

COAL CITY COURANT

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2020

A FREE PRESS NEWSPAPER



SECOND GRADE STUDENTS in Connie Terrel's class at Coal City Elementary School had big reactions to the makeover their classroom received thanks to a \$10,000 grant their teacher received from the Meemic Foundation and Lakesore Learning.

Classroom makeover

One lucky elementary school teacher wins \$10,000 prize

BY ANN GILL

One might say Connie Terrel was on a lucky streak winning not one, but three educational giveaways in a matter of months, the most significant a classroom

The second grade teacher at Coal City Elementary School regularly submits her name to receive educational tools provided by the Meemic Foundation for the Future of Education. The non-profit was founded through

Meemic Insurance Company to provide financial assistance to public and private schools in order to advance academic The foundation provides grants to

schools and from time to time supports educational giveaways to educators. Terrel, a member of the Meemic

Foundation Club, and others within the Unit 1 School District often submit their names with the hope of being selected.

Last school year, Terrel entered a drawing to win a a robot for her classroom



BEFORE THE MAKEOVER

foundation and Lakeshore Learning, a developer and retailer of educational materials.

when the foundation Then announced late last year that it had teamed up the Lakeshore to provide \$10,000 classroom makeovers, Terrel once again applied.

A couple of months later she was learned her classroom was one of 12 across selected to receive a standup desk from the three states to be selected for a customized



AFTER THE MAKEOVER

makeover that included everything from design services to installation.

Elementary school principal Jennifer Kenney said she was excited for the longtime educator, and they were both looking forward to seeing the classroom take on a

Terrel was able work with Lakeshore to Just after the new year, the teacher design the classroom space, a process that

SEE RENOVATION, PAGE 2

All I want for Christmas Three vying for board

Students in Owensby's second grade class at Coal City Elementary School wrote letters to Santa Claus and they shared them with The Coal City Coruant before sending them to the North Pole. The letters appear as written by the students.

Dear Santa,

This year me and Elliot made gingerbread houses but Elliot made a train. I would reilly want a huverbord. I have ben trieing to be good this year. I got my pickcher took with you and if I fell off a huverbord you siad youwould feel stink stank stunk. You also siad you would feel like you something Christmas is my favorite holiday. Santa, what is your favorite cookie?

Love, Emily

Dear Santa,

This year I've been so good. For Chistmas I want a iphone 11. How are the reindeer doing? Tell Jangles I love her. Happy Holidays!

Love, Adelia

Dear Santa,

I lover you. How ar the reindeer Santa? I want 17 Mine dras, money, a bike, my Gampa Rod, a puppy, elfclos for Snowflake, a bike helmit, a sled, an ipad. One mor thing! Mrs. Claus, can I have a pikshr of an elf? I will give you milk and cookies, Santa.

Love, Aubree

Dear Santa,



SECOND GRADE STUDENTS in Brea Owensby's calss at Coal City Elementary School are anxiously awaiting the arrival of Santa Claus.

good! Do you know what I want fur Christmas? I know I want a new tablit, and a drawing book. How is Rudolph? I'm going to make the best cookies This year I've been so ever. What is Mrs. Claus doing?

Santa do like hot chocolate? Well I like hot chocolate it is the best. And how are the elves Dear Santa, doing too? I'll leave your cookies at the fireplace. I hope you have a great day Santa!

This year I hope Santa came to my house this Christmas. I love Christmas I

hope that I get toys Santa. Christmas is my farite Holidas. I hope that evrevon has a good Christmas and my famley.

Love, Brayden

Dear Santa,

I have been a awesome brother. I would like a Harry Potter book collection. I would apreciate if you go me what I wanted. I would also like Tom Riddle's diary. I would also like aquill. I'll make cookies. I wishChristmas eve was today. Merry Christmas!

Dear Santa,

I really want glitr so I can make a glitr bath. You tryi it. I saw that you love the chocolate cookies. I hope that I was good this year for Christmas. I really want to see your elfs. I want a Paper book that I can draw in. Have a good Christmas.

Love, Athena

Dear Santa,

I would like amonus app and a tablet. I have been very very very good. Santa, I would like an Alexa, a TV, a PS4, and a new computer for my office P.S. where's roudolph? I'd like a contraption for Chrismas and that's all, Santa.

Love, Timothy

Dear Santa,

This year I will want a toy. Love, Yelisa I canot wait until Christmas moning. I will make you cookies and milk! I would like a hotweel set, a monster truk, a

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 2

Grundy receives first doses of vaccine

STAFF REPORT

Grundy County received its first doses of the COVID-19 vaccine over the

"In coordination with neighboring health departments, hospital systems and the Illinois Department of Public Health, Grundy County was able to receive 100 doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine late Saturday evening," Grundy County public health administrator Michelle Pruim reported on Sunday.

The first group of persons to be offered this vaccine will be healthcare

Morris Hospital & Healthcare Centers launched its vaccination plan immediately with plans to use the first

allotment by Monday.

Pruim said additional vaccine is expected to arrive regularly in the weeks and months ahead and plans are being finalized by the health department to provide vaccine to healthcare personnel not affiliated with health systems and to other individuals in priority groups when more vaccine

becomes available. All long-term care facilities in the county will receive vaccine through a federal program called the Pharmacy Partnership Program and distribution

is expected to begin next week. As of Monday, IDPH was reporting the total number of positive cases in the county had reached 3,623, with 36

deaths from COVID-19 complications. Since Dec. 16, there have been five reported deaths— one male in his 70s,

one male and one female in their 80s, one male in his 90s and a female over 100 years of age.

According to the health department it is following 423 people who have recently tested positive and are in isolation, and each of their close contacts. Residents are encouraged to follow isolation and quarantine guide-

Grundy was once again on the state's COVID-19 warning list exceeding targets in four of the eight metrics designed to determine an increase in coronavirus activity including the number of cases, test positivity, tests performed and intensive care unit availability.

The designation comes from statistics reported to the state from Dec. 6-12. During that period the county's

test positivity rate was 17.6%, down from 21.4% one week earlier.

As of Dec. 18, the county's seven day rolling test positivity rate had dropped to 12.7% and 9.7% for the North Central Region which includes

The region's rate has shown a gradual decline since Nov. 17 when the rate was at 16.6%.

As of Monday, IDPH was reporting 754 cases have been confirmed within the 60416 zip code since the start of the pandemic in March while 1,469 cases have been verified within the 60450 zip

On the eve of the Christmas holiday, state and local health officials encourage residents to stay home and opt for virtual Christmas visits this sea-

seat

BY ANN GILL

The Unit 1 Board of Education will welcome a new member next month, and the seat will be filled by an individual who is seeking to be voted in during the April 2021 consolidated election.

At the board's November meeting, Jeff Emerson announced his immediate resignation and encouraged his fellow board members to consider filling his seat with an individual, who by pulling a candidate petition, seeking election in the spring.

Board members considered his suggestion and in early December announced that was the course they would take. The appointment will be made during the Jan. 6 meeting.

Six petitions were handed out by the Grundy County Clerk and Recorders office. Two of the six were obtained by incumbents—Mary Gill and Shawn Hamilton. When contacted by the district, three of the other four petition holders indicated they would be filing for election and were interested in the appointment.

At a special meeting called to interview the candidates on Dec. 16, the Board of Education heard from Daniel Englehardt, Adam Brncich and Steve Rogers.

Rogers, a former educator who now runs a video production company, was the first to be questioned by the board.

When asked why he wanted to be a member of the Unit 1 Board, Rogers said his interest came after a community member asked if he'd ever consider seeking election.

From his work in education he feels it's a responsibility to do the best one can for the kids, staff and community as a whole.

Englehardt, a former police officer, was next up and shared that he has the time to serve the district and believes he could be an effective board member based on his ability to work well with others and bring new ideas to the table.

SEE VACANT SEAT, PAGE 2





DEAR SANTA—Students in Brea Owensby's second grade class at Coal City Elementary School await the arrival of Santa Claus. The children wrote letters to the jolly old elf and shared them with The Coal City Courant before they were sent to the North Pole. Owensby and her students join the newspaper staff in wishing readers a Merry Christmas. Sending holiday greetings are [from left, row one]: Tim Wegner, Ryker Senodenos, Ryan Housman, Lexi Henderson, Hannah Sinkular, Aubree Dearth, Emma Hamilton, Athena Libner and Drake Aichele. Joining Carter Giordano in row two are Jackson Prium, Rylan Davy, Brayden Brncich, Collin Ness, Yelisabetta Rivera, Adelia Gonzalez, Sienna Ruffatto, Emily Munsell and Jaycob Wilson. Students not picutred are Olivia Vironda, Lee Wren and Xavier Ramirez.

Letters

hotwheel car, and a new stuff animal. Love, Rylan

Dear Santa. Christmas is my faverite holiday

because I get presents I will leave home made cookies and milk. This Chistmas I whant a camera drone, bike, mopped, and love. What is your faverite cookie? Love, Hannah

Dear Santa, For Christmas I want to be a you tuda would also want a gaming room.

Love, Ryan

tell comet I sed hi!

Dear Santa,

I have been ok this year. Can I please have a squshey skates,

I had a relly good year! I know I How is rudof? I'll leve you cookies.

Dear Santa.

Dear Santa,

have been bad some times but I help my step dad a lot outside. I hope I am on the nice list? I hope you, the raindeer, and the elvs are ok. Christmas is my faveorite Holiday. This year I would like a lego set, play-doe, a computer, and a new watch.

pinknepop for Christmas? How ar the

reindeer? Santa, my elf on the first

day that he came he hangd from the

banister. I will leve you cookies and

milk. Santa, how is Miss Claus? If it

This year I have been good. You

can't belive what my elves do! I'm so exited for Christmas! I want gliter for

Christmas. How are you, Mrs. Claus,

all of the elves and the reinder? I love

Christmas! Merry Christmas, Santa!

Love, Lexi

Love, Emma

snows this year I'll make snowmen.

Love, Jaycob

Dear Santa,

This year I would like a new tablet and a ninetndo. I would like a computer. Have I been good this year? I would like to see the reindeer! Love, Drake

Dear Santa,

I have been good! I want or christmas is newtendo. ihone, tenes rakits, tenes dolls and a new bike. I Love Christmas. Christmas is my favet howleday. I whil give you milk and

Love, Collin

Dear Santa,

I want for Chistmas is a coputer! I like my famely and I love Chistmas. I like Chistmas moore and I love to open presets. I love to give presets to my famely, and I hope that Santa has a good Chstmas.

Love, Ryker

Dear Santa,

This year I have been prety good. For Christmas I want a vr headset, books, and clothes. I also want tov cars. I also will give you cookies and milk. I'm exited for Christmas!

Love, Carder

Dear Santa,

This year I really want a dog. I know my mom said no because of Ranger, but I really love Ranger but he dosent like me amy more. I'vreally wanted the new I Phone 11. I really wanted the computer. I will leave milk, cookies and carrets for the reindeer and you.

Love, Sienna

I hope you are doing good. For

Christmas I want new Legos, electric scooter, fishing pole and a camo hoodie. I hope you are safe in the

North Pole. I can't wat to make you cookies. We will leve carrots for the raindeer. Merry Christmas. Love, Lee

Dear Santa,

What I want for Chismas is a kids dijdel sporting wach. Hoflly you don't get stuck in my chimny. I can't water for Chismas. I am going sleding, ice scating, and caching snowflakes, too.

maybe tru to make a iglue too.

Mavbe I'll have some hot chocolate,

bild a snowman or two, make some grnger Bred man, or rap presents too. We are going to have to bundl up and

Dear Santa,

I've been a good boy. my sister has been hurting me. but she said sorry. I need my sisterto get presents.I want her to feel the spirit of Christmas.

Love, Xavier

Love, Olivia

Renovation

occurred pre-pandemic.

Everything was set for the renovation, but then schools closed and everything was paused for the pandemic.

Since the first design plan was submitted, Kenney said some changes were made to comply with guidelines for social distancing in the classroom. However, when the time comes the items Terrel selected for her room will allow for student to resume collaborative work. After months of waiting for the stu-

dents new standup desks with rollers, stationary and wobble chairs and storage bags, the school got the call that Lakeshore would be delivering the items and sending in a team set it all up.

So on a recent school day, once all of the students had headed home, the crew arrived and renovated the classroom. Once they wrapped up, Terrel put up

her holiday decorations and then the school's custodial crew came in to clean and sanitize the room. Kenney said the big reveal came the

next morning when Terrel welcomed them in to their fun new learning space.

Although the students were aware

CCFPD announces 2021

meeting dates

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Coal City Fire Protection District's Board of Trustees will meet on

the Third Tuesday of every month at 7:00 pm. at Coal City Fire Protection District's

Station #2 Training Room, 1455 S. Berta Rd., Coal City. In the event a meeting time

or place should change, a notice will be

placed in the Coal City Courant and at the station prior to the changed meeting.

January 19, 2021 February 16, 2021 March 16, 2021 April 20, 2021

May 18, 2021 June 15, 2021

July 20, 2021

August 17, 2021 September 21, 2021

October 19, 2021 November 16, 2021

December 21, 2021

on Dec 23, 2020.

Published in the Coal City Courant



Courtesy photo

DOZENS OF BOXES were delivered to Connie Terrel's second grade classroom as a team from Lakeshore Learning arrived to set up the classroom with \$10,000 of educational furniture the teacher received through a grant provided by the Meemic Foundation.

their teacher was selected for the grant. they did not know when the makeover would take place so it came as an early Christmas surprise.

The principal reports Terrel is now the envy of everyone in the building.

individual when they meet on

Brncich all filed their nomi-

nating petitions for the con-

solidated election prior to the

Dec. 21 deadline, as have

incumbent members Gill and

Coal Bin to dispose

of property

Rogers, Englehardt and

"It turned out very nice, and we are excited for her," Kenney said.

was at 5,272 calls.

Cop calls

STAFF REPORT

Police activity in the month of November was down 42.8% a figure marked by a significant decrease in the number of offi-

According to its monthly report to members of the Village Board, the Coal City Police Department's data shows officers initiated 185 calls, 264 fewer than the prior month. The report further notes a slight decrease in calls for service—167 compared to 176 in October. Overall, officers logged 352 calls with 225 requiring a report.

Breaking down those calls, there were 103 traffic stops with the majority of those handled by two officers—Kevin Jones and Kady Sassenger. Officers handed out 25 traffic citations and responded to nine traffic crashes.

The department filed four criminal and one driving under the influence charge.

There were also a dozen ordinance violation citations

At the close of November total officer activity for the year

Coal Bin to dispose

of property

UBLIC NOTICE LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given, that pursuant to Section 40 of the Self-Storage Facility Act, State of Illinois, a sale or other disposition of property by COAL BIN STORAGE INC will be held online at www.BID13.com auction ending on January 6, 2021 1:00 PM, to sell or dispose of the personal property of the following person, Nicholas Grygiel, 797 W. Cermak Rd, Braidwood, IL 60408, Unit A39, to enforce a lien for storage pursuant to the self-storage facility act, in the amount of \$380.00, plus attorney

fees & costs. Published in the Coal City Courant on Dec. 23 and 30, 2020. Coal Bin to dispose of property

PUBLIC NOTICE

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given, that pursuant Section 40 of the Self-Storage Facility Act. State of Illinois, a sale or other dispo sition of property by COAL BIN STORAGE INC will be held online at www.BID13.com, auction ending on January 6, 2021 1:00 PM, to sell or dispose of the personal property of the following person, Charles Haltom, 302 N. Lennox, Braceville, IL

Published in the Coal City Courant

60407, Unit G10, to enforce a lien for storage pursuant to the self-storage facility act, in the amount of \$430.00, plus attorney

on Dec. 23, and 30, 2020

Attorney Black files Martin estate claim notice

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT **GRUNDY COUNTY - IN PROBATE** No. 2020 P 113 In the Matter of the Estate of

Deceased **CLAIM NOTICE**

NOTICE is given to creditors of the death of Alfred R. Martin. Letters of office as Independent Administrator were issued Deanna Romano, 30W 265 Maple Court, Warrenville, IL 60555, whose attorney is FRANK J. BLACK, BLACK & BLACK, 201 Liberty Street, Suite 211, Morris, Illinois 60450. Claims against the estate may be

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

Frank J. Black Black & Black Lawyers 201 Liberty Street Suite 211 P.O. Box 148

on Dec. 23 and 30, 2020 and Jan. 6, 2021.

DEANNA ROMANO
INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATOR Frank J. Black Black & Black Lawyers 201 Liberty Street Suite 211 P.O. Box 148 Morris, IL 60450 Morris, IL 60450 815-942-0594 815-942-0594 Published in the Coal City Courant Published in the Coal City Courant on Dec. 9, 16 and 23, 2020.

Vacant seat Brncich was the final can-

didate to appear before the board and shared that his background working in higher education could make him a good fit for the board seat.

He told the board that he would like to be a part of the community and his work at the college level could be a plus for the district as he could provide insight on changes at that level that could be used to enhance what the district is doing here.

All three candidates answered about 15 questions drafted by the sitting board. Those questions touched on a

Attorney Black files

Lutz estate claim notice

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT

OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
GRUNDY COUNTY - IN PROBATE

CLAIM NOTICE

NOTICE is given to creditors of the death of Jacqulyn J. Lutz. Letters of office as Independent Co-Executors were issued

to Stephen Lutz, 1150 Patterson Dr., Morris, IL 60450 and Michael Lutz, 395 Twilight Dr., Morris, IL 60450, whose attor-

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

INDEPENDENT CO-EXECUTORS

days after it has been filed. STEPHEN LUTZ

MICHAEL LUTZ

is FRANK J. BLACK, BLACK & CK, 201 Liberty Street, Suite 211,

No. 2020 P 109 In the Matter of the Estate of

Jacqulyn J. Lutz,

Morris, Illinois 60450.

myriad of topics from what makes a good board member, to the candidate's understanding of the district's economic and educational challenges in the years ahead. They also asked the candidates to outline their strengths and weaknesses, what they feel is the role of a board member and their view on how the district has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the close of the interviews the board moved into closed session to discuss the candidates. No action was taken.

The board will announce its selection and appoint that

> Attorney Black files Lutz estate claim notice

PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT GRUNDY COUNTY - IN PROBATE No. 2020 P 121 In the Matter of the Estate of

Lavern R. Lutz,

Deceased CLAIM NOTICE

NOTICE is given to creditors of the death of Lavern R. Lutz. Letters of office as Independent Co-Executors were issued to Stephen Lutz. 1150 Patterson Dr., Morris. IL 60450 and Michael Lutz, 395 Twilight Dr., Morris, IL 60450, whose attorney is

FRANK J. BLACK, BLACK & BLACK, 201 iberty Street, Suite 211, Morris, Illinois

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.

STEPHEN LUTZ MICHAEL LUTZ INDEPENDENT CO-EXECUTORS Black & Black Lawyers 201 Liberty Street Suite 211 P.O. Box 148 Morris, IL 60450 815-942-0594 Published in the Coal City Courant on Dec. 23 and 30, 2020 and Jan. 6, 2021.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Hamilton.

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given, that pursuant to Section 40 of the Self-Storage Facility Act, State of Illinois, a sale or other disposition of property by COAL BIN STORAGE INC will be held online at www.BID13.com auction ending on January 6, 2021 1:00 PM, to sell or dispose of the personal property of the following person, Lauren Boothby, 2114 Taliesen Ln, Rockford, IL 61107, Unit E29, to enforce a lien for storage pursuant to the self-storage facility act, in the amount of \$305.00, plus attorney fees & costs.

Published in the Coal City Courant on Dec.23 and 30, 2020.

Happy Holidays

Tammy Johnson, AAMS® Financial Advisor



12 East North Street Coal City, IL 60416 815-634-0205 www.edwardjones.com

Edward Jones MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING Member SIPC



Ryan T Weimer

Financial Advisor



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Deadlines for the Prairie Shopper

Display Advertising: Thursday, 2 p.m. Classified & Public Notices: Thursday 5 p.m. Deadline for The Free Press Advocate,

Braidwood Journal and Coal City Courant

News and Advertising: Monday, noon E-mail: News & News Photos: news@fpnusa.com Ads & Artwork: ads@fpnusa.com

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> Eric D. Fisher, publisher Ann Gill, editor

Heroes & Helpers make Christmas bright for Grundy kids

County Heroes & Helpers, Inc., and local police officers, firefighters, sheriff deputies, and emergency medical service celebrated Christmas with 76 children and their families through the second annual Shop with a Hero on Saturday, Dec. 12.

The children were selected through an application process where families had opportunity to share about a hardship from 2020 that was making celebrating Christmas particularly difficult.

"With COVID-19 impacting us this year we had to get creative, we knew we couldn't have our event like last year where we match a hero; police, fire, sheriff, EMS with a child and send them on a shopping spree together," said Heroes & president Wendy

Briley.
"We needed to be able to provide social distancing and space our families out, which I am happy to say with the help of First Christian Church and Pastor Scott Zorn we were able to successfully provide a safe, social distanced event for

Walmart in Morris. Each hero was given a list of necessities for the children; coats, clothes. shoes, etc. Items were then wrapped by the heroes and helpers and set aside for the big celebration day. Families were given a time slot to arrive at First Christian Church between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. on

Upon arrival, children were assigned a local hero and helper and were invited to greet Santa, Dave DiVincenzo, for a socially distant picture. Santa sat in Santa's house with a plexi-glass window separating them. The children were able to sit in front of him on a Santa's House specially built

The heroes then walked the children to tables of toys laid out by age, the children were able to pick out several toys. Once toys were picked, children continued through the one way circle to a gift opening station where the children opened a couple of the clothing items previously purchased by the heroes.

The stations were sanitized between children assur-Local heroes and volun- ing everything was clean and new bike.

ready for the next family. The heroes and helpers helped the families to their cars to load up all of their presents and Christmas cheer.

"The most important part of our celebration is giving children an opportunity to meet our county's heroes, said Briley. "We are so grateful and honored for all the heroes and departments throughout the entire county who came through and gave their undivided attention to the children we served this year.'

"It brings me a lot of joy to see the kids come through the doors and get to see all the heroes together interacting with the kids," said Sgt. Chris Harseim, of Coal City Police Department. "It is nice to see the community come together to give back to the kids." This is Harseim's second year to participate along with his wife, Britt Harseim who also helped with shopping, wrapping, and celebrating at the event

Due to an anonymous donor 22 bikes were able to be raffled off. Grundy County Sheriff Ken Briley surprised recipient's and then took photos with the child and their



GRUNDY COUNTY HEROES & Helpers hosted its second annual Shop with a Local Hero event and recipient Aycen Taylor was assisted at the holiday celebration by Coal City Police Department Sgt. Chris Harseim and his wife, Britt Harseim.

Coal City signs onto county mitigation plan

The village of Coal City will participate in Grundy County's 2020 multi-jurisdictional natural hazards mitiga-

Village approved the document that steps the county and the community on what steps to take after natural hazards including severe storms, tornados and

The plan includes projects within the county and each of the 11 communities that participated.

Each of the projects included in the multi-page document are aimed to reduce the impact of natural hazards on citizens, visitors, infrastructure, property and critical facilities.

Coal City has 16 items on its list that include scheduling regular ditch inspections, installation of backup generators, replacement of the North Broadway bridge and storm water conveyance improve-

Carbon Hill and Diamond also participated in the plan's Carbon Hill was the developstations and construction of a located at 910 S. Illinois St. storm shelter.

As for the village of will limit the setback to one 1-

basins, construction of an underground tornado shelter and the construction of a trunk sewer are part of its project list.

Coal City's Village Board Administrator Matt Fritz represented Coal City on the county's planning team.

In other matters from the board's Dec. 9 meeting:

 Trustees agreed to make final payment to Construction for work on the 2020 Street Improvement Plan. The total payment made to the contractor was \$17,515.95 with \$3,072.60 of that being paid out of the town's tax increment financing fund.

• The final payment for the new restroom facility in the Hope Helps playground was authorized to be made to Chamlin & Associates. The final payment was \$50,663.60.

The village received a grant for the project that came in at total cost of \$153,750. The village engineer noted the village has received 63% of the award to date.

 At the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning development. Among the Board, trustees approved an items outlined by the village of interior side yard setback variance to allow for the expanment of heating and cooling sion of a detached garage canceled, so the board will

Diamond, regular cleaning foot utilizing nearly all of the and maintenance of catch existing setback to expand the

The alteration to the garage is part of larger rear yard improvement that includes the construction of an in-ground swimming pool. • Trustees granted a cor-

ner side yard variance for the construction of a fence at 1035 The plan is for the fence to

stop at the front of a detached garage located on the property that is located 12-feet from the eastern boundary of the prop-

Village officials note the property was subject to an action by the village to eliminate a curb cut adjacent to the railroad crossing as recommended by the federal railroad authority.

• Trustees approved purchase orders totaling \$39,650.14. Included in the bills was a \$2,063.71 payment to Quality Auto Body for repairs to an emergency management agency vehicle, \$3,862 for computer equipment for a police vehicle and \$385 for a pair of noise cancel-

The meeting scheduled tonight [Dec. 23] has been reconvene in the new year The requested variance with a meeting set for 7 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 13.

ing headphones.

COAL CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWS

in observance of Christmas Day.

Monday, Dec. 28-Makerspace Mondays – 2-2:15 p.m. Every

Monday we will have a different

activity for you to create. Supplies are available for pickup

curbside or in-library. See some-

one in Youth Services. Supplies

are limited and registration is

Teen Canvas Night - 1-2 p.m.

closed in

Christmas.

required.

Saturday, Dec. 26-Library

observance of

Check out our digital services available 24/7 on our website at www.ccpld.org.

It's the season for adopt-

Town officials are seeking

Adopted on Dec. 1, the vil-

ing property tax levies, and the

Carbon Hill Village Board did

just that when they gathered

\$36,814 in property taxes to

support an annual appropria-

for the December meeting.

tion about \$1.3 million.

STAFF REPORT

Curbside Pick Up - Monday thru Thursday 9 a.m.-8 p.m., Friday 9 a.m.-6 p.m., and Saturday 9 a.m.-4 p.m. For more information on the procedures for curbside pick up go to our website at www.ccpld.org. Thursday, Dec. 24-Library

closed in observance Christmas Eve.

Friday, Dec. 25-Library closed

And, \$18,837 for special lage's levy requests \$17,977 for purposes that include \$4,667

ON SATURDAY, DEC. 12, the non-profit Grundy County Heroes & Helpers hosted its second annual

Shop with a Local Hero event, a day set aside to bring extra cheer to local children. Participants

included [from left, row one]: volunteers Jordie Cory, Tasha Saltzman, recipients Thomas Hernandez,

Olivia Farcus, Owen Farcus, JR Hernandez, and volunteer Shannon McConaughy. Standing in row two

are Grundy County Heroes & Helper board member Becky Di Vencenzo, Sheriff Ken Briley, Dwight Fire

Carbon Hill adopts levy seeking \$36,814

poses that are specifically

focused on administrative

The 2020 levy details the

Department Lt. Joshua Jahn, and sheriff's deputy Tony Cheshareck.

expenses.

\$6,000 toward salaries of vil- ance and Social Security. By statute approved levies lage officials, \$1,842 for the municipal audit, \$8,399 to must be filed with the county cover insurance and a total of clerk and recorder on or before \$1,736 for office and miscellaneous costs.

request that looks to collect toward street lighting, insur-

general corporate fund pur- for police protection, \$1,193

the last Tuesday in December. Carbon Hill has fulfilled the requirement as its levy was filed with the clerk on Dec. 3.

> We provide the supplies and you bring the creativity to paint your own masterpiece with Ms. Tricia. Register to receive the Zoom link and canvas to participate in the

going to the water fund and

\$10,125 for garbage services.

requested of taxpayers will go

remaining

Wednesday, Dec. 30- Digital Escape Room – Teen – 3:30-3:45 p.m. The Spy Apprentice Digital Escape Room: Travel the world as a Spy Apprentice, solving clues and mysteries. Difficulty: Moderate/ Hard. Registration is

First Farmers State Bank to merge with Bank of Pontiac

Bank of Pontiac, head-quartered in Pontiac, IL and First Farmers State Bank, headquartered in Minier, IL, announced that First Farmers State Bank will merge into Bank of Pontiac.

The transaction will add banking locations in Minier, Delavan and Bloomington to the footprint of Bank of Pontiac, which presently has offices throughout Livingston County as well as in Coal City. It will bring the assets of Bank of Pontiac to approximately

\$800 million.

We are excited to teamwith First Farmers State Bank," said Bill Kauffman, President and CEO of Bank of Pontiac. "We are committed to the local business community and are confident that this partnership will bring additional strength and opportunities to First Farmers State Bank's market area."

"After more than 145 years, it's time to affiliate with an organization that we trust to continue to care for the banking needs of the communities we love," said Craig Peine, Chairman of First Farmers State Bank. believe that the acquisition of First Farmers State Bank by Bank of Pontiac ensures the

continuity and quality of banking services our customers deserve.

"Beyond benefitting our customers, this is a win-win for both our staff and communities," said First Farmers State Bank CEO Brian Schroeder. "As a larger community bank, Bank of Pontiac will open new doors for professional growth and development for our employees. Whether you're talking about making loans, community donations, or simply good corporate citizenship, Bank of Pontiac has an outstanding record of commitment to the communities it serves. We're sure that this will continue to be the case here in Minier, Delavan Bloomington.'

Coal City ICU nurse Allison Giordano recognized

Life-long Coal City resident Allison Giordano has made an extraordinary impact in the Intensive Care Unit at Morris Hospital over the past four years, first as a certified nursing assistant and now as RN. Those who work with her know that even the most critical patients will be in great hands when Giordano is on duty. She picks up extra shifts any time she can, works hard to build relationships with patients' families to keep them at ease, and voluntarily participates in committees as a way to give back to the hospital. Recognized as a great asset to the ICU and to Morris Hospital, Giordano was honored as the hospital's Fire Starter of the Month for November.

Giordano says she feels fortunate to have been hired as a CNA in the Morris Hospital ICU in 2016 and believes the hospital gave her a great opportunity when she stayed in the ICU after receiving her RN degree from Rasmussen College in

July 2019.
"I had always been interested in health care and thought working as a CNA was a good step toward becoming an RN,' said Giordano. "I like the long term aspect of the ICU setting. Each patient is so different, and the needs of each patient is constantly changing. I like the challenge."



nurse, was recognized by Morris Hospital as the Fire Starter of the Month.

Morris Hospital ICU Manager Dawn Clayburn said from the time Giordano

started on the unit as a CNA, Clayburn could sense she is the type of person who always wants to learn more.

"Allison has such a great work ethic and always goes above and beyond," said Clayburn. "Out of concern for the patients, she willingly picks up extra hours and even extra roles if there's a need on the unit. She is concerned about others, always wants to be sure we have enough nurses to take care of our patients, and is willing to learn new roles so she can help out wherever she can.'

Morris Hospital ICU Charge RN Stephanie Kelly nominated Giordano as Fire Starter of the Month and couldn't give her higher praises.

"As a charge RN, I know that when Allison is working, I have someone behind me wanting and willing to help out in any way she can, even if it means assisting with a code on another unit," said Kelly. "She is a pleasure to work with due to her skill and personality and inspires others to take the extra step.

In early civilizations, fire starters were individuals who had the important job of keeping the flame alive. With over 1,400 employees, Morris Hospital & Healthcare Centers is the largest employer in Grundy

Helping you protect what matters most.

Let's set a time to discuss your auto, home and life insurance needs.



Dean Tambling, LUTCF Financial Representative 65 E Church St Coal City, IL 60416-1604 www.countryfinancial.com/dean.tambling dean.tambling@countryfinancial.com



uto and Home policies issued by COUNTRY Mutual Insurance Company", COUNTRY Casualty Insurance ompany", or COUNTRY Preferred Insurance Company", Life insurance policies issued by COUNTRY Life surance Company" and COUNTRY Investors Life Assurance Company".

0520-513HC_16272-11/30/2020

Free Press Newspapers readers

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

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

To voice your opinion, please go to

Merry Christmas

www.freepressnewspapers.com, Submit Sound-off or call 815-634-0317. Please state the town in which you are calling from or in regards to. If mailing comments please direct them to Sound-Off, 271 S. Broadway, Coal City, IL 60416 or 111 S. Water St., Wilmington, IL

Because he does

COAL CITY—This is in response to last week's caller about the Pritzker sucks signs. Should have told your kid plain and simple, we have a governor who has forced one in three businesses to close due to his statewide shutdown. Should have told your kid that in May Gov. Pritzker passed a budget \$5 billion out of balance, banking of a bailout by the federal government and the passage of his "fair tax" constitutional amendment of which the voters soundly rejected. Instead of manning up like a good leader would, he blames the Republicans saying he's forced to raise taxes. Pritzker should have said because the trifecta Democrats, with super majorities in the Illinois House, Senate and governor's office, have promised too good of pensions for union workers, judges and college professors. Just look at Coal City's budget where 23 percent of the yearly levy will go to pay pensions. That's what the Democrats want, big pensions, so unions help them get reelected. It's the voters who decided that Pritzker, Madigan and those in Springfield can't be trusted, not the Republicans. You should have told your kid that Pritzker defrauded the public \$320,000 by taking the toilets out of his second mansion. Sure, after he got caught avoiding the property taxes, he paid them because he was running for office. Pritzker is one of the richest guys in the state who bought his election into office. And now, when we really need good leadership, all we have is a guy who's sucking the life right our of Illinoisans.

Wear a mask!

WILMINGTON—It is becoming increasingly concerning to me that people are still not wearing a mask when coming out into public spaces. I have the right to go grocery shopping with my mask on and feel safe. You do not have the right to come in without one and knowingy spread a deadly virus to all in the stores. I think it's reckless and disgusting! I don't feel safe shopping in town. I don't want you near me without a mask on. This is hurting the local businesses and the mayor needs to step up to the plate and protect our town. So does the police department. There has been a real failure in this town to protect the citizens and store employees. Perhaps, someone needs to be fired for failing to protect the community. Also, I find it disgusting that there is a business in town selling alcohol and gas with the owner and his employees never wearing masks. I hope you get fined and your license suspended. Most of their patrons aren't wearing them either. I have no mercy if you catch this horrible virus. The sad part is that you're spreading it throughout the community. I'm really disappointed in the amount of people in this town who apparently failed science class. Yes, you look really dumb without a mask on. Stay home and out of public spaces if you're too dumb to simply wear a mask to protect others.

So many on the list

COAL CITY—Read in AARP Nov. 2020, 92,000 Americans were on waiting lists for a kidney transplant. About one in three Medicare patients are dealing with end stage renal disease and are receiving dialysis. Medicare has new rules come January 2021, they will have a choice of their dialysis treatment at home. Medicare will increase the amount it pays providers of home kidney treatment to encourage the change. The move is expected to save the program \$24 million over five years according to Medicare officials. We're shocked to learn of the high numbers on dialysis. Modern medical treatments extends life for sure.

Vicious gang members

WILMINGTON—According to the Justice
Department, three quarters of MS-13 gang members indicted by federal authorities in the last four years have been living in our country illegally. The report claimed at least 749 MS-13 defendants have been prosecuted with 500 sentenced to prison and 37 given a life sentence. Many other defendants are awaiting trial including two whom the department is seeking the death penalty. Thanks President Trump for drawing attention to vicious behavior of MS-13 gang members.

Best eating

Accepted

SHADOW LAKES—This is a compliment to Nelly's in Wilmington, I guess you could call it a fast food restaurant. They definitely have the best fast food of any surrounding community and including Joliet. I have to say the help is very nice, polite. The food is cooked the way you want it. You can have things added to your burgers, not everything but most things lettuce, tomato, onion for no extra charge and cheese of which Burger King charges you an extra dollar to have cheese on it. I think they have some of the best food around. The problem is I'm gaining weight because I'm eating there so often. Thank you. My name is Dan Hill.

Wait until the end

WILMINGTON—With the coronavirus being distributed in Illinois, Wilmington should not have to request too many doses. With nearly 800 positive cases in Wilmington since this pandemic began, it will be easy to decide who gets the vaccine first. The self-centered no-mask wearers will not qualify for the vaccine since they ignore and thumb their noses at the Phase 3 mitigations. There should then be plenty of vaccines for the people who follow the rules and respect the health of others! From a mask-wearing senior citizen.

Presidential pardons

WILMINGTON—Even after our President Trump leaves office in January for him and his loved ones, the news media will never end with vicious attacks on everything about him. Recently he pardoned former National Security Advisor General Michael Flynn and it's gone on and on. Yet President Obama holds the record by pardoning 2,000 convicted criminals including 330 during his final few days. President Clinton pardons are also questionable. President Carter pardoned and gave amnesty to more than 200,000 men who "dodged" the draft during the Vietnam War. God bless those men that served. Washington D.C. is full of "nasty" politics.

Better transparency

REED TOWNSHIP—Transparency important. Last week there was a Sound-off that attempted to "call out" candidates for township office based on their attendance at meetings and then went on to state that the way municipal government and township government operate is "completely different." I couldn't agree more; the way Braidwood's City Council operates and Reed Township's current elected officials operate couldn't be more different. Braidwood's City Council has every single agenda posted online for the public to see prior to every meeting, the minutes are readily available, the meeting dates/times are posted, and I have gone so far as to Live Stream every single meeting since August for everyone to see. Regardless of your individual circumstances or availability, you are still able to stay up-to-date with what's happening in munici-pal government. Reed Township is the exact opposite. You won't find any agenda, minutes, budget, or even meeting times/dates posted anywhere online. There's no website or social media page to try to keep people up-to-date with what's happening in their township government. How can you expect anyone to show up to meetings if you don't tell them when they are? I doubt that many people even know who runs their township or what the township does; they don't post anything for you to be able to know what they do. Last week's Sound-off proves that those running Reed Township (all of which are members of the Democratic Party and most of them have never been challenged in races) are afraid of the noise that's going to be made in the next few months; they couldn't even be transparent and honest enough to sign their name to what they said in last week's Sound-off. People have the right to know what their elected officials are doing. Transparency is important...and that's exactly what our Republican candidates, including myself, are going to give the people of Reed Township. In response to our "mystery writer" in last week's Sound-off, you are correct. The two government bodies do operate very differently and it's time to make Reed Township government as, if not more, transparent and honest as our

John Guistat, Reed Township Republican Chairman and candidate for Reed Township

Not surprised

SHADOW LAKES— Early Christmas gift to the citizens of Illinois, from the Democrat party. Quote from the Braidwood Journal, Democrats vote to end the investigation of Madigan." Did you really expect anything less? It has all been a show, headed by our beloved governor. Our Christmas present to them must be, just keep voting these people back in the office. We know the Democrat party is the people of the people, and they are there to help you. Always, Margot Lane.

A big sell out

WILMINGTON—Let's take a look at the USA Today. Maybe people will see how much damage has been done to the American citizens with all the corruption throughout the country. First you look at our borders where people came into the USA illegally. Then our borders were closed, that helped the American citizens. Next the borders will be open again by Joe Biden. Amnesty will be given to people here illegally, by Joe Biden. We cannot forget about the Biden family deals with communist China. Just recently there were a lot of problems with

the presidential election and even with a lot of documented evidence that proved numerous crimes in the election process. The judicial system will not look at any of the evidence but decided to keep Joe Biden as the new president. So it looks like Republicans and Democrats will suffer since the judicial system is just as crooked as the politicians that cater to communist China. Sold out by the Democrat party. What happened to the

Certified technicians

All insurance accepted

Completed in a timely fashion

laws of the USA for the American citizen?

Destroying America

WILMINGTON—The Revolution began because the people in this land got tired of a dictator imposing outlandish rules upon them. So some men got together and decided to revolt against the way they were being treated which brought about the sovereign laws of the USA and the separation from all dictatorship policies. Now there is a political party that is more then willing to destroy the freedom that American citizens have lost their lives willing to protect our country. Patriotic American citizens have risen through time and will rise again to help defend the USA and the American citizen from any barbaric treatment. Now the same political party in this country is more than willing to turn over the USA to a communist country with disregard for the laws of our country. A Democrat politician has warned the people of the Republican party to tread lightly or they will suffer the consequences, but all American citizens will suffer at the hands of the Democrat leadership.

Done by semi trucks

WILMINGTON-Little wonder the sewer collapsed at Kankakee St. and Kankakee River Dr. with all the 18-wheelers driving back or to the US Cold Storage plant. They drive very slowly and usually at night, and now we have to pay for it. Maybe Cold Storage and their drivers can foot the bill.

China loe

SHADOW LAKES—Reply to Irene D. Have you been living on another planet for the last four years? You brought up the subject of the President launching a coup. Let us go back to day one with our President. Let us go to the oval office, with President Obbumber, and his wonderful Vice President China Joe. Wasn't it China Joe who wanted to enforce the "Logan Act" to try and get rid of our President? I will not go into the next chapters of the coup from the left for the remainder of his presidency. I do not want to take up a page of white space. As you see, Irene it is now the right, who can tell you just how our elections have been fixed. What is that old saying, "what goes around comes

Works both ways

WILMINGTON—Hey Trumpies, I'll care about the money Hunter got from China when you ask about the money Ivanka got.

What to expect

ESSEX—Let's try to put politics aside for a few moments and discuss part of what the Democrat leadership has been and will be doing to the American citizens whether you are a Republican or Democrat. Riots are allowed, illegal aliens commit crimes against American citizens and are released from prison to commit more crimes. American citizens have become irrelevant to the Democratic leadership. Free speech has been censored. American citizens have been jailed for standing up for legal rights. Now we have a Democrat leader that seems to have been living out of the pocket of communist China and that has been elected by corrupt individuals who committed election fraud. They have documents that prove criminal activity of the election process that are irrelevant to the judicial system which seems to leave the American citizens without any legal rights.

Hold them accountable

WILMINGTON—Anyone who unironically thinks the Democrats are going to implement communism is laughably ignorant. Man, I wish Democrats were as hard-core and Left-wing as pearl-clutching conservatives think they are; something might actually get better in this God-forsaken country if they were. It's a shame that Dems are just as gutless and enslaved to corporate interests as Republicans. A real slam dunk there, if I do say so myself. It's pretty great to live in a country where the two teams vying for control of the country are basically the same people. Nothing gets done, the middle class gets smaller, poverty continues to rise, and average people are at each other's throats over petty issues that have little effect on most

people's day-to-day. People want to get abortions? Fine, that doesn't affect me. People are transgender? Great, as long as they pay their taxes and let me know what to call them so things don't get awkward, that doesn't really affect me much either. Those issues matter, but we've got significantly bigger fish to fry. Might 1 suggest keeping all elected officials accountable? It's hypocritical to get mad at the other team's guy when he does shady things and turn
a blind eye when your guy has been doing shady things for a while too. No one looks good. Politicians are shady by nature. Hold them accountable. They work for us, not massive corporations. It's cruel for them to line their pockets while we get pittance. I'm frustrated because I care. We all, regardless of party affiliation, deserve a more honest and efficient government that works for us, the average Joe.

Never a communist

SHADOW LAKES—I just got done reading the sound-off section of the Braidwood Journal I find it interesting to see that even though president Biden's administration hasn't taken over yet there are people claiming that the Democrats are responsible for communist activities going on in the country. I can already see where things are going. Do you people who are making these statements even know the difference between a democracy and communism? Obviously not. The United States is a capitalist country. That means the economy is created by the private sector. In a communist country the economy is run by the government. The United States has a government that is elected by the people. In a communist country the same people can run the government and the country forever. In this country we have a constitution that protects the people's rights and liberties. We have three branches of government that keep checks and balances on each other. A perfect example of the working democracy in this country is what just happened with Trump trying to be a dictator who thought that his appointed Supreme Court judges were going to give him the presidency. Don't forget that the Vietnam War was a war against communism regardless of what anybody says. The United States would never ever

be communist.

Picking the best
SHADOW LAKES—According to our constitution our government is supposed to be made up from the people they represent, but the Trump administration is made up of older white men. This country is not made up of older white men. President Biden is starting to put his administration together and now we will have a White House administration that reflects what the people of this country really

look like. Elections ends all

SHADOW LAKES— Anyone else notice the BLM rioting ended right after the election like they were told? Anyone else notice after the election we find out Biden's son and brother are Eddie

under investigation? I noticed. Socialism for the rich

CUSTER PARK—It's true that right-wingers hate socialism like the black plague. Why do they think hard-working Americans deserve no financial safety net? The following are chilling statistics about living conditions for ordinary citizens: Most American workers who lose their jobs aren't eligible for unemployment insurance; 20% of American children live in poverty; 10% of Americans have no health insurance; 50 million American households can't afford child care, transportation, food and housing. In contrast our government has been subsidizing the oil industry for decades and rescued the big banks by hundreds of billions after the housing crisis. Mega-businesses like Amazon pay no taxes since the Trump tax cut and corporate farmers recently got exorbitant checks in the mail. How and why? Socialism for the rich. Republicans believe that the rich deserve bailouts but the poor do not. My response to that viewpoint is "throw the bums out." That's what happened in this election and it's a good thing for the people.

Gloria W.

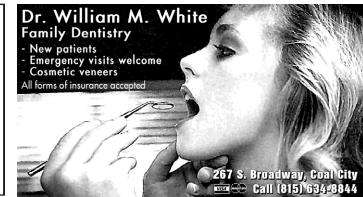
SEE SOUND-OFF CONTINUED ON PAGE 5







815-458-3300





gift? Do your shopping in Wilmington, support the local businesses and you can make a donation to the Christian Help Association.

Over 30 merchants in the Wilmington area are displaying collection boxes with photos of cute little elves. The money collected in these boxes will be donated to the Christian Help Association to help offset the expenses of providing Christmas gifts, foods and toiletries to approximately 250 local families.

As you check out, look for a bright painted box with a photo of a cute elf or two. Deposit your change, or a few dollars or even a check. Boxes will be displayed until January

The three "elves" that receive the most donations win a Chamber of Commerce certificate. Monetary

for a vaccine for Covid 19. But yet the Democrats were against him, the medical com-

munity which is controlled by Democrats said

that oxychlorosene was dangerous but yet it

has been used for 55 years with no problems.

And that has now been used recently by the

medical community. Why did they wait so long?

And do you think that Biden would have gotten this done this fast? Or Clinton? No, I don't

because they prefer to keep the country locked down. I am for small business, because I was

small business and small business employs

more people throughout the nation than big

businesses. And why is it you can't go to church

in a lot of these Democrat controlled states but

you can go to Walmart and Target and all the

other big stores that are really nonessential.

That includes Menards. So tell me, where is the

logic? This statement is directed to Gary

Weidner and his wife, Gloria and what in the

world has Trump done wrong? Even your retire-

ment incomes have increased dramatically

until Covid 19 which Nancy Pelosi was in Wuhan China back in November 2019. Dan Hill

Kamala Harris and Cuomo of New York refuse

to take the vaccine because it came out under

President Trump. Is this political or are all you

WILMINGTON—I didn't vote for Hunter.

COAL CITY—If you are past middle age

you may remember hearing stories many years

ago about finding Japanese soldiers in remote

areas of the Pacific who still had their uniforms

and weapons and were not aware that World

War II had ended. These soldiers remind me of

the fanatical Trump supporters who still fly

their flags and keep signs in their yards despite

the fact that more than 81 million Americans

rejected the lies, corruption, incompetence

and divisive tactics of the Russian puppet who

inhabits the White House. So it's time to stop

drinking the koolaid and accept the reality that

your hero is going back to the golf course if he

munism incorrectly by equating it with author-

itarianism or with a single party dictatorship.

So let's define our terms according to the dic-

tionary. Communism: Any economic theory or

system based on the ownership of all property

by the community as a whole. Socialism: Any of

various theories or systems of ownership and

operation of the means of production and dis-

tribution by the society or the community rather than by private individuals with all members of society or the community sharing

in the work and the products. And to those who

don't know, a dictionary is a book filled with

definitions of words and their usage. So if there

are billionaires in Russia and China it would

mean everyone is a billionaire and we know

that's not true. Ergo, these countries are not

communist but like capitalism, most of the

wealth is accrued by the elite who don't really

Penny Lane

Last week five callers used the word com-

Communism defined

GARDNER-I don't understand why

Just plain stupid

Democrats really stupid? **Hunter who?**

A reality check

avoids prison.

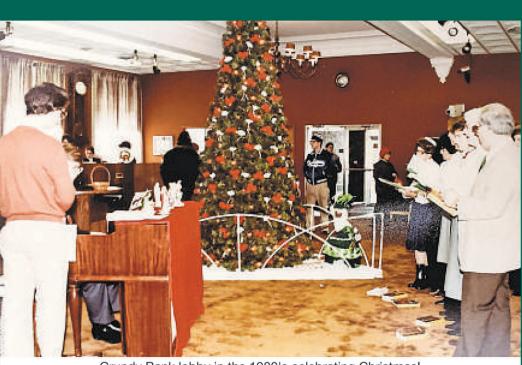
Drop your change into an elf box while shopping local Still need a last minute donations can also be mailed struggled this year. Any size darkness; help bring a bright

to CHA at 635 S. Main St., Wilmington, IL 60481. So many families have had so much sadness and

donation will help make a difference. In a world that has

smile to someone.

Cyndi Ragain CHA volunteer



Grundy Bank lobby in the 1980's celebrating Christmas!

Merry Christmas Hom Grundy Bank

not going to let the Covid-19 stop our officers, directors and employees from wishing you a very Merry

It will be a different Christmas Season for all of us. We hope you're able to enjoy this special time of year with your loved ones and good friends.

Our wish for the New Year is for life to return to normal for all of us worldwide, with renewed hope for good health and much happiness.

Wilmington and the surrounding communities of Grundy



Kevin Olson President & CEO

This has been a trying year for everyone...but we're Christmas.

Our banks and drive-up facilities will close at noon on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, closing on Christmas Day and New Year's Day so our employees and enjoy this special time of year.

It has been our pleasure to serve you in Morris, and Will counties. We Thank You for choosing Grundy Bank for your banking needs and we look forward to a healthier and more productive year in 2021.

Member



• 201 Liberty St. Morris 444 Bedford Rd. Morris
 120 S. Main St. Wilmington www.grundybank.com • 815-942-0130

facebook.

Sound-off, continued from page 4

Bridge Street.

What's it costing?

BRAIDWOOD—Braidwood city officials need to come clean with how much money and time is being spent on fulfilling FOIA requests each month. A monthly report breaking down who submitted what would definitely be beneficial. That way we know just how much money some of these FOIA cheerleaders are costing us.

Getting away with it

DIAMOND-To Sasha M. I am an independent and do not disagree with what you are saying and I am not a Trump supporter but it goes both ways. The Democratic controlled cities who allow their cities to be burned down and allow looters to destroy people's livelihoods when their businesses are destroyed is not a nice thing either. When Trump was elected in 2016 cities burned and stores were looted. do have to ask why this is not happening now that Biden is elected? I'm not against Biden but why does that side get away with destroying people's livelihoods?

John Chiqua

Election integrity matters

BRAIDWOOD—I Pennsylvania and the Wisconsin hearings. I listened to dozens of eye witnesses tell what they saw take place during ballot counting. Hundreds more signed affidavits under threat of perjury declaring irregularities they saw take place. In many states official poll watchers were ushered out of the rooms, even shoved out the doors. I saw those videos too. Windows were covered over so poll watchers could not even see into the room. Ballot counters cheered and applauded when the poll watchers were sent away. I heard the truck driver say he transported 280,000 ballots wrapped on pallets from New York to Pennsylvania. Later his trailer disappeared. I saw the video from Georgia showing ballot counters pulling rolling suitcases from under a long table draped in black after they had sent the poll watchers home for the night under the guise that they were all leaving. The ballots they removed from the suitcases were put through the machines over and over again. They sent the witnesses home but they forgot about the video running the whole time. In Wisconsin the state Supreme Court voted not to hear the evidence of fraud. Three of the judges declared it was a shame "the court could not be bothered to hear the case." Trump got 11 million more votes this time around than in 2016. Yes he won in a landslide and yes we will keep on fighting to get out the truth. There's a new book coming out next month, "Stolen." We will tell our children and grandchildren the truth about this election. The truth will never die. Chief Justices Roberts and Breyer have been texting each other and saying "we will never let Trump be re-elected." That's why the SCOTUS would not hear any election fraud cases. So much for putting aside personal opin-

ion and partisan beliefs while on the bench. The Joe influence

SHADOW LAKES—Remember last year when the song "Baby It's Cold Outside" became a big deal for the Me too movement? It was banned on radio stations till Joe Biden was accused and the Me too movement ended. I do.

Some kinda hero

CUSTER PARK—Margo Lane, you forgot to thank Donald Trump for not being honest about Covid-19 in January and every month thereafter. You forgot to thank him for encouraging people not to wear masks or social distancing while at rallies and parading in our streets with guns. You forgot to thank him for putting pressure on the CDC to skew numbers. And you forgot to thank him for the compassion he has shown for the 300,000 plus deaths in our country. Yes, a big thank you for your hero.

Hanging in shame

I am a person born in the 1930s. I grew up loving our country and being proud of it and what it stood for. I am now embarrassed and ashamed by it. I'm not a die-hard Republican or Democrat, but who we now have as president representing our country is so humiliating. I want to hang my head in shame. Hopefully this new year will be better and kinder.

Couldn't do

SHADOW LAKES-What president do you think would have done this much, this fast



Immediate & Convenient Care locations in:

Channahon - Diamond-Coal City - Morris - Yorkville

Our Immediate and Convenient Care clinics are a perfect solution when you're not feeling well and your provider isn't available, or when you have a minor to moderate injury that doesn't require the advanced care of a hospital emergency department. With on-site laboratory and x-ray, we are here to help you start feeling better now. No appointment needed!

morrishospital.org/urgentcare



Expanded Walk-In Hours in Channahon, Morris & Diamond-Coal City! 8am-7pm Mon-Fri 8am-2pm Sat & Sun



Special measures are in place to keep you safe!



Linda L. Bockman

MORRIS-Linda L. Bockman (nee 74, of Morris, passed away Tuesday,

Dec. 15, 2020, at Morris Hospital. She was born March 27, 1946, in Peoria, IL where she was raised and educated. In 1963, she married her lifelong partner, Richard and they built a home in Channahon where they lived for 30 years raising their two girls. They then built a home on 6 acres on a lake near Goose Lake where Linda loved the outdoors and entertaining and feeding friends and family when they would visit.

Linda loved to play cards and other games with her children and grandchildren, fishing for bluegills, and having the family over for large meals and gatherings. She also enjoyed antiquing and crafting. She will be terribly missed by her family and friends.

Linda is the beloved wife of 57 years to Richard Bockman; loving mother of Jackie (Jim) Jennings and Terri (Bill) Kelly; devoted grandmother of Jessica (Justin) Holman, Colton (Michelle) Kelly and Mackenzie Kelly; proud great-grandmother of twins, Feagan and Camden Holman and Dixon Kelly; dear sister of Richard (Lois) Schall, of Lakeland, FL; Judy (Lloyd) Frazier, of Magnolia; Shirley (George) Schafer Sr., of West Peoria: Ricky (Michelle) Stewart, of Morris and Peggy Hanson, of Odell and aunt to many nieces and nephews. Linda was preceded in death by her

parents, Edward Stewart and Virginia Lloyd, and siblings, Penny (Hubert) Sherman and David Stewart.

Funeral arrangements for Linda are pend-

Memorials can be made in Linda's honor to the American Cancer Society.

For more information, visit her Memorial Tribute at www.fredcdames.com where you can

share a favorite memory or leave a condolence. Fred C. Dames Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

₋Walter H. Bradley_



CARBON HILL— Walter H. Bradley, 84, of Carbon Hill, passed away on Wednesday, Dec. 16, 2020 at his home surrounded by his family. He was born Nov. 8, 1936 in Joliet, the son

of William and Mildred (nee McCowan) Bradley. Walter graduated from Minooka High School and later served his country honorably in the United States Marine Corp. Walter married Linda Vee Decker on Nov. 1, 1958 at the New Hope Presbyterian Church in Coal City. He

was a Machinist for Local # 124 and retired from Johns Manville. He was also a past board member for the Carbon Hill Museum Walter is survived by his sons, Scott (Sally)

Bradley, of Gillette, WY and Ross (Joann) Bradley, of Coal City; his five grandchildren: Bill (Teresa) Bradley, Kristin (Eric) Bauer, Tim Bradley, Evan (Stephanie) Bradley and Amy Bradley; great-grandchildren: Milana, Indira and Walter Bradley, Jack Bauer and Ember and

Rowan Bradley. Also surviving are his sisters-inlaw, Mary Decker and JoAnn Decker.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Linda Bradley; his sister, Elsie Nadler; his sisters-in-law, Louise Jensen and Joyce Sumner and his brothers-in-law; Boyd Decker, Kenneth Decker and John Jensen.

Memorial donations may be made in Walter's name to the Carbon Hill Museum, 875 N. Second St., Carbon Hill, IL 60416

At Walter's request, cremation rites will be

A graveside inurnment was held on Saturday, Dec.19, 2020 at Braceville-Gardner Cemetery.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guestbook at www.ferrarifuneral.

Ferrari Funeral Services of Coal City were entrusted with arrangements.

William V. Martin

MORRIS—William Martin, "Bill," 90, of Morris and formerly of Odell, passed away peacefully on Sunday, Dec. 20, 2020 at Park Pointe Gardens in Morris.

Born July 7, 1930 in Pontiac, IL, William Vincent was the son of William Frederick and Ellen "Nellie" (Condon) Martin. He was raised in Odell and graduated from St. Paul's with the class of

1948. Following high school, Bill attended

Gallagher School of Business in Kankakee before entering into the United States Navv (1951-1955). Following his honorable discharge he went on to marry Patricia Ann Fraher on Nov. 26, 1955 in St. Paul Catholic Church in Odell, and together they made their home in Odell until relocating their family in the summer of 1972. Bill began his career with the United States Postal Service, where he served as Postmaster of Odell until 1971 when he took the postmaster position with Morris. He then served the Morris community for the following 19 years until his retirement in 1990.

Bill and Pat were dedicated members of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Morris; he was a member of Morris Country Club and the American Legion Post 294 in Morris. In addition, Bill belonged to the Lions Association.

One who was an avid sports fan, Bill took great pleasure in following the Chicago Bears, Notre Dame Football and the Chicago White Sox. Throughout the years he also enjoyed hunting, fishing, playing golf, and working in the yard with Pat. He was truly a 'Jack of all trades,' and could fix or repair anything. His number one hobby was his family, and Bill will be most remembered as a loving husband and devoted father, who was his grandkids biggest

fan at their sporting and school events. Survivors include his children: Michael (Ann) Martin, of Stamford, CT and Sheila (Thomas) Riccolo, Mary (Terrence) O'Connor and Bill (Meghan) Martin, all of Morris; seven

grandchildren: Caroline Riccolo, Peter Riccolo, Sean Martin, Brendan Martin, Caitlin O'Connor (Ben Wollam), Eileen (Cameron) Berner and Erin O'Connor (Matt Wiehl), and numerous nieces

and nephews. Bill was preceded in death by his parents; son, Mark W. Martin; wife, Patricia Martin; sister, Ruth Mobus and granddaughter, Regina Martin.

The family will receive friends for a

COVID observant and walk through visitation on Monday, Dec. 28, 2020 between the hours of 9 and 11 a.m. at Reeves Funeral Home, 408 E. Washington St., one block east of Illinois Route 47, in Morris. Due to current pandemic guidelines, face masks will be required for attendees and measures of safe social distancing practices will be in order. The funeral home staff will assist the family not to exceed the safe number set forth for the visitation. Funeral services will follow at 12 noon in

Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, 600 E. Jackson St. in Morris. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated with Reverend Jason Stone presiding.

Those wishing to participate in Bill's funeral service online are welcome to join the livestreamed service beginning at 12 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 28, 2020. This virtual service is Burial will be in St. Paul Catholic Cemetery

in Odell, where Bill will be laid to rest with his late wife, Pat. Preferred memorials may be made as gifts

in Bill's memory to Immaculate Conception School or Immaculate Conception Church.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guest book, upload photographs, and share Bill's memorial page online through social media by logging onto: www.ReevesFuneral.com/obituary/WilliamBill

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

Lester A. Leves

MARSEILLES—Lester Alan Leyes, 67, Marseilles, IL, formerly Wilmington, passed away Saturday, Dec.12, 2020 at his home. Born August 11, 1953 in Joliet, IL the son of Lester F. and Dorothy (nee Stehl) Leyes.

Lester married Kathy Paulsen on July 26, 2013 in Ottawa, IL.

Lester retired from Akzo Nobel in Channahon, IL, following 35 years of employment. He enjoyed riding his Harley-Davidson motorcycle.

Surviving are his wife, Kathy Leyes of Marseilles; daughter, Sandi (Tim) Stallard of Wilmington; step-son, Scott (Nikki) Boundy of Morris; step-daughters, Megan (Rob) Ragland of Gardner and Rachel Boundy of Morris; one

grandson, Rylan Stallard; three stepgrandchildren, Madison, Mackenzie, and Colton; and two sisters, Linda (Victor) Cuputi of St. Charles, IL. and Becky Burkett of Murphysboro, IL.

Lester was preceded in death by his parents; two brothers; and 3 sis-

Cremation rites will be accorded. A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date. For more information and to visit his online guestbook, please log on to

www.rwpattersonfuneralhomes.com Patterson Funeral Home and Crematory, 401 E. Main St. Bradwood, is in charge of arrange-

Daniel Willis Sr.

TUSCOLA-Daniel Willis Sr., 72, of Tuscola, IL, formerly of Braidwood, passed away Monday, Dec. 14, 2020 at Carle Foundation Hospital in Urbana,

Born May 29, 1948 in Braidwood, he was the son of Vern and Stella (nee Lasley) Willis. Dan worked as a laborer in construction for many years. He enjoyed watching old western movies, especially John Wayne.

Surviving are his close friend, Barb Wiborg; children, Alan Hopping, Janis Lee, Darin Hopping, Judy Broussard, Jody Patton, Aaron Willis and Patrick Willis; 28 grandchildren, 29 great-grandchildren, siblings: Roy and Gary Willis and Betty Harden; numerous nieces and nephews and too many friends to name.

Preceding him in death were his parents, his wife of 49 years, Beverly Jean (nee Leonard) Willis; children, Doug Hopping and Daniel Willis Jr. and his siblings: Maxine, Farena, Pete, Rudy, Les, R.A. and Coy.

Cremation rites have been accorded. Private services will be held at later date.

For more information and to visit online guestbook, log on to www.rwpattersonfuneralhomes.com

find them on Facebook. R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory, 401 E. Main St., Braidwood is in charge of arrangements.

Jeanette Lewis_

WILMINGTON-Jeanette Lewis, 88, of Wilmington, passed away Saturday, Dec.

Born Oct. 23, 1932 in Wilmington Jeanette Rose was a daughter of Alfred and Olive (Hundley) Kuriger. She was raised in Wilmington and graduated from the Wilmington Public Schools with the class of 1950. Jeanette worked for many years at Braun Sales and went on to retire from the First National Bank in Wilmington.

Survivors include her two children, Kathleen Lewis, of Morris and Jack (Kristine) Lewis, of Wilmington; grandchildren: Tanya (Brian) Funk, of Morris and Jill VanDuyne, Brett Lewis, Kyle Lewis and Kaden Lewis, all of Wilmington; great-grandchildren: Mike Funk (fiancé-Olivia Aimone), Nina Funk, Brianna Funk, Hunter Funk, Jackson VanDuyne and Brady VanDuyne; great-great-grandsons: Hudson and Henry Funk, and one sister-in-law. Norma Kuriger, of Coal City, as well as numerous nieces and nephews. Jeanette was preceded in death by her par-

ents, husband, Jack in 2001; sister, Betty

(Joseph) Peterson; brothers: William Kuriger, Alfred (Lorraine) Kuriger and twin brother, James (Cona) Kuriger; brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Frank and Mary Catherine Lewis and three

Cremation rites have been accorded, and a private family inurnment will be held in Oakwood Cemetery, Wilmington, where Jeanette will be laid to rest with her late husband

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Jeanette's memory to the Alzheimer's Association or to a charity of the donors choos-Family and friends are encouraged to sign

the guest book, upload photographs and share Jeanette's memorial page online through social logging www.BaskervilleFuneral.com/obituary/Jeanett e-Lewis

Cremation services and memorial arrangements have been made under the direction and care of Baskerville Funeral Home in

_James Helsing.

BRAIDWOOD—James Helsing, 16, of Braidwood, passed away unexpectedly on Saturday, Dec. 19, 2020.

Born June 29, 2004 in Joliet, James Allen was a son of Jeremy Allen and Deborah Denene (Murphy) Helsing. He was a junior at Reed Custer High School where he excelled in wrestling and was a true class act of a sportsman who remained dedicated to his team mates. An 'old soul,' James was a true friend

to all who had the privilege to know him. Known for his big warm hugs, he never passed anyone who he loved without an embrace. He was considerate to all, and always respective of his elders. James had a contagious smile and was always surrounded by countless friends.

From an early age, James always proved himself to be selfless. He would give the shirt off his back to anyone in need. He was truly genuine in character and never wished to burden anyone. He wanted for nothing, but the simple things in life, and will be remembered for his constant khaki and hoody style.

In addition to being a true friend, James also had a fearless demeanor. He had a passion for the outdoors and truly enjoyed camping, fishing and rock climbing, as well as biking and running. A true survivalist, he cherished his time spent in Colorado, and though he could be labeled as a minimalist, James was one of the pickiest eaters who wouldn't touch a condiment unless it was ranch, and passed on spaghetti.

James served as a life guard at the Braidwood Recreation Club, and also took a position with the kitchen staff at High Point Golf Club in Essex. During this past year, he also took up playing the piano, and his musical skills and abilities soared. James could recite every line from "The Office" and possessed every quality of a great friend; a caring heart, respectful attitude and a little bit of wit.

James left behind a lasting footprint every day in someone's life. His hugs spoke volumes, and with his jovial personality and unending smiles, he brought great joy to those around him. James' kindness and spirit of giving will forever be in the hearts of all those who knew him. May you be reminded of this genuine soul within playful monkey, a soaring eagle or a force of nature. Never forgotten, always remembered. Survivors include his parents

Debbie

Helsing, of

Jeremy and

uncle. Mike Murphy.

Braidwood; one brother, Murphy, of Coal City; one sister, Madison Helsing, of Braidwood; his grandparents: Gary Helsing, of Dwight; Kathleen Reynolds, of Fairbury; Pamela Alioto, of Arlington Heights and Mary Ann Oko, of Braidwood; great-grandmother, Rose Bonarigo, of Michigan and three uncles including Steve Murphy and Tony DePaulo who

was like an uncle to James. Not to forget, James leaves behind the countless friends too many to mention, as well as the Wrestling Family at Reed James was preceded in death by his papa and nana, Joseph and Wylo "Dee" Alioto and his

The family will begin to assemble Saturday morning, Dec. 26, 2020 at Reed Custer High School at 12 noon for a procession and escor which will depart at 12:45 p.m. to Ignite Christian Church, 1180 W. First St. in Braidwood. There will then be a COVID observant visitation in the church from 1 p.m. until time of funeral service at 5 p.m. Pastor Jeff Whittum will officiate and cremation rites will be accorded following the services.

Those wishing to participate in the services virtually, are welcome to join the live streamed services beginning at 5 p.m. on Saturday evening, Dec. 26, 2020. A link is available on his memorial page.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests dona tions to support the services and memorialize James. Contributions may be made directly through the appeal link on his memorial page.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the guest book, upload photographs and share James memorial page online through social logging www.BaskervilleFuneral.com/obituary/James Helsing

Funeral services and cremation arrange ments have been made under the direction and care of Baskerville Funeral Home in

Leand E. Myers



BRAIDWOOD-Eugene "Lee" Myers, 71, of Braidwood, passed away Wednesday, Dec. 16, 2020 at Morris Hospital. Born

March 26, 1949 in Littlefield, TX, he was the son of Arvle Leand and Colletta Pearl (nee Palmer) Myers.

Lee married his high school sweetheart, Bonnie Watkins on July 2, 1967 in Rover, MO. Veteran of the United States Army, serving in Vietnam from Jan. 1, 1970 to March 11, 1971. He was a police officer with Will County, Braidwood, and Wilmington. Lee also worked at Celotex, Personal Products, and Flint hills Chemical Plant. He retired in December 2009. Lee enjoyed camping, hunting, and fishing with all his grandchildren and good friend George Powers.

Surviving are his wife of 53 years Bonnie Myers; two daughters, Melody (Neil) Hayden of Braidwood and Michelle Myers-Shiner of Piper City, IL; six grandchildren, Nicolas (Natalie) Hayden of Joliet, Jacob (fiancé Jazmin Williams) Hayden of Braidwood, Lucas (fiancé Katy Koch) Hayden of Diamond, Joshua Hayden of Braidwood, Katarena (fiancé Erik Mugnolo) Shiner of Coal City, and Hannah (Kyle) Crickman of Salina, KS; one great grand-child, Logan Arroyo; and two more great grandchildren expected; three brothers, Douglas (Brenda) Myers of Rover, MO, Joey (Susie) Myers of Havana, AR and Arlie (Jackie) Brinkley of West Plains, MO; one sister, Kathy (Bobby) McClanahan of Alton, MO; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Preceding him in death were his parents, sister, Wanda Wolfe; son, Darrin Myers; and granddaughter, Madison Hayden. Funeral services were held at the Island

City Baptist Church, Tuesday, Dec. 22, 2020. Pastor Jeff Logsdon officiated. Private interment with military honors will

be at the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Island City Baptist Church or St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. For more information and to visit his

online guestbook, log on to www.rwpattersonfuneralhomes.com or find them on Facebook. R.W. Patterson Funeral home and

Crematory in Braidwood was in charge of

Linda K. Schultz

ESSEX-Linda K. Schultz (nee Monroe), 72, of Essex, passed away Thursday, Dec. 17, 2020 at Riverside Medical Center in Kankakee. She was born Feb. 27, 1948 in

Pontiac, IL to David and Dorothy Louise (nee Haag) Monroe. Linda graduated from Reddick High School with the class of 1966. She was a member of the Trinity Lutheran Church in Goodfarm Twp. She retired from J.R.'s Crop Service in Reddick after working there

for over 30 years. Linda enjoyed flowers, and she especially enjoyed crafting and getting together with her friends.

Surviving are her husband of 36 years, Ronald Schultz, of Essex; one daughter, Ladena (Patrick) Appel, of Minnesota; three stepdaughters: Cari (Scott) Pierard, of Coal City; Michelle (Dan) Fennel, of Streamwood, IL and Vikki Morrical, of Indiana; nine grandchildren: Kameron Dohnansky, Abby Navikas, Zack Pierard, Reagan Morrical, Mike, John and Maddie Fennel; Rachel and Kellen Appel; two great-grandchildren, Evelyn and Eleanor Navickas; one brother, Gerry (Judy) Monroe, of Essex; one niece, Jenne (Wade) Kilman and one nephew, Ryan (Catie) Monroe.

Preceding her in death were her Visitation for Linda will be at the R.W. Patterson Funeral Home and Crematory, 401 E. Main St., Braidwood, Wednesday, Dec. 23, 2020 from 11a.m.-1 p.m., with a funeral service commencing at 1 p.m. All attendees are required to wear face coverings, follow social distancing guidelines, and due to the capacity requirements, please be brief with

your condolences to allow other guests to pay their final respects. Interment will follow at North Cemetery in

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in her name may be directed to the Trinity

Lutheran Church, 515 E. Stonewall Rd., Dwight, For more information and to visit her online guestbook, log on to www.rwpatterson-

funeralhomes.com or find them on Facebook. R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory

is in charge of arrangements.

Feel regal drinking a Crown Royal Flush

The rebirth of classic cocktails over the last decade has led a new generation to appreciate both the cocktails of yesteryear and the spirits that fuel these classics. Let's face it, whiskey as a category is probably bigger now than it has ever

whiskies are basking in the glow of craft cocktail boom, while other whiskies are being excluded. One such whiskey is literally the crown jewel of whiskies from our neighbors to the north, the legendary Crown Royal. First a brief history lesson.

Crown Royal is a specially blended product from the Seagram's line that was created in 1939 to commemorate King George VI and Queen Elizabeth's visit to Canada. This was the first time that a reigning monarch had visited Canada, and Seagram's blended over 50 whiskies for the high level of production?

and designed the now iconic bottle for the occasion.

Canadians may have forgotten the royal visit, but they remembered n. the whiskey. The Bourbon, scotch, and Irish new blend from Seagram's was an instant success. The Crown Royal blend

gained popularity finding its way to the US in the

Shortly after introduction to the US market, Crown barrels that have been charred, became the top selling Canadian whiskey. Sales of Crown Royal were still growing as of 2019, a year in which nearly 7 million cases were sold in the United States alone.

What kind of resources does it take to turn out such a



Brian Rung

facility in Manitoba is located on Lake where Winnipeg distillery the process 10,000 bushels of grain each day, along with nearly 1 million gallons of water.

The aging whiskey is then stored in 2 million barrels across 50

in Canada before eventually unique warehouses, each of which adds a little something different to the complex blend. Some warehouses may store some allow more or less fluctuations in temperature, and so

This wide variety of variables used in the aging process gives the distillery nearly endless options when blending. The end result is a high-

quality, approachable blended

whiskey that doesn't require much (if any dilution) to drink Think of Crown Royal as what the automotive market refers to as "affordable luxury".

It is a quality blend that will stand on its own as a sipping whiskey, but one that can be mixed into a wide variety of cocktails without overpowering the drink. Crown Royal performs well as a mixer when substitut-

ed for other types of whiskey in classic cocktails, and the "Crown and Coke" is one of the most popular mixed drinks on the planet. The Old Fashioned, Manhattan, and Whiskey Sour can all be made with Crown. In addition to the classics,

there are a few cocktails that the brand has shared through their website that are best made with Crown Royal. One such cocktail is the light, sweet, and refreshing Crown Royal

The Crown Royal Flush is one of two cranberry cocktails promoted by Crown Royal, the other is the Crown Royal Red Snapper. Crown is unique in the whiskey world in that it mixes well with cranberry

Vodka or gin are most commonly paired with cranberry juice, but Crown's light mix of fruit and vanilla notes are a perfect complement to fruit juice and/or fruit

Other than Crown and cranberry, the Crown Royal Flush calls for peach schnapps. Peach schnapps is the unsung hero of several contemporary cocktails, including the Jolly Rancher and the Fuzzy Navel.

If you have options when shopping for peach schnapps, choose Bol's or DeKuyper. There are a few cheaper options, but the less expensive options are of a lower quality and have a dominant "artificial" taste to them.

In the mixology world, when a drink calls for cranberry, the drink calls for Ocean Spray Cranberry. Ocean Spray Cranberry is found behind nearly every commercial bar around the globe. Make sure that you pick up the standard unsweetened variety, avoid blended and artificially sweetened juices.

Ćrown Royal Flush preparation is straight forward: shake with ice, strain into glass, serve. The blend of Crown and cranberry is a nice departure from Crown and Coke, or Crown and 7. You probably have a bottle of Crown from last Christmas party in your liquor cabinet, why not give this one a

The Crown Royal Flush is built in a shaker, and served in a rocks glass.

> Combine in shaker: 1 1/4 oz. Crown Royal 1/4 oz. peach schnapps

3 oz. cranberry juice Shake with ice, strain into ice-filled rocks glass

Garnish with orange peel Until next week, enjoy responsibly.





Button worth \$637

ARE YOU the lucky winner? Whoever owns button number 544 in the Wilmington Chamber's 2020 button drawing will receive an early gift. The winning number was drawn Monday and the split the pot winnings are \$637! To claim the award the owner must present the button at the Free Press Advocate office, 111 S. Water St., Wilmington. Button owner 544 has two weeks to claim their prize before a second number will be drawn. Chamber president Steve Evans thanked everyone who purchase a button, noting that the other half of the drawing proceeds will be used for beautification in downtown Wilmington.



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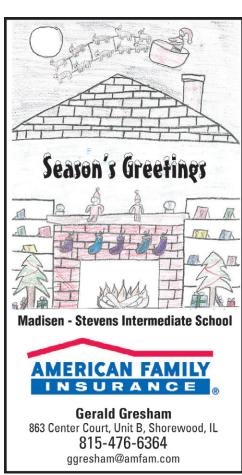
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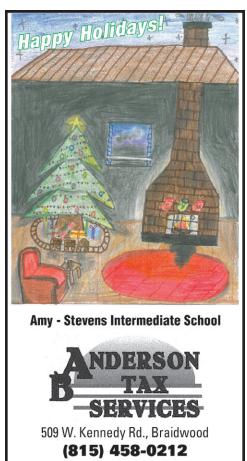
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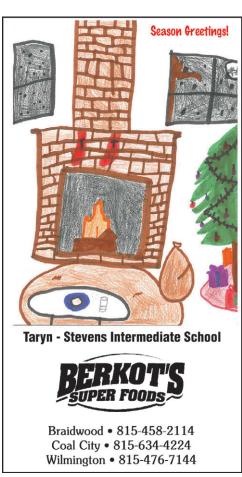


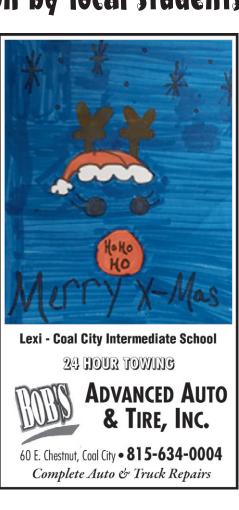
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These merchants wish you a Merry Christmas with artwork drawn by local students

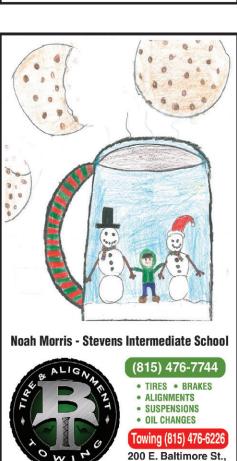








Merry Christmas!

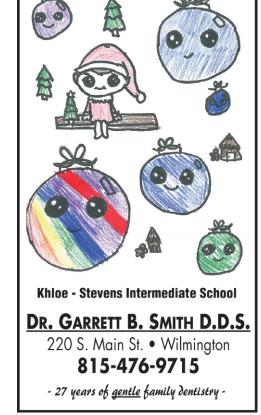




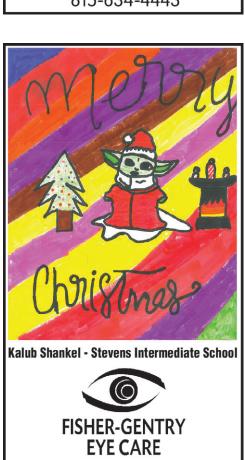


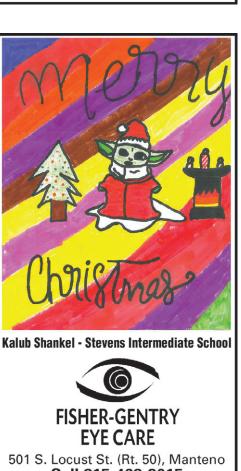
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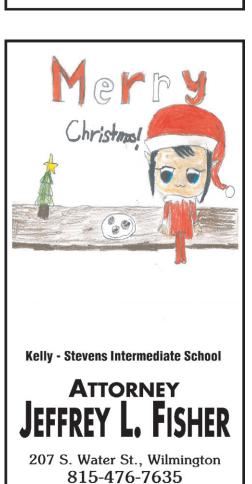


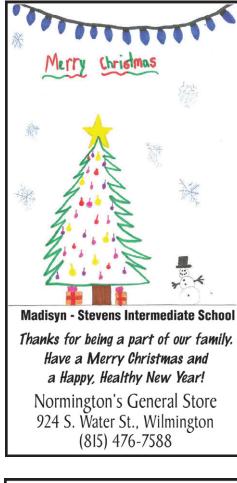












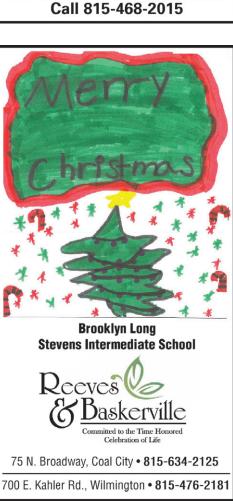


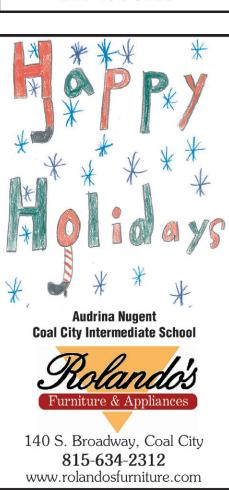
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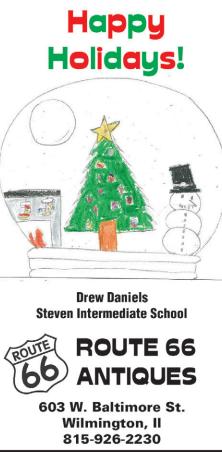
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Lakewood Animal Hospital

1301 Lakewood Dr., Morris

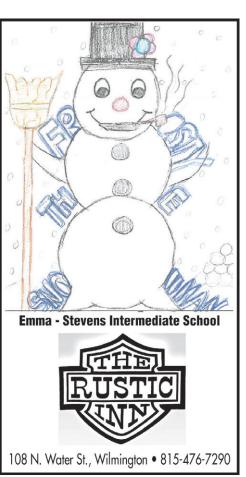


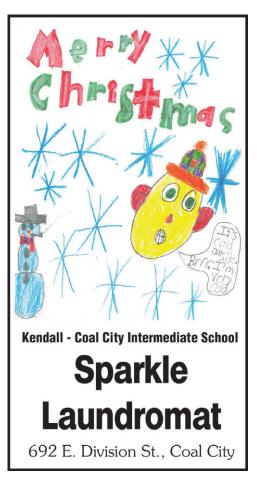


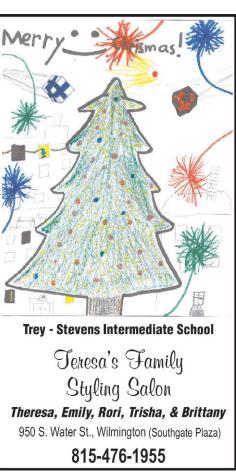


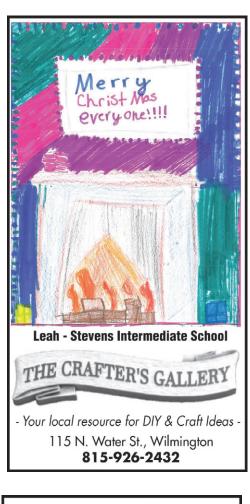
The Free Press Advocate, The Braidwood Journal, The Coal City Courant, Wednesday, Dec. 23, 2020, page 9

These merchants wish you a Merry Christmas with artwork drawn by local students

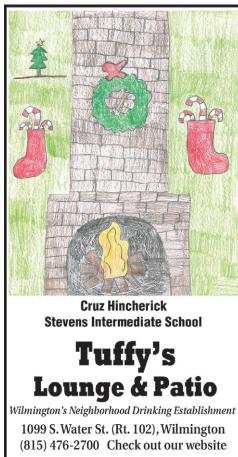




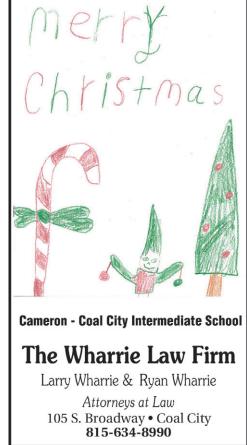








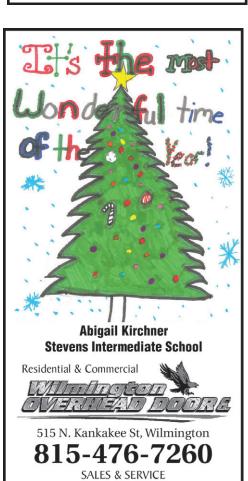


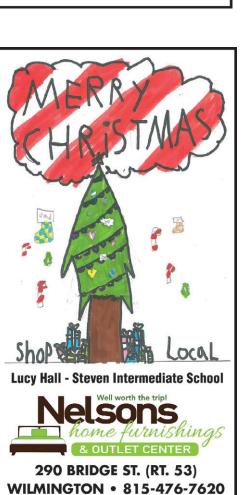


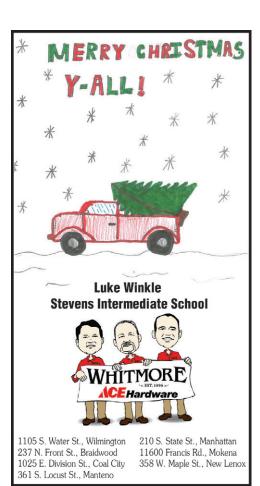


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Don't know what to give a teen? How about giving a good book

BY BRIDGET KNOWLES WHS STUDENT REPORTER

Although this year has been challenging, The Wilmington Public Library District and the Wilmington High School Library are both open. Students can now check out books to read over winter break.

Around this time every year, The Wilmington Public Library sees an increase in books checked out over winter vacation which starts Friday. Many people have time off of work and school, which gives them more time to cozy up by the fire and read a good book.

However, due to the pandemic, the library has seen an increase in digital reading. "Any reading of any nature is extremely beneficial," commented Maria Meachum, the public library's director.

Books can be checked out inside the Wilmington Public library, or can be picked up from their contactless pick up locker. WHS students can also check out books from the WHS library before they leave for winter break.

The WHS librarian, Ms. Turner, and the WHS sophomore english teacher, Ms. Keane, compiled a top 10 list of books they think students would enjoy, to keep them reading over break. Books on this list would also make great Christmas gifts.

- Throne of Glass by Sara Maas • Red Queen by Victoria Aveyard
- The Program by Suzanne Young • Between Shade of Gray by Ruta
- Sepetys •They Both Die at the end by Adam
- Silvera • The Amulet Series by Kazu Kibuishi
- •Scott Pilgrim Series by Bryan •One of Us is Lying by Karen
- McManus • It by Stephen King

•Naruto by Masahi Kishimoto

Here are some additional book recommendations from Sue Eckhardt, the youth services manager at the Wilmington Public Library District.

 The Mortal Instruments Series by Cassandra Clare

Genre; Contemporary Fantasy, Urban

Book 1: *City of Bones*

Synopsis: In New York City, a seemingly ordinary teenager named Clary Fray (Lily Collins) learns that she is descended from a line of shadowhunters - half-angel warriors who protect humanity from evil forces. After her mother (Lena Headey) disappears, Clary joins forces with a group of shadowhunters and enters Downworld, an alternate realm filled with demons, vampires and a host of other creatures. Clary and her companions must find and protect an ancient cup that holds the key to her mother's future. • The Great Gatsby by F. Scott

Fitzgerald Genre; Historical Fiction, Tragedy

Synopsis: This exemplary novel of the

Jazz Age has been acclaimed by generations of readers. The story is of the fabulously wealthy Jay Gatsby and his new love for the beautiful Daisy Buchanan, of lavish parties on LongIsland at a time when The New York Times noted "gin was the national drink and sex the national obsession," it is an exquisitely crafted tale of America in the 1920s.

• The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy Series by Douglas Adams Genre: Science Fiction, Humorous

Synopsis: In this collection of novels,

Arthur Dent is introduced to the galaxy at a large when he is rescued by an alien friend seconds before Earth's destruction, and embarks on a series of amazing

adventures, from the mattress swamps of Sqornshellous Zeta to the Restaurant at the End of the Universe.

•The Princess Bride by William Goldman

Genre: Adventure, Fantasy, Comedy Synopsis: This tale of a handsome farm boy who, aided by a drunken swordsman and a gentle giant, rescues a beautiful princess named Buttercup comes with a slyly humorous, metafictional edge: Goldman claims to have merely abridged an earlier text by one "S Morgenstern" (actually a pseudonym) and peppers his text with clever commentary.

•The Curious Incident of the Dog in *the Nighttime* by Mark Haddon

Genre: Crime Fiction, Fantasy

Synopsis: Despite his overwhelming of interacting with people, Christopher, a mathematically gifted, autistic boy, decides to investigate the murder of a neighbor's dog and uncovers secrets about his mother. •My Sister's Keeper by Jodi Picoult

Genre: Domestic Fiction, Women's Fiction, Tragedy Synopsis: Conceived to provide a

bone marrow match for her leukemiastricken sister, teenage Anna begins to question her moral obligations in light of countless medical procedures, and decides to fight for the right to make decisions about her own body. • The Inheritance Cycle by

Christopher paolini

Genre: Science Fiction, Fantasy Fiction, Dystopian Fiction

Synopsis: The series that began with Eragon follows poor farm boy Eragon as he grows into a master swordsman who fights alongside his dragon, Saphira, to help save the Empire from evil and dark-

Coloring contest underway for those ages 3-6 Winners of the local

Wilmington VFW Post 5422 Auxiliary is sponsoring a patriotic coloring contest for boys and girls ages 3 through 6.

Entry forms to be colored by youngsters from Wilmington and Braidwood can be picked up at the VFW, W. Baltimore Wilmington.

contest will be entered into a District competition. The name, age and address of child must be written on the back of each entry.

Deadline to enter is Jan. 15, 2021. For more details call Kathy at 815-823-4324 or 815-926-2651.

Go with a

bar of soap

Vaccine optimism driving up gas prices

Illinois gas prices have due to COVID-19," said Patrick the past week, averaging \$2.26/g Monday, according to GasBuddy's daily survey of 4,378 stations.

Gas prices in Illinois are 12.0 cents per gallon higher than a month ago and stand 24.1 cents per gallon lower than a year ago.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Illinois is priced at \$1.94/g while the most expensive is \$2.83/g, a difference of 89.0 cents per gallon.

The national average price of gasoline has risen 4.8 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$2.21/g. The national average is up 9.8 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 34.5 cents per gallon lower than a year ago.

"The sudden spike in gas prices last week was brought on by a continued rise in the price of oil, which jumped last week to nearly \$50 per barrel, the highest we've seen since March, when prices collapsed

risen 8.7 cents per gallon in De Haan, head of petroleum analysis for GasBuddy. 'While last week's gas

price surge isn't likely to repeat this week, it could be a sign of things to come in the year ahead," said De Haan. 'A weakening U.S. dollar

and vaccine optimism continued to push oil higher last week, along with stock markets. While some are wrongly pointing to the coming shift in the White House as driving up prices, I can assure motorists that what we're seeing has nothing to do with such a change and everything to do with market optimism that demand will rise, and the weaker dollar which makes oil cheaper to anyone holding non-dollar currencies, putting upward pressure on demand.

GasBuddy's updates 288 times every day from the most diverse list of sources covering 150,000 stations nationwide the most comprehensive and up-to-date in the country.

liquids because they are easier to use completely, have less packaging and save the cost of

Here is a tip to reduce

waste related to soap and shampoo. Use bars instead of transporting water, since you supply that when you lather them at home. Soap bars last longer if

you allow them to dry between uses. If a soap dish holds water, consider placing a bottle cap under the bar to

State Police bust driver hauling pot

If an Ohio man thought Route 47 in Morris after cannabis was now legal in Illinois, he learned real quick that it's not when you're carrying 103 pounds with the intent to sell it.

An Illinois State Police (ISP) District 5 unit conducted a traffic stop in Grundy County Tuesday that resulted in multiple felony charges and the seizure of three firearms (1 stolen), 103 pounds of cannabis and \$20,259 cash.

The State Trooper pulled a passenger vehicle over on Interstate 80 eastbound at felony); Attempt cannabis milepost 112 just south of tracking-More than 5,000

observing a traffic violation. Probable cause to search the vehicle was then established.

A subsequent search of the vehicle resulted in three carryon bags containing 103 pounds of cannabis, three firearms and a fourth bag with \$20,259 cash.

Henry O. Umpierre, 33, of Cleveland, OH was arrested on multiple felony including, attempt to manufacture/deliver cannabis-more than 5,000 grams (a Class X

grams (Class 1); Possession of cannabis-more than 5,000 grams (Class 1); Conspire/possession of a weapon by convicted felon (Class 2); Possession of a stolen firearm (Class 2) and Armed violence

Umpierre is being lodged at the Grundy County Jail and has been formally charged by the Grundy County State's Attorney.

(Class X).

Umpierre's bond was set at \$150,000 (10% applies). All subjects are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

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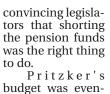
Pritzker could have done the responsible thing to balance the budget

quite accurate, but I don't think it's a stretch to say that Gov. JB Pritzker had the opportunity and most probably the votes to balance the state budget with an income tax hike during 2019, his "honeymoon" year with the General Assembly.

Instead, the governor came into office and proposed what was essentially a pension payment holiday and other magic budgetary solutions.

I was told in early 2019 by a high-level administration figure with influence over the budget that the Pritzker administration would not take the "easy" route of raising taxes and wanted to instead focus on the "hard" choices.

But hiking the flat tax to balance the budget ahead of a hoped-for 2020 change to the state constitution to allow for a graduated income tax would not have been the "easy" route. A pension holiday was the easiest route he could've possibly taken. There was nothing "hard" about that, except for



tually saved by an

receipt boost in

the spring which eliminated the

immediate need

for a pension holi-

day, budget cuts or

a new revenue

unexpected

CAPITOL FACTS

Rich Miller

infusion. And then came 2020, the now almost half over. mother of all lousy years.

tax

The international pandemic has punched all states and local governments in the fiscal gut. But the lack of preparedness hit Illinois even

The state's current revcomparison to last fiscal year, partly because the state income tax filing deadline was moved from April to July, which is in the current fiscal

the governor's Fair Tax failed, and because the current fiscal year's budget depended upon those new revenues plus a nearly \$5 billion federal bailout from the federal government, the state budget office last month projected a \$3.9 billion deficit for the

current fiscal year, which is

The immediate deficit projection has been lowered by \$2 billion because the state is borrowing that money from the Federal Reserve, less than half the \$5 billion it was eligible to receive.

That borrowing leaves the enue situation isn't that bad in state with a \$1.9 billion or so hole to fill by June 30th, and Gov. Pritzker outlined \$711 million in unilateral cuts last

\$75 million of those reductions relies on an agreement

with AFSCME, and the union tax hike to balance the budget make more cuts than the \$711 appeared to reject the notion out of hand. Bruce Rauner's attempt to wipe AFSCME out of existence backfired so badly that the union has been strengthened to the point where even asking for minor concessions is beyond diffi-The governor pointed to

the failure of his Fair Tax proposal as a big reason for the need to make cuts, and AFSCME countered by saying it was also all-in on the graduated income tax. But while Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden lost Sangamon County to President Donald Trump by just 4.3 percentage points (down from Trump's 9-point winning margin in 2016), the Fair Fax lost AFSCME's home-base county by a whopping 26 points. Heckuva job.

We can't go back and change history and it's often maddening to engage in the exercise. But, if the governor had just done the responsible thing in 2019 and used a flat

when he could've drawn on an almost infinitely deep well of goodwill among his supermajority legislature, we wouldn't be in nearly this mess right now. And he could've then painted the 2020 constitutional amendment vote as a very real and substantial income tax cut for 97 percent of the populace instead of the few dollars he ended up promising.

I'm only writing this now because when I laid out this very scenario in an early 2019 meeting with that high-level Pritzker person who has significant budget influence, I was laughed at and waved off with "We're not taking the easy way out with a tax increase, Rich.'

Also, the governor said that he'll need the General Assembly's cooperation to

million he outlined. That's not totally true.

Under Rauner, the vast majority of the state's budget was put on auto-pilot, either by statute or by judges. A big chunk of that money falls under various consent decrees entered into by the state. The administration could attempt to change those consent

decrees without any help from the legislature. But doing so would bring enormous heat on the governor because those consent decrees involve things like minimum funding and staffing levels for the state's care of

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



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Exelon employees give over \$2.9 million

Generation employees live and work will receive more than \$4.4 million to support critical needs, thanks to the nuclear power plant employees and the Exelon Foundation.

The nuclear power plant employees pledged more than \$2.9 million to over 2,000 different charities in their surrounding communities this year. And for every dollar pledged by employees, the Exelon Foundation donated 50 cents to their local United Way, bringing the total donation to more than \$4.4 million.

At Exelon's three area generating stations: Dresden, Braidwood and LaSalle, employees pledged more than \$470,000 to 440 charities during this year's Employee Giving Campaign.

Organizations supported include Special Connections of Grundy County; Grundy Area Pads; Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago; Community Care Center (Braidwood Food Pantry); Kuzma Care Cottage Community; Joliet Area Community Hospice; National

communities where Exelon Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI); We Care of Grundy County; Midwest Veterans Association; Illinois Valley Food Pantry; Gary Sinise Foundation; and more.

You can feel that giving back is embedded solidly within the Exelon culture, and employees do that in so many ways - through donations but also by giving their time and talent in the form of labor and volunteerism," said Karen Nall, executive director of the United Way of Grundy County. "It's truly feels like neighbors taking care of neighbors."

"This has been a challenging year for

many, and our nuclear power plant employees answered the call for help, giving to charities and causes that mean the most to them," said Bryan Hanson, Exelon chief generation officer. "Our people have strong bonds with the communities that surround our nuclear plants. Their generosity will bring resources to organizations that need them, along with hope and relief for the people who rely on them.'

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YOUR HOMETOWN for the Holidays

Merry Christmas from the dedicated employees who bring you the local newspaper, in print and online, every week. It's been a challenging 9 months for all of us but we are thankful to all of you who still believe in supporting local journalism. May your family be safe and there be peace on earth . this holiday season.

. The Free Press Newspapers

Coal City Wilmington



COAL CITY MIDDLE School has announced its first semester Citizenship Award recipients. School staff selected one boy and one girl per grade level—both in-person and remote learners—for the award. Recipients are students who displayed CCMS's four C's—Commitment, Compassion, Courage and Communication. Sixth graders earning the honor were [from left] in-person learners Brody D'Orazio and Maisy Franklin. And, remote learners [not pictured] were Savannah Flood and Liam



SEVENTH GRADERS HONORED with Coal City Middle School's first semester Citizenship Award were [from left] in-person learners Sydney Larson and Colin Schimandle. And, remote learners [not pictured] Rhylan Brackett and Austin Harding.



FOUR EIGHTH GRADERS at Coal City Middle School were named the first semester Citizenship Award recipients. The honorees were selected by staff based on the school's four C's that include commitment to school and others, compassion by choosing what is right in the face of opposition, courage for behavior driven by respect for one another and communication by using positive works and actions. Eighth grade recipients were [from left] in-person learners Calleigh Vanderwerken and William Johnke and remote learners [not pictured] McKenzie Messina and Owen Quarles.

Warriors earn citizenship awards GAVC Agriscience teacher awarded CASE grant

Elise Hackett, agriscience dents for success in college educator at GAVC, is one of 38 teachers nationwide to be Implementation Grant sponsored by Corteva Agriscience. This grant will allow Hackett to participate in a professional development institute for Plant Science for Curriculum for Agricultural Science Education (CASE) course in the GAVC agriculture program. CASE is an instructional

system that is changing the culture of agriculture programs in the United States through intense teacher prodevelopment; fessional inquiry-based, studentfocused lessons; assessment; and certification. CASE equips teachers to elevate student experiences in the agriculture classroom, and prepares stu-

and careers emphasizing science, technology, engineering,

CASE Director Nancy Trivette looks forward to seeing the impact these funds will have on both new and established CASE programs. "It's a announce the grantees. It's always great to provide funding through the generous support of Corteva AgriscienceTM for implementation of CASE nationwide.'

With the goal of supporting workforce development and sparking student interest in enriching lives through agri-culture, Corteva AgriscienceTM has offered this grant program for the past eight years to public and private schools and universities to assist with the implementation of CASE.

Teachers were able to apply for grants up to \$5,000 for implementing the CASE program in schools teacher professional development at a CASE Institute and purchasing classroom equipment and resources.

'Corteva Agriscience is proud to support agricultural educators through CASE. This year it's even more important to provide teachers all the support we can as many are navigating the challenges of teaching a hands-on curriculum in a virtual setting," says Ronda Hamm, Global Academic Relations Manager.

For more information, visit case4learning.org, corteva.us, and Ag Program Website.

GAVC students, staff show kindness



STUDENTS, FACULTY AND staff at Grundy Area Vocational Center [GAVC] did their part to make the holiday season a bit brighter for Grundy County families in need. Between Dec. 7 and 17, these individuals and a few former students brought in non-perishable food and bottled water as part of the vocational center's Cans for Kindness campaign. On Dec. 15, the center had collected 2,600 items and in the final two days the total donation count had climbed to an impressive 17,011 items. The food and water is being distributed between four charities—Help for Hope in Coal City, the food pantry at the Church of Hope in Gardner, New Beginnings Women's Help Center in Morris, and the Grundy County Health Department's micro pantries. The center had a little fun with the collection in the form of a friendly competition between programs. Welding students came out on top and received individually wrapped cookies for their effort. Rounding out the top five in order of placement were: IIT/CISCO, health occupations, criminal justice [Morris campus], and early childhood [Morris campus].

Kinzinger gives thumbs up to relief bill

year-end stimulus package, Appropriations wins included for the among other provisions.

American people have been caught in the middle of a political standoff. Still, I'm glad to see so many Republican priorities included in this funding package, and relieved that our Democrat colleagues finally decided to negotiate in good faith on a COVID-19 relief package that we could get passed through Congress and

on to the President's desk. "Despite this package being long overdue, I was proud to vote in its favor because of the many provisions that will positively impact the American people facing the hardships of the COVIĎ-19 pandemic. This funding measure includes

After voting in favor of the many bipartisan wins that take important steps to help pro-H.R. 133 – Consolidated vide COVID-19 relief through funding for vaccines, PPP Congressman Adam Kinzinger loans, unemployment insur-(IL-16) released the following ance, and \$13 billion to supstatement touting the many port the agriculture sector, Act - This legislation would

includes spending bills that will protect our energy sector, our environment, our national security and cyber defenses, and our consumers. Several of my own bills have been included in this package like measures increase energy efficiency in the public and private sectors, and provisions to secure our telecom and information networks and their supply chains from foreign threats. The funding package also expands the telehealth grant program authorized under the CARES Act, ends the egregious practice of surprise billing, and funds community health centers (CHCs), and includes many other reforms to protect patients and taxpayers.

A few of the different legislations sponsored by Kinzinger included in the year-end H.R.

133 funding package include: • H.R. 1430, the Combined Heat and Power (CHP) Support reauthorize an existing program that encourages t of energy efficient technologies by generating electricity and capturing heat (that would

vide useful thermal energy. H.R. 2044, the Smart Building Acceleration Act This bill assists in the building sector of adopting smart build ing technology to increase energy efficiency by requiring the Department of Energy (DOE) to establish a Federal Smart Building Program.

otherwise be wasted) to pro-

 H.R. 3079, the Energy Savings Through Public-Private Partnerships Act - The bill requires federal facilities to implement energy and water efficient measures.



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

Must redeem by Dec. 228, 2020

"Proud to be serving the community for the past 34 years!"

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

"Support Coal City High School Athletes"

Tucker named to Knox College dean's list

Madeline Tucker, of Morris, has been named to the Knox College dean's list of distinguished students for the 2020 fall term.

To be named to the dean's list, a student must have a grade point average of 3.6 or

better on a 4.0 scale.

Tucker, a graduate of Coal City High School, is majoring in neuroscience and psychol-

Knox College is located in Galesburg, IL.

Krause earns spot on dean's list

More than 200 students were named to the fall 2020 dean's list at Iowa Wesleyan University including Benjamin Krause of Mazon.

To be a part of the IWU's dean's list the individual must have a grade point average of 3.5 or higher.



IESA far short of funds to continue

BY SHAWN LONG SPORTS WRITER

It's been two weeks since the Illinois Elementary School Association appealed to the public to support a 'Go Fund Me' page to keep the organization operational. If the IESA doesn't get financial help by April, it will be forced to

As of Monday the Go Fund Me page reached \$22,200, far short of their \$500,000 goal. While it's not clear what will happen to

middle school sports if the IESA dissolves, Coal City Athletic Director Dan Hutchings says it's a waiting game now.

"I haven't been involved in any discussions on that," said Hutchings. "I'm sure that there will be talks after the new year. I'm sure there's going to be some discussion amongst schools." Hutchings is hopeful that everything will

work itself out and they can get things started

"I'm just hoping that we can get going especially to have a track season and get to that point in time. The IESA is very well put together and they do a nice job with everything. We usually get an email at least monthly if not every two weeks from the Executive Director Steve

It would definitely be a change to middle school sports if the state lost the IESA. The main focus right now is getting students back to school for full days before anything else. Then, they'll go from there, says Hutchings.

"It would change a few things with state tournaments but it would be a situation that we would decide when faced with that decision. But we haven't had any discussions about it, so I don't know what would happen. The government is making the decisions in what we are and not allowed to do and sports are affected. The No. 1 thing is we've got to get students back in front of teachers for full days. We're academ-

ic institutions. We've got to make sure that we regular junior high sports association and you educate our kids. That's important."

What's been the impact of having a statewide organization that puts on state tournaments for 7th and 8th grade athletes? One of the best to experience the workings of the IESA is former middle school baseball coach Jerry McDowell.

He said there is no better influence on aspiring athletes than to watch them advance in a state series and see them achieve their goal. He saw first-hand how winning state or even making it to the state level builds confidence in young teens.

McDowell as led five teams to state, winning three titles. He has nothing but great things to say about how IESA Executive Director Steve Endsley has run things for years.

'We won in 1996 and 1997," said McDowell. "Then, we won it in 2013, got third in '14 and won it again in 15. It just means a lot because a lot of schools don't get involved with IESA or a

just pick up games and play on your own. The IESA is so well organized and has got everything set right there for you and Endsley has done a great job organizing that."

McDowell has also been a referee for the IESA and says he's loves working for an organization that puts its heart and soul into making

everything run smoothly.

"I've been involved with IESA for state basketball and I've reffed the state tournaments for 22 years. Also I've served on the committee for state baseball so he puts a lot into, he puts his heart into it and it's a shame because a lot of people have struggled during this pandemic and hopefully, we can get these vaccines going and get it straightened out and get the kids back on the playing field playing sports again. I'm hoping the IESA can get back to going full

Coaler golf coaches score hole-in-one with dream team picks

BY SHAWN LONG SPORTS WRITER

The Coal City golf program is entering its 33rd year thanks, in part, to Pat Halloran who took the coaching position back 1987.

Halloran coached for six years at Coal City, leading the team to state in two consecutive seasons, something no team after it has ever done. He held a 60-27 record in that time (1987-1993). That team alone could be a dream team. Those two consecutive

title runs happened four years into the program after getting through the first three years when it seemed players trying out were mostly inexperi-

"It was a great experience for the students to get that far," said Halloran. "Especially since we only had golf for three or four years prior to that time frame. When we first started golf, we had 35-40 guys tryout and nobody had really played."

The first state qualifying year for the Coalers was in

1991-92 when they were 14-6, they're out on the course but it falling just outside the top 10 In 1992, Bishop McNamara was the strongest golf team in the state.

A year later the Coalers came back to state but fell just outside placement behind Driscoll Addison and Bloomington Central Catholic.

While Halloran had many memories in the sport, his favorite memory was the overall state experience where the You're up against schools

other private schools where some of those students had different chances to play in summer tournaments. When they got past who they were facing, the student-

like Bishop McNamara and

athletes had to work out a few kinks but after that, they were good to go and the tournament was a great experience.

was kind of nerve wrecking," Halloran said. "Golf is an interesting sport--at that time you couldn't talk to the golfer when

was exciting for the students. We definitely had some jitters. Some of the guys had to spend a little extra time on the driving range after the first round trying to work things out but it was a well run tournament so it was a really neat experience."

The school send off before the state tournament was really something he can never forget says Halloran.

Coach John Cullick, the competition was top of the athletic director, always did a nice job of having donuts and iuice in the cafeteria and the other students came to say good luck.' On those teams were

some tremendous golfers including Mike Hines, a player ideal for a golf dream team. Hines was a top golfer on

the team that also played basketball for Halloran. Hines was a power stroker. He was a big and strong

'It was exciting at state. It kid," said Halloran. "He could hit the ball a long way."

Dave Halloway

Halloway, captured the first ever state trophy for Coaler state golf.

He was the top golfer from that team as he came back to state as a senior and became the only Coaler to ever medal, placing seventh in 1993-94

He also went to state with those two teams as a freshman and a sophomore. Halloran brought him up because he was talented at such a young

"Dave Halloway was an underclassmen on that team. He was one of those kids that had done well in the offseason with local golf professionals like John Keegan over at the Morris Country Club. He was a natural player."

The twins were a big part

of the state tournament teams.

They were very good putters.

"The Wills twins probably showed the biggest improvement in their junior and senior years," added Halloran. "They had really good short game and they were really good around the green. They were really big natural athletes. They played some hockey and other sports that weren't the norm. They were good baseball players and all these guys were multi-sport athletes.'

Halloran also selected Brian Cleek, Jim Martis and Todd Berta.

Todd Hansen

Hansen, who played on Halloran's first team was very good because he had experi-

ence.
"He had taken an interest in golf prior to us even having a team," Halloran said. He was one of the lowest

scorers of that time. What made it more impressive was where they had to play their home meets. 'He was one of our golfers

that could shoot consistently in the 40's. It was kind of difficult starting out. We didn't know what to expect. We didn't have a home course. We played at a variety of places. There was a course out on Essex Road everyone referenced it as the 'Nuclear Nine' and that was our home course.

Dave Sinkular took over the coaching duties in 2004. He stayed in the position 13 seasons, where he led the Coalers to a 135-98 record.

'My first year was the year we won conference and got three kids down to the sectional tournament," said Sinkular. 'We also had two to the state tournament.'

Cody Scerine

Cody was Sinkular's first pick and he was a great first golfer. Scerine went to state in 2004, placing just outside the top 50 with a score of 82. Scerine's grandpa ran the golf course so Cody was always around the game giving him numerous chances to better his swing.

'Cody was just one of those guys that loved to play golf and was always around the game. He ended up getting a degree as a professional course manager.

Brett Smith Smith was another stand-

out. Smith went to state that same year and ended up scoring an 88. Playing with Scerine "Brett Smith was a sopho-

more when they went down to state and he was on the team where there were kids who really wanted to go down to state and really wanted to do well so that helped him.

Ben Lyons

Lyons was one of the three to make it to the sectional tournament that year. He'd be his third option after Scerine and Smith. Lyons shot an 84 at the Macomb Sectional, missing the state tournament by one stroke in 2004.

Clayton Cash

Sinkular also referenced the 2016-17 season where the golf team had a 17-2 record and Clayton Cash was one of the reasons why. Sinkular notes Clayton averaged 41.



COALER BEN LYONS was selected for the golf dream team. Lyons qualified for sectionals in under Dave Sinkular in 2004.

"He was the number one golfer on that team," added Sinkular. "Clayton had been playing golf for years. He played in middle school tournaments so he had a background in it. His family was also big in it as well. Clayton was a kid who could hit the ball pretty far and had a really good

Clayton was one of the really elevated his game says two golfers to make it to the sectionals that year. He shot an 88 which was nine strokes behind the leader. He could also putt really well.

Collin Erickson

Erickson was another really good golfer on that 17-2 team. He had good long game.

Erickson has been in golf his whole life and his dad still is the golf coach at Seneca," commented Sinkular. "I could hit the ball a long way.

Logan Schoen

Logan was another one of his top golfers and he actually bested Cash at the regional, shooting an 85 to join him at the sectional tournament.

"He could hit the ball a long way. It wasn't necessarily his or Collin's number one strength but they used their size to their advantage.

Luke Lyons & Jake Van Duyne

Lyons and Van Duyne were some of his top golfers during the 2010 season. Lyons was like his brother, Ben, they were both good at the short game. Jake could do-it-all

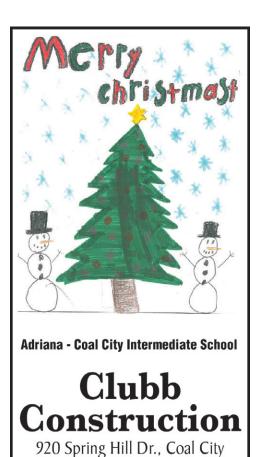
"Jake was a balanced golfer," commented Sinkular. He did a little bit of everything. He showed potential as a freshman and then took the ieadersnip roie and as a senior he was probably the best kid on the team at that point. Luke and his brother Ben hit the ball solid and always knew where it was going. There really wasn't a time where they didn't know what was happening.'

Sinkular has many memories in the sport but the best was taking two individuals to the state tournament during his first year coaching the

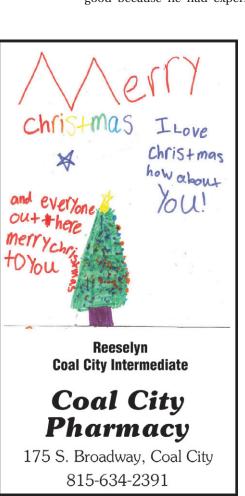
"The kids were great," concluded Sinkular. "It was a well-rounded team. A lot of those guys when we see each other, there's still a warmth to it. They were good kids and it was interesting to be a first year coach and have a team that were that good and had a lot of success.'

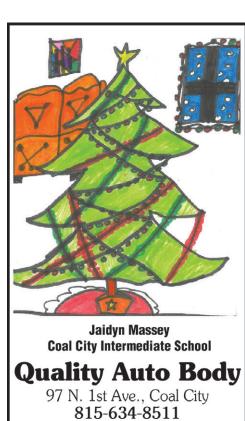


CLAYTON CASH was selected for the golf dream team at Coal City High School. Cash was a sectional qualifier in his senior season.



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HAPPY HOLIDAYS!