



A holiday tradition renewed

Coalers ready to Rumble

COALER SPORTS



\$1.00
Vol. 122, Issue 52
1 section • 12 pages
Not over 75% advertising
www.coalcitycourant.com

COAL CITY COURANT .com

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2023

A FREE PRESS NEWSPAPER • (815) 634-0315



Image courtesy of Albertsons Companies

SITE WORK IS began in July for the Jewel-Osco that will anchor the new Diamond Marketplace Shopping Center at Route 113 and Will Road. The 62,000 square-foot grocery store will include a pharmacy and Starbucks, and is slated to open in the fall of 2024. It was the most-read story posted by the Coal City Courant in 2023.



A NEW MAYOR - Dave Spesia was elected mayor for the Village of Coal City. He was sworn into office in early May.

The year that was: 2023 in Coal City, Diamond

It was a busy year in this portion of Grundy County, with new development, new leadership, and new champions leading the way in 2023.

Here, a look at the stories that kept Coal City talking in 2023:

Diamond's new Jewel

After nearly 20 years of anticipation, Jewel-Osco announced in 2023 that the grocer and pharmacy chain is moving forward with plans to construct a 62,000 square-foot grocery store on the southeast corner of Route 113 and Will Road.

The store—complete with a pharmacy and Starbucks—

will serve as the anchor of the new Diamond Marketplace Shopping Center, a site Mayor Terry Kernc expects will begin to develop now that Jewel is under construction.

The site includes five outlots of a little over one acre that front Route 113. There is enough space for another anchor type store.

The entire 40 acre site was acquired in 2004 by TBS Development Services Group, Inc., for Albertsons, the parent company of Jewel. Even with changes in the company's corporate structure over the past two decades the concept of operating a store in Diamond never wavered.

The company's invest-

ment in Diamond is around \$30 million and it did receive an incentive package from the village that includes tax increment financing funds and sales tax reimbursement, as well as the ability to utilize economic incentives that come with the village's enterprise zone such as sales tax exemptions on purchases of building materials and manufacturing equipment.

The village also committed funds toward site development.

Construction of the building will commence once the site work has been completed, with a completion date slated for the first quarter of 2024.

For Kernc the goal has

always been to provide for the residents and that means securing the services they need and want.

"If they don't want to leave town to go to Joliet, Morris or Kankakee and just want to get their food and pharmacy here in Diamond they are going to be able to do that. If they want to go to the doctor's office here in Diamond, they can do that," Kernc said.

Heroes West Sports Grill announced in November plans to open a restaurant inside the development.

Wrong way driver

Tragedy struck a young family from Livingston County

in June when a head-on traffic crash on I-55 just north of Coal City Road claimed the lives of a mother and father traveling with their children.

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

On June 27 that the Dubes' GMC Yukon was struck head-on by a wrong-way driver in the southbound lanes of Interstate 55 at the 238 mile marker—Route 129—in Wilmington Township.

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

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

Michael Trinka, 34, who resides in Shadow Lakes, was arrested on July 12 for allegedly causing the crash. Police believe Trinka entered southbound I-55 at Route 113 even though there are six "Do not enter" and "Wrong way" signs at the off-ramp, and traveled north two miles still unaware he was in the southbound lanes.

Trinka remains in the Will County Adult Detention Center in Joliet on a \$3 million bond, facing 14 felony charges, including aggravated DUI resulting in death, reckless homicide, aggravated DUI causing bodily harm. His next court appearance is scheduled for Jan. 18, 2024.

Unit 1 challenges GE Hitachi assessment

In December, the Coal City Community Unit School District 1 Board of Education filed a complaint against the assessed value of the GE-Hitachi Nuclear Energy Morris Operation, which it believes is under assessed. The board directed the superintendent and chief school business officer to file the complaint with the Grundy County Board of

Review.

The GE-Hitachi Morris Operation was originally constructed by GE to reprocess spent nuclear fuel but that did not happen. Instead, the site has operated as a spent fuel storage facility and, for more than 50 years, GE-Hitachi Nuclear Energy has been providing nuclear plant operators from around the country with storage space at its facility on Collins Road in Goose Lake Township.

The facility's deep water pools hold 3,217 fuel assemblies, that's 773 metric tons or 1.7 million pounds of spent nuclear fuel. The majority of that was shipped to the facility from nuclear generating facilities located in California, Connecticut, Minnesota and Nebraska, as well as some from the neighboring Dresden Nuclear Generating Station.

The GE-Hitachi Morris Operation, located within the boundaries of the Coal City School District, is the only permanent high-level nuclear waste storage site in the nation. There is no other property like it anywhere in the country.

"The Board of Education firmly believes that GE-Hitachi is not paying its fair share of the property taxes required to educate our schoolchildren and that is unfair to homeowners and small businesses," said Superintendent Christopher Spencer.

The Board of Education previously filed objections to the assessed value of the spent nuclear fuel storage facility in tax years 2021 and 2022. For tax year 2021, the county's three-member Board of Review increased the assessed value of the site from \$3.2 million to \$6.13 million.

There was no change in the assessed value in 2022 and, when the assessor published the county's assessments on November 8, the assessed

SEE TOP STORIES PAGE 2



Courant file photo

ONE OF OUR favorite stories for 2023 appeared in the May 10 edition of the Coal City Courant. It featured Bradley Burla who won the Oscar Take Me To Prom contest which included a free ride to prom inside the famous Oscar Mayer Wienermobile. Burla is pictured with his date Lexi Robbins before hopping aboard the Wienermobile and relishing every moment.



BERKOT'S SUPER FOODS

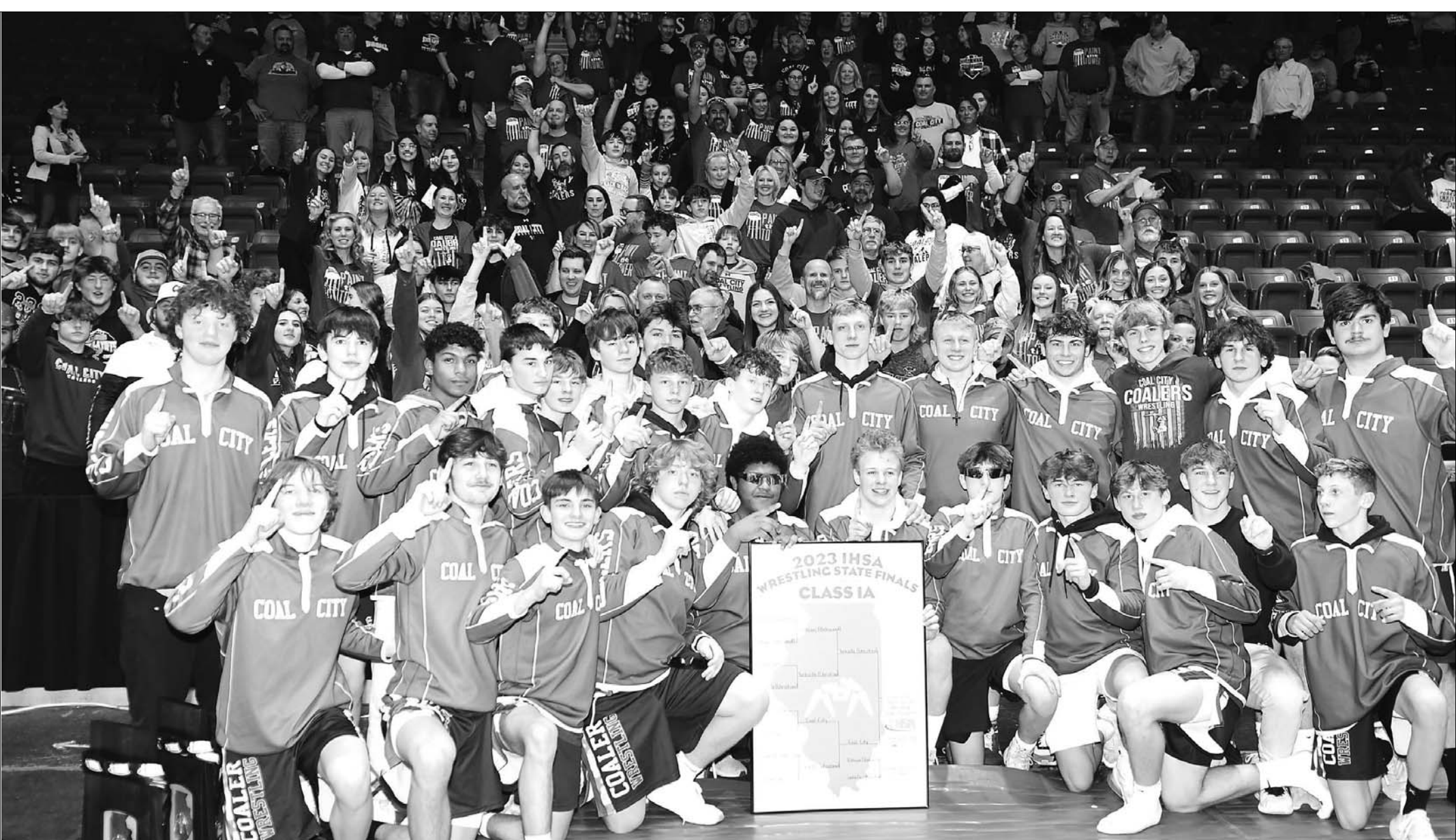
SALE VALID 12/28-1/3/24

WILMINGTON 815-476-6272
COAL CITY 815-634-4224
BRAIDWOOD 815-458-2114

CHECK OUT OUR WEEKLY AD AT BERKOTFOODS.COM

QUENCH YOUR THIRST WITH BERKOT'S LOYALTY DEALS

<p>PRICE W/ LOYALTY ONLY 4 permitted, limit 1 transaction per loyalty account per ad week.</p> <p>\$4.99</p> <p>EACH with loyalty LIMIT 4*</p> <p>Pepsi Family Soda 12 pk 12 oz cans</p>	<p>PRICE W/ LOYALTY ONLY 4 total permitted, limit 1 transaction per loyalty account per ad week.</p> <p>\$4.99</p> <p>EACH with loyalty LIMIT 4*</p> <p>7 Up Family Soda 12 pk 12 oz cans or 8 pk 12 oz btls</p>	<p>PRICE W/ LOYALTY ONLY 4 total permitted, limit 1 transaction per loyalty account per ad week.</p> <p>\$5.99</p> <p>EACH with loyalty LIMIT 4*</p> <p>Coke Family Soda 12 pk 12 oz cans or 8 pk 12 oz btls</p>	<p>PRICE W/ LOYALTY ONLY 4 permitted, limit 1 transaction per loyalty account per ad week.</p> <p>2 FOR \$5 with loyalty LIMIT 4*</p> <p>Prairie Farms Milk- Gallon 1%, 2%, or Skim Milk</p>
---	---	---	--



Courant file photo

STATE CHAMPIONS—The Coal City wrestling team stands with their fans inside Grossinger Motors Arena in Bloomington, IL after winning the Class 1A state championship for the first time in school history on Saturday, Feb. 25. The Coalers will be looking to defend their title in 2024. Same time, same place, be there.

Top stories, continued from page 1

value for 2023 was once again at the Board of Review's 2021 amount of \$6.13 million.

In its effort to obtain a fair assessment of the GE-Hitachi facility, the Coal City School District and three other taxing districts—the Coal City Fire Protection District, Coal City Public Library District and Grundy County—have filed appeals from the Grundy Board of Review rulings to the Illinois Property Tax Appeal Board (PTAB) for tax years 2021 and 2022.

Those cases are pending and it could take several years before they are resolved at the state level.

future of Coal City," Spesia said following the April 4 consolidated election.

Of the town's 3,729 registered voters, 748 or about 20% cast a ballot.

In the contest for mayor Spesia received 59.7% of the vote to 40.3% received by his opponent Ross Bradley.

Spesia said his priorities include maintaining essential services such as police and utilities, business development, and ensuring the residents to have a comfortable place to call home.

Coaler Wrestlers are State Champs

In February, Coal City edged defending champs Yorkville Christian, 32-31, to claim the state wrestling championship in Bloomington.

"Everybody's always about living a life of comfort but not these guys. They were built for greatness," said coach Mark Masters. "They had a

great team unit. It's a special group obviously, to be able to do what they did."

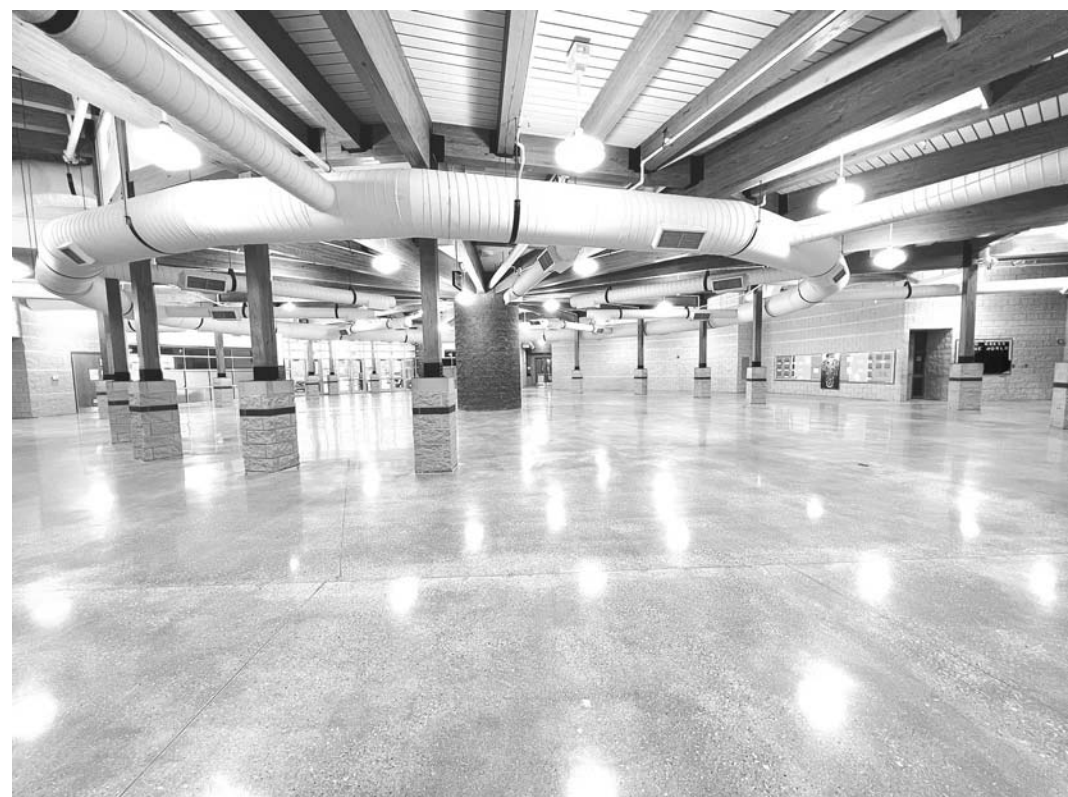
What they did was to better what 11 Coaler teams could not do before. Six times Coal City settled for second place, twice as third place trophy winners, once in fourth place and two times not placing at all.

"They're a great senior class. I couldn't be more proud of those guys...high class, high character kids," Masters commented. "They did a great job leading our program, all the way from our youth program. This all started 10 years ago when many of them were Little Coalers. We've had the right coaches in the right places throughout these kids' careers and I am happy for them."

New Mayor in Coal City

In April, David Spesia became the new Coal City village president—a role more commonly recognized as mayor. No matter the title used, Spesia is set to lead the community.

"I am eager to serve as mayor and optimistic for the



Courant file photo

NEW FLOOR for Coal City Middle School brought excitement to Coal City Unit 1 District as the first of several improvement projects planned during 2023 and into future years. The improvement list includes new parking lots, roadway configurations and possible new turf for athletic fields.

Grundy EMA installing devices to alert motorists

Grundy County Emergency Management is installing HAAS Alert's Safety Cloud digital alerting in its EMA vehicles which will notify

motorists before they come upon an emergency scene.

The motoring public in and around Grundy County will now receive pre-emptive digital alerts via in-dash systems in multiple brands including Dodge, Ram, Jeep, and Chrysler vehicles, as well as through Apple Maps and Waze mobile applications.

These alerts, activated when Grundy vehicles' emergency lights are in use, will assist in facilitating adherence to Illinois Move Over Laws and can significantly reduce collision risks as first responders arrive on-scene to support

other Grundy County Emergency Response Agencies, protecting and maintaining roadway and scene safety for all and reducing the likelihood of secondary collisions near roadside incidents by up to 90%.

The purchase/service of these units was made possible by generous donations from industrial, communities, community service organizations and citizen partners.

"Thank you for your continued support!" said director Grundy EMA director Joe Schroeder.

Attorney Meents files Knight estate claim

PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
GRUNDY COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF CAROL J. KNIGHT, Deceased; No. 2023PR80

CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given of the death of Carol J. Knight, Letters of Office as Independent Executor were issued on December 4, 2023, to Allyn D. Knight, whose address is 1508 Lang Drive, Bolingbrook, Illinois 60490; whose attorney is Meents Law, P.C., 25158 W. Eames Street, Unit A, Channahon, IL 60410. Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Grundy County Courthouse, 111 E. Washington Street, Morris, Illinois 60450, or with the representative, or both, on or before June 14, 2024, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by the Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a Claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

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

Allyn D. Knight
Independent Executor of the Estate of Carol J. Knight, Deceased

Frank J. Meents
25158 W. Eames Street, Unit A
Channahon, Illinois 60410
Telephone: (815) 534-9515
Facsimile: (815) 534-9516
Attorney No: 06298859
Email: frank@meentslaw.com

Published in the Coal City Courant on Wednesday, Dec. 13, 20 and 27, 2023.

Have retirement plan questions? Let's talk about your options.



Tammy Johnson, AAMS'
Financial Advisor

12 East North Street
Coal City, IL 60416
815-634-0205



www.edwardjones.com Member SIPC

Toadstool sewing files as new business

LEGAL NOTICE

Assumed Name Publication Notice

Public Notice is hereby given that on December 18, A.D. 2023, a certificate was filed in the Office of the County Clerk of Grundy County, Illinois, setting forth names and post-office addresses of all of the persons owning, conducting and transacting the business known as Toadstool sewing, located at 3635 Pine Meadow Lane, Morris, IL 60450. Dated this 18th day of December, A.D. 2023.

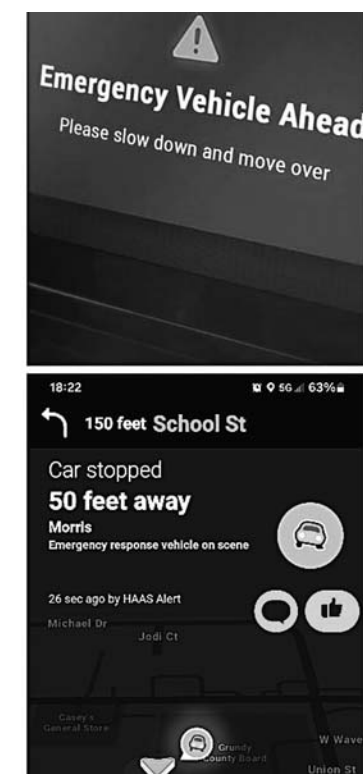
Kay T Olson, Grundy County Clerk
Published in the Coal City Courant on Dec. 20, 27, 2023 and Jan. 3, 2024.

Hometown Storage to dispose of property

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice of Lien

Hometown Storage, 2920 E. Division St., Diamond, IL 60416, 815-634-3333 hereby is asserting a Possessory Lien in pursuant to your contract and the State of Illinois Self-Service Facility Act. Tenant: Jerrold Miller 2 Sportsman Dr., Diamond IL 60416 Unit #330. If unpaid rental charges, late fees and associated charges are not paid for in full by February 15, 2024 the property will be sold to satisfy the lien. Published in the Coal City Courant on Wednesday, Dec. 27, 2023 and Jan. 10, 2024.



EMERGENCY AHEAD! Motorists could receive notifications like this from Grundy County EMA vehicles with the latest HAAS digital alerting system. This advanced service connects Grundy EMA emergency lighting systems to connected vehicles through navigation platforms. Photos are simulated for basic illustration purposes.

Hazard
175 feet away
Near Morris
Emergency response vehicle nearby

13 sec ago by HAAS Alert



The Coal City Courant

USPS No. 120-060
Published weekly, 52 times a year, on Wednesdays by
G-W COMMUNICATIONS, INC.,
271 S. Broadway St.
Coal City, IL 60416
Periodicals postage paid at Coal City, Illinois

Postmaster: Send address changes to:
Free Press Newspapers; 111 S. Water St.;
Wilmington, IL 60481

Subscription rates: \$43 Grundy & Will counties; \$50 other Illinois counties and \$57 out of state

G.W. Communications, Inc publishes the weekly subscription newspapers named The Free Press Advocate, The Braidwood Journal and The Coal City Courant.

Advertising and Business Offices:
• 111 South Water St., Wilmington, IL 60481
(815) 476-7966; Fax: (815) 476-7002
• 271 South Broadway, Coal City, IL 60416
(815) 634-0315; Fax: (815) 476-7002

Deadline for The Free Press Advocate, Braidwood Journal and Coal City Courant
Display Advertising: Friday, noon
News and Classified Advertising: Monday, noon

E-mail: News & News Photos: news@fpnusa.com
Ads & Artwork: graphics@fpnusa.com

©2023 All news, photographs and advertising material used in this publication are the property of G-W Communications, Inc. Use of the material without the consent of G-W Communications, Inc. is strictly prohibited. Violators of this property right are subject to legal action.

Eric D. Fisher, publisher



Coal City School District photo

STUDENTS IN Betsy Cowherd's fourth grade class completed a holiday project with the help of volunteers including Mike Giard, the grandfather of one of Cowherd's students. The project required the students to measure, cut, sand and stain a piece of wood that was used as part of a holiday gift.



Coal City School District photo

GRANDPARENT Taras Lenczuk teaches a fourth grade student on the proper way to sand a wood board.

Coal City Intermediate School continues holiday traditions

Saw blades were whistling as students in Betsy Cowherd's fourth grade class got to work on a holiday project and they had some help from a few special visitors.

It's become tradition that in the month of December a group of grandfathers head into the classroom to assist Cowherd's students in creating a gift for their parents and it starts with measuring and cutting a piece of wood. The teacher asks for grandparent volunteers who are willing to come in and work with groups of students on the proper way to measure and cut wood, as well as sand and stain the boards.

"I think it's a great idea to show them how

to use a square, how to sand properly, how to stain properly, it's a life skill and that's what's neat about the project," said Mitch Hamann, a fourth grade grandparent and retired Coal City educator and administrator.

Hamann worked with a group that included his grandson, Adler. The two do a lot of activities together, but seeing his grandson in his school environment was something rather special.

"It's an opportunity not a lot of people get, so you appreciate when you get those opportunities," Hamann said.

The other grandfathers lending a hand

were Robert Bianchetta, Mike Giard and Taras Lenczuk, who took on the name of Mr. T. Lenczuk's grandson is a student in the class and the youngster shared that having this opportunity will likely inspire the duo to complete more wood working projects in the future.

"Exciting," is the word Lenczuk used to describe being able to come into the classroom and work with the students, and it's something he would do again if asked. The one highlight being the chance to spend time working alongside his grandson.

For the students it was great to have their grandfathers join them at school, and it was

even better when they were allowed to apply the stain to their wood projects, most agreeing that was the highlight of the project. The completed pieces will be going home to parents in time for holiday gift giving and it will be a special treat when they see the personalization that comes with the gift—a poem that the students have also entered into a contest.

The holiday activities in Cowherd's classroom continued as the students created their very own gingerbread houses, another holiday tradition for Cowherd's fourth graders.



Coal City School District photo

LENDING A HAND-Mitch Hamann, a retired educator and administrator, headed back to class to assist students in Betsy Cowherd's fourth grade class with a holiday project. Hamann, aka Biggie, was one of four grandfathers who volunteered to assist the class.



Coal City School District photo

ROBERT BIANCHETTA teaches a fourth grade student how to properly measure a board. Bianchetta was among a group of grandfathers who assisted students in Betsy Cowherd's class.

Alzheimer's caregiver support group to meet

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

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

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

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

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

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

COAL CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWS

Check online event calendar at ccpld.org for a description of the events and to register.

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

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

Thursday, Dec. 28- Jr. Artists -

11am

Teen Artists - 2pm

Friday, Dec. 29 - Tween Lock-In - 5:30pm - Join us for a locked-in Retro Party, where we will enjoy pizza and lemonade, and dust off some old party games! We are also going to make ice cream sundaes...but we're not going to let you use your arms. Register to find out how that's going to happen! Feel free to come dressed like how your parents used to look!

Fun Fridays - 3pm

Saturday, Dec. 30- Library Closed for New Year's Eve

Monday, Jan. 1- Library Closed for New Year's Day

Tuesday, Jan. 2- Adult Book Club - 1pm

Wednesday, Jan. 3-Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP) - 9am-12pm

Paper & More - 9am-4pm

Teen Anime - 4pm

Braceville-Gardner Cemetery donations

As the year comes to a close the Braceville-Gardner Cemetery board would like everyone to think about family, friends and loved ones buried at the cemetery. The board is in great need of financial help to keep the cemetery running. They run strictly on grave sales and burials with no other source of income.

The following donations to the Braceville-Gardner Cemetery are gratefully acknowledged by the Braceville-Gardner Cemetery Association.

In memory of Albrect, Crawford, Farmer and Wills families, by James and Louann Albrect.

In memory of Junior W. Zilm, by Bettie Zilm.

In memory of Dillan Pierard by Tom and Sarah Sayers.

In memory of Herman and Mary Cullick by Bernie and Debra Burla.

In memory of Ulivi and Bauer families by Bill and Janet

Ulivi.

In memory of Kathryn Hansen by Barney Vigna.

In memory of John J., Evelyn, John D., Angelina Zerboglio by Stephen and Karen Broucek.

In memory of Ike and Russell Bull by Betty Bull.

In memory of Mudd family by John and Linda Mudd.

In memory of Sisk, Gabehart, Pavlis families by Tod and Donna Gabehart.

In memory of John Pogliano Jr. by Lana Pogliano.

In memory of Ernie Viano by Barb Viano.

In memory of Ed Novy by Anna Novy.

In memory of Herron family by Don Herron.

In memory of Grant family by Bernard Grant.

In memory of Elaine Testa by Scott and Lynn Allison.

In memory of Patricia L. Scubic by Dale Scubic family.

In memory of Corbin and Bell families by Richard Corbin.

In memory of Taylor family A.Z. and A.R. and Laurie Nestor by Lloyd Brewer.

In memory of Robert and Marian Gubelman by Roberta Gubelman.

In memory of Nels Olson family by Alan and Beth Olson.

In memory of Mabel and Jim Morris and Gordie Allison by Wayne and Joyce Morris.

In memory of Wilson and Cullick families by John and Beverly Cullick.

In memory of Nell and Gary Lissy Jr. by Gary Lissy Sr.

In memory of family by Peter and Mary Giaudrone.

Donations can be sent to Braceville/Gardner Cemetery, 7295 W. Braceville Rd., PO Box 246, Braceville, IL 60407. The association appreciates all donations during these trying economic times.

Board of Directors Braceville-Gardner Cemetery Association



Coal City School District photo

COAL CITY MIDDLE School has announced the final Students of the Week for the first semester. The honored students were selected by their teachers for the weekly recognition. Honored were [from left]: Ty Giger, nominated by Coach Masters and Rese Symons, nominated by Mr. Perry. Not pictured is Chase Clubb, nominated by Mrs. Larson.



Coal City School District photo

COAL CITY MIDDLE School student Mia Horst was selected to receive the Student of the Week honor. She was nominated by Mr. Larson.

Free Press Newspapers readers

SOUND-OFF

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

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

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

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

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

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

Honoring veterans

To be buried in Abraham Lincoln cemetery you must be a war veteran who served this country during war. I qualify, my wife and I will be buried at Abraham Lincoln cemetery. On Dec. 16, 2023 on a cold, wet, freezing day at Abraham Lincoln Cemetery 33,000 Christmas wreaths were laid on the graves of veterans. Thirty-three thousand war veterans received Christmas wreaths. We had Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, Christians, Jewish, Orthodox, churches, police departments, everyone laid down 33,000 wreaths on these veterans. It was freezing cold out, it was terrible but they stayed and they got the wreaths laid at these war veterans' graves. We had police from Coal City, Wilmington, Joliet, Chicago, Channahon, numerous police departments but not Braidwood. Sue Rezin was there God bless her. She was shaking hands with everybody. She shook hands with my wife of 55 years.

Like they'll read it

COAL CITY—Why is there so much political stuff here. Like I know it is for sounding your opinion but come on. Trump is a criminal. Joe is sleepy. And for the people with political beliefs every week, do you think they will see this? No they won't. Trump doesn't even know what a newspaper is and Joe is too busy.

Struck out

WILMINGTON—Mighty Casey struck out but at least he gets his mail because there is no DeJoy in Mudville.

Upcoming allegations

WILMINGTON—Why are we even having a presidential election in 2024? If Trump wins, the election was fair and square and he will have set a new record with billions of legal votes in his favor. If Biden wins, the election was tainted with voter fraud, malfunctioning voting machines, fake electors, and cheating poll workers. Benny Lane

Election workers

CUSTER PARK—Now that the damages have been decided in the defamation lawsuit on behalf of the two election poll workers in Georgia, how about a shout out to all our election poll workers in big cities and small towns all across this great nation! You are the backbone of our democracy.

Choices for all

WILMINGTON—Newt Gingrich, former Republican Speaker of the House from the same state as Marjorie Taylor Greene, on hearing about Colorado keeping Trump off the primary ballot. "The American people are not going to tolerate being told that they're not allowed to have a choice for who they want to have as president." How about this, Newt? "The American women are not going to tolerate being told that they're not allowed to have a choice in their healthcare."

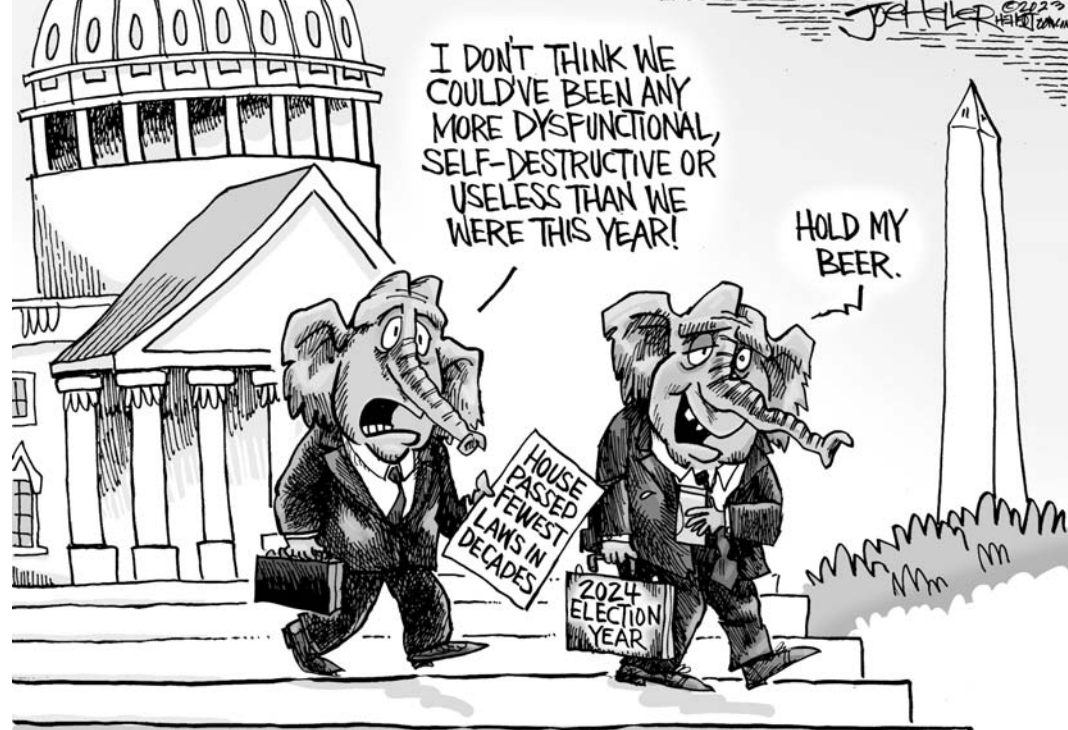
Fascism isn't funny

WILMINGTON—Americans everywhere mourn the death of Norman Lear, the creator of so many entertaining TV sitcoms that made us laugh about ourselves. Lear's lovable characters displayed the presence of bigotry and social injustice and at the same time demonstrated Lear's love of country. Fighting fascism as a young man, Lear served in WWII from 1942 through 1945 bombing Germany during 52 combat missions and received the Air Medal with four oak leaf clusters. Norman Lear's fight against fascism continues today but it's not

funny anymore. His creations of many years ago decry the evils of hatred which unfortunately are now spawned, encouraged and nurtured by Trump.

Blood on their hands

GARDNER—When I listed Bidens accomplishments, I never said everything he did was perfect, (nobody is) but along with all the good things, he's a not a threat to our Democracy, spewing lies, and talking like Hitler - wanting to be a dictator. The pullout of Afghanistan actually started when Trump made a deal with the Taliban saying we were pulling out and getting the clock started. By the way these were the same terrorists he invited to Camp David the same week of 911. Nice....It was definitely a mess, but that's the way most things end up when touched by trump. He made sure he left a lot of messes for Biden to clean up not caring who it would hurt. The border problem is something that could be fixed if Republicans didn't want to use it as an election issue. Congress is the group that needs to fix it not only the president. Ron Johnson said just today that they will hold up anything the Democrats put up just to use it in November. Graham had a big smile on his face when he said he couldn't wait to vote no on anything put to him. Can't be any more transparent than that. That shows that they don't want to fix anything. They wouldn't even fix it when they were in power except for using extreme cruelty and that's the point with them. Just how vile and cruel can we be to these poor people. This Republican-led Congress has done the least amount of work in their session than anyone in years. Most of them went to Washington not to do anything for the people of this country, but to tear everything down and make money. Meanwhile, people are dying in Ukraine for their Democracy where we just take ours for granted. Very sad. The supplies (that are made in this country with that money) helps Ukraine and actually us. Their blood is on the hands of those smiling Senators who vote no to help. God will judge them. These immigrants you hate so much help our economy by paying taxes (something that rich people here don't do) and paying into Social Security and doing many jobs that no one else would do in this country. High food prices? Part of that is there is no farm help. By the way, we're ALL immigrants - Native Americans are the only true Americans and see how we treat them. The only difference to the far right Republicans is the color of your skin. Hoping Biden and the president of Mexico can work to get something done soon. He and the rest of the Democrats are working while the Republicans are home happy about what they're doing while people are dying. One of the biggest problems is that there are people in this world who spew disinformation to these poor people telling them that we do have open borders while we do not and telling them to come up here because they can come in and find work. They don't know any different until it's too late. Who wouldn't want to believe that if you're kids are dying. I would do anything in my power to save my family if I was in their shoes. This is done by Putin and others (Steve Bannon and the far right, to name a few) to start trouble in this country and others, so we need to know these things. They want us fighting, so they can do whatever they want. Trump nearly destroyed this country with his fake grievances and hate and is still trying to do so. The only thing stopping him last time were a lot of Republicans and Democrats who held the line. If he gets in again, there will be no one to stop him. They



will all be "his" people. Please learn the truth. Think how nice your Christmas has been and think about people who have nothing and help. I think that's the reason for the season, isn't it? Love, not hate.....P.S. I'll take a calm, competent, sane, and humane president any day of the week instead of a demented and insane grifter trying to stay out of jail for all of his crimes.

Strapped America

GARDNER—Regarding "Done so much." Clearly Gardner needs some new water pipes, or you're nuts. Biden and his party have destroyed this country. Every consumer product has raised drastically as well as inflation. Name one that hasn't? Our military has been depleted and replaced by 'pronoun warriors.' We have no border thanks to Biden. Ask Texas and Arizona. 10,000 illegal entries in one day at one port alone, 200,000 in December so far. Don't worry though, Biden is sending them to you and every other fool that voted for him. Please send him your address so you can take in a few dozen, vetted or not. How many veterans receive gift cards and free cell phones for committing a crime? Illegals do. How many 'gotaways' (over 500,000) are people who wish harm on America? If you think 9/11 won't happen again, bless your heart. Democrats destroyed this country in 1860 and are repeating it again. Hitler banned guns, got rid of God, tore down statues, burned the flag, got rid of history he didn't agree with, got rid of public police so only rich could afford, created terrorist organizations out of anyone who disagreed with him, as did Stalin and Tao. Sound familiar? Stay strapped America. History repeats itself.

10 million migrants

WILMINGTON—I think my days on sound-off are about done. O'Biden is trying to turn America into a third world country. Ten million illegals from 130 countries that we, the taxpayers are paying for. Paying for two foreign wars. Crime you see it on the news every night, gangs looting stores, homeless sleeping on the streets. Inflation, interest rates a 22-year high. Biden has a 30 percent approval rating, no one thinks he should be running again. The Biden family looks like a crime family. Pay your fair share unless you're a Biden, gun laws must be

enforced unless you're a Biden. All this but people will vote for him because 'I always vote Democrat' and most important he's not Trump. Remember everything was better under Trump and I know I can't change the people with a Trump derangement syndrome. Happy New Year and God bless America. Eddie

Cruel wishes

WILMINGTON—I think the cruelest and most insensitive thing anyone can do is telling someone who is totally alone, has no family, nobody and wish them a Merry Christmas. Whether you send them a text on the phone, post something on their Facebook page, send them an email or however you do it, I think that is very evil because to them there is no holiday because of the fact that they are alone. I just think that it's really cruel to do that. I would rather have somebody tell me to drop dead or go to see Satan than wish me a Merry Christmas. I'm alone and I have nobody. People need to be considerate of others during the holidays because you don't know what others are going through. And for those of you who have families, I'm glad you had a nice weekend with your family and for others who are alone, I certainly understand your pain and torment. Evelyn O.

House in order

WILMINGTON—Republicans like Speaker Johnson want President Biden to use executive actions to stop immigration at the border. But it's the job of Congress to write laws and this Congress has a record of doing nothing but hold hearings and threaten impeachment. Maybe Johnson should get his house in order before blaming the president. If this migrants turn themselves in to the proper authorities how does that make them illegal? Finally if you call yourself a Christian but you hate the poor you are doing it wrong.

Immigrant mother

WILMINGTON—I hear Trump rail against immigration and birthright citizenship and his acolytes eat it up. So hear are some fun facts: First, Trump was born to an immigrant mother. Second, four out of five children were born by immigrant mothers.

Wilm. American Legion to host murder dinner

The Wilmington American Legion Post 191 Ladies Auxiliary will be hosting a Murder Mystery Dinner on Jan. 13. Enjoy a night of who dunnit, the theme is "A Dance with Death". The 1950's sock hop gone south will be a night to remember. Dressing is encouraged but not a must. There will be raffles and a 50/50 drawing. Doors open at 5 p.m. and dinner will be held at 5:45 p.m. Located at VFW Post 557 on West Baltimore St., Wilmington. You must be 21 or older and there is a fee of \$35. All funds raised will support active Military and Veterans. Tickets are available at the Wilmington VFW or by calling 815-252-7830.

Pass It On...

For the cost of a box of cereal

How just noticing makes all the difference in the world

BY THE FOUNDATION FOR A BETTER LIFE

Julian was having a difficult day at work. Projects were due, and his boss had just

made major changes to a spreadsheet that would mean a long night. Julian isn't the type to get angry, but he does get withdrawn. Taking a deep breath, he gathered himself and went out to grab a late lunch that would also serve as dinner. He needed the break, but he didn't feel like fast food. So he stopped in a grocery store and grabbed a couple of pieces of fruit and a plastic-wrapped sandwich. He kept to himself as he waited in line to make his purchase.

The last couple of years had been difficult for Julian. He works in the tech industry, where pressure is high, but companies are volatile, expanding and contracting. Julian had just made his second career move and was pushing hard to catch up with the demands on his time. The request to work late did not come at a good time. His young family also needed attention; his wife was looking forward to some time off, but with the new job, it would be months before they could get away.

He put his few items on the conveyor belt at the check-out, barely noticing the woman in front of him. She was frantically counting change in her pocketbook, digging in every corner. When she laid it all out, there wasn't enough. She set a small bag of oranges aside, then a box of cereal. She had just enough for milk, eggs and a loaf of bread. Embarrassed, she apologized to the clerk.

That's when Julian noticed the tears in her eyes. Julian handed the box of cereal and the bag of oranges back to the clerk. "I'll pay for

these." There was an awkward pause. It was clear that the woman had never needed this kind of help before. Julian didn't ask questions. "My kids love this cereal, too," he smiled. "And they need the oranges."

The woman thanked Julian and walked out. He would never see her again. Maybe she was traveling, or changing apartments, or had a pile of medical bills. It didn't matter to Julian. People sometimes need help.

Before he left the store, Julian went back and grabbed a box of cereal for his kids. The next morning, instead of getting to the office early, he had breakfast with his family. They were delighted to have their dad — and their favorite cereal — waiting for them.

Sharing... PassItOn.com@ The Foundation for a Better Life, all rights reserved. Available under a Creative Commons Attribution

Service Your Furnace for reliable heat all winter. \$100 Menard's Gift Card Free with new install! After hour service available! Payments as low as \$50/month Prep your furnace with a tune-up. BREEZE-AIR Local, Trusted Company HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING Call (815) 476-6615. American Standard, BBB Accredited Business, BBB Rating: A+

Surf Broadband Solutions Connect Further, Faster. RELIABLE, FAST & AFFORDABLE INTERNET SERVICE. Mention this ad and receive FREE INSTALLATION—Call Today! (888) 274-6381 • www.surfbroadband.com

Celebrate the New Year with Berkot's Great Deals!

Top Quality Groceries, Amazing Prices! - Berkot's Is Your Meat Headquarters

Only the BEST Fresh Meat & Produce! - Join Berkot's Loyalty for Savings!

HAPPY new year 2024

New Year's Eve 7 AM - 8 PM
New Year's Day 8 AM - 7 PM

Sales valid 12/28/23-1/3/24 | STORE HOURS: 7 AM - 9 PM
ALL ITEMS AVAILABILITY BASED ON SUPPLY. QUANTITIES MAY BE LIMITED. NO RAINCHECKS WILL BE PROVIDED.

 \$10.99 \$4.00 \$6.99 with loyalty	 \$11.99 \$4.00 \$7.99 with loyalty <small>PRICE W/ LOYALTY ONLY</small>	 \$6.99 EA	 \$3.99 \$2.00 \$1.99 with loyalty <small>PRICE W/ LOYALTY ONLY</small>
 \$3.99 \$1.00 \$2.99 with loyalty	 \$9.99 \$2.00 \$7.99 with loyalty	 \$4.99 \$3.00 \$1.99 with loyalty LIMIT 2 PKGS* 1/1 ONLY!	 \$12.99 \$3.00 \$9.99 with loyalty
 \$19.99 PER LB	 \$6.99 PER LB	 \$5 EACH with loyalty LIMIT 3* 1/1 ONLY!	 \$9.99 \$3.00 \$6.99 with loyalty 1/1 ONLY!
 \$17.99 EACH	 \$17.99 PER LB	 \$4.99 EACH with loyalty LIMIT 4*	 \$4.99 EACH with loyalty LIMIT 4*
 \$17.99 EACH	 \$15.99 EACH	 \$5.99 EACH with loyalty LIMIT 4*	 2 FOR \$5 with loyalty LIMIT 4*

JANUARY 1 DAY SUPER SALE

Monday 1/1/24

QUENCH YOUR THIRST WITH BERKOT'S LOYALTY DEALS

 99¢ EACH	 99¢ EACH	 8 FOR \$1	 99¢ PER LB
 \$1.99 EACH	 2 FOR \$5	 99¢ EACH	 4 FOR \$5
 4 FOR \$6 when buying 4	 2 FOR \$5	 3 FOR \$10	 \$4.99 EACH
 \$4.99 EACH	 DIGITAL COUPON 2/\$6 when buying 2 with \$1 digital coupon	 DIGITAL COUPON 3/\$9 when buying 3 with \$1 digital coupon	 DIGITAL COUPON 59¢ when buying 5 with 50¢ digital coupon
 \$14.99 when buying 2	 \$16.99 when buying 2 like items	 \$6.99 EACH with loyalty LIMIT 2* 1/1 ONLY!	 99¢ EACH with loyalty LIMIT 2* 1/1 ONLY!

PRICE W/ LOYALTY ONLY
2 pkgs permitted, limit 1 transaction per loyalty account per ad week.

*Share Loyalty Phone Number at Register. X Packages/LBs/etc. permitted, limit 1 transaction per loyalty account per ad week.

FULL WEEKLY AD @ BERKOTFOODS.COM

SCAN THIS QR CODE TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE →



Lisa Marie's HAIR SALON

- Men
- Women
- Children

CUTS ★ COLOR

450 Davy Ln., Wilmington
(708) 465-3198

Rebuild Illinois completes work on 5,522 miles

That 18-cent gas tax increase that Illinoisans have been paying since 2019 has resulted in smoother roads and more stable bridges throughout Illinois.

Rebuild Illinois is investing \$45 billion into the state's aging transportation system over a six-year span, creating

jobs and promoting economic growth. As of Sept. 30, just on the highway system alone, Rebuild Illinois has made \$9.6 billion in improvements statewide on 5,522 miles, 553 bridges and 814 additional safety improvements, ranging from routine maintenance projects and minor resurfacing to extensive interstate and bridge reconstructions.

transit, freight and passenger rail, waterways, as well as bike and pedestrian accommodations.

"The past year at IDOT was another for the history books under Gov. Pritzker," said Secretary Osman. "We are proud to deliver these improvements for the public and appreciate your continued patience and support as we Rebuild Illinois."

miles from Ridge Road in Minooka to U.S. 30 in Joliet and New Lenox while adding capacity to improve safety and reduce congestion. More than 30 bridges will be rehabilitated or replaced, including those over the Des Plaines River.

that ultimately increased speeds from 79 mph to 110 mph between Chicago and St. Louis. The \$1.6 billion project was made possible by \$1.3 billion in federal funds and approximately \$300 million from a mix of state and non-federal sources.

AUTO • HOME • LIFE • BUSINESS • PROPERTY

"Your local State Farm Agent for 30 years"

Jerry Hallahan - Agent

1350 E. Division St., Diamond
(815) 634-2222 jerry@jerryhallahan.com

INSURANCE

MOTORCYCLE • REC VEHICLES • WATERCRAFT • LIABILITY

Dr. William M. White
Family Dentistry

- New patients
- Emergency visits welcome
- All forms of insurance accepted including Meridian and Dentaquest

267 S. Broadway, Coal City
Call (815) 634-8844

warrencollisioncenteril.com

WARREN'S COLLISION CENTER

860 E.Z. St., Braidwood
815-458-3300

- Finest quality warranted collision repair
- Rentals available
- Certified technicians
- All insurance accepted
- Completed in a timely fashion

WE CARE BEYOND THE REPAIR!

NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY!

TOFFY'S WILMINGTON, IL

Check out our website

A Class Act

No Cover • Drink Specials
Sunday, Dec. 31

NEW YEAR'S EVE

Free Jukebox • Party Favors
Toast at Midnight

EVERY THURSDAY KARAOKE 7-11pm

Like us on! Wilmington's Neighborhood Drinking Establishment
1099 S. Water St. (Rt. 102), Wilmington • (815) 476-2700

Under the leadership of Gov. JB Pritzker and Illinois Transportation Secretary Omer Osman, the investments has been in highways, transit, railroads, airports, waterways and more.

"Here in Illinois, we're on a mission to modernize our infrastructure and make transportation more reliable for commuters, families, and businesses," said Governor JB Pritzker. "2023 was another historic year for our Rebuild Illinois capital program, with record investments towards modernizing and maintaining all modes of transportation. Thanks to the hard work of IDOT, local governments, and union laborers, we're making transportation safer and more reliable across our state."

In July, IDOT released the largest multi-year program to repair and modernize infrastructure in state history: \$41 billion over six years, showcasing the reach and impact of Rebuild Illinois.

Covering fiscal years 2024 - 2029, the multi-year program is the first time in more than a decade IDOT released a comprehensive approach to invest in all modes of transportation: roads and bridges, aviation,

Among the 2023 highlights:

- In Chicago, work wrapped up on the first year of the three-year, \$150 million Kennedy Expressway (Interstate 90/94) rehabilitation project, with construction taking place in the inbound lanes. Improvements include fixing 36 bridges and the reversible lanes system, replacement of overhead sign structures as well as the installation of modern LED lights. Work resumes in the spring.

- Work is progressing on the \$1.3 billion reconstruction of I-80 in Will County. Completed in 2023 were the conversion of the Houbolt Road interchange into a diverging-diamond design, replacement of bridges at Shepley Road and Wheeler Avenue as well as the installation of temporary pavement on I-80's westbound lanes between Ridge and River roads to accommodate traffic in the work zone during the upcoming construction seasons. Replacement of Briggs Street and River Road bridges also are underway.

The overall I-80 project will redesign and rebuild 16

million multiyear project to improve I-39 from U.S. 20 to Harrison Avenue began in July with the reconstruction of the I-39 and U.S. 20 interchange.

- The new eastbound \$167 million McClugage Bridge between Peoria and East Peoria continues to progress with the decking of the new span as well as assembly and installation of the 650-foot steel arch. The bridge is expected to open to traffic in fall 2024.

Also in the Peoria area, the Bob Michel Bridge and the Lacon Bridge were rehabbed during long closures.

In Champaign, a multi-year project to reconstruct the I-57/74 interchange entered a new phase with the installation of girders for two flyover ramps. Modernizing an interchange built more than 50 years ago to improve safety and mobility in the area, the \$251.8 million project is anticipated to be substantially complete in late 2025, with some work remaining in 2026.

Several bridges over the Mississippi River are in the process of being replaced or repaired with costs being shared by Illinois and Iowa.

The state of rail

Illinois ushered in high-speed rail in 2023 with the completion of track upgrades

Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program awarded \$127.9 million for 72 statewide projects that include biking and walking paths, trails, streetscape beautification and other improvements designed to encourage safe travel across the various modes of transportation at the local level.

Forest Preserve to host Happy Mornings Yoga and Hike

The Forest Preserve is hosting Happy Mornings Yoga and Hike at the Four Rivers Environmental Center. It will be held Sunday, Jan. 14, from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Yoga takes place in the Grand Hall and is followed by an outdoor hike. Bring a yoga mat, water and warm layers for the hike. Free, ages 14 or older. Register by Jan. 13.

Will County Animal Control offering free microchipping

The Will County Animal Control Department is offering free microchipping services to dogs and cats owned by county residents through the end of the month.

"We're hoping to incentivize pet owners to microchip their pets," said Will County Executive Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant. "Having pets microchipped, with updated tags, helps ensure that they can find their way home if they get lost. This simple step can go a long way for Will County pet owners."

This free service is available to Will County residents by appointment only until Dec. 30, 2023. Appointments are available Monday through Friday between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. in 15-minute increments. Appointments are required - no walk-in services are available. Residents

must provide proof of current rabies vaccination for each pet receiving the microchipping service.

"Lack of identification is the biggest challenge in reuniting lost pets with their owners," said Will County Animal Control Administrator Anna Payton. "By increasing the number of dogs and cats with microchips in our community, we can help more animals be reunited with the families who love them. This is a small step we can take to make sure pets are home for the holidays."

The "Home for the Holidays" Microchip Program takes place at Will County Animal Control, 22452 S. Cherry Hill Road, Joliet. Requests for appointments can be made by calling (815) 462-5633.

A microchip is a small

device, about the size of a grain of rice, that is inserted between the shoulder blades of a dog or cat, just under the skin. When a stray animal is picked up by an animal control officer or comes into a shelter, the animal is scanned for a microchip. All microchips have a scannable number that is connected to the owner's contact information, allowing for their pets to be returned before entering the shelter system.

Veterinarian hospitals, and even some police departments, have microchip scanners available. Will County Animal Control advises residents who come across a stray animal to bring them for a microchip scan as soon as possible.

Join in solar group buying

Will County residents who want to learn more about affordable ways to install rooftop solar panels and battery storage are encouraged to register for a solar group purchasing program.

By coming together as a group, participants can secure a discounted price on rooftop solar installations for their homes or small businesses.

Also keep an eye out for upcoming virtual Solar Power Hours which can help you with your solar power decision making. There will be showings at willcountygreen.com on Thursday, Jan 18 at 11 a.m., Tuesday, Jan 23 at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, Jan 31 at 11 a.m. and Tuesday, Feb 6 at 2 p.m.

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

LIFTED

SPRAY FOAM INSULATION
CONCRETE RAISING

Spray Foam Insulation

- garages
- pole buildings
- attics
- basements
- commercial
- industrial

Concrete Raising

- driveways
- sidewalks
- patios
- stairs
- and more!

Wilmington • 815-200-6880

Landscape & Supply

Wood, IL

- Driveway stone
- Pulverized topsoil
- Pool & play sand
- Hardwood mulch
- Decorative stone
- Bobcat Service

We Deliver!

www.jdlandscapesupply.com
815-478-3717
708-921-3535

FULL COLOR

- Banners
- Yard Signs
- Post Cards
- Brochures

Customized to your liking.
Competitive prices.

THE FREE PRESS

111 S. Water St., Wilmington, IL

WEST CONTRACTING

W

815-926-2410

- Carpentry • Plumbing
- Electrical • Remodeling

Property Maintenance

LICENSED—INSURED—BONDED

SHOP LOCAL!

WILMINGTON

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

EST. 1958

616 Davy Lane
Wilmington

Mini Storage

CLEMENTINE'S CLOSETS

515 Davy Lane,
Wilmington

Affordable
Clean, Secure
Monthly Rentals

No Deposit Required
815-530-0200

FARMERS INSURANCE

MELODIE J. LUCKETT

326 E. Baltimore St.
Wilmington, IL 60481
Office 815-476-5242
Cell 815-671-1356
mluckett@farmersagent.com

Auto • Home
Life • Commercial

SISTEK RENTALS

We **SELL, REPAIR,** and **RENT**
Outdoor Power Equipment

CubCadet **GRASS HOPPER**

YOUR NEXT MOWER®

815-237-8298
740 Oak Street • South Wilmington, IL

HENDRON CABINETS.COM

Jason Hendron Construction, LLC

**CABINETS
COUNTERTOPS
FLOORING**

Showroom Location: 450 Davy Lane, Wilmington

815.790.1235

SHORKEY PAINTING

Est. 1989

(815) 546-1321

Interior/Exterior

ORDER YOUR BUSINESS CARDS

from the Free Press Newspapers
Call 815-476-7966 and ask for Eric

A & E SEPTIC SERVICE

Pumping - Repairs - New Installation
Sewer Rodding - Sanitary - Party Potties
Ed Bonnavier
Coal City • 634-4691

Masons donate to buy more SIS books



THE WILMINGTON LODGE #208 of Masons made a \$500 donation to the Steven's Intermediate School Library. This donation will give students that may not otherwise be able to participate an opportunity to purchase books during special book fair activities. The goal is to put books in the hands of children (from left) Frank Kiper, George Roesel, Librarian Tracy Lawrence, Lee Springer and Tim Cragg.

ICC declines rate increase for ComEd, Peoples Gas angering organized labor

Three of Gov. JB Pritzker's appointees to the Illinois Commerce Commission have not yet been confirmed by the Illinois Senate, including the chair, Doug Scott.

All three unconfirmed appointees have recently voted against the stated interests of trade unions.

Senate President Don Harmon has assiduously courted trade union support and has raised millions of campaign dollars from them.

So, right off the bat, the legislative math is pretty clear, even though Harmon's office opted not to comment for this story.

Operating Engineers Union Local 150 is one of the most politically engaged trade unions in Illinois. The union blasted an ICC vote in November which "paused" \$265 million in natural gas pipeline replacement work next year by Peoples Gas, calling it "a troubling example of political overreach" by "unconfirmed appointees" who are "playing games with peoples jobs, heat, and safety as we head toward the holidays and the cold of winter."

"The war on gas stoves is here," Local 150 exclaimed in dramatic fashion.

Peoples Gas then asked the ICC to reconsider its decision and restore half of the project money to pay for "critical safety and reliability work," including finishing up ongoing projects, but the commission declined.

Mark Poulos, Local 150's top lobbyist, told me last week that the ICC's decision will cost his union members 1.5 million person-hours of work next year, and he's furiously warning that the ICC commis-

sioners' confirmation hearings might not go so well in the Senate.

Poulos said the ICC's rulings were part of its "overzealous" quest for "decarbonization" and moving away from the use of natural gas. "They are basically saying 'F**k you, this system will be obsolete in the next generation,'" Poulos claimed, while warning that the future may not play out as the commissioners hope.

The Citizens Utility Board's executive director Sarah Moskowitz recently appeared with Poulos on WTTW's Chicago Tonight program and noted that the ICC had granted Peoples Gas a record rate hike after the company reported record profits for six straight years and that existing state statutes mandate that the utility continue emergency and safety maintenance projects. "They're kicking and screaming about the fact that they just got a record rate hike but it's not enough," said Moskowitz. "When is enough enough?"

Even so, the president of the Chicago Federation of Labor and the president of the Illinois AFL-CIO recently co-wrote an op-ed demanding that the legislature consider restarting the pipeline program if the ICC doesn't reverse itself.

Other labor unions are not taking such a public approach. For instance, Bill Niesman is the business manager of IBEW Local 9, which does a lot of

ComEd work, but he politely side-stepped questions about an ICC ruling that rejected ComEd's proposed rate hike and ordered it to return to the commission within three months with a new plan.

The ICC explained its ruling via press release: "Specifically, the Commission's decisions found that both utilities failed to sufficiently incorporate customer affordability into their proposals." The vote was 4-1, with former AFL-CIO President Mike Carrigan voting No.

Niesman said his union is taking a wait and see approach, but said that the ICC's low rate of return on equity for ComEd would mean less money for building up the region's electrical grid. Other union leaders are saying privately that a big Senate confirmation process fight is indeed brewing.

The union leaders aren't alone. The president of the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce co-wrote a recent op-ed with ComEd's CEO about the need for more electrical infrastructure spending, and the Illinois Manufacturers Association supported ComEd's ICC filing. They're all worried about insufficiencies with the region's electrical grid.

Gov. Pat Quinn backed down from a fight after he tried to appoint CUB'S then-executive director as the ICC chair, but you don't get that vibe when talking with



Rich Miller

CAPITOL FACTS

Wilmington Freemason's chili cook-off seeks entries

The Wilmington Freemasons Lodge #208 will be having their 14th annual Chili Cook-Off to fund the Pedals for Progress program on Sunday, Feb. 4 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Tasting and a bowl of house chili \$10 for adults, \$5 for kids over 11 and free for kids 11 and under. There will also be \$1 hot dogs available.

Wilmington Masonic Lodge is located at 311 Main St., Wilmington.

Think you have what it takes to be the Chili King? Register to be a contestant. Call Ben Stickel 815-370-7331 or Matt Lohmar 815-210-9606.

YOUR NEW HOME DESERVES THE BEST PROTECTION

American Family Insurance is proud to be named Best Homeowners Insurance of 2021 by Forbes Advisor.

Contact me today and get the protection you deserve.



American Family Mutual Insurance Company, S.I. & its Operating Companies, American Family Life Insurance Company, 6000 American Parkway, Madison, WI 53703 ©2020 19714-421-14723130



Gerald Gresham
815-729-3570
815-476-6364
863 Center Ct., Unit B,
Shorewood, IL 60404
teamgresham@amfam.com
Email: ggresham@amfam.com

ComEd work, but he politely side-stepped questions about an ICC ruling that rejected ComEd's proposed rate hike and ordered it to return to the commission within three months with a new plan.

The ICC explained its ruling via press release: "Specifically, the Commission's decisions found that both utilities failed to sufficiently incorporate customer affordability into their proposals." The vote was 4-1, with former AFL-CIO President Mike Carrigan voting No.

Niesman said his union is taking a wait and see approach, but said that the ICC's low rate of return on equity for ComEd would mean less money for building up the region's electrical grid. Other union leaders are saying privately that a big Senate confirmation process fight is indeed brewing.

The union leaders aren't alone. The president of the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce co-wrote a recent op-ed with ComEd's CEO about the need for more electrical infrastructure spending, and the Illinois Manufacturers Association supported ComEd's ICC filing. They're all worried about insufficiencies with the region's electrical grid.

Gov. Pat Quinn backed down from a fight after he tried to appoint CUB'S then-executive director as the ICC chair, but you don't get that vibe when talking with

ComEd work, but he politely side-stepped questions about an ICC ruling that rejected ComEd's proposed rate hike and ordered it to return to the commission within three months with a new plan.

The ICC explained its ruling via press release: "Specifically, the Commission's decisions found that both utilities failed to sufficiently incorporate customer affordability into their proposals." The vote was 4-1, with former AFL-CIO President Mike Carrigan voting No.

Niesman said his union is taking a wait and see approach, but said that the ICC's low rate of return on equity for ComEd would mean less money for building up the region's electrical grid. Other union leaders are saying privately that a big Senate confirmation process fight is indeed brewing.

The union leaders aren't alone. The president of the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce co-wrote a recent op-ed with ComEd's CEO about the need for more electrical infrastructure spending, and the Illinois Manufacturers Association supported ComEd's ICC filing. They're all worried about insufficiencies with the region's electrical grid.

Gov. Pat Quinn backed down from a fight after he tried to appoint CUB'S then-executive director as the ICC chair, but you don't get that vibe when talking with

YOU DESERVE COMFORT OF MIND

Giving everyday people comfort of mind in planning their estate.



Last Will and Testaments, Trusts, Durable Power of Attorney and Health Care Power of Attorney are serious concerns, during this serious time. Gain peace of mind knowing your affairs are in order by calling for an appointment in taking care of these important life decisions.



207 S. Water St., Wilmington • 815-476-7635

5 MONTH CD SPECIAL

5.10% APY*



Bank of Pontiac

Pontiac • Odell • Dwight • Forrest • Fairbury • Coal City
Minier • Delavan • Bloomington

Toll FREE 855-844-6151 | www.bankofpontiac.com

Member FDIC

*Annual Percentage Yield accurate as of 8/31/2023; \$5,000 minimum deposit; Rates subject to change without notice; Penalty for early withdrawal.

OBITUARIES

Sally Fisk

DIAMOND—Sally Joanne Fisk, 90 of Diamond, and formerly of North Webster, IN and Joliet, passed away peacefully at her home on Saturday morning, Dec. 16, 2023.

Born June 25, 1933 in Joliet, Sally Joanne was a daughter of Victor and Evelyn (Peterson) Sheeler. Her formative years were spent in Joliet, where she completed her education at Joliet Township High School. It was during these transformative years that she found love with George Herbert Fisk, her childhood sweetheart whom she went on to marry June 24, 1951, the day before her 18th birthday.

Guided by an unwavering dedication to her family, Sally was a devoted wife and mother. With George by her side, they welcomed the joys and challenges of life together. She took great joy in raising her five children and created a loving home in which they all thrived.

Upon George's retirement, they moved to Indiana, where they lived out their golden years on Irish Lake. There, Sally enjoyed pontoon boat rides, weekly dinners with the "Wild Bunch," visits to the hair salon, and relaxing on the porch, which afforded peaceful views of the lake.

After her soul mate passed away in 2014, Sally relocated to Diamond, where she lived with Stephen and Sheri. She was a diehard Chicago Bears fan; cherished football Sundays; and when the Bears weren't winning, always had her Patrick Mohomes to look forward to watching. Sally looked forward to visits from her extended family and was always excited to go out for dinner. Lounging in her recliner while speed-reading through a romance novel, always with manicured nails, was a favorite pastime.

Sally will be missed greatly by her loving family, yet they do not grieve without hope. Sally knew Jesus as her Lord and Savior, and the family takes comfort knowing she was welcomed into the arms of Jesus and is reunited with George, Stephen, and all the faithful who

have gone before.

Survivors include her children, Sharon Peck of Crest Hill, IL Michael (Karen) Fisk of Joliet, Timothy (Mary) Fisk of Channahon, and Polly (Duke) Yaguchi of Canton, GA; her daughter-in-law, Sheri Fisk of Diamond; grandchildren: Mandy Peck (Billy Wilson), Matt (Rebecca) Peck, Meagan (Andy) Patterson, Josh Fisk, Eric (Jenny) Fisk, Todd Fisk, Ryan Fisk, Hayley (Jay) Fisk-Triggs, Victor (Sneha) Yaguchi, Grace Yaguchi and Rose (Conn Dickson) Yaguchi; great grandchildren: Tyler Fisk, Ashlyn Fisk, Alyson Fisk; Morgan Walsh; Sammy Peck, Teddy Peck; Waylon Patterson and Harley Patterson; Shadow Razavian and River Razavian; Niyam Yaguchi and Arya Yaguchi; and Kian Dickson and Shay Dickson; brother-in-law, Don Robertson; sister-in-law, Diane Fisk; her special friends, Wendy Huston and Kelly Olson; as well as dear canine companion, Trina.

Sally was preceded in death by her parents; husband, George; son, Stephen Fisk; granddaughter, Michelle Fisk, in infancy; son-in-law, Rich Peck; and two sisters, Lanette Sheeler and June (Bud) McCann.

The family will receive friends for a memorial visitation at New Hope Presbyterian Church, 80 North Garfield Street in Coal City on Thursday, Dec. 28, 2023 from 3:00 p.m. until time of the memorial service, 6:00 p.m. Her son, Michael Fisk will officiate.

Those wishing to participate in the memorial service virtually are welcome to join the live stream through the link available on Sally's memorial page.

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

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



Charles R. Jackson

WILMINGTON—Charles R. Jackson, 84, of Wilmington, passed away Dec. 20, 2023 at Ascension St. Joseph Medical Center in Joliet.

Born June 25, 1939, Charles Richard was a son of Harold A. and Helen Marie (Shramek) Jackson. He was raised in Wilmington; graduated from Wilmington High School with the class of 1957 and went on to attend Northern Illinois University.

On Aug. 13, 1966, Chuck married Leslie Porterfield in the First United Methodist Church in Wilmington, and together they made a home and raised their family in Wilmington.

Chuck's employment entailed working at US Steel, as well as with Wilmington Public Schools as a custodian. It was his part time assisting at Leslie's grandfathers' business H&H Nursery in Wilmington however, that planted the seed which later established Jackson Landscaping in Wilmington. Chuck started his business in 1981 and was currently working aside the next generations to serve his countless loyal customers near and far. For over four decades Jackson Landscaping has continued maintaining lawns, landscaping, and providing seasonal Christmas trees and greens.

Beyond his tireless work ethic and dedication to his business, Chuck was known as the "hardest working man in Wilmington." He earned the affectionate nickname "The Sod Father" due to his relentless commitment to his craft. Yet despite his busy schedule, Chuck always prioritized family above all else. He was a constant presence at his children's and grandchildren's school events and never missed an opportunity to show support. An avid fan of the Wildcats and Chicago White Sox baseball team, Chuck also enjoyed watching NASCAR.

Survivors include his wife of 57 years,

Leslie; three children: Lisa (Kent) Keeley, Dayna (Jeremy) Haddon and Jeff (Dawn) Jackson, all of Wilmington; grandchildren: Becca (Cory) Acred, Brandon Keeley (Jayme), Kaylie Christensen, Brooklyn Haddon, Tanner Haddon, Jenna Jackson and Drew Jackson; six great-grandchildren: Logan, Cole, Kylie, Braylen, Knox and Tinsley; two sisters, Beverly Horton, of Largo, FL and Lois (Chris) Smith, of Wilmington; one brother, Edward (Marcia) Jackson, of Creal Springs, IL and brother-in-law and sisters-in-law, Douglas (Reba) Porterfield, of Custer Park and Sandy Porterfield, of Frankfort, as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

Chuck was preceded in death by his parents, granddaughter, Alyssa Danielle Keeley; niece, Deborah Horton Jackson; brother-in-law, Richard Porterfield and sister-in-law, Jeannie Miller.

The family will receive friends for a visitation at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 E. Kahler Rd. in Wilmington on Thursday, Dec. 28, 2023, from 10 a.m. until time of funeral service at 12 p.m. Burial will follow in Wesley Cemetery, where Chuck will be laid to rest in the Jackson Family lot.

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

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

Funeral services and arrangements have been made under the direction and care of Baskerville Funeral Home in Wilmington.



Pastor Gary T. Linkous

WILMINGTON—Pastor Gary T. Linkous, 81, of Wilmington, went home to be with the Lord on Tuesday, Dec. 5, 2023 at his home.

Born Nov. 19, 1942 in Cabin Creek, WV, Gary Thomas was the son of Malcolm and Hanna (Crawford) Linkous. Being a pastor's son, he was raised in several states and would ultimately graduate from high school in Casper, WY. On May 28, 1961, Gary married Elaine Thornton in Karns City, PA, beginning a beautiful 62 years of marriage.

His calling to being a pastor struck him as a young man, growing up in the church. Gary pursued his theological studies through Trinity Theological Seminary and served many congregations over the years in Fertigs, PA; Perry, FL; Garden City, MI; Burbank, IL; Worth, IL; Oklahoma City, OK and Bessemer, AL. He also operated a Christian radio station, Daystar Radio, in Ocala, FL for 15 years. Gary's call to ministry not only pulled him to serve as pastor in the United States, through his congregation in Oklahoma City, he and his wife were sponsored missionaries, helping to establish new churches and other ministries in Russia, Ukraine, and Africa.

Gary was an ordained Bishop and life-long member of the Church of God of Prophecy, and cherished his role as pastor. Most recently, he was a member of Abundant Life Fellowship in Wilmington. Many considered him to be their pastor even after he had moved to a different location. He had a knack for making people feel special and befriended many over the years. Gary had a sharp wit and great sense of humor, and could often be found out on the golf course

chasing another hole in one to add to his scorecard. He was blessed with a loving wife and family whom he cherished, and leaves behind a beautiful legacy for them to carry on.

Survivors include his wife, Elaine Linkous, of Wilmington; three sons: Pastor Greg Linkous, of Wilmington; Jeffery (Adriana) Linkous, of Milton, WI and Byron (Kirsten) Linkous, of Oklahoma City, OK; eight grandchildren: Joshua (Sarah), Andrew (Brittany), Delaney, Manuela, Ben, Emma, Katie, and Claire; four great-grandchildren: Caleb, Autumn, Hannah, and Abigail; one brother, Larry (Sandra) Linkous, of Titusville, FL; two sisters-in-law: Anita (John) Leader, of Charlotte, NC and Jean Thornton, of Murfreesboro, TN; and several nieces and nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews.

Gary was preceded in death by his parents; his mother-in-law and father-in-law, Boyd and Sarah Marie Thornton; two brothers-in-law, Richard and Verlin Thornton and one sister-in-law, Joy Thornton.

The family will receive friends for a memorial visitation at Abundant Life Fellowship, 23632 IL Route 113, in Wilmington on Friday, Dec. 29, 2023 from 1 p.m. until the time of memorial service at 3 p.m.

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

Cremation services and memorial arrangements are being made under the direction and care of Reeves & Baskerville Funeral Homes and Crematory in Wilmington.



Robin L. Rosenthal

MORRIS—Robin L. Rosenthal, 59, of Morris, formerly of Gardner and Channahon, went home to be with the Lord on Monday, Dec. 18, 2023 at her home.

Born Dec. 23, 1963 in Joliet, Robin Lynn was a daughter of Edward and Freda (Rogers) Beha. She was raised and educated in Channahon and graduated from Minooka High School with the class of 1981. Robin was a devoted homemaker who found great purpose in caring for her family. She was a woman of deep faith and took great pleasure in joining her sister at Families of Faith Church in Channahon. Robin was a loving, kind woman, who showed great perseverance through all of the struggles she faced over the years, and will be greeted in heaven by her husband, Terry.

Survivors include her mother and father, Edward and Freda Beha, of Channahon; one daughter, Carrie Beth and two step-daughters, Stephanie and Stacy and several grandchildren; two sisters, Brenda Sanders, of Morris and Linda Smiley, of Channahon; one step-brother,

Carl (Patsy) Greiner, of Crystal Beach, TX and many nieces and nephews.

Robin was preceded in death by her husband, Terry Rosenthal, on Dec. 17, 2019.

The family will receive friends for a visitation at Families of Faith Church, 2466 West Eames Street, in Channahon on Wednesday, Dec. 27, 2023 from 4 p.m. until the time of memorial service at 6 p.m. Pastor Joe Pospischil will officiate, and cremation rites will be accorded following the services.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Robin's memory to Families of Faith Church in Channahon.

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

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



Betty Rosenquist

DWIGHT—Betty Jane Rosenquist, 83, of Dwight, formerly of New Lenox, passed away Monday, Dec. 18, 2023 in Dwight.

Born July 1, 1940 in Kano, Nigeria, Betty was a daughter of Albert and Eva (Marvin) Ter Meer. Being a child of missionary parents, Betty and her siblings spent much time in Nigeria, but her high school years were mostly in New Jersey and Canada. Betty completed her degree in nursing from Rutgers University, and on Dec. 20, 1966 she married Max Lee Rosenquist.

She was a born-again Christian whose faith in Jesus was the foundation for everything she did. Betty met her husband through InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, and together founded the interdenominational young adult group, Seekers, at Harper Junior College in Palatine. She also was a self-employed Shaklee Vitamin Supplements distributor for over 40 years. Betty was beloved by her friends and family, acting as a counselor to many, and she loved her children and grandchildren dearly.

Survivors include her two sons: Greg (Ginger) Rosenquist, of Dwight and Dan (Taunya) Rosenquist, of North Dakota; 17 grandchildren: Robin, Elisabeth (Jacob), John, Tori, Becca, Angelina, William, Sophia, Jack, Teddy, Charlotte, Jessica, Penny, Alex, Josie, Aliza, and Cooper; two great-grandchildren: Jacob Jr. and Hank, with one more on the way;

her twin sister, Dorothy (Ron) Vander Velde, of Fruitport, MI and her brother, Paul (Jean) Ter Meer, of Custer, SD; one sister-in-law, Jean Ter Meer, of Florida and several nieces and nephews: Pam, Jane and Daniel Vander Velde; Donna Johnson, Christy Hagen, Jeff Ter Meer, Andy Ter Meer, Stacey Hult-Headley and Chad Hult.

Betty was preceded in death by her parents and her husband; two brothers: Donald and Robert Ter Meer; and one sister-in-law, Dianne (Mel) Hult.

Funeral services were held at Living Word Bible Church in Morris on Saturday, Dec. 23, 2023. Pastor Timothy Greene officiated, and a private interment followed at Elm Lawn Cemetery in Princeton.

Family and friends are welcome to join the livestream of Betty's by following Living Word Bible Church's YouTube stream: www.youtube.com/@lwbworship7592/stream.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Betty's memory to The Gideons International.

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

Funeral services and arrangements were made under the direction and care of Reeves & Baskerville Funeral Homes, Ltd. in Morris.



Peter Maland

COAL CITY—Peter "Buddy" Maland, 81, of Coal City, passed away Saturday, Dec. 23, 2023, at ARC at Dwight.

Born June 10, 1942, in Morris, Peter Joseph was a son of Peter Earl and Rose J. (Spiezio) Maland. He was raised in Coal City and attended the local schools. Buddy worked at Donico in Morris for many years while also during that period owning and operating Maland Shoe Repair in Coal City. He later took a position as a lead custodian with the Coal City School District, and it was here from where he retired.

Known for his tremendous love of collecting, Buddy enjoyed garage sales and over the years built on his collections of juke boxes, slot machines and coins to name a few. He was a guy that could run a conversation and never knew a stranger. In recent years it was his dog, Bruno that gave him great companionship.

Survivors include his sons: Peter Jr. (Tami) Maland, of Diamond and Tony Maland (Megan Anderson), of Coal City; three grandchildren:

Rita, Peter III and Charles, and his siblings: Ronald (Mary Jo) Maland, Rick (Mary Ann) Maland, Michael Maland, as well as Brad Allen, who was like family to Buddy.

Buddy was preceded in death by his parents, and one brother, Richard.

Cremation rites have been accorded and the family is planning a celebration of Buddy's life for a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made as gifts in Buddy's memory to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105.

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

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



Rick Riffel

COAL CITY—Rick Riffel, 66, of Coal City, formerly of Joliet, passed away Wednesday, Dec. 13, 2023 at the Lightways Hospice Home in Joliet.

Born Oct. 28, 1957 in Joliet, Ricky Bernard was the son of Bernard and Mary Jane (Miller) Riffel. He was raised in Plainfield, where he attended St. Mary Immaculate Parish School in Plainfield and graduated from Plainfield High School with the class of 1976. On Oct. 3, 1987, Rick married Cindy Ann Pellegrini at St. Mary Immaculate Church, and together they would make their home in Joliet until relocating to Coal City in the early 2000's.

He worked for Crane Composites as a material handler for over 28 years until he retired this past summer. Rick took great pleasure in being outdoors, especially at the Coal City Area Club. He enjoyed fishing and going for walks with his dogs who were very near and dear to his heart. Rick was an avid Chicago Blackhawks fan and loved to ice skate when the opportunity presented itself. He was a kind and sociable person who could carry a conversation with anyone he met, and was well known for his excellent sense of humor. There was nothing that gave him more joy than that of being and loving and devoted husband and father.

Survivors include his wife of 36 years, Cindy Riffel and his son, Ricky Riffel, both of Coal City; three sisters: his twin, Cindy (Bob) Gates, of Princeton, IL; Connie (Paul) Striet, of Aurora and Debbie (Ed) Glavan, of Joliet; brothers and sisters-in-law: Don (Ruth) Pellegrini, of Steger, IL; Brenda Pellegrini, of Florida and Tina (Gary) Gordon, Sandra (Shelby) Little, and Michael (Tammy) Pellegrini, all of Kentucky; as well as numerous nieces and nephews, and his canine companions: Dakota, Bella and Nikita.

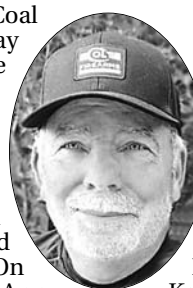
Rick was preceded in death by his parents and his mother and father-in-law.

Cremation rites were accorded and a memorial service will be held at a later date.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Rick's memory to an animal shelter of the donor's choosing.

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

Services and arrangements have been made under the direction and care of Reeves & Baskerville Funeral Homes and Crematory in Coal City.



Billie Brandt

MORRIS—Billie Jean Brandt, 77, of Morris, passed away Saturday, Dec. 16, 2023 at home.

Born Jan. 17, 1946 in Morris, Billie Jean was the daughter of Billy and Annie (Sarti) Higgins. She was raised and educated in Morris and graduated from Morris High School with the class of 1964. Billie ran the canteen at Self-Locking with her cousin, Tommy Girot, and worked in quality control at Federal Paperboard in Morris. Along with her husband, Royal Brandt, they established Brandt Printing in Morris which they owned and operated for many years. In her spare time, she enjoyed reading a good book, working her crossword puzzles, and dotting on Royal's beloved dogs: Lucky and Peanut. Billie also loved spending time with her daughter, Lisa, and cherished being her mother.

Survivors include her husband, Royal

Brandt and her daughter, Lisa Brandt; several cousins and Royal's granddaughter, Leah Dockett, who showed her great kindness which Billie truly appreciated.

Billie was preceded in death by her parents, Anna Marie and Billy Higgins; as well as her paternal and maternal grandparents and three cousins.

Per her wishes, cremation rites are being accorded and there will be no services.

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

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



Prohibition on book bans, right to sue for 'deepfake porn' among new laws

More than 300 statutes will become law in the new year

BY PETER HANCOK, ANDREW ADAMS & JERRY NOWICKI
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

More than 300 new laws will take effect Jan. 1, ranging from a ban on book bans to the regulation of "deepfake porn" and prohibitions on videoconferencing while driving.

Thanks to a law signed in 2019, workers at the lowest end of the pay scale will see a pay raise with the new year as the state minimum wage increases by one dollar, to \$14 per hour.

Gov. JB Pritzker championed and signed that law after it was approved by lawmakers within his first two months of office. The law gradually phases in a \$15 per-hour minimum wage starting in 2025.

The minimum wage applies to most workers 18 years of age and older. Teens who work less than 650 hours in a calendar year will go up to \$13 an hour while the minimum wage for tipped workers will increase to \$9 an hour.

Also come Jan. 1, Illinoisans who own guns, ammunition and accessories prohibited under the state's "assault weapons" ban will be in violation of the law if they don't register them with the state. A federal judge last week chose not to temporarily halt the law's enforcement while a broader legal challenge plays out. The U.S. Supreme Court also recently declined to stay the law.

While permanent administrative rules regulating which guns and ammunition must be registered with the Illinois State Police remain in flux, temporary rules governing registration remain in effect.

Other laws hitting the books include a measure granting paid leave to all workers, indoor vaping restrictions and a ban on youth solitary confinement in state correctional facilities, among others.

Paid leave for all

Starting Jan. 1, anyone who works in Illinois will be entitled to earn up to 40 hours of paid leave during a 12-month period, time they can take off work for any reason, regardless of whether they are full-time, part-time, or seasonal employees.

The Paid Leave for All Workers Act passed during the lame duck session in January — a session that was called primarily to pass the assault weapons ban. Pritzker signed it into law March 13.

"That is a game changer for many employers, particularly those who have not previously offered any type of paid leave to their employees," Scott Cruz, a labor attorney, said during an interview with Capitol News Illinois in November.

In particular, he said, the law will be a major change for waiters, waitresses and other workers in the hospitality industry who have never received paid leave benefits in the past.

The Illinois Department of Labor has published a list of frequently asked questions to help guide employers and employees through the new law.

Banning book bans

Libraries in Illinois will lose access to grants administered by the secretary of state's office after Jan. 1 if they ban books or other material "because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval."

The so-called ban on book bans, House Bill 2789, was an initiative of Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias. The secretary of state in Illinois also serves as the state librarian, which awards millions of dollars a year in grants to public and school libraries around the state.

Under the new law, libraries must either adopt the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights or develop a written statement prohibiting the practice of banning specific books or resources.

Giannoulias said he proposed the legislation after extremist groups targeted Illinois libraries with efforts

to ban certain materials from circulation

"The concept of banning books contradicts the very essence of what our country stands for," he said in a statement. "It also defies what education is all about: teaching our children to think for themselves. This landmark law is a triumph for our democracy, a win for First Amendment Rights, and a great victory for future generations."

Digital forgeries

Lawmakers this spring approved a new protection for victims of "deepfake porn." Starting in 2024, people who are falsely depicted in sexually explicit images or videos will be able to sue the creator of that material.

The law is an amendment to the state's existing protections for victims of "revenge porn," which went into effect in 2015.

In recent years, deepfakes — images and videos that falsely depict someone — have become more sophisticated with the advent of more readily available artificial intelligence tools. Women are disproportionately the subject of deepfake porn.

Some sponsors of the legislation, notably chief sponsor Rep. Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz, D-Glenview, have indicated interest in further regulating the use of artificial intelligence.

Zooming while driving

Starting on Jan. 1, it will be illegal for Illinois drivers to participate in videoconferencing or check their social media pages while behind the wheel.

The law adds the use of any mobile videoconferencing software, explicitly referencing Zoom, Microsoft Teams and Webex, to banned actions under existed distracted driving laws.

The law also specifically names social media sites Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram and "Twitter," which was rebranded to X a few months after the law's passage.

Illinois law currently bans cell phone use generally while driving, although it does allow drivers to use

phones through hands-free or voice-activated means. In 2022, more than 24,000 drivers were cited for distracted driving in Illinois, according to the secretary of state's office.

Illinois drivers continue to be able to use cell phones in handheld mode if they are reporting an emergency, are parked on a road's shoulder or if they are stopped due to a traffic obstruction and the vehicle is in neutral or park.

Vaping indoors

People who use electronic cigarettes or vaping devices will now face the same restrictions as cigarette smokers.

It's an update to the state's Smoke-Free Illinois Act, which banned smoking in most indoor public spaces and within 15 feet of building entrances in 2008. "Public places" include restaurants, theaters, offices, stores, libraries, schools, polling places, all government-owned buildings and banks among others.

Tobacco stores and vape shops are exempt from the law, as well as some other facilities, such as smoking rooms at nursing homes, some hotel rooms and tobacco conventions.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported this summer that in 2021, nearly 5 percent of adults were e-cigarette users, although that figure was 11 percent among people 18 to 24.

Other new laws

Youth solitary confinement: House Bill 3140 prohibits solitary confinement in youth detention facilities for any purpose other than temporarily preventing serious and immediate risk of physical harm.

Grocery initiative: Senate Bill 850 created a Grocery Initiative program which will receive \$20 million to fund grants and financial aid to grocery stores opening or operating in "food deserts." It also requires the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to study food deserts.

Underground Railroad task force: Senate Bill 1623 creates the

Underground Railroad Task Force to develop a statewide plan for creating a "cohesive statewide history" of the Underground Railroad and developing new educational and tourism opportunities.

Utility shutoffs: House Bill 1541 prohibits utilities from shutting off gas or electric services due to non-payment of bills when the temperature exceeds 90 degrees or there is a heat advisory in effect.

Rearview mirrors: It's long been illegal in Illinois to hang an object that obstructs a driver's view from a rearview mirror. House Bill 2389 maintains that driving with such an obstruction is prohibited, but it also prevents law enforcement from stopping and searching a vehicle solely because the driver is violating that law.

Civil rights violation: Under Senate Bill 1817, anyone who considers immigration status during a real estate transaction, including purchase and rental transactions, could be guilty of a civil rights violation.

Dangers of fentanyl: House Bill 3924 requires high schools to teach students about the dangers of fentanyl in state-required health courses. The coursework would include differentiating legal and illegal uses of the drug, details about "the process of lacing fentanyl in other drugs and why drugs get laced with fentanyl," as well as information on how to detect fentanyl in drugs and how to save someone from an overdose.

Fentanyl test strips: House Bill 3203 allows pharmacists and retailers to sell fentanyl test strips over the counter.

Bears and primates: Senate Bill 1883 prohibits keepers of bears and nonhuman primates from allowing members of the general public to come into contact with them. Violators of the law would be subject to a Class B misdemeanor. "General public" does not include employees at the facility where the animal is kept, veterinarians or professional film crews

KofC Youth free throw contest to be Jan. 13

All boys and girls ages 9 through 14, as of Jan. 1, are invited to participate in the local level of competition of the Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship.

The Wilmington Knights of Columbus will host the local contest on Saturday, Jan. 13. Registration will be 8:30 a.m. and competition will begin at 9 a.m. in the St. Rose School gymnasium, 626 S. Kankakee St., Wilmington.

All young people, not in another local contest, are invited to participate. Each will vie for the best of 15 consecutive free throws.

The Knights of Columbus Free Throw

Championship is sponsored annually with the winners progressing through local, district, regional and state competitions. National winners are awarded based on the scores accumulated in the various rounds of competition.

Participants will compete in their respective age division. All contestants on the local level will be recognized for their participation. There is no entry fee.

Proof of age and written parental consent will be required the morning of the event.

Entry forms will also be available at the contest.

Gas prices unchanged for the week

The price of a gallon of gasoline is unchanged locally for most stations despite a 3-cent increase in the national average.

The cheapest price locally was \$2.69/g Tuesday morning at the Mohsen station at I-55 and Lorenzo Rd. Other Wilmington and Braidwood stations were averaging \$2.94/g, unchanged from a week before.

In Coal City the price on Tuesday averaged \$2.95/g, up from \$2.84/g. Regional prices were \$2.72/g in Bourbonnais, \$2.89/g. Morris and \$2.79/g Joliet.

"After 13 straight weeks of

decline, average gasoline prices have edged higher due to optimistic comments from the Fed on cutting interest rates in 2024, coupled with Houthi attacks on vessels in the Red Sea, boosting concerns of a disruption to global shipping, including oil shipments," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Illinois was priced at \$2.49/g yesterday while the most expensive was \$4.59/g.

"For now, the price of gasoline has already jumped, but could ease slightly this

week ahead of the New Year. For now, I'm optimistic that we may still have a chance of seeing the first \$2.99 national average since 2021 sometime before spring arrives. We'll have the full details on what we expect for gasoline and diesel prices in 2024 later this week. Hopefully motorists will be able to celebrate a New Year with good news at the pump!"

Prices in Illinois are 31.2

cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 10.0 cents per gallon lower than a year ago.

The national average price of gasoline is \$3.07/g. The national average is down 13.8 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 1.8 cents per gallon higher than a year ago, according to GasBuddy.

Cyd Notter graduates as Food for Life Instructor

Cyd Notter, of Wilmington recently graduated as a Licensed Food for Life Instructor for the Physician's Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM).

Food for Life is an award-winning program designed by physicians, nurses, and dietitians that provides education and cooking classes to reduce or reverse diet-related chronic diseases. Since 1985, PCRM has been advancing health care through lifestyle medicine, good nutrition, and through implementation of clinical research.

Cyd will now be offering workshops and cooking demos on the topics of Cancer Prevention and Survival, a Diabetes Initiative, Your Body in Balance (hormone-related issues), Cooking to Combat COVID-19, Kids Health



CYD NOTTER

(grades 4-6), Employee Wellness Programs, Kickstart Your Health (weight management), and more.

Anyone interested in class information for yourself, a group, or your company, Cyd can be reached at cydnotter@cydnotter.com.

State employees can take leave for firefighter training

A new law led by State Senator Patrick Joyce (40th-Essex) to help solve Illinois' firefighter shortage will go into effect Jan. 1.

The new law creates the Firefighter Training Leave of Absence Act, which allows state employees leave from their job to attend firefighter training.

Fire departments across the state have faced a shortage of new recruits and volunteer firefighters in recent years. Along with Senate Bill 1611 to help combat this issue, Joyce also sponsored Senate Joint Resolution 7, which created the Recruiting and Retaining Public Employee Firefighters and Paramedics Task Force to identify solutions to the shortage of eligible applicants for the positions.

"Not everyone can easily take the time off they need to complete the training courses to become a volunteer firefighter," said Joyce. "I'm hopeful this law will encourage more people to complete the

training so we can begin to see more recruits and help communities feel safe."

Senate Bill 1611 takes effect Jan. 1, 2024.

WASH ✦ DRY ✦ FOLD

Sparkle
LAUNDROMAT

Drop-Off Laundry Services NOW AVAILABLE!

Sunday-Wednesday-Friday
Hours 6 p.m. - 10 p.m.

Drop off and pick up or call for appointment

692 E. Division St., Coal City • 815-634-4111

Illinois minimum wage to increase January 1

The minimum wage in Illinois is increasing on January 1st.

Workers will see an increase of \$1 per hour from \$13 to \$14. The minimum wage for tipped workers will rise to \$8.40 per hour and youth workers (under 18) working fewer than 650 hours per calendar year will see their hourly wage increase to \$12 per hour.

"Since day one as Governor, I've made it my mission to put Springfield back on the side of working families," said Governor JB Pritzker. "With this new minimum wage increase, we are once again making Illinois a more affordable and equitable place to live for all of our residents."

This will be the sixth increase in the state's minimum wage since 2019 when Pritzker signed legislation establishing a schedule of

increases culminating in a \$15 per hour minimum wage in 2025.

"Nationally, minimum wage laws have not kept pace with the cost of living," said Illinois Department of Labor Director Jane Flanagan. "These wage increases have helped Illinois workers pay for the increasing costs of groceries, childcare and other everyday expenses. While many working families are still struggling, we celebrate that once again, on January 1st, workers will get a raise."

Minimum wage workers are encouraged to review their paystubs in the new year to ensure they are being paid correctly. Workers in the City of Chicago are required to be paid at a higher rate, depending on the size of their employer.

Annual New Years Day Sale

Special Offers

15-50% OFF STOREWIDE
*SOME EXCLUSIONS APPLY

50% OFF CHRISTMAS MERCHANDISE

20% OFF REGULAR PRICED FABRIC
(1YD MINIMUM CUTS)
OVER 1800 BOLTS OF FABRIC

Countryside Village
1540 N Division St
Braidwood, IL
815-458-2191

Located at I55 & Rt 113, exit 236, East Frontage Road, 1/2 block,

www.countrysidevillagegifts.com

CLASSIFIEDS

CLASSIFIED DEADLINES

Pre-payment required for all classified ads unless customer has a pre established business account

Deadlines
Classified Display
Fridays - 5 p.m.
Classified Word Ads
Mondays - noon

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

Cost
Line Ads are up to 30 words (20¢ for each word over 30)
1 wk. - \$15; 2 wks. - \$19;
3 wks. - \$22; 4 wks. - \$25
\$1.00 Extra per line for bold or caps on classified

APARTMENTS FOR RENT

Wilmington - 2BR apartment for rent. \$975.00/month and \$1,700.00 security deposit. No pets, need references. Leave message at 815-365-2829.

BUSINESS PROPERTIES FOR RENT

Office space for rent in Coal City. 2,070 sq. ft. 5 exam rooms, waiting room, 2 bathrooms, kitchenette, private offices, lighted marquee, lighted parking lot, handicap accessible. \$2,400 per month. Contact Joan at 815-791-5875. Email joan@advantage Realty.com TFN

DUPLEX FOR RENT

2 Bedroom Duplex Ranch Style. Only 2 units per building. 1/2 mile from I-55 in (Diamond, IL). Attached garage, backyard. Oak cabinets, concrete drive, washer & dryer hook-up. All maintenance included. \$1,050 per month. Available 1/1/24. No smoking or pets & year lease. Call 815-351-2494. cc49-52

HELP WANTED

Hiring General Manager. Oversees daily operations of the log yard. Duties: Liaise with customers (mainly in Asia) re needs and pricing on projects and orders; grade logs to customer specifications and distribute to factories; coordinate export logistics and prepare customs documents; maintain inventory records and track log movement in and out of yard; manage crew including scheduling and training as needed; serve as log buyer, compute and report to Chinese parent company all expenses related to the log yard operation (labor costs, equipment maintenance/repair); review and analyze log yard operation data to identify improvement and cost reduction opportunities. 5 years experience in the logging industry. 3 years experience with project and stakeholder management. Experience may be concurrent. Fluency in Chinese and Japanese. \$172,000-\$177,000 per year. Full time, 40 hrs per week. Email: herman@apexforest.com Herman Wong, HR, Sunway Forest Products, 32625 IL-53, Wilmington, IL. cc51-10

HELP WANTED

Godley Park District is in need of a child care center cook. Position is part-time, Monday through Friday, morning hours. If interested, please contact HR at 815-458-6129 x4. ch51-52

SERVICE & REPAIRS

Mac's Snow Removal Residential and commercial snow plowing. Call (815) 418-6624 for a free quote! cc51-2

Gas Fireplace Repair

40 years experience. Licensed, insured & bonded. Call Margo at 708-712-5012 to schedule an appointment. Can repair most brands. Weekends available. Thank you. ck37-12

Mike Collins Roofing

re-shingles and gutter cleaning, aluminum gutter screen, no repair to small or too big. Don't let your roof get damaged from black algae. Have it sprayed, low prices. **INSULATION.** Keep your house cooler in summertime and warmer in the winter. Free estimate for blown in insulation for attics from Mike Collins Roofing. Lic # 104.007296. Ask for Mike at 815-730-1303. ck17-20

LOST & FOUND

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

MISCELLANEOUS

Hall Rental - Available for parties, showers & meetings. Seats 100 people, full kitchen available. If interested call New Hope Presbyterian Church in Coal City, 815-634-8332. ch 27a-tfn



A Thousand Words Photography
385 N. Second Ave.
Coal City
Mandy Eaton
815-791-2913

REAL ESTATE

SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE OF 34351 Walnut Avenue, Wilmington, IL 60481 (Single Family). On the 18th day of January, 2024 to be held at 12:00 noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 904, Joliet, IL 60432, under Case Title: **MIDFIRST BANK Plaintiff V. OMAR GARCIA; SUSAN M. GARCIA; UNITED STATES OF AMERICA; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS; UNKNOWN OCCUPANTS** Defendant. Case No. 23 FC 0139 in the Circuit Court of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, Will County, Illinois. Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County. In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the purchaser of the unit, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and legal fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 and the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Illinois Condominium Property Act. Pursuant to Local Court Rule 11.03 (J) if there is a surplus following application of the proceeds of sale, then the plaintiff shall send written notice pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/15-1512(d) to all parties to the proceeding advising them of the amount of the surplus and that the surplus will be held until a party obtains a court order for its distribution or, in the absence of an order, until the surplus is forfeited to the State. For Information Please Contact: **LOGS LEGAL GROUP LLP** 2121 Waukegan Rd, Suite 301 Bannockburn, Illinois 60015 P: 847-770-4348 F: 847-291-3434 Published in the Free Press Newspapers on Wed., December 27, 2023 and Wed., January 3 & 10, 2024.

REAL ESTATE

SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE OF 547 N English St, Braidwood, IL 60408 (Single Family Home). On the 4th day of January, 2024 to be held at 12:00 noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 904, Joliet, IL 60432, under Case Title: **U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, AS TRUSTEE FOR J.P. MORGAN MORTGAGE ACQUISITION CORP. 2005-WMCI, A S E T - B A C K E D PASS-THROUGH CERTIFICATES, SERIES 2005-WMCI** Plaintiff V. **JEFF URBAN A/K/A JEFF A URBAN, AMANDA URBAN A/K/A AMANDA C URBAN, MICHAEL ZWIEZEN, TONI PICCIOLA, INDIVIDUALLY AND AS SPECIAL ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ESTATE OF MICHAEL WILKEY; UNKNOWN OWNERS GENERALLY, AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS** Defendant. Case No. 22 FC 1272 in the Circuit Court of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, Will County, Illinois. Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County. In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the purchaser of the unit, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and legal fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 and the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Illinois Condominium Property Act. Pursuant to Local Court Rule 11.03 (J) if there is a surplus following application of the proceeds of sale, then the plaintiff shall send written notice pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/15-1512(d) to all parties to the proceeding advising them of the amount of the surplus and that the surplus will be held until a party obtains a court order for its distribution or, in the absence of an order, until the surplus is forfeited to the State. For Information Please Contact: **ANSELMO LINDBERG OLIVER LLC.** 1771 W. Diehl Rd. Suite 120 NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS 60563 P: 630-453-6960 F: 630-428-4620 Published in the Free Press Newspapers on Wed., Dec. 13, 20 & 27, 2023.

REAL ESTATE

605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the purchaser of the unit, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and legal fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 and the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Illinois Condominium Property Act. Pursuant to Local Court Rule 11.03 (J) if there is a surplus following application of the proceeds of sale, then the plaintiff shall send written notice pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/15-1512(d) to all parties to the proceeding advising them of the amount of the surplus and that the surplus will be held until a party obtains a court order for its distribution or, in the absence of an order, until the surplus is forfeited to the State. For Information Please Contact: **KLUEVER AND PLATT, LLC.** 200 N. LASALLE ST. STE 1880 Chicago, Illinois 60601 P: 312-201-6765 F: 312-236-0514 Published in the Free Press Newspapers on Wed., Dec. 13, 20 & 27, 2023.

REAL ESTATE

SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE OF 19241 W QUAIL CT., ELWOOD, IL 60421 (Not Applicable). On the 4th day of January, 2024 to be held at 12:00 noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 904, Joliet, IL 60432, under Case Title: **SPECIALIZED LOAN SERVICING LLC Plaintiff V. UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES OF RICHARD A. GOEPFER; DEBORAH L. GOEPFER AKA DEBORAH HOWERTON; TRACI J. HARRISON FKA TRACI J. GOEPFER; AMY N. PIAZZA FKA AMY N. GOEPFER; JONATHAN WOMACK AS SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR RICHARD A. GOEPFER; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS;** Defendant. Case No. 22 FC 1214 in the Circuit Court of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, Will County, Illinois. Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County. In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the purchaser of the unit, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and legal fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 and the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Illinois Condominium Property Act. Pursuant to Local Court Rule 11.03 (J) if there is a surplus following application of the proceeds of sale, then the plaintiff shall send written notice pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/15-1512(d) to all parties to the proceeding advising them of the amount of the surplus and that the surplus will be held until a party obtains a court order for its distribution or, in the absence of an order, until the surplus is forfeited to the State. For Information Please Contact: **ANSELMO LINDBERG OLIVER LLC.** 1771 W. Diehl Rd. Suite 120 NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS 60563 P: 630-453-6960 F: 630-428-4620 Published in the Free Press Newspapers on Wed., Dec. 13, 20 & 27, 2023.

REAL ESTATE

In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the purchaser of the unit, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and legal fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 and the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Illinois Condominium Property Act. Pursuant to Local Court Rule 11.03 (J) if there is a surplus following application of the proceeds of sale, then the plaintiff shall send written notice pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/15-1512(d) to all parties to the proceeding advising them of the amount of the surplus and that the surplus will be held until a party obtains a court order for its distribution or, in the absence of an order, until the surplus is forfeited to the State. For Information Please Contact: **ANSELMO LINDBERG OLIVER LLC.** 1771 W. Diehl Rd. Suite 120 NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS 60563 P: 630-453-6960 F: 630-428-4620 Published in the Free Press Newspapers on Wed., Dec. 13, 20 & 27, 2023.

SITUATIONS WANTED

Wanted: Stories about local people, organizations and events. If you know a neighbor with an interesting hobby, collection or cause, give the editor a call at 1-815-634-0315 or 1-815-476-7966. tfn/47b

SHOP YOUR LOCAL BUSINESSES!

STORAGE

PUBLIC STORAGE
Clementine's Closets
815-530-0200
- No Deposit - Starting at \$50
515 Darry Lane, Wilmington

WANTED

Wanted: Stories about local people, organizations and events. If you know a neighbor with an interesting hobby, collection or cause, give the editor a call at 1-815-634-0315 or 1-815-476-7966. tfn/47b

WANTED

SCRAP METAL

- Farm Machinery
- Garden Tractors
- Snowmobiles
- Appliances
- Anything Metal

Free pickup 7 days 815-210-8819

GRUNDY COUNTY'S #1 HOME SELLER

Source: Midwest Real Estate DataBase, (MLS) Single Family Detached Homes Sold in 2022 By Grundy County Offices.

SEE EVERY HOME ON THE MARKET AT

C21.COM

(815) 942-9190



99% Customer Satisfaction Rating

Need printing?

We'll put our award-winning graphic arts department to work for you to typeset and print practically anything.

Sure you can order printing online but it's not always cheaper when you ad in those hidden art charges and shipping. **Get a local quote first!**

Specializing in full color business cards

- business cards
- dinner tickets
- letterhead
- full color copies
- banners
- posters
- raffle tickets
- envelopes
- business forms
- fliers
- resumes
- yard signs and more

We'll take care of your printing needs from start to finish.



Stop in for a free competitive quote
111 S. Water St., Wilmington
Ph. 815-476-7966

BRAIDWOOD • COAL CITY • WILMINGTON • ELWOOD

Community reporters needed

The Free Press Newspapers is seeking TWO staff writers for part-time positions, approximately 25-30 hours per week. Assignments include general feature writing, city government meetings, school news, photography and expanding our online editions. Great opportunity for an ambitious person who wants to learn about all aspects of community journalism. Good grammar a must, AP style writing a plus. If you think you can keep the pulse of the community, like the idea you'll mostly be working from home with flexible hours and want to be part of our team, let's talk.

Send resume to Eric Fisher
The Free Press Newspapers
111 S. Water St.,
Wilmington, IL 60481
Call (815) 476-7966 or email: efisher@fpnusa.com

LAND AUCTION: 103 ACRES - 130 P

SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 2024 @ 10:00 AM

Auction Location: American Legion, 426 Industry Ave, Gardner, IL

Farm Location: 1/2 mile North of Rice Rd on 8th Ave (Coster Rd) in South Wilmington, IL

ONLINE & LIVE BIDDING AVAILABLE

SEC 11 - GREENFIELD TWP GRUNDY COUNTY IL

PIN: 12-11-326-001 and 12-11-401-005 Offered as ONE Tract

103.73 ACRES m.o.l. - 130.5 PI Reddick Clay Loam and Andres Silt Loam Soils

Owners: Estate of Elaine G. Joyce

Complete Listing, Terms, Flyer and Maps on website!

RO Contact Auction Co For Brochure Richard A. Olson & Assoc, Inc MORRIS, IL - 815-942-4266 **RO** RICHARD A. OLSON & ASSOCIATES, INC.

www.richardaolson.com

New Year's Resolutions that can help the environment

Dear EarthTalk: What are some New Year's Resolutions I can make to help the environment?

—M. Lind, Sturges, MI
Given the escalating environmental challenges facing our planet, directing some of our New Year's aspirations toward eco-conscious endeavors can make a tangible difference. Luckily there are lots of ways to put your resolve to work for the planet...

For starters, one of the most impactful resolutions is to adopt a more mindful approach to consumption. Commit to reducing waste by embracing practices like reusing, repurposing and recycling. Shift to buying reusable items and those with minimal packaging.

Support brands committed to sustainable practices. Minimize your use of single-use plastics, another way to make a big impact without much effort. Choose stainless-steel water bottles, cloth shopping bags and glass food containers. Say no to plastic straws, cutlery and excessive packaging whenever possible.

Making more sustainable food choices is yet another way to make 2024 greener than 2023. Adopting a more plant-based diet or reduce meat consumption to significantly reduce environmental impact. Pledge to support local, organic and sustainably sourced



foods. Also, strive to reduce food waste by planning meals, composting organic waste and supporting initiatives that redistribute surplus food to those in need.

Another resolution that of us can make is to reduce personal carbon emissions. Embrace alternatives to fossil fuel-based transportation by walking, cycling, carpooling or using public transit.

Also, consider investing in energy-efficient appliances, using renewable energy sources, and supporting initiatives that offset carbon emissions. While they might not be top of mind, changing up daily habits can also reduce your carbon footprint and overall environmental impact.

Conserve water by fixing leaks, taking shorter showers and using water-saving appliances. Grow your own food, support local biodiversity by planting native species, and prioritize eco-friendly practices in your daily routine.

Another way to create positive change is to speak out more for environmental policies and initiatives. Support community groups and environmental organizations, and join in local clean-up efforts or conservation projects.

Engage in discussions, educate others, and advocate for sustainable practices in your workplace, schools and social circles. Spread awareness about environmental issues and inspire others to take action.

Share information on social media, organize educational events, or start a community garden or recycling program. Encourage friends, family and colleagues to join in

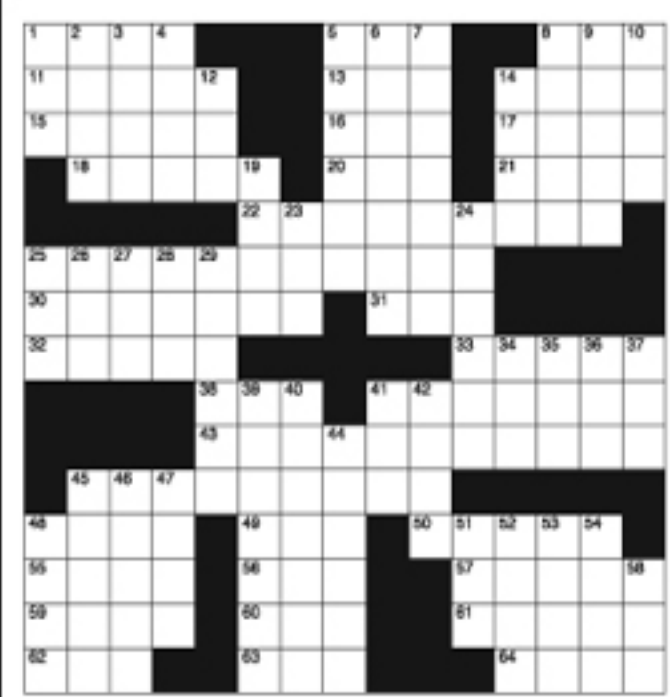


IT'S THAT TIME of year when you have to make some New Year's resolutions. How about factoring in climate and the environment this year?

your eco-friendly endeavors, fostering a collective effort toward a greener future.

Making a resolution is just the first step—commitment is key to achieving lasting change. Progress may require adjustments and perseverance, but every step contributes to a healthier planet.

By incorporating these resolutions into your New Year's goals, you become an active participant in the global movement toward environmental stewardship. Together, let us embark on this journey to protect and preserve the natural world we all call home. Cheers to a more sustainable, eco-conscious year ahead!



CLUES ACROSS

1. A way to injure
5. Mutual savings bank
8. Rock TV channel
11. Large number of fish swimming together
13. Military mailbox
14. Female of a horse
15. Category
16. City
17. Breezed through
18. Officer who bears a mace
20. Tax collector
21. "Cheers" actress Perlman
22. Pauses before acting
25. Extracted information from a wave
30. Tendency to revert to something ancestral
31. No seats available
32. Nocturnal rodents
33. Moves gently to and fro
38. Not good
41. A way to ready
43. One who makes something better
45. Things associated with American history
48. Ancient Phoenician fertility god
49. A continuous portion of a circle
50. Volcanic craters
55. Units of electrical resistance
56. Gamble on
57. Ethiopian town
59. One point east of northeast
60. Polynesian garland of flowers
61. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
62. State of fuss
63. Keyboard key
64. Partner to relaxation

CLUES DOWN

1. "The world's most famous arena"
2. Polite interruption sound
3. Private school in New York
4. Refuse of grapes
5. ___ Tomei, actress
6. Adult beverages
7. Supporter
8. Papier-___, art material
9. Forests have them
10. Most ancient Hindu scriptures
12. Downwind
14. Marketplace
19. Flowering plant genus
23. Street where nightmares happen
24. Admirer
25. Dip lightly into water
26. When you hope to get there
27. Partner to cheese
28. Eggs
29. A way to disqualify
34. South American plant
35. Fold-away bed
36. Debbie Harry album "___ Koo"
37. Swedish krona
39. Displaying warmth and friendliness
40. Official orders
41. Bowling alley necessity
42. Stray
44. About milk
45. Expressed pleasure
46. Caribbean dance
47. If not
48. ___ fide (Latin)
51. Swiss river
52. Hebrew calendar month
53. One easily swindled
54. Point that is one point south of southwest
58. Small island (British)

New vice president at Grundy Bank

Grundy Bank is delighted to announce the promotion of Ashley Speed to vice president. Speed has been a valued employee of the Grundy Bank team for 15 years and brings a wealth of knowledge when it comes to operations, liquidity, IT, shareholder relations and a portion of human resources.

"We are pleased to announce the promotion of Ashley Speed to vice president of Grundy Bank. Speed brings exceptional teamwork skills to the table and vast knowledge in many areas of the bank. She's an asset here with us at Grundy Bank and we are proud to have had her with us for the last 15 years and look forward to many more," said Kevin Olson, president & CEO of Grundy Bank.

Speed began her career at Grundy Bank in May 2008 as a part-time teller while attending Eastern Illinois University. She worked her way up the ranks, becoming the supervisor of bookkeeping in 2012 and eventually the internal auditor in 2015.

In acknowledgement of her hard work, she was promoted to assistant vice president in January 2021. And just recently, in 2023, she was promoted once again to the position of vice president.

In addition to her academic achievements, Speed has participated in a variety of bank education programs, such as the Illinois Bankers Association Future Leaders Alliance in 2015.

She also completed the Graduate School of Banking program in Madison, WI in August 2021 and received an Executive Leadership Certificate from the Wisconsin School of Business during the same month. Speed also graduated from the Illinois Business Academy, Spring of 2023.

"I'm grateful to have received a promotion to vice president and look forward to my new position. Throughout the years here at Grundy Bank I have learned a large amount of bank knowledge as well as being able to create personal



ASHLEY SPEED and professional relationships along the way," said Speed. "I look forward to taking on new

tasks and to continue to gain further knowledge and experience throughout my time here."

Speed currently sits on the Grundy County Chamber of Commerce & Industry Board and serves as the treasurer. She is also part of both the Illinois Future Leaders Alliance Board as well as the Community Foundation of Grundy County's Grants and Programs Committee since 2022.

Grundy Bank is proud to say they have served Grundy County and southern Will County for over 159 years with their financial needs. For locations and information on Grundy Bank call 815-942-0130 or visit grundy.bank.

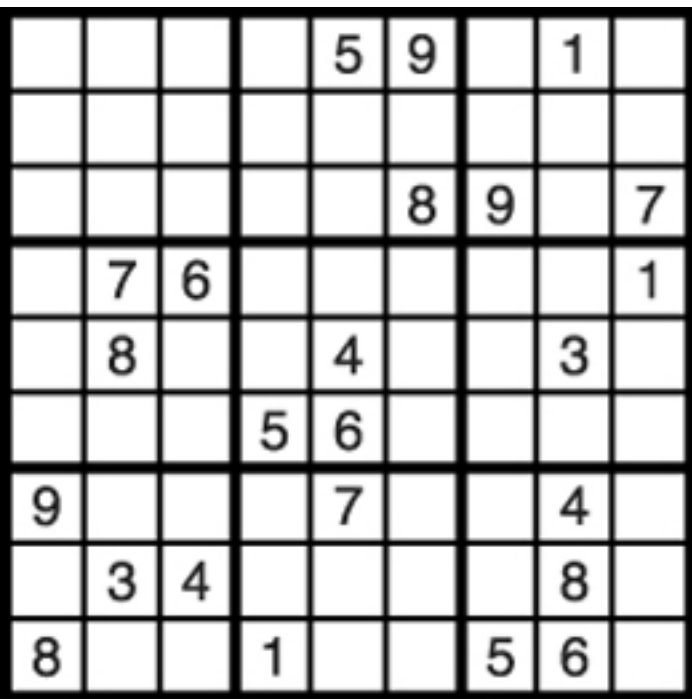
Reusing cooking oil

Remember when using cooking oil, never be poured it down the drain as it will clog the pipes.

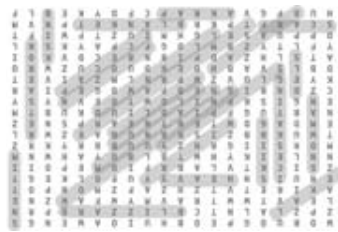
A great tip for bird lovers seen on social media is adding oats to the pan and soaking up

the oil to make treats to place on tree branches.

Pour warm oil into glass jars only. You may reuse some or cool off and scrape into a disposable container for the garbage.



Here are answers to the puzzles appearing on this page. We know you're tempted to look but trust your brain power by giving each answer a second try. Good luck!



CRYPTO FUN

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to winter. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 13 = I)

A. 7 12 13 22 22 11 5 9
Clue: Big snow storm

B. 21 16 13 12 12 18
Clue: A bit cold

C. 9 5 13 24 6
Clue: Pile of snow

D. 25 3 10 14
Clue: Frozen precipitation

Answers: A. Blizzard B. chilly C. drift D. snow

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to winter.

ACTSO

--	--	--	--

Answer: Coats

Guess Who?

I am a musician born in Denmark on December 26, 1963. I played tennis as a young man, but gained an interest in music after receiving a ticket to see Deep Purple, which inspired me to become a drummer. I've been part of a metal rock band for many years.

Answer: Lars Ulrich

WINTER WONDERS WORD SEARCH

W O B U O G P E O B H U I O A W E N G S
Z P Z L A L N T C B L I Z Z A R D P R N
L E A V T W W T R A V M Y W F A W Z N E
A K I R E T V T Z H Z A F Z M O N P O T
E N U I S N H E A V Y Y U F O L K E G T
Z S I C K T V L A B R F I D M E P O I I
N N L E I K Y H W T B L B O Y A H W N M
M O R S I I G R N Z Y U U B B R Y K R Z
T W U K N B Z I S R R N U N A E Z W R L
E M D A G D W T E N T N E A R P S N E Z
N A B T U G F P I A D L I U D R U B T M
E N G I S K P N I L O W T O E V N Y S Y
C Z D N B I G N E O F A W D G E P I A R
K Y E G L U V Z W P R N L M Z A I V E T
D B L S V A B H O E H D U O C U Z W R O
A T S L H Z A D P I B N R E C D V K O I
Y F L T Y Z B M L O G F C P A Y K S N L
O P P U A S E L G H M I U Z T F W I F T
S C A R F T P K R B L A N K E T P R V M
H U D P G V A K R A P C F D Y K E B L F

WORDS

BLANKET

BLIZZARD

BRISK

BUNDLE

DOWNHILL

FROZEN

HAZARD

HEAVY

ICECAP

ICE SKATING

LAKE

MITTENS

MOUNTAIN

NOR'EASTER

PARKA

SCARF

SKIING

SLED

SLIPPERY

SNOWMAN

TEMPERATURE

WINTRY

WOODBURNING

WOOLEN

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

Coal City state wrestling title highlights 2023

SHAWN LONG
SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

While most will remember 2023 as the year the Coalers wrestling team won state, there were several other accolades to reflect on including the Warriors' runner-up trophy, the CC Bass fishing team's impressive placing, Dames to state and many others.

Coal City wrestling wins it all

The Coaler wrestlers ran the table from the very beginning, crushing every opponent in their path. They won their first six at the Shepard Duals, including a tough bout against Downers Grove North.

They kept on, rattling off their first 17 dual team matches before a loss. No one believed they were going to lose until their bout with the Class 2A returning state champion Hilltoppers. Coal City was stacked but JCA was more stacked and showed it in a 47-16 win to give the Coalers their first loss of the season.

Coal City powered through Abe's Rumble to capture gold in the 60-team dual team tournament with a sparkling 9-0 record. That added to their already impressive and record breaking pace of a 30-2 dual team record. That led to another impressive tournament title. This time it was the Princeton Invitational Tournament (PIT), where the Coalers put an impressive, 245.5 points to outpace the competition. They had all 14 of their wrestlers place, including two champions. The Coalers continued to dominate as they rattled off another seven wins before dismantling fellow conference front-running Reed-Custer in a 69-12 beatdown.

The Coalers continued their individual success as well as eight matmen captured a title during the annual Illinois Central Eight Tournament. That led to another eight champions during the regional tournament at Reed-Custer as they would qualify 106- Culan Lindemuth, 113-Brody Widlowski, 132- Jake Piatak, 138- Brant Widlowski, 145-Mataeo Blessing, 170- Derek Carlson, 182- Braiden Young and 195- Joey Breneman to the sectional.

Joining them were runner-ups 120- Aidan Kenney, 220-Drake Dearth and 285-Michael Gonzalez, and third place winners 126- Brock Finch, 152- Landin Benson and 160-Jack Poyner. At the sectional, the Coalers advanced all 14 to state, including champions Lindemuth, Bro. Widlowski, Bran. Widlowski, Blessing and Young.

Out of the 14 state qualifiers, the Coalers had Breneman place third. Bro. Widlowski and Young placed fourth while Piatak captured sixth. Blessing and Carlson earned eighth place in their respective classes.

That individual success led to something special and something Coal City hasn't seen in the history of its program, a state dual team championship. They dominated the competition with wins over Leroy (65-6), Lena Wislow (46-14) and finally Yorkville Christian (32-31) to capture the title along with their best dual team record of 43-2.

Warriors were runner-ups

While the Coaler wrestlers were state champions, the middle school Warriors weren't far behind, earning a second place trophy during the Illinois Elementary School Association state wrestling finals. The Warriors also dominated the competition all season long, earning a team regional championship as they trounced the field with 438 points to Herscher's next best 206.

Coal City middles sent 22 wrestlers to the sectional tournament with 10 champions as Ryder Gill, Landon Bomba, Jake Munsterman, Jason Piatak, Owen Petersen, Cooper Morris, Alex Carlson, Theo Fritz, Aidan Edmond, Brody D'Orazio, Brantley Brooks, Tyson Price, Fabian Hernandez, Carter Teague, Cole Russell, Cameron Minuth, Gavin Clubb, Gabe Hamilton and Enzo Mugnol all advanced to the sectional.

The Warriors ended up sending 15 of those 22 to state where they would earn second, finishing just behind Vandalia 164 to 149.5. Individually, the Warriors placed six which included three champions (Munsterman, Peterson,

Morris), Gill in second, D'Orazio in third and Brooks in sixth.

Munsterman earned a shutout decision to capture his title, finishing with 47 wins and no losses. Petersen powered through his first two opponents before a shutout decision to finish 47-1. Morris edged his opponent 1-0 to earn his title finishing with two state titles and a 47-2 record to cap off his eighth grade year.

Gill pinned his way to the finals before falling in a close decision. D'Orazio captured four of five to end up in third while Brooks came back, winning his last two before falling in the fifth place match to pick up sixth.

Bass Fishing places 11th at state

The Coal City fishing team of Buddy Widlowski and Layne Cuddy qualified for the state tournament, catching four fish which totaled 8 lbs. 15 oz, good enough for 11th out of the 50 boats. This was also the first time Coal City had a boat place at state.

Collin Dames to state

The Coaler track team as a whole wasn't much to write home about but the senior shot put artist Collin Dames sure put in the work, making it to state.

Dames was impressive during the sectional, launching the shot put 14.1 meters to earn first. That set him up for the state tournament where a tough field would have had him placing in the top 20 had it not been for his foul out. The shot put best was put up by Chase Crawford of Cahokia, who posted 19.28 m.

Coaler football wins one in playoffs, cap off solid season

The road was not easy for the Coal City football team as they had a tough schedule which featured eventual yet made the playoffs for the 33rd time.

After a 43-3 loss to Morris for the opener, they won five straight until facing eventual state champion Wilmington in a 28-0 shutout. Their 7-2 regular season carried them into the 4A playoffs where they upended Normal (University) 44-0 at home in the first round.

Rochester, the eventual state champs, ended the fun

in the second round with a 45-3 loss.

Lady Coaler sluggers run table, capture regional title

The CCHS softball team won 15 of their first 17 games to start the season. Coal City took third place in the Tuscola Tournament that featured top state competition.

They followed that by pounding out 15 hits which included three home runs in a 14-1 victory over Lisle. That was part of a huge stretch where the Coalers bashed 11 home runs in four games. The Coalers earned a top seed in the regional and started it against Wilmington as they cruised to a 12-2 victory. Coal City followed that with 5-4 victory over Seneca in the regional title game.

Their run ended in a 9-6 loss to the Herscher Tigers during the regional championship game. The Lady Coalers had built a 6-2 lead into the seventh but Herscher came back with a seven-run seventh to steal the victory.

Lady Coaler kickers earn sectional berth

The Coal City girls soccer team won four of their first six games. That included a tie with four wins. They had their ups and downs but finished the season with 12 wins with eight losses and two ties.

They continued their season with an impressive first in their Lady Coaler Shootout. They carried that success into the regional where they would edge Bishop McNamara 3-2 to earn a regional championship. Kylee Kennel scored two of their three goals while Chloe Pluger was nails in goal with eight saves to secure the title.

They advanced to the sectional title game but ended up falling 6-2 to Herscher to end their season as Cara Planeta and Audrey Cooper provided their two goals while Plueger secured 12 saves. The Lady Coalers got a game-winning penalty kick from Planeta to walk-off winners 2-1 over Chicago University during the sectional semifinal game.

State qualifiers

The Coal City administration recognized two female athletes this fall for advancing to state. Abby Stiles (Girls' Tennis) and Kylee Kennel (Girls' Golf) were two student athletes honored for their

accomplishments. This only comes with a lot of hard work and dedication to their sport.

Seniors Ethan Bach and Ryland Megyeri were sectional qualifiers in Boys Golf.

Lady Coalers netters top ICE conference, fall in close regional

The Lady Coaler netters ran the table in the ICE, winning 13 of their first 19 contests, including a near perfect 6-1 conference record. That led Coal City to a conference championship as they beat Lisle 25-13, 25-16 to capture the conference crown with a 12-2 league record and 22-11-1 overall.

The Lady Coalers were on their game and on the top of the Seneca Regional with the two-seed but that's when the wheels came off as Pontiac gained a head of steam in a 25-20, 25-22 win.

Lady Coaler hoops dominates field to 20-win season

The Coal City girls basketball team won eight of their first 10 games en route to a 21-8 record. The Lady Coalers were one of the top teams in the conference, capturing 10 of the 14 conference matchups played.

They were tied for second with Herscher atop the conference leaderboard. Peotone was the only team who stood leaps and bounds ahead of those two with a perfect, 14-0 conference record.

One of those wins was to help celebrate head coach Brad Schmitt, who would capture his 300th career win in a 53-21 win over Streator on December 8th.

They finished off the year going 13-6 to earn themselves the sixth seed in a tough regional. Their season abrupt-

ly ended in a close, 60-56 loss to Pontiac during the regional quarterfinal game.

The Lady Coalers jumped out to a nearly comfortable 16-6 lead but Pontiac proved no lead is comfortable as they put together a 15-9 run to close the gap 25-21 at the half. Pontiac followed with another 16-8 run in the third and coasted from there, making 24-of-34 free throws down the stretch to win.

All-Conference athletes Mia Ferrias and Audrey Cooper led the Coalers with 17 points each in that regional contest. Along with them, Mackenzie Henline also made All-Conference in the Illinois Central Eight Conference while also tallying 14 rebounds with four steals in that regional game.

Coalers fall in regional despite getting hot late

The Coal City baseball team won four of their first nine games despite having Jerry McDowell back as a coach. The Coalers would set the conference on fire, winning 15 of their last 17 games to put themselves in good position for the regional game.

They were playing well. The only problem was Wilmington was playing well too. The visiting 'Cats thwarted Coal City's chances of a postseason run with a 7-6 comeback win over the Coalers during the first round of the regional.

Nolan Ness pounded a home run and Braden Riley pitched well but the Coalers fell just short. Coal City finished second in the ICE Conference with 20 wins and nine losses with a 12-2 conference record.

While 2023 was an exciting year for the Coalers, here's to hoping 2024 will top it.



Photo by Eric Fisher

SQUARING OFF at 175 pounds is Coal City's James Keigher pinned his Morris opponent.

Coalers make quick work of the Redskins

Morris may have ruled the football field but it's the defending 1A state champion Coalers who reign over the mat.

That was the case Friday when Coal City easily defeated their Grundy County rivals 66-7 to improve to 22-3 overall. The Coalers took 11 of 13 matches by pin, five in :37 seconds or less.

On Dec. 29-30 they will travel to Springfield to compete in the largest dual team tournament in the country with 60 teams. They won the Rumble the past two years.

Coal City 66, Morris 7

- 106—Petersen, Owen (CC) over [106] Hughes, Jay by fall 0:37
- 113—Morris, Cooper (CC) over [120] McDonnell, Eli by fall 0:26
- 120—Anderson, B (M) over Lindemuth, Culan Maj Dec 14-5
- 126—Widlowski, Brody (CC) over [126] Meloun, J. by fall 0:34
- 132—Skoff, Carter (M) over Houston, Noah decision 7-1
- 138—Greggain, Evan (CC) over [144] Klinker, Kazden by fall :35
- 144—Garner, Mason (CC) over Curran, Cam by fall 1:22
- 150—Finch, Brock (CC) over [144] Martinez, Jordan by fall 0:23
- 157—Widlowski, Brant (CC) over Paull, Andrew by fall 2:44
- 165—Keigher, John (CC) over Wills, Ian by fall 6:32
- 175—Keigher, James (CC) over [190] Franzetti, AJ by fall 1:22
- 190—Poyner, Cade (CC) over [215] Valverde, Mike by fall 1:56
- 215—Vigna, Payton (CC) over Riley, Daniel by fall 5:58



Photo by Diana Vestal


AT TOP SPEED as he heads to the basket while battling Joliet Catholic on Friday is senior Coaler Jim Feeney.



Fresh Hot Delivery


The Coal City
Courant

Benson Insurance
Agency, Inc.



ALLEGRA
Printing

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



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

Must redeem by January 1, 2024

*"Proud to be serving the community
for the past 38 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"



Photo by Diana Vestal

FAST BREAK BASKET—Colton Sztapka puts up a hot while playing Joliet Catholic at home Friday. The Coalers put up a good fight but lost 68-52.

FRESH HOT DELIVERY!



"Proud to be serving the community for the past 38 years!"



38TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL

1 X-Large - 2 Topping Pizza
XL Geo's Nuggets, FREE Double Chocolate
Caramel M&M's Gourmet Brownie
& a FREE 2-Liter of Soda
(Limit 1 coupon per party per visit)

ONLY \$28.99

Not valid with any other offer. Plus sales tax. Expires 12/31/23.

Order online at www.geospizza.net



634-8858

715 S. Broadway • Coal City

Gift Certificates Available