



Promoted to Fire Lieutenant

Coalers win 4th straight

COALER SPORTS



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Unit 1 revenue ahead of expenses

STAFF REPORT

A \$47 million spending plan was adopted by the Unit 1 Board of Education this month, a 24.29% increase in expenditures over the prior year's budget.

Over 75% of the district's expenditures are for educational expenses and capital projects—\$26.6 million and \$8.76 million, respectively.

Revenues are budgeted at \$53.3 million, an increase of 53.17% over the prior fiscal year, and \$7.3 million over planned expenses.

Revenues come from various sources, the largest is property taxes and by agreement, the district will collect \$17.3 million from Constellation Energy—Dresden Nuclear Generating Station.

"We anticipate that state revenues will remain fairly consistent, as will our federal revenues. Just in perspective those are always small frac-

tions of our total income, and then we expect the bond and interest earnings will continue to be higher than the previous five fiscal years because of where rates are," said Jason Smith, the district's chief school business official.

Budgeted revenues also take into account the Board of Education's intent to issue working cash bonds of just under \$15 million.

The bond proceeds would be used to complete capital improvements outlined within the district's facility improvement plan.

Priority projects include restroom renovations, new furniture, a building addition and classroom renovations at the early childhood center and improvements to outdoor athletic facilities.

Although the budget outlines a portion of these projects to be completed this fiscal year, Smith noted some may not happen.

"So I don't expect that to be the actual expense at the end of the day. But because this is an estimated budget, the board isn't in a spot where they have to amend a budget. We are going to go ahead and plan for those projects and if the Board chooses not to go forward with them they don't happen. The same with the bonding issue," Smith said.

One project that is slated for this fiscal year is the construction of a storage facility at the middle school that incorporates restrooms and concessions to serve the outdoor athletic fields.

In the past two fiscal years, the district has received a significant increase in corporate personal property replacement tax [CPPRT], revenues collected and paid to local units of government to compensate for lost personal property taxes on corporations and other businesses.

In fiscal year 2021, the CPPRT

payment was \$1.6 million. The following year the district received \$4.2 million and last year it was \$4.7 million. So with a surplus of about \$4.4 million, the Board has directed a portion of those dollars be used to cover the construction cost for storage building at the middle school.

As for expenditures, Smith noted the education budget increased by 9.14%.

Reflected within that is salary and benefit increases that came with the recently approved teacher contract and new hires throughout the district including faculty, social workers and administrative staff.

The budget, by fund, shows expenditures in the education fund of \$26.6 million with revenues at \$26.39 million.

Operations and maintenance costs are budgeted at \$3.66 million with supporting revenues of \$4.4 million.

The debt service fund is estimated to take in \$3.5 million with expenses of \$3.4 million.

Budgeted expenses in the transportation fund at \$3.2 million with revenues of \$2.6 million.

The district has budgeted \$896,200 for Social Security/Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund with revenues of \$1.14 million.

Revenues of \$450,000 in the tort fund will offset \$236,000 in planned expenditures.

The district anticipated \$36,426 coming into the health/life safety fund with projected expenses at \$75,000.

As previously noted the capital projects fund is anticipated to expend \$8.76 million and the working cash fund is budgeted to take in \$15.3 million.

The balance at the close of the fiscal year is estimated at \$33.4 million.



THE 2023 COAL CITY High School Homecoming court has been announced. Members of the senior class cast their votes and elected eight members of the class to represent them. Court members are [from left, seated]: Cassidy Jenke, Gianna Ferrara, Makayla Henline and Jadya Shaw. In row two: Austin Davy, Cade Baldauf, Stephen Beyers, Jr., and Jim Feeney. The king and queen will be announced next week.

Protect the park

Vandalism to Hope Helps playground once again addressed with Village Board

BY ANN GILL
CORRESPONDENT

For at least the third time Brittney Kaluzny stood before the Coal City Village Board last week to address the vandalism that keeps occurring at Hope Helps All-inclusive Playground.

On two other occasions, Kaluzny was told there would be additional police patrols in the park and town officials also discussed reviewing the surveillance system that's in place.

As the founder and president of Hope Helps, the non-profit organization responsible for constructing the play area, Kaluzny told village officials that if something was not done to increase security the organization would not move forward with the third and final phase of the playground.

With assurance the park would be better monitored, the organization completed the \$146,000 addition to the playground. A community build took place in late August and the playground was officially opened on Sept. 10.

Without regard for the barricades and signs asking the public to stay out of the new phase until its official opening, individuals did their own thing and damaged the newly installed ground covering.

The rubber surface was installed on Saturday, Sept. 2 and sometime between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. the next day, vandals went around the barricades and walked across it before it could properly cure. The action left footprints in the rubber surface that went down to the base.

The damage was fixed, but as Kaluzny pointed out that's not the point. The point is that individuals are damaging the park, "and it's being allowed to happen, because we don't have that properly secured,"

she said "So, I am here to ask why that wasn't done when we came and were told that was going to happen, and what are we doing about it moving forward," she asked.

Following the damage report, two additional surveillance cameras were installed in the park to cover the new addition. So currently there are nine cameras located within the park. The police department says the extra camera will help them identify offenders.

Mayor Dave Spesia said the police department has increased patrols around the park too.

"We can't guarantee, as much as you hate to hear this and as much as I hate to say it, but you can't guarantee something is not going to happen there," Spesia said.

Kaluzny said she is not looking for a guarantee, rather, "I'm looking for what was said [at the meeting in the spring] to actually happen," and according to her that was for a 360 degree camera to be installed in the playground.

"I was told at that same meeting by Chief Harseim that he has secured a grant for 360 degree cameras that were going to be put up and that would be done prior to our build and that did not happen," Kaluzny said.

Trusted and the village administrator say they don't remember talk of a 360 degree camera, rather cameras that provide a 360 degree view of the park and currently the park has video coverage.

The mayor has directed the administrator to look into new cameras and a vendor to service the equipment.

Spesia hopes to have some answers with regard to new equipment within the next month.

SEE PARK, PAGE 2

Coaler Paradise

Dress up days, class competitions and parade highlight Homecoming Week

Homecoming is a time to commemorate the pride one has for their school community and in this community, there is a lot of Coaler Pride to celebrate.

Next week is Coal City High School's Homecoming, a week-long celebration designed to be the best week of the year for high schoolers with lots of fun activities, traditions and plenty of celebrating.

Student Council is responsible for organizing homecoming week activities, from setting up dress up days and class competitions, to hosting the pep assembly and dance.

Coaler Paradise is the theme this year and the student council has planned a week of activities that centers around the tropical theme. That includes a BYOF [bring your own floaties] Day.

"Student council has been working hard since May to create the best, most memorable Homecoming week at Coal City High School. The teachers love it, and we hope the students love it," said Allison Peterson, who serves as co-sponsor of the student council.

Several events are planned for Monday, Oct. 2 through Saturday, Oct. 7.

The week kicks-off with Eras Day on Monday and that afternoon the staff will take on the seniors in a game of flag football. The homecoming king and queen—selected by a vote of the senior class—will be announced. Members of the homecoming court are Cassidy Jenke, Gianna Ferrara, Makayla Henline, Jadya Shaw, Austin Davy, Cade Baldauf, Stephen Byers, Jr., and Jim Feeney.

Day two of homecoming will find students rhyming without reason, as the dress up theme is just that Rhyme without Reason. In the words of Peterson, think PJ and DJ or Post Malone and traffic cone. Items that rhyme but have no connection. Students will also have an opportunity to participate in Bingo and Singo.

On day three, students will dress in their class colors—freshmen in blue, sophomores wear purple, juniors come in orange and red for seniors. That evening at 7 p.m., the student council will host spirit night games at the stadium. The boys' soccer team will host Sandwich for their homecoming contest that evening.

Thursday is the day when the high schoolers will be bringing their floaties to school for Coaler Paradise Day. A pep

assembly will be held in the afternoon and the Lady Coaler volleyball teams will host the Wilmington Wildcats that evening.

Coaler Spirit Day is Friday and the student council is looking for the entire community to participate. Students will be dismissed early to provide an opportunity for all students and families to take part in the parade.

The district will operate on a first/last day schedule. Start times remain the same with dismissal for the Early Childhood Center at 1:15 p.m.; Elementary School at 1:35 p.m.; Intermediate School at 1:25 p.m.; Middle School at 1:45 p.m., and high school students will be released at 1:40 p.m.

The Homecoming parade SEE HOMECOMING, PAGE 2

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Students of the Week



Courtesy photos

FACULTY MEMBERS AT Coal City Middle School have selected four students as the school's Students of the Week. Honored students for the week of Sept. 25 are (from left): Tiegan Trofimchuck, Haley Johnson, Paisley Ziech and Olivia Ferrari.



Courtesy photo

COAL CITY INTERMEDIATE School Students of the Week for the week of Sept. 25 are (from left): Christina Hall, Drake Figge and Elle Gordon. Seth Langer is absent.



COAL CITY EARLY Childhood Center Students of the Week for Sept. 25 in row one are (from left): Archer Gagnon, Payton Anderson, Shae Buzzard, Charlotte Terrel, Anna Barrie, Colton Felella and Waylon Cryder. Breckin Boonstra is standing in row two with Erin Berlanga, Grace Einhaus, Paul Bergin, Clayton Cockerham and Julian DeLaMora.



COAL CITY ELEMENTARY School Students of the Week for Sept. 25 are in row one (from left): Sawyer Chodi, Natalie Nowak, Kayla Arcos, GrayTrofumchuck and Johnny Darcy. Charlie Stott starts off row two with Lincoln Connor-Mikos, Layla Hunnings, Savvy Brand, Eron Bakii, Paisley Terrel and Logan Ingalls.

Homecoming

on Oct. 6 will step off from the intersection of South Broadway and Elm Street and make its way north to Carbon Street.

Sara Anderson has been selected by the student council to serve as this year's parade grand marshal. Anderson teaches business courses at the high school and has served as a student council sponsor for 16 years. She will retire at the close of the school year.

"There is no one more deserving than her to be our grand marshal," Peterson said, adding the students were unanimous in the decision for Anderson to lead the parade this year. Also fitting since she played a role in establishing the parade as a homecoming tradition.

Three additional staff members in their final year with the district—middle school principal Travis Johnson, district athletic director Dan Hutchings and

Carol Budde, intermediate school health aide—will also be recognized in the homecoming parade.

Among the 20-plus school and community units in the parade, the Coaler Marching Bands from the high school and middle school will participate.

Following the parade, Coaler fans are encouraged to head out to Dzuris Stadium to cheer on the Coaler football team as they take on Wilmington in conference action. Kickoff is 5 p.m. for the soph game; 7 p.m. for varsity.

The week will end with the Homecoming dance on Saturday, Oct. 7.

Students in Pre-K to eighth grade will also celebrate with a week of special events.

"We've been in contact with all the building principals and student council sponsors to share our plans. They are all getting involved in the festivities which is great," Peterson said. Students at the early

childhood center and elementary school will celebrate the week with Fall Colors Day on Monday, Pajama Day on Tuesday, Class Color Day on Wednesday, Hawaiian Day on Thursday and Friday is Coaler Day.

The Intermediate School student council organized its celebration and will keep its dress up days in line with what the high school is doing. The fourth and fifth graders will begin the week with 90s Day and follow the same schedule as the high school for the rest of the week.

Members of the middle school student council organized its Homecoming week dress up days and will begin the week in their pajamas. Tuesday is Tourist Day, Wednesday is Senior Citizen Day, 80s attire will be featured on Thursday and Friday is Coaler Spirit Day.



HOPE HELPS ALL-INCLUSIVE playground in Coal City's Lions Park is a popular place to play, but it also become a target for mischievous conduct resulting in damage to the equipment and related amenities. The village of Coal City is currently looking to improve on its surveillance of the park.

PARK

As for the reported damage to the playground, Village Administrator Matt Fritz said the police department is investigating. "Right now I know that is not something anyone of us wants to start talking about," he said.

Based on information provided by police, the department was obtaining information about juveniles who are the subjects of interest.

The village said it plans to install another camera in the park and that would bring the total number to 10.

"Anything outside of putting up a fence, which is not necessarily our preferred option, I don't know how else to secure this place," Spesia said.

Kaluzny and neighboring

residents are looking for additional patrols and the surveillance cameras to be installed as previously agreed to.

Hope Helps overall investment in the playground is more than \$700,000.

The third phase included several new pieces of playground, equipment, park benches and landscaping.

Town officials thanked Kaluzny and the Hope Helps Board of Directors for investing in the community.

"Congratulations on your third and final phase, it is a huge accomplishment and we appreciate it," the mayor said.

His comments were echoed by town trustees.

"The work you did was incredible, the park is incredible," Trustee Bill Mincey said.

In his comments he called on the community to help keep an eye on the playground, "if you see something,

say something."

After the damage was discovered, residents took action to keep a close eye on the park.

"It was awesome to see how many families came out to keep watch. To see these other families take pride in protecting the park was huge and I really hope our community continues to go and protect the park. I hope they do that and not just at the Hope Helps park, but at any of our parks in town, anywhere in the community," said Trustee Sarah Beach, chairman of the village's Park Board.

As the investigation into the damage continues, Harseim made it clear, "anyone who gets caught doing something they are not supposed to, we are going to prosecute to the fullest extent of the law."

Miners get the best of the Patriots

The Coal City Miners football program had a good day in New Lenox, beating Manhattan in three of four games played.

Superlights

The Miner Superlights took on the always-tough Manhattan Patriots, beating them 30-12.

Offensively, the game started off with a touchdown by Eddie Gergits, followed by touchdowns by Cole Watson (2) and Aaron Evans.

The offensive line did a great job of blocking, allowing for those long touchdown runs. The offensive line was led by Kamden Kerr, Brayden Plata, Brantley Monshau, Mikey Tworek, Lucas Horst, Cole Coleman and Jacob Harris.

Defensively, the Miners were led by Brady Loughran and Eddie Gergits. Brady had multiple tackles for loss, as well as a forced stripped fumble return for touchdown. Eddie Gergits had several tackles for loss and was able to penetrate the Patriot offensive line with ease. Other notable

defensive mentions go to Mikey Tworek, Levi Hennessey, Cole Watson, Cole Coleman and Aaron Evans.

Lightweights

Coal City Lightweights celebrated another shutout, winning 26-0.

The defense played great and was unbeatable! Drake Heath and TJ Wagner were a force to reckon with. Many stops by our defense behind the line and down field. Offense did an amazing job executing multiple plays, Bainen Durkee with great passing yards.

Austin Newman, Collin Ness, Rylan Davy, Dylan Rich, Nolan Cardenas, and Drake Heath all for many carries for great yardage and points on that board! Grady Jensen with an incredible catch thrown by Andrew Beckers for an untouched touchdown.

JV Miners

The Junior Varsity squad fought a tough game against the Manhattan Patriots, losing 20-12. Our team came to play against the undefeated conference leaders. The defense was led by our defensive tackles Bryson Male and Cooper Winke gave the Patriots a bat-

tle they weren't expecting.

One of our touchdowns came from a long kick return from Kenny Tazelaar. The other touchdown was from Ryan Carpenter on the QB keeper. The team did a great job and we are very proud of them. Looking to continue to get better taking on Plano this weekend.

Varsity

The Miners Varsity picked up their 4th win of the season against three losses, with a 14-8 victory.

The defense held the Patriots scoreless through 3.3 quarters of the game.

LB Hayden Kennel led the defense with several tackles for loss and two interceptions CB Tyce Ferrell also had several tackles and a key interception to set up the Miner first TD.

The offense scored the first TD of the day in the Third with a 20-yard pass from QB Maddox Meents to RB Caider Tourigny. Tourigny also scored the second Miners TD on a 6-yard scamper.

The Miners will host the last regular season games vs Plano at Coal City High School on Sunday.

Young Lady Coalers open with a win

The 6th grade Coaler girls basketball team defeated Ottawa last week by a score of 18-4.

Leading scorer for the Coalers was Melody Leman, with 6 points, while Abby Mills, Caylee Lynn and Charly Gray each scored 4 points to lead the balanced attack. They are now 1-0 on the year.

Investment strategies. One-on-one advice. Call to schedule a one-on-one.



Tammy Johnson, AAMS*
Financial Advisor

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The Coal City Courant

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Eric D. Fisher, publisher
Ann Gill, editor

Drive thru food drive to aide Backpack Program

The General Federation of Women's Clubs has challenged clubs to do a project to help food insecurity in their community. GFWC-IL Coal City Junior Woman's Club has accepted the challenge of this special project "GFWC National Day of Service" on Sept. 30.

The theme of this event is food insecurity and the club has chosen the Coal City Backpack Program as the organization to receive food donations.

Coal City's Backpack Program has been providing assistance to Unit 1 School District families for several years. The goal is to provide supplemental food items to students.

The mission of the organization is, "to help children in need begin each school week with a full heart and nourished body so they can grow in mind, body and spirit."

The Backpack Program is supported through donations and fundraisers.

On Saturday, Sept. 30, there will be a drive thru at Coal City United Methodist Church where members of the community can drop off food and/or monetary donations for the Coal City Backpack Program between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

The type of food needed is individual servings of mac-cheese, applesauce, fruit cups, juice boxes, cereal, granola bars, goldfish, raisins, and/or

pudding cups. The Coal City Backpack Program's purpose is to help the individual child, the child does not use full sized food items.

The Coal City Backpack program services approximately 135 Coal City School District students.

Donations of one item or several items is appreciated. Monetary donations will also be accepted. Make checks out to CC Backpack Program.

Community members who would like to make a donation, but are unable to attend the food drive this weekend can do so by sending their tax deductible gift to the Coal City Backpack Program, 7855 E. Arrowleaf Trail, Coal City or making a direct dona-

tion at Midland State Bank.

Product donations are also welcome and can be left in the donation box located at the Coal City Public Library, 85 N. Garfield St.

The organization hopes the community will support the Coal City Juniors in its efforts to help the Coal City Backpack Program help children with food insecurities at home, spread the word about this important food drive.

For questions about the Backpack Program, contact Sara Smith 815-693-0974. Questions regarding the drive thru food donations, contact Marsha Vaughn 815-735-4609.

Barrow promoted to rank of lieutenant



IN A CEREMONY at Coal City Fire Station 1 on Friday, Sept. 16, firefighter/paramedic Michael Barrow was promoted to the rank of lieutenant. Coal City Fire Chief James Seerup administered the oath to the new officer. Barrow began his service with the Coal City Fire Protection District in 2010 and moved into a full-time position in 2018. He will oversee the gold shift based at Station 1 on DeWitt Place.



MEMBERS OF ST. JUVIN Post 1336 Veterans of Foreign Wars visited Coal City Middle School on Sept. 15 to present the students and staff with a new American flag. Participating were (from left): Earl 'Shorty' Fatlan, Keith Roseland, Jim Richards, James 'Hoppy' Phillips and Bill Bomba.

Valiente graduates NIU

Danielle Valiente, of Coal City, was among 540 students who received their degrees from Northern Illinois University in August. She earned an Educational Specialist degree in Educational Administration.



COAL CITY MIDDLE School's student council accepted the donation of a new American flag from St. Juvin Post 1336 Veterans of Foreign Wars. Post members also provide the school with a POW flag and a banner recognizing the contributions.

Post 1336 leaves its mark at CCMS

St. Juvin Post 1336 Veterans of Foreign Wars presented Coal City Middle School with a new American flag.

The flag will hang on the east wall of the middle school gymnasium, as will a POW flag and banner denoting the veteran organization's gift to the school. Members of the school's student council accepted the flags during an assembly on Sept. 15.

The Post was established 98 years ago by veterans of World War I and one individual—John Herron—who served in the Spanish American War. Herron was the first commander of the post that was named for St. Juvin, a small village located in northeastern France. For 10 days in October 1918, there was a

fierce battle between the US 82nd and 77th Infantry Divisions and the retreating German Army in the area of St. Juvin.

According to a written history of the Post, "on October 14 the 82nd Division's 326th Infantry Regiment crossed the Arie River and attacked the village from the southeast while the 325th Regiment attacked from the southwest and after a pitched battle, which nearly flattened the town, they forced the Germans out and captured 540 prisoners."

It's unclear how many of the founding members of Post 1336 served in St. Juvin, however it appears there were enough to select the name for the post that will observe its 100th anniversary on March 21, 2025.

Current members of the post are veterans of the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Bill Bomba, chaplain of Post 1336, said the number of US war veterans is shrinking and that means fewer VFW members.

"We wanted to put our mark on the school for you to remember us," Bomba said. Post 1336 has also collaborated on a project with Coal City High School to enhance the Military Service Wall located in the administrative wing of the school.

VFW members participating in the presentation with Bomba were commander James 'Hoppy' Phillips, junior vice commander James Richards, adjutant/quartermaster Keith Roseland and member Earl 'Shorty' Fatlan.

Wake Up Call presentation set for Oct. 18

The rise in the use of vaping devices and other substances among youth is a growing concern. Are you familiar with Carts? Dabs? Disposables? If you have young people in your life, you should be.

Parents, guardians, caregivers, and grandparents are invited to attend an eye-opening presentation taking place on Wednesday, Oct. 18 in the Coal City Performing Arts Center at Coal City High School, 655 W. Division St., Coal City. Doors open at 5 p.m. and presentation begins at

5:30 p.m. Wake Up Call—What Parents Should Know is a 90-minute presentation that provides practical information on current drug trends, proactive parenting strategies to keep your child substance free and a walk-through of a teens' bedroom with more than 20 red flags that could indicate substance use.

The presenters combine their personal stories, experience working with students and families, and sharing things they wish they would've known into an engaging, real

and unique presentation. This presentation, a program of the Addiction Resource Council, Inc., is a must-see for parents, grandparents, teachers, community members and other adults who are influential in the lives of youth.

It's for adults only—21 years of age or older. Register for this free event at: bit.ly/45leoUE

Questions regarding this event, sponsored by the Coal City School District, should be directed to Craig Warner at cwarner@coalcityschools.org

CCMS Students honored for responsibility



EIGHT COAL CITY Middle School students were selected by their teachers for displaying citizenship and responsibility in the first weeks of the school year. Recognized during the monthly PBS ceremony on Sept. 15 were (from left): Caleb Hall, Molly Jones, Gabriel Hamilton, Gianna Carver, Cash Wentenkamp, Penny D'Arcy, Pearl Friddle and Benjamin Manering.

Students display citizenship, responsibility

Character traits—qualities that define an individual's character—are being highlighted this school year.

Coal City Middle School will focus on a new character trait each month of the school year and students from each grade level will be recognized for displaying that trait. The students are nominated by their grade level and Encore teachers.

Citizenship and responsibility were the traits selected for the first month of the school year. "Being a good citizen is being a positive member of the community and your

community is a lot of things. Your community can be your core group of friends, your community can be the school or your classroom, it can be the entire Coal City community, the state of Illinois or United States of America," Principal Travis Johnson told the students during the monthly PBS assembly on Sept. 15.

"Part of our job is to help you become good citizens, so when you go out in the real world and you are adults you are a positive member of the community, and that is what we want for everybody."

Johnson said.

Students who stood out to teachers for showing responsibility and citizenship were: Pearl Friddle and Benjamin Manering, sixth grade; Penny D'Arcy and Cash Wentenkamp, seventh grade; Gianna Carver and Gabriel Hamilton, eighth grade, and eighth grader Molly Jones and sixth grader Caleb Hall, who were selected by their Encore teachers.

Each of the students received a certificate and McDonald's gift card.

Buying a mattress will support a theatre student

The Coal City Theatre Department is holding a fundraiser that could have you getting better sleep.

On Saturday, Nov. 4, the Coal City High School gymnasium will be transformed into a mattress showroom for the first mattress fundraiser.

The event will support the theatre department's educational trip to New York City in March 2024.

Beds in all sizes will be available with 25-plus models on display. Prices range from \$199 to \$549 and all forms of payment will be accepted and financing is available.

Each of the new mattresses comes with a full factory warranty and delivery is available.

There will also be accessories on sale including

adjustable bases, pillows and mattress protectors.

The sale will run from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the high school, 655 W. Division St.

For additional information and specials follow the Coal City Theatre Department on Facebook.

Attorney Black files Pellegrini estate claim

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT GRUNDY COUNTY - IN PROBATE No. 2023 PR 64

In the Matter of the Estate of DONALD F. PELLEGRINI, Deceased

CLAIM NOTICE

NOTICE is given to creditors of the death of Donald F. Pellegrini. Letters of office as Independent Co-Executors were issued to Lynette Pellegrini, 1 Manor Court, Joliet, IL 60436, and Laney Callahan, 1604 Locust Road, Morris, IL 60450, whose attorney is FRANK J. BLACK, BLACK & BLACK LAWYERS, 201 Liberty Street, Suite 211, Morris, Illinois 60450.

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

LYNETTE PELLEGRINI
LANEY CALLAHAN
INDEPENDENT CO-EXECUTORS

ATTORNEY FRANK J. BLACK
BLACK & BLACK LAWYERS
201 Liberty Street
Suite 211

P.O. Box 148
Morris, IL 60450

815-942-0594

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on Sept. 20, 27 and Oct. 4, 2023.

Claypool Drainage and Levee District to hold annual meeting

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT GRUNDY COUNTY, ILLINOIS 1963TX1836

IN THE MATTER OF THE)
CLAYPOOL DRAINAGE AND)
LEVEE DISTRICT.)

NOTICE

TO: ALL INTERESTED PERSONS

The Claypool Drainage and Levee District will hold its annual meeting on November 7, 2023 at 11 a.m. at 117 W. Washington Street, Morris, IL 60450. All meetings are open to the public.

Robert Koerner, Joseph Brown, Ronald Maland, Commissioners
Charles L. Schmidt, Attorney
117 West Washington Street
Morris, Illinois 60450

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LIGHTWEIGHT MINER Andrew Beckers runs for a touchdown against the Patriots in a 26-0 victory.

Courtesy photo

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All town cleanup

GODLEY—To the Mayor of Godley. It is nice to drive through this town and see people cleaning up the trash. It is beginning to look like it should. While it is not complete, it is progress! Keep up the great work and we will have a nice village! Thank you for enforcing ordinances. Our kids should not have to look at piles of tires, beat up vehicles, piles of fence, wood, old appliances and junk. You are doing a great job for those of us who try to keep our house nice, our yards clean and safe and giving us a little pride in what was just trashy. We have a beautiful park and our kids go to a nice school. They deserve nice neighborhoods too. Thank you.

Mic up everyone

BRAIDWOOD—The City of Braidwood needs to invest money in microphones (instead of helicopters and nonsense) for city hall meetings. If citizens have to speak into a microphone everyone needs to including the City Attorney, City Administrator, Chief of police, etc. What are you trying to hide?

Attend meetings

BRAIDWOOD—Attended the Sept. 13 Braidwood City Council meeting. During the meeting Commissioner Mikel wanted to table a bargaining issue. Commissioner Walsh approved tabling this and Commissioner Mikel 2nd it. HUH?? How can you 2nd your own statement? Everyone needs to be coming to City Council meetings. Next meeting is 9/26/23. See you there!!

Piles of cash

DIAMOND—Our president has just exchanged five American prisoners in Iran for five Iranian prisoners in the U.S.A. and also gave Iran \$5 billion. Isn't this the same type of thing that President Obama did by sending piles of cash in the middle of the night. This presidential administration and the entire Democratic party are pushing to turn the our country to full communist control and destroy the sovereign laws of U.S.A. The Democratic party idea is to prevent every form of freedom for every American citizen because they believe that U.S.A. should be run like communist China with no choices in the election process except Democrats. This can only be prevented if American citizens vote against communism and not the Democrat party.

Fact from fiction

SHADOW LAKES—I always believed that a person that made up stories about themselves to look better than they are is full of BS. When Biden does it the White House calls it mis-memory? I think that means he can't tell fact from fiction? OK if your in a bar but not for the president. Eddie

Lacks transparency

WILMINGTON—Last week, Trump refused to say if he watched the January 6th attack unfold at the Capitol. "I'm not going to

tell you. I'll tell people later at an appropriate time." But in 2019, he said "I was the most transparent, and am, transparent President in history." I guess like most of the things this old man says, he doesn't know what transparency means!

Their wallets first

DIAMOND—Our president is planning on changing our currency to a digital currency which will be connected to 90 other countries that will destroy the entire economy of the U.S.A.. But the Democratic leaders don't care because they have connections with big business in foreign countries. Only the American citizens will suffer with the back door deals our elected public servants make with foreign countries. The Democratic leaders have a new motto "It is my wallet first and the lives of the American citizens after every other countries' citizens." Our Democratic leaders should not even be given employment as custodians of a rest room.

Took an oath

SHADOW LAKES—Venezuelan illegals get work permits! What a boom for our country. I hope you realize just what this is going to do. This in itself is going to be just like a magnet, drawing more illegals to this county. Where in the world could I go to receive free medical, free housing and free three meals a day plus, now a job. If, nothing else, these actions should be enough to bring impeachment to China Joe. Who are these people coming into our country? What sickness do they bring? When China Joe was sworn in as president, he placed his hand on the Bible and took an oath. That oath was to protect this country and its citizens. Just how many people have died from drug overdoses of fentanyl? Our border patrol has already captured 140 members that are known terrorist. How many more are here that we do not know about? You better wake up before there is no USA. Remember this man took an oath. And he wants to run again? Obediently yours, Margot Lane.

Another tax waste

BRAIDWOOD—Healthland Human Services. Biden's Covid must be fast acting. His brain is worse than this old man's brain. Health and Human Services already exists. The boy in the candy store wants to spend more money to buy gun violence prevention. People are Human, Health a problem with people and Services serve. Don't need to waste people's tax on Bullarky.

Beautiful downtown

COAL CITY—I love the look of the flower pots on the main street in the business district in Coal City. It definitely adds beautification and I know I don't pass them by once without appreciating them.

Just ignorance

WILMINGTON—The Republicans have declared war on books, science, facts and



objectively reality yet they want us to believe them and that their opinions are all that matters. This is called willful ignorance.

Bunch of bull

WILMINGTON—Trump says he has a plan to end the Ukraine War. So what is it? Probably in the same place with his plan to bring troops home from Afghanistan, with his plan for a better health care plan after he gets rid of Obamacare, and with his plan to build a wall with Mexico paying for it. In other words, it is a bunch of his usual bluster with no substance.

If he's re-elected

WILMINGTON—What's so important that Prince William of England has come to New York City? Climate change. What's so important that homeowners insurance is skyrocketing and some insurance companies are leaving some states entirely like Louisiana? Climate change. Why is the state of California suing five major oil companies for causing the destruction of California's landscape? Climate change. Remember the approach former President Trump took on climate change? Trump deliberately rescinded more than a hundred policies dedicated to easing climate change just because he could, just because he defied scientists and common sense itself, just because he wanted to stick it to Americans which especially include babies born today as well as children and young adults. Trump just doesn't care and would ravage our country again if re-elected. Irene

Senator Biden

SHADOW LAKES—Seventy-five percent of people think Biden is doing a bad job on the

southern border. When asked, the 25 percent that thinks he's doing a good job answer with Mucho Gracias Senior Biden. Eddie

Parking confusion

COAL CITY—The parking lot at Dollar General is a disaster. There are very big pot holes that have been there for quite some time and the parking lot in front has angle parking going in both directions in the same row in front of the building. Who the heck designed that setup?

Corrupt politicians

DIAMOND—There are going to be some new laws about artificial intelligence but we don't need new laws, we have artificial intelligence in Washington, D.C.. So why do we need another type of machine that is going to lie to the American citizens and invade our privacy more than what our elected officials are already doing to our lives with all their lies that have come out of the Democratic leaders. How can the American citizens believe one word out of the mouths of the Democratic leaders when there is so much corruption. The Democratic leaders need to look into the mirror when they try to blame the Republicans.

Made in China

SHADOW LAKES—Think about this. The solar panels and batteries that we are told we have to buy are made in China by slave workers, that are made in coal fired plants with coal bought from Russia. So every panel or battery we buy makes China stronger and gives money to Russia to fight the Ukraine war as American taxpayers give money to Ukraine to fight Russia. It's called Bidenomics.

Commentary

Six things every American needs to know

BY DOUGLAS CARSWELL

"Woke" radicals love to undermine America at every opportunity. They try to rewrite history in order to demoralize and disorientate the United States.

Cultural Marxism is able to thrive in that vacuum where there was once good civics education. If we want to defeat the radicals, both on and off campus, there are six things we should ensure every American child understands.

1. America is built on liberty.

Liberty is what makes America special. This country was started in 1776 because people living in 13 former British colonies had had enough of being bossed about by a British king.

America today might have its fair share of busybody politicians and bureaucrats, but the default setting in this country is to distrust anyone claiming authority over others, from George III to Dr. Fauci.

Americans also dislike being told what to think, and particularly having their children told what to think: an extraordinary 3.7 million American schoolchildren are now homeschooled.

2. The U.S. Constitution created the best system of government in the world.

America might only be 240-something years old, but the U.S. Constitution is now the oldest written Constitution in the world (with the exception of tiny San Marino). For context, France, which had its revolution at about the same time as America, is now on its fifth constitution. (Incidentally, how's that working out?)

It might be fashionable for CNN pundits to proclaim that American democracy is in crisis, but it is nonsense. If and when Americans adhere to what the Founders actually wrote, the system works.

The document they drafted, which fuses English ideas about natural rights with recently rediscovered insights from republican Rome, has withstood the test of time and the challenge from would-be tyrants.

3. America is a force for good.

No country is perfect, and America has had its fair share of blunders. But overall, America has been a force for good in the world.

All previous great powers used their might to establish empires. Far from subjugating people, the United States used her strength to set people free, insisting the European powers dismantle their empires.

On three occasions —

World War I, World War II and the Cold War — the United States has intervened to save the free world. Can you imagine what the world today would be like if on any of those occasions, the other side had won?

4. Americans are amazingly inventive.

From the first flight of the Kitty Hawk to the advent of the iPhone, there is one country that has proved extraordinarily inventive; the United States.

Take a look at the everyday household objects around you as you read this. The light bulb. The microwave oven. The refrigerator. Toothpaste. All are American inventions.

Innovation depends on being able to try out new things. It means freedom to fail. America is inventive because she is free.

5. Judeo-Christian ideals have shaped America.

Religion has been remarkably important in shaping America. Yes, I know that the Founders kept religion and government separate. That was not because they thought religion unimportant but in fact the opposite.

The Founders wanted to avoid the oppression of smaller religious groups, as had happened in Europe.

When George Washington became President, he wrote an

extraordinary letter to the Jewish congregation in Newport, Rhode Island. In it, he made it clear that they had a right to follow their faith. No one needed anyone else's approval to worship as they pleased.

America's emphasis on individualism is, I suspect, a reflection of Judeo-Christian thinking.

6. Americans have so much to be thankful for.

"Woke" ideology encourages grievance and resentment, rather than gratitude. This is why the "woke" seldom seem happy.

Gratitude is an essential ingredient for happiness — and if you want to "pursue happiness" won't get very far without appreciating the good things that you have.

It is not a coincidence that one of the most important days in the American calendar is called "Thanksgiving".

Initially, a day to show gratitude for getting the harvest in, today Thanksgiving is a day to celebrate being American. Simply being an American means you have so much to be thankful for.

Douglas Carswell is the President and CEO of the Mississippi Center for Public Policy.

Illinoisans pay more for household bills than most other states

BY KEVIN BESSLER
THE CENTER SQUARE

Illinoisans are paying above the national average for the most essential household bills.

The bill paying assistance company doxo found that residents of Illinois pay nearly \$900 more a year for household expenses than the national average.

The report reveals that while the average U.S. household spends \$24,557 annually on the most essential household bills, which is 35% of the U.S. household median income of \$70,784 and roughly \$2,046 per month, many states, including Illinois, rank above this figure.

"We look at the ten most common household bills, and for each city and state and county across the U.S., we were able to come up with a number for how much consumers, on average, pay for household bills on a monthly and yearly basis," said Liz Powell, senior director of

Insights at doxo.

Illinois is known for its high property taxes, so the cost of mortgage helps place the Land of Lincoln as the 16th most expensive state for household bills. Illinois households spend about 35% of their income on bills.

According to the study, Kendall County is the most expensive county in the state for household expenses, nearly \$11,000 over the U.S. average. By comparison, household bills in Marion County in downstate Illinois are 37% lower than the national average.

Chicagoans pay \$2,188 a month on the 10 most common household bills. That is 6.9% higher than the national average, and 3.2% higher than the state average of \$2,121.

Hawaii, California and New Jersey were the three most expensive states for monthly bills, while West Virginia, Mississippi and Arkansas were the most affordable.

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Oct. 1 deadline

\$500 being offered for best scarecrow

The Wilmington Lions Club will be hosting an Oz Scarecrow contest with a first place prize of \$500.

The "No Place Like Home" Oz festival will be held on Sunday, Oct. 15, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the South Island park. Voting ends at 2:30 p.m. and winners will be announced at 3 p.m.

Participants can enter as a business or private party. Applicants for public is \$10 while applicants businessed will be \$20.

The Lion's Club will provide you a wooden sign at registration, this sign has your scarecrow entry number. You can add your business name or Family name onto that sign.

Scarecrows will be displayed in the downtown district on North Water St., across

the walk bridge, on the porch of Nelson's Plaza, all the way to the South Island Park, if needed.

Scarecrows must have a wooden T-shaped frame to support it, allowing it to be tied erect.

Business scarecrows must be brought to Fleur De Lis by 5 p.m. on Oct. 6, and public scarecrows must be there by Oct. 13. **Deadline to enter is Oct. 1.** No late entries will be accepted.

Scarecrows will be on display until Oct. 31. All scarecrows will be disposed of unless noted otherwise. If you plan on keeping your scarecrow, you must inform the Lion's Club.

Register at Fleur De Lis at 219 N. Water St. in Wilmington.



New place to launch your kayak

Courtesy photo by: John Stecyk

A NEW KAYAK and canoe launch at the Forest Preserve District of Will County's Lake Chaminwood Preserve near Channahon is both accessible and adaptive, which will make entering and exiting the lake easier for those with disabilities. Chaminwood is 1 mile north of Channahon off Shepley Road. The 35-acre lake and 12-acre lake on the 1,500-acre preserve are stocked annually with channel catfish and saugeye, has an average bluegill and largemouth bass population. It's part of the DuPage River Preservation system. Hours are 6 a.m. to sunset daily.

Line Dance classes in Essex

The Essex Community Center will be hosting Line Dance classes with experienced instructors on Tuesdays at the Center, 217 Parls Street, in Essex.

Beginner level one will be from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and beginner level two will be from 7:45 p.m. to 8:45 p.m. There will be a fee of \$8 per class each week.

For more information or to get on list call contact Roylene at (815) 937-9301 or Sheila at (815) 351-1563.

Musicians invited to Circle jam

There will be a circle jam Saturday, Oct. 14, from 5 to 8 p.m. in the hall under the water tower at the Godley Park District, 500 S. Kankakee Street, Godley.

Bring your instrument and play, sing or just enjoy.

The free event is open to everyone including musicians and listeners. Donations will be accepted.

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

Forest Preserve to host Sensory Sunday

The Forest Preserve District of Will County is hosting Sensory Sunday on Sunday, Oct. 1, from 11 a.m. to noon, at Four Rivers Environmental Education Center, Channahon.

Guests with sensory-processing needs, social anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder and those that would benefit from a small-group experience are invited to experience the exhibits and trails on their own terms. All ages. Register by Sept. 30.

Come out for home-made chili

The United Lutheran Church of Gardner will be hosting its annual chili supper on Wednesday, Oct. 11, from 4 p.m.-7 p.m.

The chili supper will take place in the ULC Fellowship Hall at 309 Jefferson Street in Gardner.

Come enjoy home-made chili, hot dogs, and delicious desserts. Lemonade, water, and coffee will also be served. Cost for an adult will be \$5, children 6-12 years of age \$8 and children under 6 will eat for free!

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The Village of Symerton and Symerton Tap would like to thank these sponsors who helped to make our Homecoming Celebration a success:

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Pump prices dropping despite jump in oil

Average gasoline prices in Illinois have fallen 6.5 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.85/g, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,378 stations in Illinois.

The lowest price reported Monday was in Braidwood and Coal City at \$3.43/g. In Wilmington the lowest price was \$3.49/g while stations across town were at \$3.74/g and even \$3.95/g.

In Morris the best price was \$3.59/g while in Bourbonnais it was \$3.55/g at its cheapest. Prices in Illinois are 22.2 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 6.6 cents per gallon lower than a year ago.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Illinois was priced at \$3.37/g while the most expensive was \$5.09/g, a difference of \$1.72/g.

The lowest price in the state was \$3.37/g while the highest was \$5.09/g. The national

average price is \$3.80/g.

"It's been a mostly quiet week for the national average price of gasoline, with most states seeing gas prices cool off. But, new and continued refinery issues in some regions have had an oversized effect on gas prices in some states, especially in Southern California, Arizona and Nevada," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy.

"While most states are likely to continue seeing gasoline prices fall in the week ahead, any new refinery issues as others begin maintenance could be problematic. For diesel prices, however, the opposite is playing out, with prices that continue to rise as demand for diesel strengthens. Overall, the largest issues impacting gas prices remain refinery disruptions, but also the price of oil, which has held around \$90 per barrel as Saudi Arabia and Russia maintain significant production cuts."

IFB outlines must-pass farm bill

BY TIMOTHY EGGERT FARMWEEK

Illinois Farm Bureau is urging federal lawmakers from Illinois to enact a farm bill this year that features must-pass support for farmers when markets and the weather turn for the worse.

In a letter sent Sept. 12 to Illinois' congressional delegation, IFB President Richard Guebert Jr. outlined the organization's priorities among the 12 titles in the five-year legislation, which is set to expire Sept. 30.

Above all measures, Guebert wrote, the bill should maintain commodity and risk management programs that address drops in market prices and help farmers recover quicker from natural disasters.

Other reforms topping the IFB list for Title I are commodity program provisions that would let farmers update their base acres and yields and allow farmers who elect a Harvest Price Option to receive the harvest price if it is higher on prevented plant acres.

For Title II conservation programs, Guebert called for "serious debate" on policy proposals like shorter, five-year Conservation Reserve Program contracts, carbon sequestration incentives for farmers who use cover crops and new credits for improving water quality.

He further pushed for discussion on expanding the Conservation Security Program (CSP) to reward farmers for practices they've adopted and giving farmers opportunities to earn more CSP points for maintaining conservation practices over time.

IFB also strongly supports reauthorization of the federal crop insurance program in its current form, a message IFB leaders for months have communicated in meetings with lawmakers.

But were Congress to improve federal crop insurance, IFB recommends a \$5-per-acre discount for farmers who plant cover crops, with provisions to reward early adopters, Guebert added.

"This mirrors USDA's Pandemic Cover Crop Program which was very pop-

ular in Illinois and incentivized many farmers to plant cover crops and improve soil health on their farms," Guebert noted.

Providing USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service with sufficient funding to hire more conservation engineers and granting farmers additional flexibility to harvest cover crops for livestock feed during normal growing conditions is another IFB recommendation.

And regarding the 2023 farm bill's dairy title, Guebert said IFB supports dairy risk management programs that address negative price differentials and improvements in the Dairy Margin Coverage feed price component.

IFB also supports providing sufficient resources to the National Agricultural Statistics Service for accurately estimating alfalfa prices.

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

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Birders flock to refuge to see avian guests

Longtime birder Vicky Sroczynski typically doesn't "chase" rare birds, but she considered the opportunity to see a Roseate Spoonbill—normally a resident of the Gulf Coast and rarely seen further north—at TWI's Dixon Waterfowl Refuge too good to miss.

As soon as Sroczynski entered the Refuge gates after a two-hour drive from her home in Darien, IL she craned her neck toward the boat launch... just in time to glimpse a pink-winged bird fly behind the island and disappear.

"I really, really hoped that wasn't my only view of this bird!" Vicky recalled. "Luckily, I parked, practiced patience—long earned through 22 years of birding—and later enjoyed watching the pinkish young bird preening, eating, and resting. Sharing the experience with six equally excited birders made it that much more special."

With its bright pink feathers, bald head, and flat spoon-shaped bill, this waterbird is unique and unmistakable. And having been recorded fewer than 10 times in Illinois over the past decade, its unexpected presence at the refuge made a trip to the site hard to resist.

On August 7 alone, 29 birders entered their sightings and photos of the spoonbill in eBird, a popular online data-



A ROSEATE SPOONBILL, rarely seen in Illinois, enjoys the marsh habitat at the Dixon Waterfowl Refuge alongside a resting swan.

Photo by Vicky Sroczynski

base of bird sightings that is publicly accessible. After August 7, the bird moved on—possibly to Chautauqua National Wildlife Refuge further south.

The Roseate Spoonbill marks bird species #280 to be observed at the 3,000-acre refuge over its 22-year restoration history. And it isn't the

only avian visitor to cause a recent sensation! Over the past year, birders have also spotted a Limpkin (another southern-specialty wading bird far outside its usual range), Trumpeter Swans, King Rail, Black Tern and more.

The Dixon Waterfowl Refuge near Hennepin, IL is about a 90-minute drive west

of here, making it an ideal location for a day trip.

As waterfowl migration begins this fall, see what bird and wildlife memories you can make by visiting the Dixon Waterfowl Refuge. Trail maps, a bird checklist, and other visiting details can be found at The Wetlands Initiative website.

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St. Rose CCW holding drive for Breaking Away shelter

The St. Rose Church CCW September meeting saw many new faces, as well as, familiar ones. The organization is off to a great start for an exciting and productive year.

The next meeting will be Monday, Oct 2, at 6 p.m. in the St. Rose school, Wilmington, to finalize the calendar of events.

The women will be collecting items for the Breaking Away Women's Shelter servicing women in the surrounding areas. Needed items: body wash, soap, body spray, feminine products, tote bags, toothbrushes, toothpaste, hairbrushes, diapers, and baby wipes.

Following the meeting the CCW will sort the donated items. Light refreshments will be served by hostesses: Karen Miller and Moira Shoger

For more information or to contribute to our drive for Breaking Away, please contact Kristi Seitz, CCW President, 815.262.4158 or secretary Cathy McCoy, 815.274.1262

On Saturday, Oct. 21, the CCW will be holding a fall bake during the Knights of Columbus spaghetti dinner. Treat yourself to a yummy dessert. Free will donations requested.

Tour the old Joliet Prison by flashlight

The Joliet Area Historical Museum is offering a unique way to tour the ground of the old Joliet Prison off Collins Street.

Flashlight Tours are being given at the Old Joliet Prison seven days a week from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. All tours include a souvenir flashlight.

Cost is \$30 for adults; \$10 for children ages 3-10; and children under the age of 3 are free.

Friday and Saturday hours for the month of October will be 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. Reservations are recommended, please visit JolietPrison.org to book tickets in advance.

For the safety of staff and guests, the Joliet Historical Society does not allow large bags and backpacks inside the prison. All items must be secured in your vehicle before entering the prison.

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OBITUARIES

Melba D. Clark

REDDICK—Melba D. Clark, 57, of Reddick, passed away unexpectedly on Wednesday, Sept. 20, 2023 at her home. Melba Dawn was born on July 20, 1966, in Kankakee to Melvin Douglas and Mildred (Griffith) Brown. She grew up in Braceville, attended First Baptist Church in Wilmington with her family, and went on to graduate from Ford Central High School with the class of 1983. It was during her high school years that Melba found the love of her life, Mark Clark. They married on Jan. 15, 1984, and together they built a loving home and cherished family.

Melba's life was dedicated to her spiritual work as a Spiritualist and Medium. Through her readings, parties, and classes, she touched the lives of many and brought comfort to those in search of solace. Yet above all else, Melba treasured her family. Nothing brought her greater joy than spending time with her loved ones, and she held a special place in her heart for her precious grandchildren.

An avid collector at heart, Melba's collections entailed everything from pedal cars and crystals. She enjoyed the thrill of antiquing and never missed an opportunity to explore auctions and garage sales in search of hidden gems.

In the hearts of all who knew her, Melba will forever be remembered as someone who



truly lived to connect with others. Her warm spirit radiated through every conversation she had. To Melba, every person she met was a friend waiting to be discovered.

Survivors include her husband, Mark; three sons: Mark Jr. (Danita) Clark, Max (Ashley) Clark and Matthew Clark, all of Reddick; seven grandchildren: Peyton, Zachary, Caleb, Layla, Jacob, Damian and Andrew, and one sister, Diane Hollis, of Reddick, as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

Melba was preceded in death by her parents, sister, Ginger Brown and two brothers, Mitchell Brown and Matthew Brown.

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

A memorial service will be held at Church of Hope, 202 N. Monroe St. in Gardner on Sunday, Oct. 1, 2023 at 1 p.m. Reverend Jan Chandler will officiate.

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

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

Ruth Watson

WILMINGTON—Ruth Jane Watson, of Wilmington, passed away peacefully on Thursday, Sept. 21, 2023 at the age of 87. She was born Nov. 20, 1935.

Passed away peacefully on Thursday September 21, 2023 at the age of 87.

She loved gardening, watching Judge Judy, collecting cookbooks, baking, and napping with her fur baby Tucker. She loved spending time with her kids, grandkids, and great-grandkids.

She is survived by her four children: Craig (Karen) Watson, of Wilmington; Ray (Darlene) Watson, of Hohenwald, TN; Tammy and Kelly Watson, of Wilmington. She had five grandchildren: Katie (Shawn), Jason (Cassandra), Laura



(Cody), Timothy and Emily, followed by eight great-grandchildren: Caden, Larkyn, Westin, Cooper, Hadley, Amelia, Nora and Miles. She will truly be missed by all her friends and family.

She was preceded in death by her loving husband, Ray and grandson, Timothy.

Visitation will be Thursday Sept. 28, 2023, from 9 a.m. until time of funeral service at 12:30 p.m. at Hickey Memorial Chapel, 4201 W. 147th St. Midlothian, IL 60445. Interment will be at Chapel Hill Gardens South.

Patricia L. Phelps

BERWYN, IL—Patricia L. Phelps, 75, of Berwyn, IL, passed away Sunday, Sept. 24, 2023 at her son's home in Wilmington.

Born Oct. 10, 1947 in Chicago, Patricia Louise was a daughter of Marvin and Jacqueline (nee Stark) Phelps. She was raised and educated in Chicago and graduated from Lakeview High School. Patricia worked as a bookkeeper for several companies until she retired. She was an animal lover and was particularly fond of Siberian Huskies. Patricia loved her family very much and looked forward to spending as much time with them as possible.

Survivors include her three children: Steven Fickensher, of Wilmington; Ronald (Isabelle) Fickensher, of Elk Grove, IL and Cynthia (Gino) Betancourt, of Chicago; seven grandchildren: Krystal (Robby) Fickensher, Joseph Fickensher, Christine (Red) Betancourt,



Raquel Betancourt, Elena Betancourt, Miranda (Francisco) Betancourt, and Veronica Betancourt; one great-granddaughter, Scarlett; one brother and two sisters: Sheryl Phelps, Jack (Joanne) Phelps and Pam (George) Vojinovic; and several nieces and nephews, including William (Renata) Phelps and Jenny Phelps.

Patricia was preceded in death by her parents and her two husbands, Robert Fickensher and Art Maldonado.

Per her wishes, cremation rites are being accorded and a private family memorial service will be held.

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

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

George W. Jones Jr.

VILLA GROVE, IL—George W. Jones Jr., 82, of Villa Grove, IL, passed away Tuesday, Sept. 19, 2023 at his home.

He was born to George and Phebe (Huffman) Jones Sr. on Nov. 28, 1940 in Vermillion County, IN. He married Sonja Evans on Aug. 7, 1965 in Villa Grove. George enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1958 and proudly served until 1962. He then went to work for Caterpillar in Joliet for 30 years before he retired in 1995. He was a member and served as president of the Coal City Lions Club for several years and was a member of the Coal City Baptist Church.

George loved being outside whether it was going on a walk, fishing some of his favorite fishing spots, or just sitting and reading a book. He enjoyed watching baseball and football



games on TV with his boys and was a Ham radio enthusiast from his time in the Navy.

He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Sonja Jones; four children: Muriel (Dennis) Smith, Amy Seeley, Jason (Cris) Jones and Wesley (Paige Mellentine) Jones; nine grandchildren: Jessica, Claire, Stephen, Ian, Abigail, Angelina, Liam, Makayla, and Nathan; two great-grandchildren, three sisters and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, George and Phebe Jones Sr. and two sisters.

A private memorial service will be held at a later date.

Memorial donations may be made to the Coal City Lions Club.

Billy Weathersby

KENOSHA, WI—Billy John Weathersby, 50, of Kenosha, WI, passed away at his residence on Sunday, September 24, 2023.

He was born in Joliet on Feb. 23, 1973, the son of Gary and Cecelia (Heylek) Weathersby. He was baptized and confirmed into Christ on March 5, 2000. He was a graduate of Reed-Custer High School and earned his bachelor's degree in Law Enforcement from Western Illinois University.

On June 9, 2001, Billy was united in marriage to Tamara Rusch at Messiah Lutheran Church. He was employed as Security for Tremper High School and previously worked at Progressive Insurance. Billy was a member of Messiah Lutheran Church, where he was actively involved.

He enjoyed spending time with his family



camping. Billy cherished his children and enjoyed taking them to Six Flag and other amusement parks. He was also ready and willing to lend a helping hand to others.

He is survived by his wife, Tamara Weathersby; his children: Cody, Payton and Hayley Weathersby; his mother, Cecilia Weathersby; his sister, Carrie Weathersby and many nieces and nephews.

Billy was preceded in death by his father, Gary Weathersby.

Memorial services honoring Billy's life will be held Saturday, Sept. 30, 2023 at Messiah Lutheran Church. Private inurnment will follow in Sunset Ridge Memorial Park.

Phillip Middleton

COAL CITY—Philip "Leo" Middleton, 68, of Coal City, passed away at The Pearl of Joliet on Saturday, Sept. 9, 2023.

Born March 4, 1955 in Joliet, Leo was a son of Philip C. Middleton and Elaine Zambon. He was raised in and was a life long resident of Coal City. He graduated from Coal City High School in 1973. On Oct. 21, 1978, Leo married Pamie Smith at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Roman Catholic Church in Coal City and together they made a home and raised a family.

Leo was very civic minded and served as Mayor of Coal City, Village Administrator and Village Trustee. He also worked for Lyondellbasell for several years and drove as an over the road trucker for Werner Enterprises before retiring.

In his free time Leo loved hunting and shooting, coin collecting, playing Euchre, watching sports on TV, especially the Cubs, Bears, Bulls and Blackhawks and watching old western shows. He particularly loved spending time with his grandchildren who he deeply cherished. Leo had lots of friends whom he enjoyed spending time with.

Survivors include his wife, Pam; one daughter, Tina Middleton, of Coal City; three



grandchildren: Aidan Middleton and Reganne Patrick, of Coal City and Eathan Patrick, of Gardner; one brother, Paul Middleton, of Coal City; several nieces, nephews and cousins.

Leo was preceded in death by his parents, a sister, Cynthia Middleton in infancy and two sisters-in-law, Teri Middleton and Wendy Smith.

Per his wishes, cremation rites have been accorded.

The family will receive friends for a memorial visitation at Reeves Funeral Home, 75 N. Broadway Street, in Coal City on Friday, Sept. 29, 2023 from 5 p.m. until the time of memorial service at 7 p.m.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Leo's memory to the family for their distribution.

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

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

Baptist church to host Alzheimer's caregiver support group

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

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

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

the health of his or her caregiver: the healthier the caregiver, the healthier the patient, and vice versa.

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

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

Manteno Veteran's Home needs help

The Veterans' Home at Manteno invites volunteers to join its force of more than 50 volunteers to assist with a wide-range of services and programs to its residents.

Opportunities include serving food, escorting residents to appointments, leading projects, playing games, and maintaining and organizing donated goods. Immediate needs include transporting residents to church services on Thursday and/or Sunday and leading creative projects for members in the on-site woodworking shop.

"We welcome individuals with time and talent to share with our veterans," said Tanya Smith, Manteno Veterans' Home Administrator. "The many ways in which volunteers contribute to our community enhance the daily lives of our residents."

All volunteers must adhere to all IDVA vaccination and masking while in IVH buildings.

Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer should contact the Illinois Veterans' Home Volunteer Office by calling (815) 907-3352.

Illinois discontinues statewide testing of fish for organochlorine pesticides

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), in conjunction with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and the Illinois Department of Agriculture, will discontinue statewide testing for organochlorine pesticides, such as DDT, in fish from Illinois lakes and rivers.

Organochlorine pesticides, including DDT and other similar chemicals, have been banned for decades, but the state had tested for them since 1974 because they are "environmentally persistent" and can build up in the tissue of fish and other animals.

But the levels of these pesticides found through that testing has diminished to near zero over the past nearly 50 years, allowing the state to discontinue testing for those chemicals.

Testing for other contaminants in fish, including methylmercury and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), will continue.

Organochlorine pesticides like DDT were in widespread use across America dating back to the 1940s. Concerns about the impact of DDT on wildlife (particularly the bald eagle) and on people led to its ban for agricultural use in the U.S. in 1972; bans on other organochlorine pesticides followed in the 1980s.

However, concerns remained about levels of the chemicals in the state's fish population. In the early 1970s, the state implemented the Illinois Fish Contaminant Monitoring Program, a protocol of testing fish from the state's lakes, rivers, and streams. Lake Michigan is sampled annually, with samples drawn from rivers and large streams every five years, along with periodic testing of other public lakes. The testing measures whether

fish samples contain pesticides, metals, or other dangerous chemicals at a level that would render them unsafe to eat. In its early years, testing from state waterways indicated concerning levels of DDT, chlordane, and dieldrin in bottom feeding fish such as carp and catfish. Levels of chlordane were detected at rates making the fish unsafe to eat until the mid-1970s; DDT was found at unsafe levels until the early 1980s. Dieldrin, another organochlorine pesticide, was detected in levels deemed to be unsafe to eat as recently as the early 1990s. Since then, however, the pesticides are no longer found in unsafe amounts. With those chemicals no longer in use, continuation of the testing program for those pesticides is no longer necessary, saving both time and money.



A RECORD AMOUNT of cannabis—2.5 tons—is displayed in front of a bus that was transporting it into Illinois along Interstate 80 on Sept. 20. Two men from California were arrested.

Near record pot bust on I-80

A bus filled with cannabis didn't get past the Illinois State Police as it entered the state.

Last Wednesday at approximately 5:30 p.m., an ISP trooper conducted a traffic stop on a 2000 Provoost Bus on Interstate 80 eastbound near milepost 13 near Geneseo, IL in Henry County.

During the traffic stop, numerous indicators of criminal activity were observed. An ISP Canine arrived to assist, which resulted in an alert to the odor of narcotics.

During the resulting search, numerous packages of

illegal cannabis were located throughout the vehicle. The total approximate weight of the cannabis was 5,231 pounds.

This seizure is one of the largest in ISP history and has an estimated value of between \$6.3 and \$14.7 million.

Police arrested Robert Mazo, age 29, and 33-year-old Pedro Arreola, both from Lancaster, CA for cannabis trafficking (Class X Felony), unlawful possession of cannabis - more than 5,000 grams with intent to deliver (Class X Felony) and unlawful

possession of cannabis - more than 5,000 grams, (Class 1 Felony).

Both subjects were taken into custody and transported to the Henry County Jail. The Henry County State's Attorney's Office filed petitions to detain on each subject, and hearings were held on September 21. The judge released the subjects on pretrial conditions.

The investigation continues with the potential for additional charges pending.

Illinois State Police photo

'Human jukebox' to play one last time in Wilmington

BY ERIC FISHER
PUBLISHER



GERRY GROSSMAN

Early in his career, guitarist/musician Gerry Grossman walked into a club in Chicago where he had played over 500 times. A sign on the door said: "Appearing tonight, the human jukebox, Gerry Grossman."

He didn't like it. "I didn't like being a thing," he said last week, some 40 years later. "But the funny thing is, is that I eventually grew to become that thing. I'm not sure how many people even know what a jukebox is anymore."

It's his lifelong love of rock and roll music and a huge repertoire of songs that have made him a featured act at night clubs across the country. And after 53 years in the business Grossman is doing a final gig this Saturday as part of a Comedy Night lineup at Tuffy's Lounge in Wilmington.

"I heard the Beatles when I was in junior high and that was it. The die was cast. I knew it was the music I was always going to play. And it turned out that I would get good at playing music. I found that kids always liked when we did rock and roll songs, they sang along and it started to be a thing," Grossman said.

He started his act in college "which was about 1000 years ago," he quipped. He eventually worked with a band in DeKalb, IL and they were promoted to New York as part of the National Coffeehouse Circuit.

He toured five years at

various colleges and would get booked for other venues like headline club shows.

"I think I went 30 years or so without missing a week of shows," Grossman said. "It was communal. It was fun. And in those days old rock and roll would have been Buddy Holly, Elvis and the Shirelles, groups like that. And then once the Beatles exploded, that was it. And so the basis of the show has always been my kind of something really connected and beautiful about people singing together. And I just never lost the love of it."

Over the years he has made the show funny and spontaneous, learning from big stars and appreciative for the time he got to spend with all of them.

"I really miss touring and believing in that nonsense about the show must always go on."

But that all changed last year with a doctor's diagnosis.

"I have been through five surgeries and six rounds of

chemo and currently feel great. I never saw this coming, I never thought I would retire," he said.

While undergoing treatments among the first to reach out to him were Ralph and Gini Stevens, owners of Tuffy's, who were praying for a quick recovery and the hope that in future he would return to their stage.

"They inspired me. I'm now determined to do this show at Tuffy's. They are first class wonderful people," Gerry said. "Besides, music can still give you chills, and I have waited for it to get old and boring and it never happened. I love it. I still love getting together with other people who've been around and I love hearing their stories."

"It's really fun to do something you love doing that makes people happy. It's always interesting and it's always...I can't believe I'm saying all this...and then have to retire from it. But it is always fun."

"The time of rock and roll is slipping us by, I consider it a huge blessing to have been around and a part of this wonderful music."

Grossman will be the headline act on Saturday at Tuffy's. Guest comics include Brian Koski and Todd Glover, along with host Brian Hicks. The night starts at 8 p.m. and tickets are available in advance or at the door.

National Life Chain to take place Sunday

The Knights of Columbus and the Legion of Mary of St. Rose Church will hold a National Life Chain to end abortion on Sunday, Oct. 1, from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. It will take place at the

corner of Water St. and Rte. 53, in downtown Wilmington.

Please park in the Grundy Bank parking lot to pick up your sign. Dress for the weather and bring a chair if you can't stand for one hour.

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GARAGE SALES

Braceville All Town Garage Sale. Friday & Saturday, September 29-30. 8AM-4PM. Watch for the sale signs. Lunch specials at the Cricket. cc38-39

Braidwood - 340 E Janet Dr., Comet Estates. Thurs., 9/28, 8AM-3PM, Fri., 9/29, 8AM-5PM & Sat., 9/30, 8AM-2PM. X-Mark 48" mower, 17 cu. ft. trailer, yard tools, saws, misc. tools, freezer, holiday items, Troy Built wood chipper, household items, lots more. cc39

Coal City, 3 family sale. 165 N. 2nd Avenue. Friday & Saturday, Sept. 29-30 from 8AM-4PM. Kid's and adult clothes, holiday and home decor, much misc. cc39

HUGE Moving Sale - Wilmington. 740 S. Kankakee Street (across from tennis court), Friday, Oct. 6, 9AM-4PM. Saturday, Oct. 7, 9AM-1PM. Furniture, home decor, kitchen, holiday, electronics, movies, outdoor equipment, garage storage, tools, power tools, tool chests. Collectibles - Beatles, Elvis, Lucy, M&Ms, Sports, Die-casts. Lots of misc, way too much to list. Shared driveway, please park on street. ca39-40

Rummage Sale at Braceville United Methodist Church. 106 W. Gould St. Friday, Sept. 29th, 8AM-3PM, Sat., Sept. 30th 8AM-NOON. Money raised for Christmas Angels. (No food served). ck38-39

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REAL ESTATE

SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE OF 34351 Walnut Avenue, Wilmington, IL 60481 (Single Family). On the 5th day of October, 2023 to be held at 12:00 noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 904, Joliet, IL 60432, under Case Title: **MidFirst Bank Plaintiff V. OMAR GARCIA; SUSAN M. GARCIA; UNITED STATES OF AMERICA; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS; UNKNOWN OCCUPANTS** Defendant. Case No. 23 FC 0139 in the Circuit Court of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, Will County, Illinois. Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County. In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the purchaser of the unit, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and legal fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 and the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Illinois Condominium Property Act. Pursuant to Local Court Rule 11.03 (J) if there is a surplus following application of the proceeds of sale, then the plaintiff shall send written notice pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/15-1512(d) to all parties to the proceeding advising them of the amount of the surplus and until a party obtains a court order for its distribution or, in the absence of an order, until the surplus is forfeited to the State. For Information Please Contact: **LOGS LEGAL GROUP LLP** 2121 Waukegan Rd, Suite 301 Bannockburn, Illinois 60015 P: 847-770-4348 F: 847-291-3434 PURSUANT TO THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT YOU ARE ADVISED THAT THIS LAW FIRM IS DEEMED TO BE A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. Published in the Free Press Newspapers on Wed., Sept. 13, 20 & 27, 2023.

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MORRIS \$449,900 Stately 4 BR home with 1st floor primary suite on the 8th fairway of Nettle Creek Golf Course. Shawn 815-474-6670. NB3280	GRUNDY COUNTY'S #1 HOME SELLER (815) 942-9190 SEE EVERY HOME ON THE MARKET AT C21.COM Source: Midwest Real Estate Database (MLS) Single Family Detached Homes Sold in 2022 by Grundy County Offices.	SOLD MORRIS \$359,000 Beautiful 6 BR, 3.5 BA home on a lg wooded lot in town w/ optional community swim pool membership. Shawn 815-474-6670. AP106	SOLD MORRIS \$349,900 4 BR, 2.5BA home w/3 car h/d garage, spacious fenced backyard with deck and shed. Theresa 815-735-8494. LG1410	RESIDENTIAL LOTS Including Wooded and Waterfront
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- CLUES ACROSS**
- Outsourcing (abbr.)
 - Deli meat
 - Fibrous substance in fungi
 - Cutting
 - Native of Slovakia
 - Delicious
 - German city on edge of Black Forest
 - "... but goodie"
 - Spiced stew
 - Passionately
 - Monetary units
 - Group of living organisms
 - Organic compound derived from ammonia
 - High honors
 - 5-year-olds' classes
 - Swiss river
 - Old woman
 - Cash machine
 - A way to soak
 - Hair product
 - Deride
 - "The Blonde Bombshell"
 - Cause to become insane
 - Bluish greens
 - Supported with money
 - Type of equation
 - Court officials
 - Indian god
 - Rids
 - Leak slowly through
 - Units of ionizing radiation
 - Midway between south and southeast

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 - Delicious
 - Fibrous substance in fungi
 - Cutting
 - Vedder and Van Halen
 - Horror comic novelist
 - Repaired
 - Rulers of Tunis
 - Shaped like a circle
 - Make a pig of oneself
 - Aphorism
 - Witness
 - Single Lens Reflex
 - Freshwater North American fish
 - Nautical ropes
 - Leg (slang)
 - Pokes holes in
 - Moved quickly on foot
 - Fix-it shops
 - Type of bread
 - Repaired
 - Synthetic diamond (abbr.)
 - Type of drug (abbr.)
 - German city along the Rhine
 - Animal disease
 - Martini necessities
 - Get away from
 - Village in Mali
 - Djibouti franc

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Opposite outcomings under Illinois' new SAFE-T Act

Hannah Meisel's recent report for Capitol News Illinois included a line that jumped out at me: "Per state law — which hasn't been updated since 1949 — only counties with 25,000 or more residents are required to set up offices of public defender."



CAPITOL FACTS
Rich Miller

13,000, according to her report. The counties want more money from the state to implement the new law. Public defenders outside of Cook County received \$10 million in this fiscal year's budget, which

ed battery to a police officer. "This highlights the misplaced priorities of Illinois' criminal justice system when the prosecutor prioritizes the freedom of a violent offender over the safety of those police officers dedicated to protecting and serving our communities," said Senate Republican Leader John Curran in response. Elsewhere, though, prosecutors used the new law to keep people behind bars who likely would've previously walked away.

According to information posted on numerous websites (Illinois Demographics, Wikipedia and World Population Review), a majority of 62 out of 102 Illinois counties have fewer than 35,000 residents. Fifty counties have less than 25,000 residents. Another 31 have less than 15,000 inhabitants, 15 have less than 10,000 people and 7 don't even have 5,000 residents. For perspective, a single Chicago ward contains about 54,000 people. Only 24 counties have at least that much population.

doesn't seem like much. I don't know what the answer is here, but I do know that local mandates are regularly approved at the Statehouse without taking the population of most Illinois counties into consideration. And the lack of resources in Illinois' plethora of tiny counties is only one problem. There will be other problems with the new SAFE-T Act.

McLean County State's Attorney Erika Reynolds has been a staunch critic of the new law, but her office persuaded a judge to keep a man locked up who was accused of possessing a gun as a felon, a consortium of Public Radio stations reported. The man was arrested before the SAFE-T Act officially took effect, and his public defender wanted him charged under the old statute so he could potentially bond out of custody. The judge disagreed and the man remained in custody.

All counties in the state are required by the Illinois Constitution to have sheriffs, county clerks and treasurers. State statutes heap on many more responsibilities, as do local county ordinances.

A prosecutor will decide not to ask a judge to keep someone in custody who has been busted for a detainable offense, or a judge will overrule a prosecutor who wants someone detained, or a loophole will be exploited and that suspect will then go out and commit another crime and maybe hurt someone, or worse.

Proponents just haven't focused on how the SAFE-T Act will make it easier in many cases to keep physically dangerous people locked up without bail.

We've long seen advocates calling for school district consolidation and township elimination. But the SAFE-T Act's implementation last week highlights how the state should probably start a conversation about how dozens of small Illinois counties can effectively govern in a modern society.

This sort of thing is not new, of course. A small minority, but still a significant number of people who bailed out of jail wound up going back after committing more offenses. But that history may easily be lost in the debate as bad things happen under the new law.

But no mere law can eliminate human error or prevent all unforeseen circumstances. As those cases emerge, we can probably expect legislative fights over whether to expand the list of detainable offenses. Those battles could wind up being the new version of the old legislative tradition of annually enhancing criminal penalties, which proceeded unabated for decades until more progressive members finally put a stop to it.

A recent WBEZ story noted that Cass County has "one attorney and one resident judge handling all the criminal cases." Cass is just northwest of Sangamon County and has a bit more than 13,000 residents. Meisel's story profiled a public defender who does part-time work in two counties: Gallatin and Hamilton. The combined population of those two counties is about

Controversy arose on the very first day of the new law when WTTW reported that the Cook County state's attorney's office decided not to ask for the detention of the very first person given a hearing. The suspect was accused of pepper spraying four Chicago police officers and sending three of them to the hospital, and is facing four counts of aggravated

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

Wilmington Public Library District passes budget and appropriation ordinance

PUBLIC NOTICE

Ordinance 24-3 Budget and Appropriations
COMBINED ANNUAL BUDGET AND APPROPRIATION
ORDINANCE OF THE WILMINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
DISTRICT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING
JULY 1, 2023 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2024
WHEREAS the Board of Library Trustees of the Wilmington Public Library District, Will County, Illinois, has caused to be prepared in tentative form a budget and appropriation ordinance; and
WHEREAS, the tentative budget and appropriation ordinance was made conveniently available for public inspection for at least thirty (30) days; and
WHEREAS, a public hearing was held on the tentative budget and appropriation ordinance on September 18, 2023; and
WHEREAS, notice of said hearing was given at least thirty (30) days prior to the hearing in full compliance with law,
BE IT ORDAINED By the Board of Trustees of the Wilmington Public Library District as follows:

SECTION I
That the following budget containing an estimate of receipts and expenditures, and containing appropriations for the fiscal year be adopted as the budget and appropriations for the District.
Part I: Summary of Budget and Appropriations by Funds FY24
Audit \$4,530
Building and Maintenance \$73,300
General \$1,035,250
IMRF \$30,000
Insurance/Liability \$18,500
Social Security \$45,000
Special Reserve \$30,000
Working Cash \$10
Total \$1,236,590

The following determinations have been made and are hereby part of the budget:
The cash on hand at the beginning of the year is \$744,464
An estimate of the cash expected to be received from all sources is \$968,973
An estimate of expenditures contemplated during the fiscal year from all sources is \$1,236,590
An estimate of the cash expected to be on hand at the end of the fiscal year is \$503,447
An estimate of the amount of taxes to be received during the fiscal year is \$774,158

Part II: Budget and Appropriation By Funds
A. Audit Fund
Cash on Hand \$2,501
Income
Interest \$30
Property Tax Receipts \$4,158
Transfer from General Fund \$0
Total \$4,188
Expenditures
Audit \$4,500
Interest Transfer to Special Reserve \$30
Total \$4,530
Estimate of cash on hand at end of fiscal year is \$2,159

B. Building and Maintenance Fund
Cash on Hand \$21,609
Income
Interest \$800
Property Tax Receipts \$55,000
Total \$55,800
Expenditures
Building and Repairs \$20,000
Grounds Maintenance/Snow Plowing \$14,000
Interest Transfer to Special Reserve \$800
Janitorial \$9,500
Maintenance and Supplies \$5,000
Utilities \$24,000
Total \$73,300
Estimate of cash on hand at end of fiscal year is \$4,109

C. General Fund
Cash on Hand \$532,495
Income
Contributions \$8,000
Corporate Replacement Tax \$75,000
Fees \$8,000
Fines \$3,500
Interest \$12,500
Landfill Fees \$20,000
Materials Replacement \$1,000
Development fees \$0
Per Capita Grant/and other Grants \$50,000
Property Tax Receipts \$650,000
Total \$828,000
Expenditures
Administrative Expenses \$1,500
Automation \$16,000
Board Expenses \$1,750
Capital Improvements/Expansion \$75,000
Continuing Education \$8,000
Equipment Lease & Maintenance \$12,000
Equipment Purchases \$10,000
Health Insurance \$66,000
Library Hospitality/Appreciation/Community Events \$1,500
Library Materials \$90,000
Library Programs \$37,000
Library Supplies \$12,000
Membership \$5,000

Mortgage \$30,000
Payroll Expenses \$6,000
Personnel \$560,000
Postage \$2,500
Printing and Publishing \$9,000
Professional Fees \$12,000
Technology \$20,000
Transfer to Other Funds \$30,000
Transfer to Special Reserve \$30,000
Total \$1,035,250
Estimate of cash on hand at end of fiscal year is \$325,245

D. IMRF Fund
Cash on Hand \$69,619
Income
Interest \$1,500
Property Tax Receipts \$10,000
Transfer from General Fund \$0
Total \$11,500
Expenditures
IMRF- Employer Contribution \$30,000
Total \$30,000
Estimate of cash on hand at end of fiscal year is \$51,119

E. Insurance/Liability Fund
Cash on Hand \$25,595
Income
Interest \$730
Property Tax Receipts \$40,000
Transfer from General Fund \$10,000
Total \$20,730
Expenditures
Bond \$1,000
Director's and Officers Insurance (now in Corporate Insurance line) \$0
Corporate Insurance \$8,000
Risk Management \$6,000
Unemployment Compensation \$1,500
Workers' Compensation \$2,000
Total \$18,500
Estimate of cash on hand at end of fiscal year is \$27,825

F. Social Security
Cash on Hand \$13,393
Income
Interest \$120
Property Tax Receipts \$45,000
Transfer from General Fund \$0
Total \$45,120
Expenditures
Interest Transfer to Special Reserve \$0
Social Security- Employer Contribution \$45,000
Total \$45,000
Estimate of cash on hand at end of fiscal year is \$13,513

G. Special Reserve Fund
Cash on Hand \$37,162
Income
Interest \$245
Interest Transfer from Working Fund \$0
Transfers to Special Reserve \$30,000
Total \$30,245
Expenditures
Capital Improvement \$25,000
Technology \$5,000
Total \$30,000
Estimate of cash on hand at end of fiscal year is \$37,407

H. Working Cash Fund
Cash on Hand \$42,090
Income
Interest \$10
Total \$10
Expenditures
Interest Transfer to Special Reserve \$10
Total \$10
Estimate of cash on hand at end of fiscal year is \$42,070

SECTION II
That the invalidity of any portion of this Ordinance or any of the items herein shall not render invalid any other portion or item thereof which can be given effect with such invalid portion or portions eliminated.
SECTION III
That this ordinance shall be in force and effect after its passage approval and publication as provided by law.
SECTION IV
This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after seven (7) days following the publications required by law. Adopted this 18th day of September, 2023.
Ayes: 5
Nays: 0
Absent: 2
Mary Smith, President
Rebecca Quigley, Secretary
Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, Sept. 27, 2023.

Registration continues for TaTa Trot

In October 2009, a group of local women participating in a cancer walk discussed holding a walk of their own and one year later they hosted the first TaTa Trot. The 5K run/walk was created to raise breast cancer awareness and provide breast cancer care. On Oct. 8, the 14th annual TaTa Trot 5K run/walk will step off from Carbon Hill Park, 800 W. Lacey St. Participants will be led out on

the 3.1 mile course at 10 a.m. Registration will begin at 8 a.m. Proceeds from the run/walk, raffles, donations and sponsorships will benefit Riverside Medical Cancer Foundation for breast cancer care for patients in the community. A registration form is available online at www.eventbrite.com. The cost to participate is \$30 in advance.

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Heat waves start to affect wildlife

Dear EarthTalk: How are recent heat waves around the world affecting wildlife?
 - T.C., via email

It would be hard to ignore the heat waves that have plagued North America, Europe and Asia in recent months. If you did not experience them yourself, chances are that you read about them, or their effects.

Abnormal thermal extremes like this have become more regular, intense and long-lasting over the last few decades as global temperatures have risen. In addition to their severe consequences for vulnerable human communities, heat waves have a drastic effect on many wildlife populations.

While there is no one single consequence felt by all wildlife populations, heat waves universally disrupt the ecosystems where they occur, which, due to the interconnectedness of biodiversity, has implications for all living things.

Heat waves are different from the rising global average temperature. They are the peak, extreme, temperatures that happen for a finite duration of time. If the global average temperature warms by 4.4 C (the highest emission scenario projected by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 41 percent of species will experience extreme heat waves.

But if global average temperature maxes out at 1.8 C of warming (the IPCC identifies

EARTH TALK

Questions & Answers About Our Environment



1.5C of warming to be the lowest emissions scenario), only 6.1 percent of species will experience extreme heat waves.

In any circumstance, the change in wellbeing or population size of one species in a local area sets off a ripple effect in that ecosystem. The secondary consequences of heat waves' effect on oyster populations are a case in point.

Heat waves reduce oyster population size as oysters are a stationary species and cannot move from uninhabitable water temperatures. When at a healthy population size, oysters limit algal bloom and are thus key to ensuring consistent oxygen levels in bodies of water.

Therefore, experts warn of consequences for other marine animals in those bodies of water now faced with reduced oxygen levels.

Some wildlife populations, particularly insects, have actually increased in size due to heat waves over the last few decades. The length of mosquito season has increased in some parts of the

THE RECENT UPTICK in heat waves has sent many different species of wildlife scurrying for new habitat where they can keep cool.

world by 30 days or more over the last four decades, spiking reproduction rates and therefore population size.

However, for some regions in the Southern hemisphere that are already very hot, increased temperature and dryness has actually shortened mosquito season, prompting a dip in reproduction rates.

In addition to mass mortality events, certain wildlife populations have been forced to migrate or change existing migration patterns. In the ocean and other bodies of water, the phenomenon that occurs when species migrate due to temporary changes in ocean surface temperatures caused by marine heatwaves is called thermal displacement.

Some groups of non-stationary species like whales or sea turtles have moved tens of thousands of kilometers to reach a new region at their preferred temperature. This changes the food chain and equilibrium of the ecosystem they have moved to and that they have moved from.

Ultimately, global average temperature rise will have many of the same effects on wildlife populations, but recent heat waves have had large effects in a small fraction of the time. Limiting global average temperature rise will limit the extremity of heat waves and reduce potential consequences for wildlife.

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COALER SPORTS

Coalers use familiar formula for 4th straight win

BY JIM SHELDON
SPORTS

Six touchdowns in six possessions. Talk about efficient. With their usual strong running attack combined with an aggressive defense, the Coal City football team overpowered Peotone with 33 first half points and cruised to their fourth straight win, 48-7 Friday in Coal City.

The defense got things



ON THE GO for the Coalers is senior TJ Babcock.

rolling with a Gavin Carpenter fumble recovery.

On their first play, Landin Benson broke free for a 35 yard touchdown run for a 7-0 lead.

"The fact that we were able to come out, get some stops defensively, our offense was able to make quick work out there," said head coach Francis Loughran.

"I think that really set the tone for the rest of the game. I thought the guys played well in every phase."

The Coalers would then turn Peotone over on downs before Benson struck again, this time on a great individual effort. 72 yards later, it was 13-0 CC.

"That play didn't start off very well, but that was all Landin, to be able to reverse field and score on that play. Having those big plays are huge momentum swings."

"His run really helped us out in that moment because we were able to get some breathing room early."

The junior only carried the ball seven times on the night, but he put up 124 yards and three touchdowns.

Next it was the passing game's turn to shine. Junior quarterback Zander Meents completed four passes for 44 yards with the drive being capped by a Gavin Carpenter 14 yard touchdown reception.

"We've looked for the progression throughout the year and he's definitely done that. I thought this week was the most efficient he's been so far this year. He put the ball in great spots, got the ball out and coordinated the offense."

Benson added an eight

yard touchdown run with 4:25 left in the half.

Right before the half, it was the Tanner Phillips show. The senior 6', 200 lb linebacker intercepted Peotone's Ruben Velasco and returned the ball 21 yards to the Coaler 19 yard line.

He then took a pitch from Meents and ran 18 yards, scoring a one yard touchdown the next play for a 33-0 half-time advantage.

"We just wanted to really reward him for his efforts. He's a fantastic player who has done a great job for us at middle linebacker and is kind of the leader of the defense."

"He made a nice play on the interception and coach Jim Looper decided to keep him in the game on offense and getting in the endzone was a little bit of a reward for everything he's done. He's had a great season so far."

With the running clock in their sights, senior Jim Feeney took the opening kickoff of the second half 96 yards for a touchdown. Crede Skubic ran in the two-point conversion, 41-0 CC.

"We had talked about scoring on our opening drive and our kickoff return did a great job along with special teams coach Cam Stone in the prep work and Feeney did the rest."

Peotone would finally get on the board at the 9:07 mark of the third quarter as Chase Rivera got behind the defense for a 74 yard touchdown pass.

The visitors were held to 71 yards rushing on 26 attempts (2.7 yards per carry). They passed for 52 yards outside of the one big play.

"Usually when you play Peotone, they are going to be physical and want to run the ball. I thought our guys answered the call this week."

"First and second downs are huge against an offense like this and we were able to put them in third and long situations and force them to pass."

"Emmett Easton, John Keigher, Austin Davy, Alec Waliczek and Tanner Wallace really did a good job up front and were able to free up our linebackers. I couldn't be happier with the physicality of the group."

22 different Coalers recorded tackles led by Carpenter's 10. Skubic had six, Phillips and Davy made five and TJ Babcock, Jake Cerutti and Gabe McHugh tallied four stops.

Buddy Widlowski, Feeney, Layne Cuddy and Joe Watson all made three tackles. Easton, Keigher, Christopher, Chase Dehler, Hayden Clark and Rey Gonzalez finished with two. Also recording a tackle were Wallace, Stephen Byers, Ryan Endrst and Landon Pollworth.

Watson closed out the scoring with an eight yard touchdown run. He had 31 yards on seven carries.

Carpenter had a 48 yard run and Feeney (15 yards) and McHugh (two) also carried the ball. Feeney added two receptions for 18 yards, Gonzalez also made an 18 yard reception and Wyatt Wickiser recorded 12 yards on two catches.



SPEEDING TOWARD the endzone late in the game on Friday is senior Joe Watson who scored from eight yards out.

Coalers hoping for some revenge against Reed-Custer

BY JIM SHELDON
SPORTS

It was a similar situation last season. The Coal City football team headed into their matchup with Reed-Custer on a four-game winning streak. They had given up only 28 points in that span while averaging 42.5 points per game.

It was close for a quarter, before the Comets kicked it into high gear and rolled 58-14.

That was a different R-C squad though. This year's team is sitting at 2-3 after last week's 35-14 loss to Wilmington and the Coalers are looking for some revenge, having been outscored 91-23

in the last two meetings.

"It's very similar to each week. We want to try and focus on stopping the run. It's going to be a big focal point," said Coaler coach Francis Loughran.

"Rex Pfeifer in the backfield does a great job and we're going to try to force them into some passing situations."

Pfeifer is similar to Landin Benson in that he's a homerun hitter who can break free at any time for a long touchdown run. The senior has scored 14 touchdowns in five games.

"Our guys are going to be really anxious to go out, continue this conference schedule and hopefully we can go in, play some smart football and

get the job done."

Reed-Custer coach Gavin Johnston knows that containing Benson will be a priority which is easier said than done.

"I feel like there are a lot of good junior running backs in this conference. He's definitely special. They do a nice job upfront protecting for him, but even the times when it seems like he's bottled up, he breaks one for a 70 yard touchdown."

"We need to get to him not far past the line of scrimmage or even behind the line and we have to wrap up. He keeps his legs going. We can't play high. He's similar to Kyle Farrell from Wilmington and Rex for us. They run angry."



BIG COALER D—Coal City's defense was quick to the ball Friday against Peotone. Making the stop are Chase Dehler (15), Hayden Clark (29), Layne Cuddy (31) and Rey Gonzalez (39).

Fr. Coalers too quick for Clifton

The Coaler freshmen football team was back in action for the second time in four days traveling to Clifton Central HS and coming home with a 49-6 victory on Thursday.

The scoreboard got a workout in the first quarter with the Coalers striking just 21 seconds into the contest.

Brody D'Orazio took the opening kickoff 68 yards down to the 4 yard line where he scored on the next snap.

Clifton answered right back with a 56-yard pass a minute later but that would be their only tally of the night.

Logan Natyshok, who led the ground game with 81 yards on 9 carries, scored his first of three touchdowns from 8 yards out.

The defense forced a punt

on the next possession and Aidan Scrogam took it to the house on the 46-yard return. And then the rout was on.

Scrogam had 61 yards on seven carries, Cooper Morris ran for 11 yards and a touchdown on two carries, Tyler Phillips finished the night with 14 yards on two tries, D'Orazio carried the rock four times for 27 yards and a touchdown, and Theo Fritz ran the ball five times for 67 yards and scored on a 33 yard touchdown trot.

Fritz led the defense with six tackles, D'Orazio, Scrogam, Kole Carpenter, and Phillips all recorded four stops.

Wyatt Chase recovered a fumble while Connor Henline and Morris each recorded an interception.

The victory improves

record to 3-2. Up next is Reed-Custer on Oct. 2

Late score costly

Coal City fell short in their rivalry game against Wilmington, 21-14. The Wildcats scored with 23 seconds left in the first half to go up 6-0.

For the Coalers, Connor Henline connected with Logan Natyshok on a 63-yard pass to the 2 yard line. Two plays later Aidan Scrogam scored the first of his two touchdowns from a yard out courtesy of the fine offensive line play of Sean Bergin, Max Kramer, Theo Fritz, Gavin Clubb, Kelen Forsythe, Reese Fitzpatrick, and Alec Carlson.

The second half both offenses sustained long scoring drives.

The wildcats started with an 85-yard drive to go up 14-6. The Coalers answered with their own 7-minute, 75-yard scoring drive. Natyshok caught a critical 14-yard pass from Henline to convert on a 3rd-

and-12 on the final scoring drive. Scrogam scored from five yards out along with the two-point conversion to tie it at 14-14.

Wilmington scored on their final drive to take the lead for good 21-14.

Natyshok led the ground game with 70 yards on 13 carries and Scrogam finished with 62 yards on 19 tries and two touchdowns. Henline finished the night 4 of 7 for 90 yards.

Defensively, Bobby Rodriguez led the team with 5 solo stops. Brody D'Orazio and Fritz tallied 3 tackles a piece.

Rivals sharing players is true sportsmanship

When the Coal City Middle School sixth grade baseball team took the field for a recent game against Reed-Custer, they discovered their opponents were short on players.

To ensure they could play, the two teams worked out a plan and it showcased what true sportsmanship is all about.

"We had some boys get sick the night before a scheduled 6th grade double header against CCMS. When Saturday morning rolled around, we did not have nine boys to field a

complete team" the RC Athletic director said.

"Coal City's coach and players were extremely understanding and shared some of their boys with us so everyone could get some innings in. The umpires and parents were on board, and we ended up playing a combined 9 innings of ball. The kids had a blast, too."

Coal City Superintendent Chris Spencer commended the sixth grade players and Coach Mike Pfeifer for their outstanding display of sportsmanship.

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Coalers get a victory over St. Anne

Coal City soccer participated in the Rivals Cup tournament over in Manteno. The Coalers went 1-2 with losses to Fisher/Gibson City, 0-2, and Beecher, 0-4; and a win against St. Anne, 6-2.

Goals for Coal City in the tournament came from Timi Shabani (2), Trey Buck, Adrian Dames, Owen Petersen, and Martin Ramirez. Carter Nicholson had an outstanding few games with a total of 38 saves.

Coal City is now 1-11-1 on the season.

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Scrappy Panthers surprise the Lady Coalers



COAL CITY VOLLEYBALL player Corrina Barkley passes the ball during Tuesday night's game against Reed-Custer. The Lady Coalers defeated them 25-14, 26-24.

It was one of those nights the Lady Coalers would just as soon forget.

With only one loss to Wilmington as the ICE Conference reached its midpoint, Coal City (5-2) is still in the hunt. But Manteno (2-5) didn't help matters on Thursday when they upset the Varsity Lady Coalers, 23-25, 25-20, and 23-25.

Coal City overall record is 13-10 and 5-2 in ICE.

Aubrey Mellen had 20 setting assists, 11 digs, and 3 kills.

Kayla Henline had 14 setting assists, 5 digs, 3 kills, and 1 service ace.

Emma Rodriguez had 13 kills, 12 digs, 1 service ace, and 1 block while Kenzie Henline had 6 kills and 2 service aces.

Paige Walker had 5 digs, 13 digs, and 1 service ace. Addison Hodgen had 3 kills and 2 blocks. Jadyn Shaw had 11 digs.

The JV Lady Coalers beat Manteno 25-6, 22-25, and 25-16 bringing their overall record to 11-3 and 7-0 in ICE.

The Freshman beat Manteno 25-18 and 25-19 bringing their overall record to 6-8 and 4-3 in ICE.

Down the Comets
The Varsity Lady Coalers beat Reed Custer 25-14 and 26-24 on Tuesday.

Aubrey Mellen had 14 setting assists, 8 digs, and 2 kills.

Naomi Rodriguez had 7 setting assists, 1 dig, 1 service ace, and 1 kill.

Kayla Henline had 2 setting assists and 2 digs.

Emma Rodriguez had 10 kills and 3 digs.

Kenzi Henline had 4 kills, 3 digs and 2 service aces.

Addison Hodgen had 2 blocks and 1 kill.

Jadyn Shaw had 5 digs.

Paige Walker had 4 digs and 1 kill.

Maddie Gomez had 3 digs.

The JV Lady Colaers beat Reed Custer 25-12 and 25-13 while the Freshman Lady Coalers lost 26-24, 18-25 and 21-25.



KAYLA HENLINE from Coal City sets the ball up for her team during Tuesday night's game. Henline had two setting assists and two digs.

Season ends for CCMS A baseball

Coaler A baseball season came to an end last week with a 6-0 loss to Shorewood Troy.

Dougie Bedinger got the start on the mound going 4 innings allowing 6 runs (5 earned), on 6 hits with 5 strikeouts and 3 walks. Trevor Walker came on to throw 3 strong innings allowing 0 runs on 1 hit and 1 strikeout. Tyce Farrell doubled; Wyatt Homering, and Bedinger added hits. Coalers finish the season 12-5.

"This was a tough loss, but I think the kids played well; things just didn't break our way

today. In all, this group had a fantastic year with some quality wins along the way. They were a pleasure to coach and we look forward to seeing them at the high school very soon," said Coach Greg Wills.

Coal City 13, Wilm. 0

CCMS opened regional play with a 13-0, 4 inning win over Wilmington.

Dougie Bedinger started on the bump going 3 innings allowing 0 hits with 5 strikeouts. Trevor Walker came on to throw the last inning, allowing just 1 hit to preserve the

shutout. Dillon Ness was 2-3 hitting his second home run in 2 days with 3RBIs. Frankie Ponio was 2-3 with 3RBI, Trevor Walker was 2-2 with an RBI. Ryland DeMichele, Bedinger (RBI), and Tyce Farrell (3RBI) added hits.

"It was great to be able to start post season play in such a big way. Dougie and Trevor were great and we really did a nice job offensively, especially in two strike counts."

Slugfest

The Coalers slugged their way to a 17-1, 4 inn. win vs

Pontiac.

Caiden Tourigny, Trevor Walker, Dillon Ness, and Jackson Duke combined on a 1 hitter on the mound.

Ness was 2-for-3 with a home run and an RBI, Kal Hogan was 2-for-2 with two RBIs. Ryland DeMichele had a double and three RBIs.

Cayden Winke also added a double and two RBIs. Frankie Ponio (RBI), Colten Lynn, Walker, Gage Krause, Wyatt Homering, and Kory Lovell added hits in the win.

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