was made at a launch event at the C.W. Avery Family YMCA in Plainfield. The event recognized local program partners and donors including Amazon, who presented a \$30,000 check.

Due to the state match, Imagination Library is available to children in 77 counties in Illinois and more than 73,000 children in Illinois are currently receiving monthly books mailed directly to their home. The program is a key component of the state's early childhood education goals, as research has demonstrated that children participating in the Imagination Library demonstrate a 29% increase in kindergarten readiness.

Parents can learn more and register for the program by visiting [WillCountyImaginationLibrary.org](http://WillCountyImaginationLibrary.org). Individual sponsorships can also be made online to support the program including \$16 to sponsor one year of books for one child.

"A man who stops advertising to save money is like a man who stops a clock to save time."

- Henry Ford

## Learn to eat what's healthy for your heart

Morris Hospital and the Morris Hospital YMCA are offering a free heart-healthy diet program on Tuesday, Sept. 9, from 1:30-2:30 p.m. at the Morris Hospital YMCA, 2200 W. Dupont Ave., Morris. The program is open to the community and does not require YMCA membership to attend.

During the program, a registered dietitian from Morris Hospital will explain how to reduce sat-

urated fats, cholesterol, and sodium in the diet while increasing fiber. Eating a heart-healthy diet helps reduce the risk of heart disease by lowering cholesterol and blood pressure.

To register for the nutrition program, call Morris Hospital's Wellness Manager at 815-705-7358 or go to [www.morrishospital.org/events](http://www.morrishospital.org/events) and select the Nutrition category.

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# OBITUARIES

## Ann Marrs

BONFIELD—Ann Marrs (nee Kupczak), 64, of Bonfield, passed away peacefully on Sunday, Aug. 17, 2025, at Forest View Rehab and Nursing Center in Itasca, IL. She was born on March 1, 1961 in Morris, to Henry and Theresa (nee Porebski) Kupczak. On Aug. 24, 1980 on her parent's farm she was married to Ronald Marrs. They shared 45 happy years together. Anne found joy in gardening, baking, and most of all animals. Some of her happiest moments were when she was able to be outside tending to her garden with a dog by her side. She was very passionate about animal rescue, bringing home many new pets to surprise her husband. More than anything she loved spending time with her husband and daughters.

Anne is survived by her husband, Ronald Marrs, of Bonfield; two daughters, Rebecca (Marc) Granrath, of Villa Park, IL



and Emily Marrs (Nicolas Dumey), of Bourbonnais; three grandsons: William Dumey, Jacob Dumey and Henry Granrath; one granddaughter, Mary Granrath; one dog, Bruno Marrs. She is also survived by one brother, Jim (Michelle) Kupczak.

Visitation will be held on Friday, Aug. 22 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory, with the funeral service immediately following, officiated by Pastor Mike Strunga. Interment will immediately follow the funeral at Oakwood Cemetery in Braidwood.

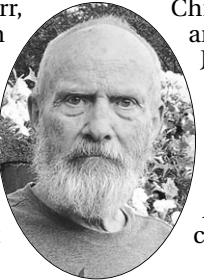
For more information and to visit her online guestbook, please log on to [www.rwpattersonfuneralhomes.com](http://www.rwpattersonfuneralhomes.com) or find them on Facebook.

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

## John Kerr

WILMINGTON—John Earl Kerr, 83, joined his wife Marilyn Kerr in heaven on Thursday, Aug. 14, 2025, after a long hard battle with Frontotemporal Dementia (FTD).

Surviving are three daughters: Deborah Rutherford, Dyanna (Robert) Swisher and Cindy McFadden (Robert



Childers); grandchildren: Robert and Tonya Swisher, Cherokee and Jacob Gillette, Holly and Cory Faurot and five great grandchildren.

Donations may be made in John's name to Island City Baptist Church, The Salvation Army or a local charity of your choice.

## Donate extra garden harvest to pantries

Families maintain and grow a number of fruits and vegetables in their own gardens in Illinois, and in many cases they produce more food than what they can consume. Instead of letting this excess food go to waste, families can consider donating their fresh food to a local food pantry.

Ampleharvest.org is a non-profit organization that makes it easy for gardeners and farmers to find

local food pantries to donate their surplus of fresh produce.

To learn more about Illinois food pantries, visit [illinoisfoodbanks.org](http://illinoisfoodbanks.org) or contact your local food bank.

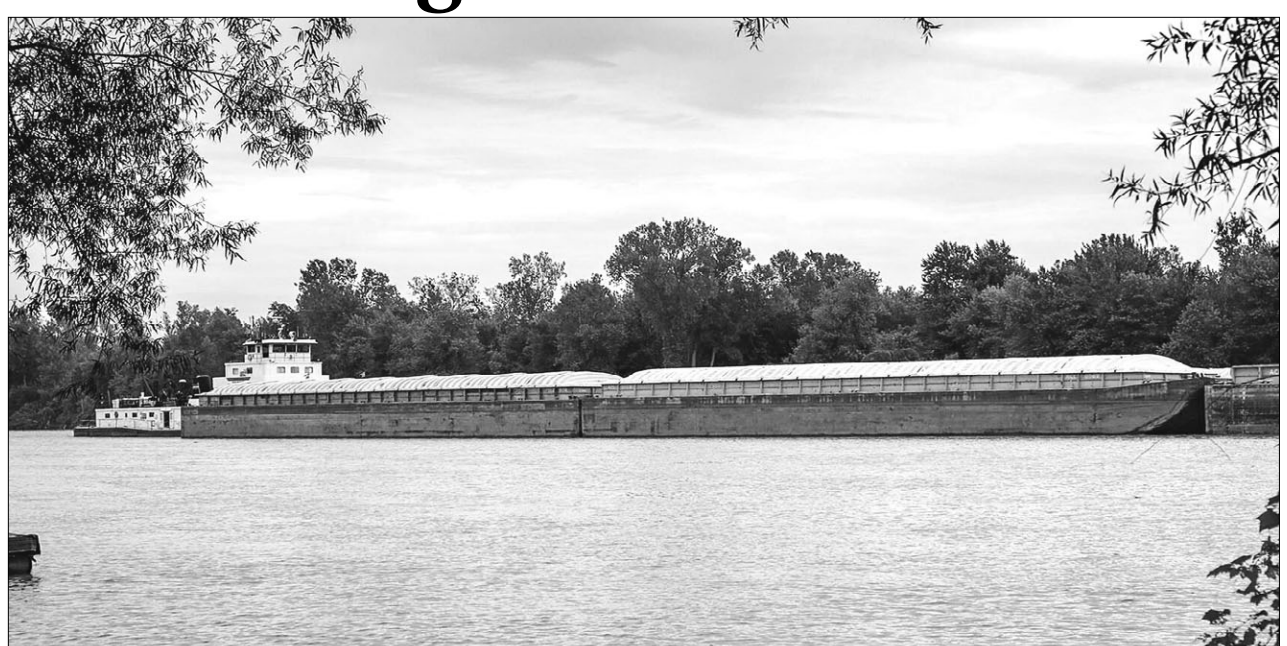
# Thousands of barges face retirement cliff

BY TAMMIE SLOUP  
FARMWEEK

The U.S. barge market is facing a retirement cliff, which could impact ag transportation logistics, one analyst warned.

Ken Eriksen, managing member and strategic adviser at Polaris Analytics & Consulting, provided an overview of the evolving landscape of agriculture and barge transport during a recent FreightWeekSTL panel session hosted by the St. Louis Regional Freightway.

The analyst talked with RFD Radio Network's DeLoss Jahnke about the outlook for commodities and the barge industry. Here are four takeaways from the conversation:



Illinois Farm Bureau photo

**THE AVERAGE LIFE** of a barge running the Illinois River is roughly 25-to-30 years, with a huge spike of barges within that age right now. That means about 2,000 barges are coming to the end of their useful life.

### Barge retirement cliff

"Where we are today with the barge market is rather fascinating, and we're facing a retirement cliff in the dry, covered barge market. They average roughly 25- to 30-some years, and there's a huge spike of barges ... within that 25-to-30-year age right now. Out of a 13,200-barge fleet, we're seeing about 2,000 barges that are coming to the end of their useful life, and there could be some tightness, and we only have a couple major builders in the United States anymore. We've got to be very diligent in how we prepare for that retirement cliff if people retire them en masse."

### Infrastructure needs

The lock and dam system has not aged gracefully,

but the infrastructure has lasted well beyond its designed and engineered lifespan.

"There's a lot of work to be done. And now within the Waterways Resources Development Act, there's been a lot of positive reinforcement of revenues to come in, and the industry's done well working with Congress to see this shift in the amount of fuel tax revenue that is paid for projects; the cost share is now 75% by the federal government, 25% from the industry.

"Except that when you have problems elsewhere in the system, and we've seen this on the Tennessee River and a few other places

where projects that have major cost overruns, or there's a major impediment or something failed, they've got to siphon the money off and direct it someplace else.

"So now you just get further behind, and you're still trying to play catchup. So being able to have full funding for projects like locks and dams is important if we want to maintain our resiliency with our infrastructure."

**Future of coal river shipments**

On the open barge side, coal production has dropped by more than half since 2015, from 1.2 billion tons to below 600 million tons, with a corresponding

drop in barge loadings. As a result, there isn't as much coal in the St. Louis region's river system. This could change given the new administration's support of the use of coal, creating both challenges and opportunities as it relates to multimodal options and multi-commodity services.

"So if you do get a bit more of a push on or at least stable coal movements, now you're going to find a stability with the amount of towboats you need, and the same time with grain exports and grain production from one year to next, we could see massive shifts, because at the end of the day, unlike any other commodity, grain

has one chance to be planted, one chance to be treated, one chance to be harvested. And none of that's guaranteed.

"If we lose some volume, like we did through 2023 and we had low water, we saw a diversion of cargo go off through other port ranges. And that's the reliability and resilience of the U.S. ag system. There are still market outlets for us, or ways to get out of the country with our grain, but the

same time, you bring back another 15 million tons of grain to the river, which is wholly possible, and if we have decent water in the Mississippi River system, we could really see some good shift back to the river, and that could put some tightness in the system that's out there. So, we could see some exciting times as we go forward here."

**Hub of America**

"Indiana likes to be called the 'Crossroads of America,' but maybe Illinois is the 'Hub of America.' You look at the ability to hit the three major rivers ... and the great one that is the Great Lakes, and that gives you multiple avenues. And that's part of that reliability. You get multiple outlets to the world market. Secondly, you've got a strong crush industry, strong grind industry and perhaps a growing feeding industry within Illinois that's very attractive, but you got all the modes with rail, barge, truck, container, that's very attractive. So there's a positive opportunity there.

*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](http://FarmWeekNow.com).*

## Gas prices remain stubbornly up

Average gasoline prices in Illinois have risen 3.1 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.38/g today, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,378 stations in Illinois.

Prices in Illinois are 4.2 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 36.9 cents per gallon lower than a year ago.

Expect to pay anywhere from \$3.12/g at BP up to \$3.44 at Circle K in Wilmington.

For Braidwood and Coal City, gas is running \$3.49/g across the board.

Pilot is charging \$3.19/g and BP \$3.39/g in Morris, and at Bourbonnais you'll be paying \$3.11/g at Pilot up to \$3.19/g in Bourbonnais.

"The national average is nearly unchanged from a week ago, with gasoline prices continuing to hover

in the same territory where they've spent much of 2025 so far—in the low-\$3-per-gallon range—as oil prices remain anchored in the \$60s," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy.

"For the majority of motorists in non-cycling states, gas prices will likely remain near current levels as we head toward Labor Day. However, it's worth watching developments around a potential peace deal between Russia and Ukraine. If such an agreement materializes, it could send oil prices lower on expectations that sanctions against Russia might be eased, effectively boosting global oil supply."

The lowest price in the state Monday was \$2.69/g while the highest was \$4.59/g.

# 20 foods to boost brain health

Pondering what cooking options are best for your brain? Here's some food for thought

Tiffani Franada, DO, is a neurologist with OSF HealthCare who specializes in Multiple Sclerosis. Part of her passion is working with patients choosing brain-healthy diets and lifestyle, which prevents neurological diseases like Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and Multiple Sclerosis.

The MIND diet is a combination of the Mediterranean diet, which is healthy fats, olive oils, fish, fruits and vegetables. And the DASH diet, which is a low-sodium diet, Dr. Franada says.

"It's particularly helpful for patients who live with hypertension (high blood pressure). The two of those combined seem to be very effective at preventing the development of Alzheimer's."

Patients on the Mediterranean diet often have lower levels of inflammatory markers in their spinal fluid. Higher levels are suggestive of Alzheimer's. Patients also perform better on cognitive testing, Franada adds.

**Fiber-rich foods**

"In regard to carbs, whole grains are probably best, and they have really good fiber in them. As well as things like legumes and beans which have good fiber levels, which make you feel full for longer," Dr. Franada said.

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) lists many

high-fiber foods here. Lentils, vegetable soups, whole-wheat bread and pasta make the list. As well as fruits and vegetables like apples, apricots, broccoli and Brussels sprouts.

"Blueberries are great, really berries of all kinds. They really help that antioxidant production," Dr. Franada says. "For vegetables, leafy greens are really helpful. They have a good amount of folic acid, which helps to reduce homocysteine (amino acid) in the brain. Homocysteine promotes inflammation and shrinkage in the brain, and we want to reduce that."

The word fat oftentimes has a negative connotation to it. Franada says there are healthy fats out there that offer benefits to brain health.

"Fats are not the enemy. Healthy fats are good for the brain. Your brain requires them, like fatty fish (salmon), which have good Omega-3s in them. If you don't eat fish, flax seed is a great alternative," Franada said. "Walnuts also have great, healthy fat in them. As well as olive oil, which has monounsaturated fatty acids which protects against inflammation in the brain.

Lean meats, like chicken and turkey, can be good for brain health because there's healthy amounts of protein and fiber in them, Franada noted.

"Dark chocolate is great. Dark chocolate has

good amounts of antioxidants. Of course, all things in moderation. But a dark chocolate square once a night, is not a bad thing," Dr. Franada said. "Also, caffeine! Believe it or not, a cup of caffeine, like coffee or tea, can help with focus, attention and is helpful for the brain."

Sleep is extremely important for brain health.

**Foods to avoid**

Ultra-processed foods have been trending lately, with health experts giving them more attention than usual because of their negative effects on people's health. High sodium, added sugars and excessive amounts of bad fat headline are the reasons why we should avoid them, with these elements being linked to diabetes, obesity and cancer.

Obesity is typically part of a metabolic syndrome, where a person has elevated blood sugars, blood pressure and cholesterol. This puts patients at risk for stroke, sleep apnea, Alzheimer's and many other health issues. Those risk factors can put someone at risk for neurological disease.

"Heavily processed foods are not great for the brain or the heart. Excess sugars, like added sugars, should be avoided as well. If you're going to have sugar, have something with natural sugar in it," suggests Franada. "Berries are much preferred to things with added sugars. Also, white bread and processed

carbs should be avoided, too."

**Effect on white brain matter**

"There's some real-world data showing that the Mediterranean diet can prevent white matter changes on the brain, which are little white spots that develop on patients' brains as they get older. It's also seen in patients with vascular risk factors," Franada said. "If you follow the Mediterranean diet pretty strictly, you can prevent getting those white spots. They also found people who adhere to that diet have better structural integrity. The left and right sides of the brain talk better to one another."

If you exercise five or six days a week and give yourself a 'cheat day' where you splurge, evaluate how the food feels in your body. Instead of packing on the calories and going bananas, Dr. Franada recommends reeling it in a bit and focusing on moderation.

"You'll probably start to recognize it doesn't feel so great," Dr. Franada says. "Maybe it's a chocolate dessert at night, or something smaller that you can do to still stay with your healthy diet, just in smaller quantities."

Dr. Franada cautions against super rigid diets that make you "fall off the wagon" after a few weeks. "You have to find something that's sustainable for you," Dr. Franada suggests.

## Learn more about electric vehicles at JJC

The Joliet Junior College automotive service technology program and Office of Sustainability are working together to host EV Drive 2025 on Saturday, Sept. 20 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at JJC Main Campus on Houbolt Road in Joliet.

EV Drive is a free community event to bring awareness to the availability of EVs and educate the public on how they work.

There will be a variety of electric vehicles from different dealerships on display in the auto-bay or to test drive, a Pro Driver demonstration course, presentations on EVs, Sustainability/EV vendor tables, and a food truck to keep you fueled for all the

fun.

The event will be held inside and outside of the Automotive Services shop (Building C), parking lots S6 and S5.

Many residents still express concerns about how EVs work, the environmental impact and basic fear of running out of power while in use. This community event is offered to improve everyone's understanding of the transportation technology and educate the public on how the many varieties of EVs.

Reminder, the Federal Rebate of \$7,500 ends Sept 30, 2025. Learn more now and save!



# Wesley 4-H Hustlers represent So. Will County at State Fair

Members from the Wesley 4-H Hustlers club of Wilmington & Braidwood attended and competed in the 172nd Illinois State Fair in Springfield.

The club helped kick off the 2025 Illinois State Fair, in Thursday, Aug. 7, by joining with other 4-H clubs from around the state to be part of the Twilight Parade from Lincoln Park, in Springfield, to and through the Illinois State Fairgrounds.

Before the parade the club had a chance to meet the governor of Illinois, and were lined up to walk in front of the famed Budweiser Clydesdales.

On Friday, club members that had their projects selected at the Will County General Project Show, to represent Will County, at the state fair, competed against 4-H members from around the state in their respective project cate-

gories. The results from their showing at the state fair are:

- Samantha Merkel; Visual Art; Fiber – 2025 Exhibit Award
- Henry Merkel; Woodworking – 2025 Exhibit Ribbon
- Caleb Merkel; Vet Science – 2025 Reserve Champion
- Veronica Boyer; Food Science 4 – 2025 Exhibit Ribbon
- Jacob Floyd; Forestry 3 – 2025 Champion Award
- Benjamin Floyd; Small Engines 2 – 2025 Exhibit Ribbon

The state fair is always a time of reflection for 4-H'ers as the activity year ends on August 31st each year. With the 2026 4-H year starting in September, new members are always welcome, as the Wesley 4-H Hustlers continue on the tradition that 4-H in general has had of "Individual

Learning and Development; through Group Service", and follow the 4-H motto of "To Make the Best Better".

Membership is open to any youth between those ages of 5-18 years old.

Wesley 4-H Hustlers is one of the oldest continuously operating 4-H clubs within the State of Illinois; dating back to 1928. This club was formed in Wesley Township, and today is based out of Wilmington.

The primary area of focus for this youth organization is Wilmington, Wesley, Florence, Reed, and Custer Townships in Southern Will County, but is open to all individuals regardless of location of residence.

Learn more about 4-H at [www.4-H.org](http://www.4-H.org), find us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/4-H](http://www.facebook.com/4-H).



WESLEY 4-H HUSTLERS gather prior to judging at the Orr Building on the Illinois State Fairgrounds in Springfield. Members include (from left, front) Caroline Merkel, Caleb Floyd, Charlotte Merkel and Caleb Merkel. Back row: Henry Merkel, Josiah Merkel, Samantha Merkel, Benjamin Floyd, Jacob Floyd and Veronica Boyer.



MEMBERS OF THE Wesley 4-H Hustlers march in the State Fair Twilight Parade in Springfield. From left, front to back are Caleb Merkel, Caroline Merkel, Samantha Merkel, Benjamin Floyd, Charlotte Merkel, Josiah Merkel and Logan Burmaster.

## CLASSIFIED DEADLINES

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**Classified Ads & Classified Display Ads**  
Fridays - 5 p.m.

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

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

### Cost

Line Ads are up to 30 words (20¢ for each word over 30)  
1 wk.- \$17; 2 wks.- \$21;  
3 wks.- \$25; 4 wks.- \$29\*  
\$1.00 Extra per line for bold or caps on classified  
\*plus .0399% with credit card

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

## CLASSIFIEDS

### AUCTIONS

Auction of a Lifetime - Two Residential Development Opportunities in South Florida! Don't miss this chance to bid on real estate in South Gulf Cove and North Port. South Gulf Cove: 5 canal lots, 13 building lots, and 1 newly constructed home. North Port: 18 building lots and 6 newly constructed homes. Auction Date: September 18 at 3:00 PM. For full details, visit [woltz.com](http://woltz.com) or call 800-551-3588. Woltz & Associates, Inc. - Real Estate Brokers & Auctioneers, - Roanoke, VA. Russell Seneff (AU4521), in conjunction with Murray R. Wise (BK3295976). 5% Buyer's Premium.

### BOATS

Deep V 16 foot fishing boat. 50 hp + 10 hp Kicker motor & trolling motor. Only 200 miles on newer trailer. One owner, garage kept. Ready to fish, \$5,500, 815-210-2100. ca34-36

### ESTATE SALES

Coal City, 335 N. Washington Street. Wed., Aug. 20. 4pm to 7pm. Thurs., Fri., Sat., Aug. 21, 22, 23. 9am to 4pm. Antiques, decor, clothing, household goods, furniture, tools and more. ca34

### FOR FREE

Free upright piano in good condition. Wilmington. 815-922-7966.

### GARAGE SALES

Wilmington, 221 N. Washington St. Thursday & Friday, August 21-22, 9am to 5pm. Recliner, jewelry, lamps, grill, Disney collectibles, dog items, Indian items, cars, purses, silverware, dishes, lots of misc., too much to list. ca34

Wilmington, 920 N. Kankakee St., Thursday & Friday, August 21-22, 10am to 3pm. Full contents of home. Clothes, furniture, tools, toys, mowers, mini bike, quad, misc. No rain date. ca34

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Full-time employee, responsible for doing a little bit of everything. Hard work, fair pay. Year round, 40 hours. 630-399-4982.

Offering CNA classes, days, evenings and weekends. Home health nurses needed. CNA instructor needed. Call for class dates, 630-771-1162 or 630-771-9069, [www.spectrumnurses.com](http://www.spectrumnurses.com)

### HEALTH

HEALTH/PERSONAL/MISCELLANEOUS IF YOU HAD KNEE OR HIP REPLACEMENT SURGERY AND SUFFERED AN INFECTION between 2020 and the present time, you may be entitled to compensation. Call Attorney Charles H. Johnson 1-800-535-5727.

### LOST & FOUND

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

Place your classified ad here. Call 815-476-7966.

### PETS

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

### RECREATIONAL VEHICLES

1991 Holiday Rambler Motorhome. 33' loaded. \$8,000. 815-634-2604. ck33-34

### SERVICE & REPAIRS

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### SERVICE & REPAIRS

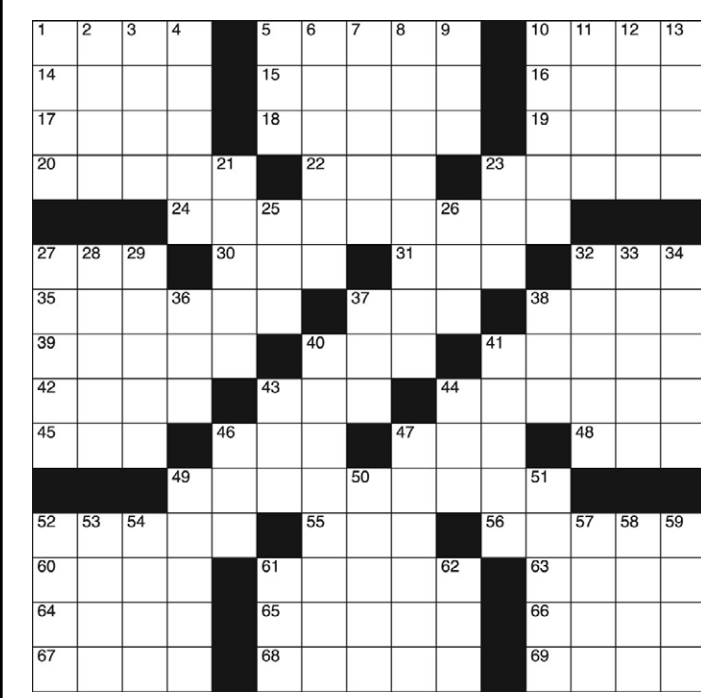
**Mike Collins Roofing**, re-shingles and gutter cleaning, aluminum gutter screen, no repair to small or too big. Free roof inspection. Low prices. Lic #104.007296 Ask for Mike at 815-730-1303. ch21-46

### STORAGE

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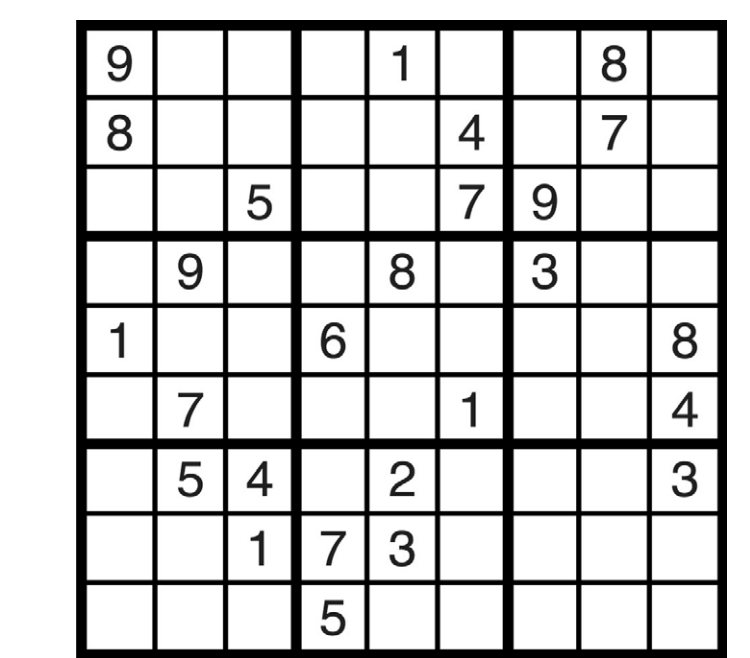


- #### CLUES ACROSS

  - Mongolian politician
  - Coconut palms
  - Rounded knob
  - Japanese city
  - Covers in soft material
  - Walk around
  - Ancient region in Syria
  - French painter
  - Grandmother
  - Cow part
  - Rocky peak
  - Secret plan
  - Sings to one's lover
  - More (Spanish)
  - Father
  - Chinese philosophical principle
  - Hat
  - In agreement
- A person's brother or sister
  - Evil spirit
  - Monetary units
  - Partner to cheese
  - About Sun
  - A place to dance
  - Performer \_\_\_ Lo Green
  - Beach accessory
  - Recipe measurement (abbr.)
  - Partly digested food
  - Pooch
  - Honorific title added to family name
  - Salts
  - Lichens genus
  - Lowest point of a ridge
  - Type of sword
  - Albanian language
  - Gold measurement

- Italian seaport
  - Longtime late night host
  - Extremely angry
  - U. of Miami mascot
  - Mid-month day
  - Omitted from printed matter
  - Upper body part
- #### CLUES DOWN

  - Two-toed sloth
  - Cooking ingredient
  - Iranian city
  - Publicly outs
  - Steep-sided hollow
  - Spoke
  - General law or rule
  - Extravagantly theatrical
  - Very fast airplane
  - Arm bones
  - Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea
  - \_\_\_ fide: legitimate
  - Gemstone
  - Counsels
  - Top exec
  - Cool!
  - Touch lightly
  - Extract money via taxation
  - Dyes
  - Cloying sweetness
  - Soft drinks
  - Capital of Guam
  - Chemical compound
  - The bill in a restaurant
  - Car mechanics group
  - Late comedian Newhart
  - Health care for the aged
  - Wise individuals
  - A passage with access only at one end
  - Trim
  - Former OSS
  - The upper surface of the mouth
  - Edible lily bulbs
  - Type of reef
  - Vaccine developer
  - Mottled citrus fruit
  - A place to store lawn tools
  - Rare goose native to Hawaii
  - Hollywood pig
  - Musician Clapton
  - Take a chance
  - Spanish soldier
  - Mark Wahlberg comedy



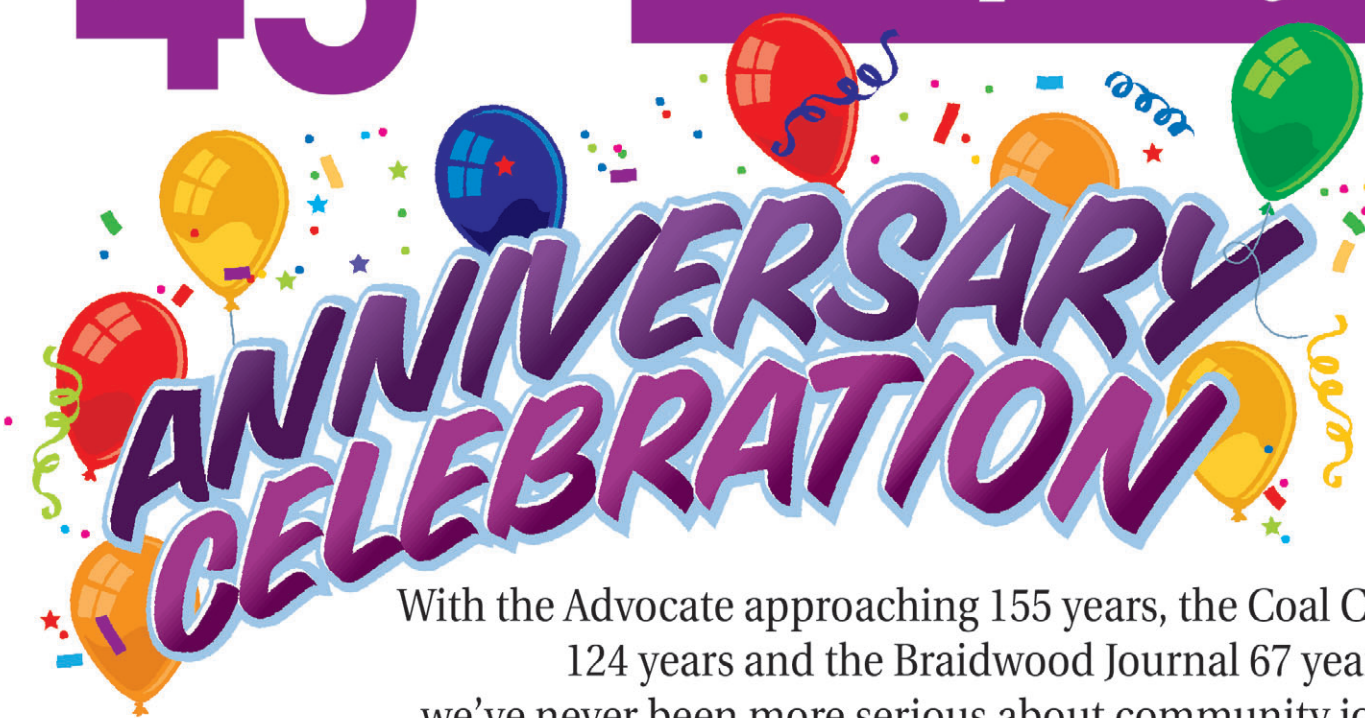
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