

Eagle watch returns to Four Rivers



Wildcat wrestlers place at The PIT



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Wilmington PD earns recognition from NCMEC

STAFF REPORT

The members of the Wilmington Police Department have completed training that will give officers a boost when it comes to investigating time sensitive reports of children who have gone missing. The WPD is now a member of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) Missing Kids Readiness Program. The NCMEC developed the Missing Kids Readiness Program to promote best practices for responding to calls of missing, abducted, and sexually exploited children. WPD is now among dozens of law enforcement agencies and 911 call centers nationwide that have been recognized for meeting essential

training and policy elements and demonstrating preparedness for responding to a missing child incident. To meet the requirements of the program, personnel with the WPD worked with NCMEC on their missing child policy to ensure it met the critical elements of the model policy for law enforcement agencies. In addition, Wilmington Police Chief Adam Zink completed his required training and insured that all patrolman and sergeants had completed the online training required for their membership. All sworn law enforcement officers must complete multiple Missing & Exploited Children training modules in order to gain the recognition, and supervisors and criminal investigators/detectives must complete the

additional modules. The chief and command staff also completed a three-day Chief Executive Officer seminar on Missing & Exploited Children as well as additional training modules. The recognition means the WPD has adopted the NCMEC Law Enforcement Model Policy and Procedures for Reports of Missing and Abducted Children, developed with the assistance of the International Association of Chiefs of Police. "By demonstrating remarkable leadership and making this commitment on training and preparedness, the Wilmington police department is communicating to its citizens and families protecting the lives and safety of their children is a top priority," the city noted in a press release issued

on the recognition. "Armed with the information knowledge and operational resources gained through meeting the program criteria the Wilmington police department is now positioned to respond more quickly more comprehensively and effectively when a child's life may be at stake." The WPD is just the second law enforcement agency in the state of Illinois to earn membership in the Missing Kids Readiness Program. "This is a big accomplishment," city administrator Jeannine Smith said. "The second in the state to achieve this, so I just wanted to say thank you to the chief for pursuing this and for your excellence." Membership in the Missing Kids Readiness Program is valid for a period of four years. At that time, the

agency must provide documentation that they continue to follow certain criteria in order to maintain that membership. Membership is free. According to the NCMEC, the recognition demonstrates to the public the member agencies' further excellence in public safety services and helps reinforce the public's faith and confidence in the commitment of member agencies to safeguard children from abduction, sexual exploitation and other risks. More than 300 law enforcement agencies and call centers are recognized by the Missing Kids Readiness Program, and more than 367,000 professionals in the United States and 33 other countries have been trained by NCMEC.

Staying safe at school



Photo by Marney Simon

SCHOOL WAS BACK IN session at Wilmington School District 209-U this week. But not before staff and law enforcement took time to go through a safety drill. The district, working alongside the Wilmington Police Department, the Will County Sheriff's Department, and the Wilmington Fire Department conducted safety exercises on Monday, Jan. 9, as teachers returned to the classroom for staff development activities. "We are very grateful for this school safety related training opportunity. Special thanks to the Will County Sheriff's office, Wilmington Police Department and Wilmington Fire Department for helping to provide this updated learning experience for our entire Wilmington School District staff," Superintendent Dr. Matt Swick wrote in an email to district families. Students returned to class on Tuesday, Jan. 10.

City finds resolution to Catfish Days fund issue

BY MARNEY SIMON EDITOR

The city of Wilmington has made some progress when it comes to untangling some financial accounts in an effort to get a more accurate picture of the city's overall financial position. In particular, the mystery of the second Catfish Days bank account has been solved. During the December Committee of the Whole meeting, city administrator Jeannine Smith updated city leaders on the long process of combing through accounts, looking for more continuity in the accounting of the city's various funds. Smith said one area to be addressed is the Catfish Days fund. Each year, the city appropriates a line item of \$30,000 for Catfish Days. The Catfish Days committee uti-

lizes the funds to pay for the summer festival, then returns the profits the festival makes to even out that line item. While the funding was never in question, the organization of those funds needed to be addressed. Smith also said last month that somewhere along the line, two bank accounts were labeled for Catfish Days. On Jan. 3, former Catfish Days Committee Chair Marty Orr, who ran the committee through 2022 before retiring from the role, approached the City Council to help clear up the confusion. "I know the paper reported about the Catfish Days funds, and reading through it, I think a lot of it happened when the city took over in 2017. They never closed the account that

SEE FUNDS, PAGE 2

Town Hall Meeting set for February

Date changed for public event

STAFF REPORT

The city of Wilmington will host a town hall next month, bumping the date from the original plan to meet in January, and instead setting up the event to take place on Feb. 9. Mayor Ben Dietz announced the change last week, after the first notification of the January date was published in an article in the Free Press Advocate. The Mayor and members of the City Council will host the Town Hall meeting on Thursday, Feb. 9 at 6 p.m. at the Wilmington High School Cafetorium. Mayor Dietz will provide a

2022 State of the Community Report, a projected outlook for 2023 and beyond, and engage residents in a Q&A session. "We're going to take a look at the year in review for the public, come out, learn something about your local government and what we're anticipating to take place over the next year," city administrator Jeannine Smith said when the event was first announced in December. This event is free and open to the public. All members of the community are encouraged to attend and discuss their priorities and goals for the City of Wilmington.

Three displaced in Diamond fire

STAFF REPORT

The American Red Cross is assisting a family displaced from a fire that broke out in their Diamond home over the weekend. Coal City Fire Protection District

personnel were dispatched to 13 Churchill Drive in the Burt Estates Subdivision around 6:50 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 7 for a residential structure fire. Deputy Fire Chief Nick Doerfler reports the cause of the fire was deter-

mined to be electrical and resulted in \$15,000 in damage. No injuries were reported. Firefighters were on the scene for about two hours and assisted by fire and emergency medical service personnel from multiple agencies.



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Business, residential development on the agenda for Braidwood in 2023

BY MARNEY SIMON
EDITOR

The city of Wilmington is set to reveal its plans for the year at a Town Hall meeting, slated to take place next month at Wilmington High School.

Meanwhile, neighbors to the south are also looking ahead, tackling the sometimes elusive growth for Will County communities south of I-80.

The city of Braidwood faces some potential changes this spring, with four of five seats on the City Council being contested in the April consolidated election.

But while the outlook for the makeup of the City Council is in the hands of voters, city leaders are not taking a wait and see approach when it comes to planning for the city.

City administrator Tony Altiery said the goal for 2023 is growth.

"We're going to continue to keep brining businesses to town and keep people's taxes from going up. Then we're going to keep using tax money to give people of town more amenities, like the dog park. We're looking into a splash park. We're looking into a little bit of everything. Taxpayers pay the money, so we're trying to do everything we can to get the things that they would like to have," Altiery said.

Altiery said the biggest goal for 2023 is to add more businesses.

"With the car dealerships coming in this next spring, our goal after that, which we're talking with people right now, a restaurant and a hotel. More amenities. We'd like to get another coffee shop in, we'd like to get more places to eat so people can stay in town, they don't have to go far," Altiery said.

The administrator did note that certain businesses are unlikely to pick Braidwood for development of new storefronts, such as large chain gro-

cery stores, simply because the city does not have the rooftops and traffic counts that suggest they could support a large store.

But, there is still a benefit for Braidwood when it comes to location.

"One of the benefits we have is the traffic count that goes down the highway. Having two interchanges with over 33,000 cars per day going by, we have an average of about 6,000 cars that come off the highway and either go toward Diamond or Braidwood. It's attracting the businesses, and the more businesses we bring here, the more that want to come here," Altiery said. "The amount of traffic is a big deal. Businesses need traffic in order to make money. So then each business feeds off each other. So, the thousands of people that the car dealership will bring in attracts food places. We have multiple lots sitting ready for fast food or sit-down restaurants."

Altiery also said that while some folks might complain about filling up the vacant buildings already in town, there aren't as many vacant storefronts in Braidwood as people may think. City leaders said for some of the vacant spots in town, the size, location, or cost can make those empty properties undesirable.

"We can't control the amount of rent that somebody wants. If the rent is too high, that's why these places are empty," Altiery said. "We have lots of people who call after checking those buildings out. The problem is, when you go to a specialty store, a Dunkin, a Starbucks, any of these, they have specific designs they need for a building. So, they won't go into the units we have empty. They're small units... We really don't have that many empty. But we do have many small businesses come in here and look at these empty spots."

Altiery said the city still saw several empty spots fill up in 2022.

"We've filled four of the small units this year, with smaller businesses coming in.

But, the businesses we're looking to bring... they can't fit in these ones, they have a specific size and their specific areas," Altiery said. "Just like Dunkin. Dunkin doesn't want to be out on Kennedy Road. Dunkin comes in, they need to be around the intersection. They have their corporate rules and regulations on where they will go... They need the traffic count, and our highest traffic count is on Route 53 in the middle of town."

In addition to expanding business growth, Altiery said the city will also focus on new residential in 2023. Altiery noted that the city saw residential growth last year, and hopes to continue that trend. In the 2022 calendar year, approximately 25 building permits for new homes were issued.

"Our housing is up from the past," Altiery said. "Our taxes are affordable."

And, he added, business and residential growth are two sides to the same coin.

"Businesses need residential," Altiery said. "We've had a lot of land that has sold lately, six lots on Main Street just sold, the Townes of Braidwood well sold, there's a road and 28 more lots that can be added there. The average house out there right now is about \$295,000, that's what they're selling out there now and I believe they sold nine of them [in 2022]. There are four or five more being sold right now."

Altiery said Braidwood has a unique offering, being closer to the interstate than some other local towns, but still close enough in proximity to Chicago and the suburbs to attract commuters who would call Braidwood home.

"Everybody wants to be in a small town close to a highway. So when they go to work in Chicago, Joliet, wherever, you jump on the highway and boom you're there.

As far as cleaning up the roads, Altiery said that while there was little work completed in 2022, the roads remain in good shape, with plans to address areas of concern if and when the cost becomes more

affordable.

"There are only a small percent of the roads that need to be touched up or repaired," Altiery said. "The issue is that last year, the cost of the materials and doing roads, if we had done them last year we would have been able to do one mile of roads. If the prices come back down to where they were, we'll be able to do three miles of roads. We actually could not get people to bid the roads, we called multiple companies.

"The roads will all be reviewed, but if it's not affordable, we can't do them. But, we don't have that many roads that are that bad," he continued.

As far as amenities for residents, the dog park is the only item that is currently in planning stages, however Altiery said there is a continuing wish list of items to be reviewed. The city has currently approved the purchase of fencing for a dog park, and is working on an intergovernmental agreement with the Braidwood Park District to have that park constructed at Old Smokey City Park.

"We're just going to keep on moving forward. We're going to try and do stuff for the community that local people want as much as anything," Altiery said.

Altiery also noted that the city is working to bring in businesses and residential developments in an effort to keep up with its financial commitments, while also giving the people what they want.

"Every year we give people raises [by contract], and if it costs us \$100,000 in raises, somewhere we need to make that up," Altiery said, adding that Braidwood's portion of property taxes only brings in a small amount of what it takes to keep the city afloat. "Our goal is, if we can get some businesses in to help make up that tax money, then we can keep taxes down for the citizens in Braidwood. And that's our goal. We don't want to be the town where your taxes go up and up and up. So, in order to do that, we bring in amenities."

Funds

we had because we started the thing, they left it open," Orr said. "That's probably where the confusion came in."

Smith, updating the issue for the first time since it was discussed publicly last month, said the city had managed to wade through some of the issues.

"That's true," Smith said of the account that had been left open. "And then, the city started using it for debt service."

City leaders said there were two accounts as Orr said, but one was mislabeled. That means the debt service fund continued to be labeled as Catfish Days, but was not being used for the festival.

"That's what I kind of figured happened, is when the city took over paying off the bills away from the committee, they never closed the account out," Orr said. "So, I think that's probably what happened. Just a little clarification, sometimes the paper doesn't say everything, so I just wanted to clarify."

Catfish Days 2023 takes place July 20-23.

Editor's note - The article in the Dec. 28, 2022 Free Press Advocate on the Catfish Days funds did not omit any information made public by the city during the December Committee of the Whole meeting. Information on the two accounts was only clarified by the city at the Jan. 3, 2023 meeting of the City Council, which is the basis of this follow-up story.

Breakfast at school

Mon., Jan. 16: no school
Tues., Jan. 17: mini cinni, orange juice, choice of milk
Wed., Jan. 18: lucky charms, goldfish grahams, fruit punch and choice of milk

Thu., Jan. 19: chocolate chip french toast, orange juice and choice of milk

Fri., Jan. 20: cinnamon pop tart, keebler grahams, grape juice and choice of milk

209U Lunch menu

Mon., Jan. 16: no school
Tues., Jan. 17: mini chicken tacos, spanish rice, salsa, mixed fruit and choice of milk
Wed., Jan. 18: french toast sticks, sausage patties, hash brown, strawberry cup and choice of milk

Thurs., Jan. 19: lasagna bake, green beans, garlic toast, peach cup and choice of milk

Fri., Jan. 20: bbq rib on bun, corn, sorbet cup and choice of milk

Daily milk choices are fat free milk and 1% white milk.

Library to hold Craft Corner

The Wilmington Public Library will be hosting "Kat's Craft Corner" on the second Thursday of every month from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Kat will gladly teach interested patrons how to knit, or you can feel free to bring your own craft project to work on and enjoy some company.

KofC Youth free throw contest to be held Jan. 21

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 Fr. Kuzma Council Knights of Columbus will host their 26th annual local contest on Saturday, Jan. 21 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.

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. In the past, Wilmington has seen individuals advancing through the rounds of competition up to competing for the state championship on the campus of the University of Illinois.

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

Entry forms are available at the offices of Stevens Intermediate School or Wilmington Middle School or by calling Bob Owens at 815-476-2754. Forms will also be available at the contest.

Post 1336 continues tradition

St. Juvin Post 1336 Veterans of Foreign Wars visited with veterans in assisted living, skilled care and memory care facilities in Wilmington, Dwight and Morris with its Blankets for Vets program.

Since 2013, when the first blankets were distributed to Post members World War I vet Bill Finn, Korean War vet Sheridan Bailey and Vietnam vet Gary Simons as a trial to see if the personalized tapestry throws with branch of service logo would be a good replacement for the usual monetary gifts or gift packages presented

to vets, hundreds have been handed out to recognize the military service of area vets.

The program was conceived by Kathy Brown, the wife of former post commander Charlie Brown. The gift proved to be well received by veterans.

While the bulk of the throws are presented during the Christmas season, the program spans the entire year. Each blanket has a custom label that reads "The members of St. Juvin Post 1336 veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States present this throw to

you as a symbol of your service to a grateful nation"

This year 32 blankets were awarded at Christmas and an additional four during the year for a total of 36 raising the nearly decade long program to almost 600 representing about \$33,000 raised by the Post's Buddy Poppy events, raffles and generous donations from special benefactor Tom Fulton and the entire community.

Make a snowflake with Forest Preserve

The Will County Forest Preserve's Four Rivers Environmental Education Center in Channahon is hosting a program called "Make a Snowflake" on Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 21 and 22, from noon to 4 p.m.

Celebrate the snow and create a wintry decoration for your home with this self-guided craft. Samples and supplies will be provided. Free, all ages.

Attorney McGrath files Duffy estate claim

PUBLIC NOTICE
LEGAL NOTICE
STATE OF ILLINOIS
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS - IN PROBATE
In the Matter of the Estate of DONALD A. DUFFY, Deceased. Case No.: 22 PR 665
CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given to creditors, of the death of DONALD A. DUFFY, of Wilmington, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued November 2, 2022, to NANCY J. DUFFY, Independent Administrator, whose address is 106 Eula St., Wilmington, IL 60481, whose attorney of record is Timothy J. McGrath, of 440 S. State Street, Manhattan, IL, 60442. The estate will be administered without court supervision unless under Section 5/28-4 of the Probate Act (IL. Compiled Stat. 1992, Ch. 755 par. 5/28-4) any interested person terminates independent administration by mailing or delivering a petition to terminate to the clerk.

Claims against the estate may be filed with the Clerk of the Court at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois, 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before the day of June 28, 2023, or 3 months from the date of mailing or delivery, whichever is later, and that any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

E-filing is now mandatory with limited exemptions. To e-file, you must first create an account with an e-filing service provider. Visit <http://efile.illinoiscourts.gov/> service-providers.htm to learn more and to select a service provider. If you need additional help or have trouble e-filing, visit <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/faq/gethelp.asp> or talk with your local circuit clerk's office. If you cannot e-file, you may be able to get an exemption that allows you to file in-person or by mail. Ask your circuit clerk for more information or visit www.illinoislegalaid.org.
Nancy J. Duffy, Independent Administrator of the Estate of Donald A. Duffy, Deceased.
Timothy J. McGrath - 6193170
McGrath Law, P.C.
440 S. State Street
Manhattan, IL 60442
(815) 478-4020
mcgrath@tmcgrathlaw.com

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Dec. 28, 2022; Jan. 4 and 11, 2023.

Attorney Wysocki files Woodard estate claim

PUBLIC NOTICE
STATE OF ILLINOIS
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF William J. Woodard, Deceased; No. 22 PR 708
PUBLICATION NOTICE INDEPENDENT ADMINISTRATION TO CREDITORS CLAIMANTS, UNKNOWN HEIRS & LEGATEES
Notice is given to creditors of the death of WILLIAM J. WOODARD. Letters of Office were issued to Mary A. Woodard whose address is 1420 E. Washington St., Joliet, Illinois 60433 as Independent Executor, whose attorney of record is June, Prodehl, Renzi & Lynch, L.L.C., 1861 Black Road, Joliet, Illinois 60435.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Circuit Clerk's Office, Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before the 28th day of June, 2023 if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the clerk must be mailed or delivered by claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

On December 8, 2022 an Order Admitting the Will to Probate was entered. Within forty-two (42) days after the effective date of the original order Admitting the Will to Probate, you may file a petition with the Court to require proof of the validity of the Will by testimony or witnesses to the Will in open Court, or other evidence, as provided in Section 5/8-1 of the Probate Act (755 ILCS 5/8-1). The estate will be administered without court supervision unless an interested party terminates independent administration by filing a petition to terminate under Section 5/28-4 of the Probate Act (755 ILCS 5/28-4).
Marilyn L. Wysocki
For the Estate of William J. Woodard, Deceased

BY: Marilyn Wysocki
1861 Black Road
Joliet, IL 60435
815-725-8000
Published in the Free Press Advocate, Wednesday, Dec. 28, 2022; Jan. 4 and 11, 2023.

Singer petitions for name change

PUBLIC NOTICE
STATE OF ILLINOIS
COUNTY OF WILL, SS
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION TO CHANGE THE NAME OF Yelizbeta Singer TO Liz Singer, Case No. 2022 MR 000393

NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that the undersigned on behalf of herself, Yelizbeta Singer adult, shall appear in the Will County Courthouse, 100 West Jefferson Street, Joliet, IL 60432 courtroom 905 at 9:00 a.m. on the 10th day of February, 2023 before the judge assigned to hear said matter, and then there present a petition requesting the name of Yelizbeta Singer be changed to Liz Singer.

Yelizbeta Singer
Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, Jan. 11, 18 and 25, 2023.

Attorney Meents files Davy estate claim

PUBLIC NOTICE
STATE OF ILLINOIS
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF MARY JANE DAVY, Deceased; No. 2022 PR 704

CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given of the death of MARY JANE DAVY, Letters of Office as Independent Co-Executors were issued on January 4, 2023, to GEORGE PRINCKO, whose address is 378 Justin Lane, Gilbertsville, Kentucky 42044; and Richard A. Princko, whose address is Post Office Box 282, Wilmington, IL 60481 whose attorney is Meents Law, P.C., 25158 West Eames Street, Unit A, Channahon, Illinois 60410.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois, or with the representative, or both, on or before July 19, 2023, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a Claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

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

GEORGE PRINCKO and RICHARD A. PRINCKO Independent Co- Executors of the Estate of MARY JANE DAVY, Deceased

Frank J. Meents
25158 West Eames Street, Unit A
Channahon, Illinois 60410
Telephone: (815)534-9515
Facsimile: (815)534-9516
Attorney Code: 06298859
E-mail: frank@meentslaw.com
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Eric D. Fisher, publisher
Marney Simon, editor

175th anniversary, Wilmington's connection

One hundred and seventy-five years ago, the Illinois and Michigan Canal opened its locks for business. Its route does not directly go through Wilmington township, but its Wilmington's connections to that great transportation project were many. Let's look at a few.



TIME WAS...
Sandy Vasko

The I & M Canal was not built without its problems, the greatest of which was the lack of water running through it. Originally, it was to be built deep enough that water from Lake Michigan would flow naturally into it.

But due to the great expense of digging through the limestone bedrock, the State couldn't afford it. So, it was built with a shallower cut and water from the Lake was pumped into it with a steam engine located on the lake shore.

But even that was not enough, so "feeder" canals were built that brought water from other sources into the I &

M. Feeder canals were constructed from the Calumet, Des Plaines, DuPage, Kankakee, and Fox rivers.

The one on the Kankakee went from west of I-55 crossing over the Des Plaines via an aqueduct from about where the Big Fish restaurant is to the I & M on the opposing bluff.

The spring following the I & M's opening in 1848 the dam which allowed water to enter the Kankakee Feeder was severely damaged. It was then the prejudice toward Wilmington was uncovered.

"The canal feeder from the Kankakee river, has been greatly damaged by the late high water. The dam, we understand, has been nearly all washed away, together with a large portion of the embankment. It will probably require 5,000 or more dollars (\$168,500) to make the necessary repairs."

"The principal danger of damage to this work, from the

rise of the river, might have been avoided, had not certain officials on the canal been opposed to the building up of Wilmington, which town is but a short distance above where the feeder was taken from the river.

Wilmington is the most natural point, and in the end, had the feeder been taken out there, thousands of dollars would have been saved to the State."

One leading citizen of Wilmington did not give up. Uncle Peter Stewart, as he became known, had been an engineer on the Erie Canal before coming to Illinois to work on the I & M.

At first, he bought up land in present day Joliet, subdivided it, sold it, and then moved to the place he loved the best, Wilmington. He spoke out on the advantages of making the Kankakee navigable from the Feeder to any one in town who would listen.

And listen they did. In 1847, even before the I & M was open for navigation, Stewart formed the Kankakee & Iroquois Navigation Company, the stockholders being most of

the leading citizens of the town.

The Illinois legislature, in an unprecedented action, granted ownership of all the water in both rivers to the company. A loan was secured from the I & M and in the fall of 1847 the dam was completed. Just a few months later, in the spring of 1848, it was destroyed by ice.

The hearty early settlers did not give up. We read in 1851 in the Joliet Signal, "Wilmington, Illinois - this town has gone ahead wonderfully, the past season. It has nearly doubled its population.

What Wilmington wants, or rather what the Canal Trustees want, is the completion of the lock and dam already begun by the citizens and which they have taxed themselves for four years to the amount of one per cent upon all their property to complete."

"Six thousand dollars at Wilmington would pour into the canal all the riches of the Kankakee valley. We hope Wilmington people will make application to the Trustees for aid in this matter and we hope the Trustees will grant it."

The Wilmington Independent in 1861 tells us the rest of the story; "Accordingly, by legislative authority a meeting was called notes were passed and taxes levied to raise the means requisite to reconstruct the works, as before and in 1852 they were again rebuilt, (as was then believed,) in a more permanent and substantial manner, but they had hardly gone into operation before they too, shared the same fate as their predecessors, and were again substantially destroyed early in the year of 1853."

"From that period to the spring of this year, several fruitless efforts were made to revive the enterprise, and raise the means necessary to reconstruct the works on a more enduring basis; but the people dismayed by the fatality attending the former operations, steadily declined to risk their money a third time."

But one man was willing to risk his and his investors money in the idea. H. O. Alden, originally from Massachusetts, formed another company and went to work.

In November of 1861 we

read, "The long looked for object is at length successfully, and as we learn; securely and permanently accomplished. The closing in of the dam and raising of the water therein, took place on the 22 inst.

"The 50 apertures for the escape of the water, at the foot of the dam, each about 4 by 9 feet, were simultaneously shut up by letting down the trap doors and spiking them in their places.

"The water then suddenly rose to a level - some two and a half feet - with the first ripple or fall, a few hundred yards above the dam. After that the rise was slow, having an area a fill of some three miles in length, and an average width of over 1,000 feet, with a height of dam 9 feet. The filling of this space took three days, with the issues in the lock gates and waste weir, however open."

Finally, the doors of the world were open to Wilmington. The entire community started a building spree, warehouses, boats, wharves, etc. were all popping up. What could go wrong?

We will answer that question when next we meet.



THE COAL CITY SCHOOL District and other taxing bodies believe current \$6.1 million valuation of the GE Hitachi facility is too low. They are seeking for an increase based on the income approach, rather than the cost approach, currently being used by the Grundy County assessor.

Decision pending on GE Hitachi tax assessment

BY ANN GILL
EDITOR

COAL CITY — The Unit 1 School District is still waiting for a response from the Grundy County Board of Review that a nuclear storage facility located in Goose Lake Township is being way under-assessed.

The district's complaint, filed last fall regarding the value of the GE Hitachi facility, is expected soon. A hearing was held last month and district officials were told a decision would be forthcoming after the new year.

The school district and other taxing bodies believe current \$6.1 million valuation is too low. They are seeking for an increase based on the income approach, rather than the cost approach, currently being used by the county's assessor.

The cost approach sets a value based on replacement costs, whereas the income approach uses the income the property generates to calculate its value.

This is the second consecutive year the district has appealed the plant's value. Last

year's request resulted in an increase of just under \$3 million. However, the objectors believe the number is still too low.

According to Unit 1 Superintendent Chris Spencer, the legal team representing the taxing districts spent about 30 minutes presenting its case.

The GE Hitachi group, he said, provided no evidence for or against, "just insisted we [taxing districts] had no new information for the Board of Review and the Board of Review should just keep the same number they had which was around \$6.1 million."

Spencer said, "that is definitely not true. Our legal counsel presented another contract, so we have two of the five contracts with the nuclear power plants."

Nuclear facilities pay to have their spent fuel stored at the site, a cost reimbursed by the federal government. GE Hitachi provides storage space for 3,219 fuel assemblies within the deep water pool along Collins Road. In total, the site provides storage for 773 metric tons or 1.7 million pounds of spent fuel mostly shipped from nuclear facilities located in California, Nebraska,

Connecticut and Minnesota.

The contracts outline what the reactor owners are paying GE to hold onto the used fuel rods. Since the storage of spent nuclear fuel is the responsibility of the federal government, but without a central repository, the feds pay operators to store their spent fuel.

The local taxing districts believe the assessed value of the site should be calculated on the income approach and the value of that site set significantly higher than what its currently assigned.

Prior to the conclusion of the hearing, Spencer said one of the three members on the BOR asked a series of questions, a move he said was promising in that the individual was seeking to gain some additional information.

"Hopefully we will have some information [on a decision] here soon," Spencer said.

The taxing districts are still appealing the 2021 assessment having filed an appeal to the BOR's ruling with the Illinois Property Tax Appeals Board [PTAB] and it could be a few years before that matter is decided at the state level.

Braidwood PD to offer Citizens Police Academy

STAFF REPORT

As promised, the members of the Braidwood Police Department have kicked off the new year by announcing additional efforts at community outreach programs.

On Jan. 9, Braidwood Police Chief Todd Lyons announced that the department will create a Citizens Police Academy, with classes set to begin next month.

The department is accepting applications for the inaugural academy, which will kick off on Wednesday, Feb. 2 at City Hall, with plans to make it an annual event.

"The Citizens Police Academy is designed to give citizens a working knowledge of law enforcement, and give participants insight into police work," the department noted in a press release. "Students in the Citizens Police Academy will get hands on experience with real police equipment and role playing scenarios. Students will be instructed by Patrol Officers, Detectives and guest speakers."

Topics to be discussed will include vehicle stops, shoot and don't shoot situations, crime scene investigations, laws and ordinances, use of force case law, a K9 demonstration, and an overview of the role of other emergency responders, such as the fire department and emergency medical services/ambulance.

The purpose of the Citizens Police Academy is to improve communication between citizens and police through education.

"As part of it, we are going to incorporate our firearms simulated training during the eight weeks, to help citizens understand how quick officers have to make

decisions where deadly force may be applied," Lyons said.

The chief noted that the department, like other departments in the region, has been actively working toward community engagement in an effort to let the public know that law enforcement officers are not just here to make arrests—they are also active members of the community.

Last month, the City Council lauded the department with a year end list of activities and efforts of officers to commit to community outreach. In addition to participating in National Night Out, Shop with a Cop, and Blue Santa, as well as community events such as Summerfest and the annual Christmas parade, members of the department were also lauded for assisting the public with day to day tasks, including helping kids with problems with their bicycles, utilizing social media to help track down the owners of lost pets, and engaging in a Christmas movie contest via Facebook.

Applicants for the academy must be at least 21 years old, and reside within the Reed-Custer School District.

Sessions will meet on Wednesday nights from 6:30 p.m. until 8 p.m. from Feb. 2 through March 23. Class size is limited.

Applications are available at the front desk at the police station during business hours, and will also be made available through the city's website. Applications should be turned in by Friday, Jan. 28 at the Police Department. Anyone with questions can contact Officer Colavecchi at 708-712-3530 or Chief Lyons at 815-458-2342 ext. 214 for more information.

The Citizens Police Academy is free to attend.

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Just trying to survive

WILMINGTON—Has anyone ever seen a deer with three arrows stuck in its side, still trying to survive after a human, with their belly full, went out for a joy hunt with the family on an unarmed creature, who is, truly just trying to survive off the land? Man!

Million\$ spent

DIAMOND—U.S. tax payers foot \$324 million annual health care bill for illegal aliens. Sharon

Misusing the word

WILMINGTON— OK Dan here we go again. Get a dictionary and look up Communism because you continue to misuse the word. For your information it is legal to be a Communist and there is a Communist party in America. Democrats have their own party and it is not Communist. The problem here is you use the word as a pejorative to insult people who don't agree with your views. I don't agree with any of your positions that wreak of racist and fascism but I'm not going so low as to call you names. Get your facts together before you open your mouth again comrade.

Revival in faith

Our nation needs a revival in faith. We know the recipe. God gives it to us in 2nd Chronicles 7:14. "If my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves and pray and seek my faith and turn from their wicked ways then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

Cause of it all

WILMINGTON—After watching the debacle of Republicans choosing a leader can we all agree it is not the Democrats causing congressional gridlock?

Destroying America

DIAMOND—If you really wanted to destroy the U.S. then... First, surrender energy independence. Kill the Keystone Pipeline. Make war on coal and nuclear power. Drain strategic oil reserves. Demonize frackers and horizontal drillers. Declare internal combustion engines and fossil fuel generations dangerous to the environment. Second, print trillions of dollars new currency. Keep all interests low. Inflate prices to a 40-year high. Spread the wealth, pay workers to become unemployed. Damn the rich in open but court them in secret. Third, end America's physical boundaries. End all differences between citizen and resident. Allow 3 million illegal aliens per year. Destroy public trust in elections. Render election day irrelevant. Normalize ballot harvesting and curing. Make auditing 110 million early votes impossible. Urge leftist billionaires to infuse riches to media to insure correct turnout. Blast anyone who disagrees with final counts as insurrectionists, deniers, Democracy destroyers. Fifth, redefine crime. One is rich man's crime but poor man's necessity. Let those in need exercise free entitlement. Exempt oppressed to take as atonement to racism. Sixth, encourage each tribe, race, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation to ban and oppose white privilege. Green light statue toppling, vandalizing, cancel culturing, ostracizing and Trotsky rising. Erase the past but control the present. Seventh, render U.S. just one nation abroad. Leave behind thousands of Afghanistan allies. Abandon some military to certain death. Leave billions of dollars of equipment. Leave a billion dollar embassy. Abandon largest air base in Central Asia. Re-enter Iran nuclear deal. Trash then beg Saudi Arabia to pump more oil. Eighth, Looter first amendment. Enlist Silicon Valley monopolies to silence free speech. Use Big tech mega profits to warp elections. Declare free expression as hate speech, Criminalize contrayion social media. Ninth, Demonize half the country as semi fascist, insurrectionists and potential domestic terrorists. Change inconvenient ancient rules. Seek to pack the court. End the Filibuster. Bring in two more states. Twice impeach a president who stood in the way. Tried President Amiridis just as a private citizen, raid his home, seek to indict a future rival to Biden. Ten, Never mention origins of CCP Covid-19 virus. Never blame China for release of CCP Covid virus. Exempt investigations of U.S. health officials who subsidized Chinese gain oppression research. Ignore Bill of Rights/mandate vaccinations, masking and quarantine. Our present government has done all ten of these. It would be difficult to imagine any planned agenda to be anymore injurious to America and it's people than what we have already endured the last two years. Sharon

Crisis at the border

COAL CITY—I read Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers can't locate records of 378,000 illegal immigrants from Alternatives to Detention program. In November alone there were 283,740 illegal migrant encounters across the southern borders reported by U.S. Customs and Border pro-

tection. Report released Dec. 24 it's a crisis! Now Chicago Mayor Lightfoot wants millions of dollars to care for 1,500 illegals. Mayor of New York received \$9 million so far to care for illegals shipped there.

Social Security increase

COAL CITY—If you received an increase in your Social Security check don't credit President Biden, it was a written law stating an increase was due for cost of living for those on Social Security long ago. Eight million new claims were filed for benefits last year, 59 percent were for retirement benefits, 31 percent were for survivor benefits and 10 percent were for disability benefits. Three million children get Social Security benefits, about \$1.3 million get survivor benefits from a deceased father or mother's Social Security record. Another one million are minor children of some one getting Social Security disability benefits. The remainder are children of retirees. More than \$1 trillion was in the S.S. program revenues last year. Ninety percent came from payroll taxes.

What a shame

COAL CITY—In Dec. 2022 all Confederate statues building signs street signs etc. were removed from West Point Academy in New York. Robert E. Lee graduated from West Point. More U.S. history put in garbage.

To get their way

WILMINGTON—After watching the four day Speaker of the House election on C-SPAN (Fox News was too busy talking about the college murders and border concerns), I learned that the House Republicans want to cut Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security now that McCarthy is Speaker. They also hint at a government shutdown if they don't get their way. If that happens, Congress should pass legislation that states that members of Congress cannot collect their salaries while any shutdown is in effect. I also noticed that these four days showed that the minority truly rules.

Looks trashy

BRAIDWOOD—There has been a bicycle with a bunch of junk attached to it chained up to the Rt. 66 Park pavilion next to the "Zoo" in Braidwood for over 3 months now. When is the city of Braidwood or the Braidwood Police Department going to remove it? There's absolutely no way that they haven't seen it. Talk about making our town look trashy, or is that what our city council wants for the look of our community?

Trash talk

BRAIDWOOD— The city of Braidwood administration has once again kept the residents in the dark about the new waste service contract. There is lots of speculation going around about how much the cost is going to go up over the life of the contract. How about the city put the entire document on their Facebook page or website for the public to read it. They probably won't because they want to see who is looking at their information and know who to target if the information gets leaked out. They said they stuck it on a countertop in the hallway of city hall, but did they make any public notice to the residents that it was available for viewing? The answer is no. Talk with a few other communities who use this new company and find out what they think about them.

Town is thriving

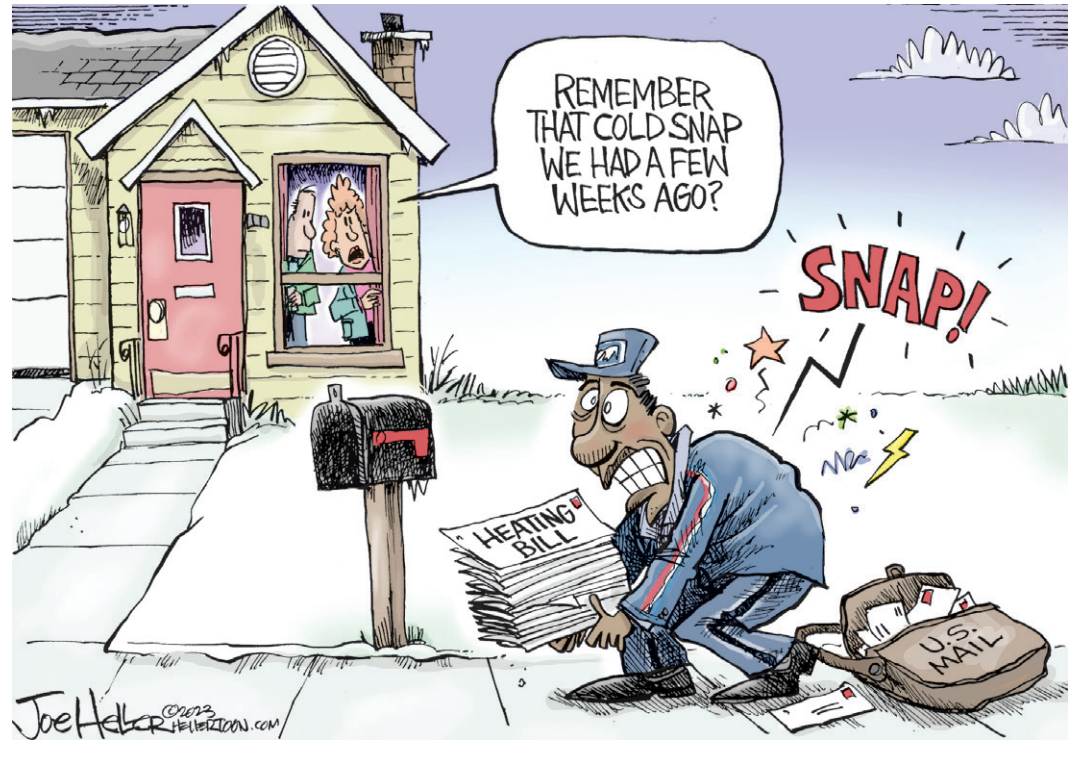
BRAIDWOOD—You are going to see a lot of fictional negative posts and mailings about this administration because that is all the old administration has to run on in the next election. How can saving citizens \$100,000 for the new garbage disposal contract and bringing in three new car dealerships be bad for Braidwood? This administration has cut frivolous spending and increased revenue, while improving the image of Braidwood. This town is thriving. Please do your research. Don't believe the negative soundoffs. You can tell when reading them it's obvious that it's always the same author.

The next meeting

COAL CITY—In regards to the upcoming Coal City Area Club meeting on Jan. 18th, I encourage as many as possible members to attend. I have heard dues are being raised on members. Also, an substantial increase on dues being paid by senior citizens. I also heard senior citizens are not permitted to join as new members. I'd love to see their upcoming meeting agenda published in the Coal City Courier, front page! I know they are a private club and they can make their own rules, however, the members deserve better. Maybe a better alternative would be to vote the present Board out and start over.

Three-day siege

BRAIDWOOD—There are a few who write into soundoff that white males get favorable treatable consideration. Fortunately "The Week" magazine free offer showed me a comparable thing to what it and people are currently saying about the Jan. 6 insurrection of the capital that blacks would not get. "Whoa." Early 1977 "Black Muslims" took control of three Washington DC buildings, killed a reporter, held 150 people hostage and shot Marion



Barry, a future mayor of DC. My being an old man of 76 years, I don't recall it. I do recall the nation of Islam movement. Oh, it was a three-day siege. Check "The Week," Dec. 23, 2022 page 20.

All for votes

SHADOW LAKES—I know Dan Hill can be a little extreme at times but he was spot on about LBJ and the New Frontier. It was the start of the welfare system that is still used to get votes almost 60 years later. It gave us fatherless families that led us into crime, gangs and drug addicts. This was all done to get votes and we will never recover.

Eddie

Praying for St. Rose

WILMINGTON—I feel very bad for the parishioners of St. Rose Parish and the fact that the Joliet Diocese has started to renew my church program. I know people whose parishes were in the Chicago Archdiocese and went through the renew my church program and had their church close and worked with another parish. It's a very long and drawn out process. They hold meetings and basically dangle a carrot in front of your nose. You walk out of the meeting knowing as much as you did when you walked in, absolutely nothing. They take many things into account, the size of the church building, how many people the sanctuary can hold, how much the church is in debt and how much the church takes in so basically the bottom line is it's all about the money. I know St. Rose is struggling financially. They are not meeting their weekly offering goal so this is something the diocese will definitely take into account, a fact my friends who have gone through it have talked about with their parishes. So I pray for the people of St. Rose and asking God to intervene won't do any good. It's going to be up to the Joliet Diocese so I wish you the best of luck in this very long and drawn out process.

Speaker promises

WILMINGTON—I hope you Republicans know that whatever McCarthy promised those right wing know-nothing extremists you are going to pay for it. He is literally playing with House money. So much for winning hearts and minds.

Lawmaker pay raise

COAL CITY—It disgusts me what the lame duck Illinois Democrats did. They gave themselves a \$12,000 pay boosts on the eve of a new session. What a sham for taxpayers. The Democrats mapped out the state so they could keep the majority going and then gave themselves a pay raise. Just another case of politicians taking care of themselves before taking care of the middle class working men and women.

Better things

COAL CITY—Surely, there are more important things we need in our school than turf for the football field. Keep the focus on education, not frivolous things. There are a lot of things that I would like to have but my good old common sense tells me that I must live within my means. If the school district has that much to spend, give it back to the taxpayers instead.

Investigating Hunter

WILMINGTON—Apparently investigating Hunter Biden is going to lower inflation and high prices and fix the border. Penny Lane

That's on them

WILMINGTON—Republicans can't blame Democrats for the Speaker fiasco. They let an angry 10% take their party hostage. That's on them. Had they really wanted to elect the first black speaker they could have voted for Jeffries.

Close the border

MORRIS—So I see where Mayor Lightfoot in Chicago demands that Colorado stops busing immigrants to the city. While first they are illegal immigrants, anybody can claim asylum in the state of Illinois and Chicago as a sanctu-

ary city and state. They want them here so what is she complaining about? She should tell her big boss in Washington DC, our illustrious President Biden, to close the border, put up a wall and stop that. He hasn't even been down to the border. He was going down to the border Sunday but it's a big joke. Biden and Harris are the worst president and vice president of the United States. Lightfoot and Pritzker want these immigrants so let them stay at their houses.

Twisted words

WILMINGTON—It is very sad what is happening with the Historical Society. I'm sure that the people who worked many years ago to get this project started are rolling over in their graves. The problems are stemming from two people on the board, the president and the treasurer. In a soundoff on Jan. 4 someone made a comment that someone was put on the board and has never attended any of the meetings. There was a person who was chosen to be a trustee and a few months ago that person had the president read a letter at a meeting which I attended stating that because of health issues they felt they could not give the time needed to serve as a trustee so they were resigning from the board. The president twisted the words around and said that they resigned as a member. The following month at a meeting I also attended this person had the vice president read a letter stating that under no circumstances were they quitting the museum as a member. They were only resigning from the board. The secretary said this person deserves an apology. The president said nothing. In the past the former president always had the secretary send the members e-mail reminders of meetings and also the agenda and when we came to the meetings on the table were the agenda, the minutes from the previous meeting that we would approve or amend if necessary and a financial report from the treasurer. When we attend meetings now there is absolutely no information available and when you ask the president he ways says if you want an agenda, attend the meeting. So this is where the problems with the Historical Society are coming from. I hope that the president will resign.

Elvis event rocked

WILMINGTON—I would like to thank Maria, our librarian, and her staff for showing the movie "Elvis" on Friday, Jan. 6. It was a very nice afternoon. When the movie played here in town unfortunately I got sick and had to leave the theater and missed over half of the movie and never got a chance to go back and see it so it was really nice to see it on Friday. A friend of mine from where I used to live came down and saw the movie as well and I had my first peanut butter and fried banana sandwich and I could see why that was Elvis's favorite snack. Thanks again for a wonderful afternoon. I know everyone who was there truly enjoyed the movie. If that young man doesn't win an Oscar for best actor there is definitely something wrong in Hollywood.

Calling them out

COAL CITY—I know it's political posturing but thank you State Senator Sue Rezin (R-Morris) for calling out lawmakers after they passed a supplemental spending bill, Senate Bill 1720, which contains a pay increase for Illinois legislators and gives the Governor \$400 million for a so-called "business closing fund" with little oversight. Resin said, "This supplemental spending bill is appallingly irresponsible. Not only does this bill give legislators a \$12,000 salary increase after they already voted to increase their salaries this spring, but it also gives the Governor nearly half a billion dollars to use with little oversight on how he chooses to use it. Far too many people in our state are struggling to keep up with the staggering increase of the cost of living for us to be giving ourselves a raise and the Governor hundreds of millions of dollars for his pet projects." I hope more people pay attention to where this money is going to be spent.

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A cocktail recipe for "Dry January"

Welcome to the 2023 installment of "Dry January", a month-long break from consuming alcoholic beverages. On average, one in seven Americans will take part in the trend that began as a public health campaign in the United Kingdom in 2012.

Dry January brings great opportunities to test your willpower and brush up on your non-alcoholic "mocktail" game. There's a mocktail that I look forward to in Dry January, and it's the classic Southampton.

As limiting as Dry January may sound, you have some delicious options. Non-alcoholic versions of the Daiquiri, Mojito, Pina Colada, and Margarita are delicious, though they are probably not part of the diets that many of us are trying to start the New Year.

Back to my all-time favorite mocktail. I assume that the drink originated in Southampton, but don't know for sure. Very little is known about the origin of the Southampton yet the drink is served all over the world. How did the world learn of this amazing mocktail?

The answer is on a bottle that can be found in nearly every bar on the planet, the

iconic Angostura Bitters bottle.

I read labels. Perhaps it started when I was a kid reading cereal box labels at breakfast. A few years ago I was enjoying a Manhattan when I noticed that there were several recipes printed at the bottom of the Angostura Bitters bottle in very fine print. There was a Daiquiri, a Manhattan, and this non-alcoholic drink called the "Southampton".

The Southampton recipe was simple: tonic water, lime juice, and a few dashes of Angostura Bitters. I figured that I would give it a shot as I had all of the ingredients handy.

It was love at first sip. The Southampton instantly became my favorite mocktail. It's crisp, refreshing, and satisfying to drink.

The non-alcoholic options at most bars are usually limited to flat Coca Cola or Sprite from a soda gun that is badly in need of calibration.

The Southampton gives designated drivers and those abstaining from alcohol the opportunity to enjoy a deli-



THE SUNDAY COCKTAIL
Brian Rung

cious drink to enjoy with their friends.

Do you have a bottle of Angostura Bitters? Add one to your home bar immediately if you do not. You don't even have to make a trip to the liquor store to pick up a bottle, most grocery stores carry Angostura Bitters.

These "bitters" are not actually bitter, they are a mix of herbs and spices that can be added to everything from an Old Fashioned to pumpkin pie. There are even claims of medicinal properties for the legendary aromatic bitters.

It's difficult to describe the taste of Angostura Aromatic Bitters, but it's unmistakable and you wouldn't have much of an Old Fashioned without the proprietary blend of herbs and spices.

Let's celebrate Dry January with our very own Southampton.

Start with a glass, preferably a tall glass. Fill that glass with ice.

Next, squeeze in some fresh lime juice. How much? That's up to you. I would say no less than a wedge, no more

than half a lime. It all depends how high your sour tolerance is.

Next, fill the glass to nearly full with tonic water. Make sure it's fresh tonic water, not "flat" tonic water leftover from Thanksgiving dinner. If you haven't tried Fever Tree tonic water, pick up a bottle and give it a shot. Canada Dry and Schweppe are also great, whatever you have in your bar so long as it's fresh.

Add three dashes of your Angostura Bitters, stir, and serve. A "dash" is not an exact science, 3 dashes from one bottle may be 4 dashes from another. Either way, the deep reddish bitters should leave your drink with a slight pink hue.

Give this one a shot even if you're not celebrating Dry January. Odds are you'll like it. Here's to trying new things in 2023!

The Southampton is built and served in a Collins (tall) glass.

Fill glass with ice
Squeeze in 1 lime wedge
Fill glass with tonic water
Add 3 dashes Angostura Bitters

Stir and serve
Garnish with lime wheel
Until next week, enjoy responsibly.



HIKE TO SEE bald eagles gathered along the Des Plaines River during the Forest Preserve District of Will County's Eagle Watch on Saturday, Jan. 14, at Four Rivers Environmental Education Center in Channahon. Live bird shows featuring an eagle and owls will be presented inside the facility.

Eagle Watch planned this Saturday at Four Rivers Center

The Forest Preserve District of Will County's annual Eagle Watch will feature many ways to celebrate a species that was once on the verge of extinction but is now thriving.

The free event is set for 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 14, at Four Rivers Environmental Education Center, located at 25055 W. Walnut Lane in Channahon.

Hike the trails to see bald eagles fishing and hunting for waterfowl on the open waters of the Des Plaines River.

Warm up inside Four Rivers by a crackling fire and view eagles from afar with a spotting scope manned by a bird expert. Or meet Victor E., a bald eagle that will be part of live indoor raptor presentations.

Forest Preserve staff have their fingers crossed for frigid weather because the colder the temperatures, the more likely eagles will gather around the open waters of the Des Plaines River near Four Rivers.

And when they do gather, it's a wonderful sight to see these massive birds soaring around the Four Rivers area, said Jess McQuown, a Forest Preserve program coordinator.

"They're one of the few birds that can coast in the air," she said. "And they're so distinct because they're big and they're ferocious predators. They dive and catch fish with their feet and watching it is pretty magical. It's like watching an adventure movie."

If the weather is warmer, "You're guaranteed to see an eagle one way or another because of the bird presentations," McQuown added.

Eagle Watch activities
Victor E., the bald eagle, and four owls will be part of

the bird presentations offered by Milton, Wis.-based Hoo's Woods Raptor Center. Two 45-minute bird presentations will take place at 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. A 20-minute "meet and greet" is set for 12:30 p.m. Seating will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

In addition to the bird presentations, Eagle Watch attendees can join 40-minute guided hikes to search for and learn about eagles at 11:50 a.m., 12:55 p.m. and 2:20 p.m. Or they can hike the McKinley Woods site on their own.

Also, three 15-minute Talon Talks will be offered. The times and topics are: noon, Eagles of the World; 1 p.m., Eagle Eyes and Other Awesome Adaptations; 2:30 p.m., Comeback Kid - The Bald Eagle's Road to Recovery.

Other activities include family crafts, an Eagle Eye Scavenger Hunt and food available for purchase from Lil' Deb's Mobile Eats.

Bald eagles have rebounded from a low of around 400 breeding pairs in the early 1960s to an estimated 316,000 today in the lower 48 states, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

And the Illinois Department of Natural Resources states that Illinois hosts more wintering bald eagles than any other state outside of Alaska. There are an estimated 3,100 eagles wintering in 27 Illinois counties each year.

Eagle Watch is supported by funding from Alliance Pipeline, a joint venture of Enbridge and Pembina, and through the assistance of The Nature Foundation of Will County. This is an inclusive program, welcoming individuals of all abilities.

Ag industry producing more with fewer workers

BY TIMOTHY EGGERT
FARMWEEK

Agriculture remains a top employer in rural parts of the U.S. but who worked in the industry has changed during the past three years, according to new data released by USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS).

In its annual report, "Rural America at a Glance," ERS found overall population growth in rural or "nonmetro" areas "took a dramatic upswing" between July 2020 and July 2021 when it increased 0.3% to 46.1 million total residents.

It marked the first time since the mid-1990s that nonmetro areas grew at a faster rate than metro areas and was largely because of the coronavirus pandemic, according to the report.

Specifically, as COVID-19 infection rates increased, more people moved into less densely populated areas at a faster rate than those who were leaving them.

But despite those positive shifts, rural America is becoming older, with people 65 years and older making up more than 20% of the nonmetro population in 2021 — the first time in history. The size of the working-age population also declined in 2021, with 58% of rural residents aged 18 to 54.

"Declines in the working-age population may make it harder to meet labor demands in some rural industries and local labor markets," the report's authors noted. "At the same time, many rural areas lack sufficient health care capacity, broadband service, community centers and other services to address the challenges associated with an aging population."

While data for 2021 wasn't

available, the report found that as of 2019, the strongest rural job gains came in the real estate, administrative services, education, professional services, health care/social assistance and finance/insurance industries.

And in 2019, the four industries in rural America with the highest employment were government, manufacturing, retail and health care/social assistance.

Those industries dovetail with the next highest employed industry — agriculture — as "families on small- to mid-sized farms often depend on nonagricultural jobs in their local economies as off-farm sources of income," the report noted.

Here are three other ways the report found the rural ag industry has changed:

Top rural industry
Agriculture remains a primary source of employment for rural America, as 7% of all nonmetro jobs in 2019 were related to the industry, compared to 1.1% of all metro jobs. The report said that disparity in employment can largely be attributed to comparative advantages, like the availability of resources and land costs.

Rural ag becoming more diverse
The rural ag industry continues to feature more white workers than workers of color, but the share of minorities employed in the field has improved, the report found.

As of 2019, Hispanic workers performed 14.4% of rural jobs in agriculture, while 2.4% of the rural ag workers were Black. American Indian and Asian workers each made up less than 2% of rural ag jobs.

Jobs down, productivity up

While ag still accounts for a higher share of rural jobs compared to other industries, the total number of jobs in agriculture has gone down, according to the report.

Specifically, the total number of rural ag jobs in 2020 was about 89% of the total number that were available in 2001. That long-term decline in industry jobs, however, has aligned with a long-term rise in agricultural productivity.

Since 2012, the labor productivity, or output per worker, and the total output, or gross domestic product, of the ag industry have both increased by at least 50%. And both measures have nearly doubled since their 2001 levels.

"Due to advances in technology and capital deepening, the rural agricultural industry has thrived," ERS economist and report co-author James Davis said during a webinar about the report. "This industry produces a lot more with the same or fewer workers."

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

Dropoff string lights, electronics Jan. 12

Will County's free electronics drop-off event will be held Thursday, Jan. 12, from 5-7 p.m. at the Wilmington City Hall parking lot, 1165 S. Water St.

Holiday string lights that are no longer working may be dropped off for recycling. This is for string lights only, no stand alone LEDs, CFLs or other fluorescent lights.

Participants are reminded to remain in their vehicles at all times, show ID by holding it to the window for staff

to see and then allow staff to remove items without assistance from each vehicle.

Items accepted include: Televisions (limit 2), monitors, printers, computers (desktops, laptops, notebooks, tablets), electronic keyboards, fax machines, videocassette recorders, portable digital music players, DVD players, DVD recorders, video game consoles, small scale servers, scanners, electronic mice, digital converter boxes, cable

receivers, satellite receivers, cell phones, computer cable, portable digital assistants (PDAs) and zip drives.

Electronic items contain materials that can be recycled countless times while other materials in items are considered hazardous.

The recycling takes place in Wilmington the second Thursday of each month. An ID showing Will County residency may be required.

Gas prices rise second straight week

Area gas prices stayed below the statewide average despite a 13.9 cents per gallon increase in the last week.

The average price on Monday was \$3.38/g according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,378 stations in Illinois. Prices in Illinois are 8.2 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 5.4 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The cheapest station in Illinois was priced at \$2.59/g yesterday while the most expensive was \$4.99/g.

Locally, Braidwood stations were charging \$3.17/g Monday while in Wilmington the price ranged from \$3.19 to \$3.28/g. Coal City stations were at \$3.29/g, Monday while in Morris, Joliet and Bourbonnais the lowest price found was \$3.19/g.

"Last week, the rise in gasoline prices continued, still due to previous refinery outages caused by the cold weather the week of

Christmas. However, I'm optimistic that as refiners get back online, we could see the increases slow down as we head into the time of year when gasoline demand is at its weakest," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy.

The national average price of diesel has fallen 2.1 cents in the last week and stands at \$4.64 per gallon, according to GasBuddy price reports. "While gasoline prices have rallied, average diesel prices continue to drift lower, which certainly bodes well for the overall economy. As long as refiners are able to get back online soon from previous cold-weather outages, we could see supply start to recover at the same time demand is weak, which could bring gas prices down again. The window of opportunity, however, is shrinking, and by late February or early March, we'll likely kick off the seasonal rise in gasoline prices."

Go green: Switch to cloth towels

Paper towels are viewed as convenient and clean but cloth towels can be just as handy, and as clean when washed; while also being far more economical.

Annual spending on paper towels is around \$24 per household but by switching to

cloth towels you would get by with \$21 in a decade.

Paper towels are usually made from trees and often are not as absorbent as cloth, resulting in more being needed for a clean up. Most brands are not made with recycled content and go to the landfill.

Cloth dishtowels, many made from cotton, can be recycled with textiles after being used for 10 to 30 years! Be sure to have at least 7 so you can toss one in the laundry each day. They make excellent gifts

Essex Township Request for Proposal for Cemetery Mowing and Trimming

Essex Township is requesting proposals for cemetery mowing services at the two township cemeteries for the period April 1, 2023-March 31, 2024. The two properties total 4.5 acres combined.

Please supply quote on a per-time basis to include mowing, trimming, small debris cleanup, and blowing clippings off markers/monuments. All services will be done on an as-needed basis, not to exceed 3 times per month. Also supply quote for spring and fall cleanup as well as outlining any additional costs or fees. Provider must include proof of liability insurance with proposal.

Quotes due no later than January 30, 2022

Mail quotes to:
Essex Township Supervisor
PO Box 309, Essex, IL 60935
For any questions call: 815-351-3554 or email: supervisor@essextownship-il.org

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Final voting begins for photo contest

It's time to vote for your favorite pictures in the Forest Preserve District of Will County's 2022 Preserve the Moment Photo Contest now that December's winner has been chosen.

The contest began in May and all eight monthly winners will now vie for overall contest honors via voting by members of the public on the Forest Preserve's Facebook page, Facebook.com/WillCoForests.

Voting will begin at noon Tuesday, Jan. 10, and end at 11:59 a.m. Friday, Jan. 13. Once all the votes are tallied, winners will receive gift cards of \$500 for first place, \$250 for second place and \$150 for third place.

Three contest participants chosen at random will receive \$75 gift cards. Monthly winners received \$75 gift cards. All prizes are funded by The Nature Foundation of Will County, willcountynature.org.

December winner
Chad Morsch of Romeoville won the month of December by snapping a shot of a fox squirrel at McKinley Woods in Channahon.

Morsch said he was walk-



Courtesy photo by: Chad Morsch

THIS SQUIRREL SHOT snapped at McKinley Woods in Channahon won Romeoville resident Chad Morsch the month of December in the Forest Preserve District of Will County's Preserve the Moment Photo Contest. Voting for the overall 2022 contest winners begins at noon Tuesday, Jan. 10, on Facebook.com/WillCoForests.

ing back to his car when he saw the squirrel enjoying a meal of smashed hedge apple from an Osage-orange tree. Judges selected the top five photos from submissions in December, and members of the public chose the squirrel shot as the best photo of the

month via Facebook voting. "The squirrel was so pre-occupied with its meal that it allowed me to get relatively close," Morsch said in an email after being notified of his win. "It was quite amusing watching it try to dissect the hedge apple into small enough

pieces it could hold on to. I spent several minutes watching it eat and took several shots. When it was finished it simply ran back to the grass and we both went our way. The squirrel had a full belly, and I had some nice photos."

The other December finalists were:

Jennifer Mathews of Joliet for her shot of a curved wooden boardwalk and water illuminated by the sun at Rock Run Rookery Preserve.

Greg Winkelmann of Romeoville for a yellow warbler with its wings stretched out in flight at McKinley Woods and also for a ring-billed gull snaring a fish in the water at Rock Run Rookery.

Thomas Hahn of Mokena for clouds reflected in the water at Hickory Creek Preserve.

To see all photo entries for the 2022 contest, visit the Forest Preserve's Flickr account, Flickr.com/WillCoForests.

For more information on the Forest Preserve District of Will County, visit ReconnectWithNature.org.

Circle jam on Saturday

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

Bring your instrument and play, sing or just enjoy. The free event is open to

everyone including musicians and listeners. Donations will be accepted.

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

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Pritzker signs bill giving state pay raises

BY JERRY NOWICKI
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

SPRINGFIELD – Officials at the highest levels of state government will receive substantial pay raises this month after the House and Senate passed a budget bill that also advances a \$400 million business incentive fund proposal pushed by Gov. JB Pritzker.

Under the bill, lawmaker salaries will increase to \$85,000 annually, up from approximately \$73,000 – a roughly 16 percent increase to their base salary. Lawmakers also receive per diem reimbursements and stipends for leadership positions. Additionally, the measure adds new leadership positions within any caucus that maintains a supermajority – which Democrats currently do – that are eligible for stipends.

The state's constitutional officers are also slated to receive raises, which created a frantic timeline for lawmakers in the

General Assembly to send the bill to the governor to sign before 11:30 a.m. Monday, when those officers are scheduled to be sworn in to their new terms.

Shortly after the measure was filed Friday night, Democrats pushed the measure through the Illinois House over Republican objections. It received a Senate committee hearing late Sunday afternoon before being approved by the full chamber later in the evening. Pritzker signed it Monday hours before the new statewide officers were sworn in at a Springfield convention center.

Under the pay schedules outlined in the bill, salaries of the lieutenant governor, comptroller and treasurer will increase from \$143,400 to \$160,900; and the attorney general's and secretary of state's from \$165,400 to \$183,300.

The governor's pay would increase to \$205,700 from \$181,670, although Pritzker, who has a net worth exceeding \$3 billion, does not take a salary.

Top state agency directors and some of their deputies will also receive raises. That includes a salary of at least \$200,000 for Department of Children and Family Services director Marc Smith, up from \$182,300.

Several other agency heads, including that of the Department of Corrections (to \$200,000), Department of Agriculture (to \$180,000) and the Department on Aging (to \$165,000), will also see raises. The raises generally range from 10 to 15%, and the governor will have the authority to up those salaries under the measure.

Senator Chapin Rose, R-Mahomet, faulted the measure for including the automatic raises, calling it "bad policy." He noted that lawmakers already effectively received a 2.4% pay bump in July, as Democrats declined to negate the automatic cost-of-living increase laid out by state law.

Illinois lawmakers agree on assault weapons bill

Bill clears Senate, awaits House action on final day of lame duck session

BY PETER HANCOCK
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

SPRINGFIELD – Negotiators in the Illinois House and Senate have reached agreement on a bill to ban the purchase, sale and manufacture of semi-automatic assault weapons and large-capacity magazines while still allowing people who already own such weapons to keep them.

On Sunday, the House and Senate seemed to be far apart, both on the weapons ban and a bill expanding access to reproductive health services, two of the biggest items being considered in a lame duck session that was to conclude Tuesday.

But by Monday night, House Speaker Emanuel "Chris" Welch, D-Hillside, Gov. J.B. Pritzker and Senate President Don Harmon, D-Oak Park, announced that they were all in agreement on a final proposal.

One of the key sticking points concerned a requirement that people currently owning such weapons register them with the Illinois State Police. Those individuals

would be required to disclose the make, model and serial number of the specified weapons to obtain a special endorsement on their Firearm Owners Identification, or FOID card. The House had included that in the bill it passed shortly after midnight Friday morning, but an early draft of a Senate plan reportedly proposed dropping it.

The final version of the bill, contained in a package of amendments to House Bill 5471, includes the requirement but extends the deadline for compliance to Jan. 1, 2024, instead of 180 days after the governor signs the bill into law, as the House had proposed.

The Senate bill also clarifies that any device that makes a semi-automatic weapon fire more rapidly – whether it converts the weapon into a fully automatic one or merely increases the rate of fire – will be illegal. And it defines large-capacity magazines as those capable of holding more than 10 rounds for a long gun or 15 rounds for a handgun.

The Senate version also does not change the age limit to obtain a FOID card, meaning people between the ages of 18 and 21 will still be able to obtain one with the consent of a parent or guardian. The House had proposed eliminating that exception.

In an effort to ease concerns of hunters and sports-

men, the bill also contains a provision authorizing the Department of Natural Resources to adopt administrative rules exempting weapons used only for hunting that are expressly permitted under the Illinois Wildlife Code.

That, however, was not enough to quell the opposition of gun rights advocates who argued that the weapons to be banned are "commonly used" weapons in American society and thus, under standards of recent U.S. Supreme Court rulings, will likely be deemed unconstitutional.

"I think folks at home need to know, and folks here in the chamber, that many of the commonly used semi-automatic shotguns will still have to be registered as assault weapons," Senator Terri Bryant, R-Murphysboro, said during debate on the floor of the Senate. "So even though some may come off, we're still going to have many commonly used shotguns that will be listed as assault weapons."

The bill passed the Senate, 34-20, and was sent to the House, which is expected to vote on whether to concur with the Senate changes.

The outcome of that vote, however, seemed a foregone conclusion when Harmon, Welch and Pritzker issued a joint statement Monday evening praising the bill's passage.

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OBITUARIES

Warren B. Brown

 CREST HILL—Warren B. Brown, 87, of Crest Hill and formerly Coal City, passed from this life on Monday, Dec. 26, 2022 at Ascension St. Joseph Medical Center in Joliet.

He was born July 21, 1935 to the late Edith (Wharrie) and Norman Brown in Coal City where he was raised and educated. He was a United States Navy Veteran who was honorably discharged in December of 1957 after completing his final assignment at the U.S. Naval Hospital in Oakland, CA. This assignment led to his employment with Metropolitan Life Insurance working out of the Chicago, London, Kansas City and San Francisco Office. He was the Manager of Auditing out of the San Francisco office for the majority of his career.

His last years were spent at Rock Run Assisted Living in Joliet. He received excellent



care and made many friends with the staff, nurses and residents.

Warren is survived by his niece, Janet Brown; two nephews, Norman (late Beth) Brown and Richard (Joey) Brown and two stepsisters, Judy (Richard) Kreiter and Joyce (Robert) Zanello.

He is preceded in death by his parents, one sister, Marilyn (late Leroy) Brown; one brother, Norman (late Mary) Brown and one stepsister, JoAnne (Tony) Danosky.

As it was Warren's wish, cremation rites have been accorded and there will be no services.

For more information visit his Memorial Tribute at www.fredcdames.com to share a favorite memory or leave a condolence.

Fred C. Dames Funeral Home and Crematory was entrusted with arrangements.

Charles Brian Smith

CHICAGO—Charles Brian Smith, 58, of Chicago, and formerly of Wilmington, passed away Saturday, Dec. 31, 2022 at Ascension St. Francis Hospital in Evanston, IL.

Born July 2, 1964 in Evergreen Park, IL, Charles Brian was a son of William Thomas and Ida Lucy (Campana) Smith.

Raised and educated in Wilmington, Charles was a 1978 graduate of St. Rose School, and a 1982 graduate of Joliet Catholic High School.

Survivors include his two brothers, Tony Smith, of Chicago and Tom (Gretchen) Smith, of Tampa, FL and formerly of Wilmington, and one nephew, Matthew Smith, of Tampa.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Bill and Ida Smith, and his sister-in-law, Sandra



Toussaint Smith.

Cremation rites have been accorded, and the family gathered for a graveside service on Wednesday, Jan. 11, 2023 in Mt. Olivet Catholic Cemetery in Wilmington, where he will be laid to rest with his parents. Rev. Sebastian Gargol from St. Rose Parish presided.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Charles memory to Kuzma Care Cottage, 635 S. Main Street, Wilmington, IL 60481.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign onto www.BaskervilleFuneral.com to sign the guest book, upload photographs and share Charles memorial page online.

Cremation and memorial services were made under the direction and care of Baskerville Funeral Home in Wilmington.

David Huston

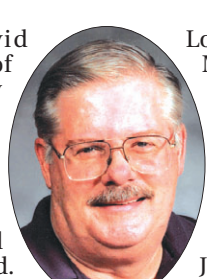
 WILMINGTON—David "Butch" Huston, 78, of Wilmington, passed away unexpectedly on Wednesday, Jan. 4, 2023 at Riverside Medical Center in Kankakee.

Born Feb. 5, 1944 in Peoria, David was the son of John and Clara (nee Walker) Huston. He was raised and educated in Wilmington and Braidwood. David served in the United States Army with an honorable discharge in 1970. On March 6, 1971, he married Bonnie Jean Blazer in Decatur, IL, and together they would make their home and raise their family in Wilmington.

David served First Baptist Church in Wilmington as a deacon and trustee. Later he served Island City Baptist Church in Wilmington on their Benevolence committee and as a Deacon Emeritus. He worked for the Wilmington 209-U School District for over 20 years as a custodian and also provided custodial services for the Presbyterian Church. Other employers included Caterpillar, Uniroyal, and PCI. David was an avid reader, die hard Chicago White Sox fan, and he especially enjoyed Celtic music along with Bonnie's piano music.

He was a bit of an agitator, but he had a gentle nature and a truly sweet heart. David was a proud family man who loved his family immensely. He was a devoted father to his two sons who he loved unconditionally. He cherished his grandchildren and fondly had nicknames for each. David's love of life and family has left a lasting legacy that will be carried on by all who knew and loved him.

Survivors include his wife, Bonnie Huston, of Wilmington, with whom David would have celebrated 52 years together on March 6, 2023; two sons, Matthew John (Miranda) Huston, of Kennewick, WA and Mark David Huston, of



Louisville, KY; four grandchildren: Jonah Michael, Libby Jayne, Samuel David and MacKenzie Joy; his twin sister, Suzanne (James) Johnston, of Wilmington; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law: Gary Underwood, of Stockton, IL; Phyllis (the late Joe) Armstrong, of San Diego, CA; Beverly (David) McGlade, of Mt. Zion, IL and Joyce (Lynwood) Langer, of Aurora, CO; as well as several cousins, numerous nieces and nephews, and his two grandpups, Ivy and Charlie.

David was preceded in death by his parents, his step-father, John Watling Sr.; father-in-law and mother-in-law, John and Dorothy Blazer and his brother and sisters: Donald E. Barnes, Marilyn (Mick) Collier, Charlotte (Loran) Barr, Joanna (Jim) McGraw, and Sharon Underwood; granddoggies, Roxie and Aspen.

Cremation rites are being accorded, and the family will receive friends for a memorial visitation on Thursday, Jan. 12, 2023 at Island City Baptist Church, 120 Vine Street in Wilmington from 1 p.m. until the time of memorial service at 4 p.m.

David will privately be laid to rest with full military honors at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood.

In Lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made as gifts in David's memory to Island City Baptist Church or Wilmington 209-U Foundation for Excellence.

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

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

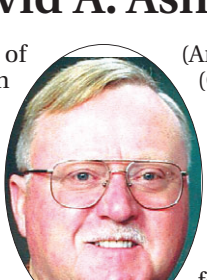
David A. Ashley

COAL CITY—David A. Ashley, 68, of Coal City, passed away peacefully on Monday, Jan. 9, 2023 at his home, surrounded by his family.

He was born on March 8, 1954 in Morris, to George and Docia Mary (nee Shain) Ashley. David grew up in Minooka and graduated from Minooka High School class of 1972. He was an operator with Local #150, retiring after 35 years. David married Debra Goode Phillips at the Park Street Congregational Church in Mazon on May 24, 1997.

A man who took pride in his home, David spent much of his time landscaping, gardening and caring for his house. He enjoyed puttering around in his shop. At 1 p.m. though, Dave would take a break from his chores to watch The Maury Povich Show and after Deb's retirement, he was happy that she would join him to watch. Most of all, Dave was devoted to his family and especially appreciated being "Papa."

He is survived by his wife of 25 years, Debra; his daughters, Mary Ashley, of Minooka and Elizabeth (Jeremy) Russell, of Morris; his sons: Justin Ashley, of Minooka; Matthew



(Angie) Phillips, of Coal City and Adam (Christine) Phillips, of Goose Lake; three grandchildren: Tristen, Tanner and Tyler Phillips; one sister, two brothers and his brothers-in-law, Ronald (Lonnie) Goode, of Dwight and James (Melanie) Goode, of Morris.

He was preceded in death by his parents, George and Docia Ashley; his father-in-law and mother-in-law, Erlene and Lucille Goode and his sister-in-law, Darlene Franklin.

Memorials may be made in David's name to the Coal City United Methodist Church.

Cremation rites have been accorded. A Memorial Visitation will be on Thursday, Jan. 12, 2023 from 10:30 a.m. until the time of the Memorial Service at 12 noon at the Coal City United Methodist Church, 6805 E. McArdle Rd., Coal City. Rev. Dr. Jay Regennitter will officiate.

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

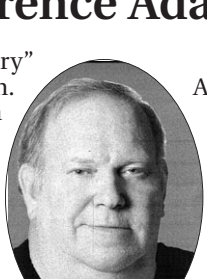
Ferrari Funeral Services of Coal City are entrusted with arrangements.

Terrence Adams

DWIGHT—Terrence Lee "Terry" Adams, 71, of Dwight, passed away Jan. 4, 2023 at OSF St. James Hospital in Pontiac, IL.

Terry was born Jan. 6, 1951 in Streator, the son of Charles and Marion (Sipe) Adams. He married Lorene Burton on Sept. 20, 1969 in Indiana. She survives in Dwight.

He attended local Dwight Schools and owned and operated Terry Adams Plumbing & Heating in Dwight for more than 22 years. Terry enjoyed woodworking, photography, fishing and making jokes. He will be sadly missed and fondly remembered by all who knew him.



Also surviving are his children, Terry Adams Jr., of Dwight and Charles (Tammy) Adams, of Forrest, IL; seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren, a sister, Marianne Decker, of Dwight; several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents and brothers: Mike, Charles, David, Jim and Tommy.

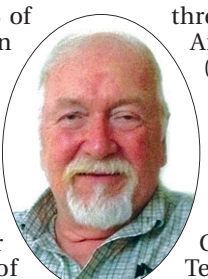
Cremation rites will be accorded. Services will be held Jan. 12, 2023 at 3 p.m. at Hager Memorial Home in Dwight. Visitation will be held one hour prior to the services.

Memorials in honor of Terry may be made to the Livingston County Humane Society.

John Frederiksen

COAL CITY—John Frederiksen, 73 of Coal City, passed away unexpectedly on Wednesday, Jan. 4, 2023 at his home.

Born March 28, 1949 in Streator, IL, John Lee was a son of Betty Jean (nee Irvin) Vilt and the late Earl Leroy Frederiksen. He moved to Coal City in the third grade; graduated from Coal City High School with the class of 1967, and went on to attend both Joliet Junior College and DeVry Institute of Technology. On Nov. 1, 1969, John married Sue Togliatti in the Coal City United Methodist Church and together they made a home and raised their family in Coal City. In that same year, 1969, John gained employment with Caterpillar Tractor Company in Joliet, where he went on to work as an Electrician for the following 34 years, when he retired in 2003. Following his retirement, he returned to work at CAT with various other subcontractors for an additional 15 years.



He was a member of the Coal City United Methodist Church, where he participated in the United Methodist Men's Group and served as a Trustee. He also belonged to the Coal City Area Club. John enjoyed fishing, camping and running, and took pleasure in gardening and tending to his roses. Many memories were made traveling on alley adventures and taking off on random cheese runs. John drew roads on the map before they made print, and in his travels he could almost always find a fellow Caterpillar employee to visit with. He was a true storyteller, could strike up a conversation with anyone he encountered, and as a jokester, enjoyed making others laugh. He bowled in years past, but in more recent years took pleasure in classic television and could often be found enjoying his popcorn drizzled in Bagna Caualda. Gone from our sight, John Frederiksen leaves behind a wonderful legacy that he built alongside his family and those who knew and loved him.

Survivors include his wife of 53 years, Sue;

three children: Amy (Tom) Borchelt, Amanda (Steven) Burns and Erik (Alanna) Frederiksen, all of Coal City; five grandchildren: Jacob and Natalie Borchelt, August and Victoria Burns and Nolan Frederiksen; his mother, Betty Vilt of Dwight; step-mother, Lois Frederiksen, of Arizona; five siblings: Maryann (Jimmy Dean) Krug, of Coal City; Doug (Cheri) Sutton, of Texas; Cinda (Michael) Conroyd, of Arizona; Lark (Deb) Frederiksen, of Verona; Leann Havekost, of Arizona and Michelle (Don) Wilson, of Shorewood; two aunts, Ethel McConnell, of Ottawa and Marie Frederiksen, of Aurora; two brothers-in-law, Dave (Donna) Togliatti, of Coal City and Marc (Merikay) Togliatti, of Morris, and numerous nieces and nephews.

John was preceded in death by his father, Earl Frederiksen; brother-in-law, Vince Hodgson and two nephews: Kevin Togliatti and Craig Holmes.

The family will receive friends for a visitation at the Coal City United Methodist Church, 6805 E. McArdle Road in Coal City on Friday, Jan. 13, 2023 from 3 p.m. until the time of funeral service at 6 p.m. Rev. Jay Regennitter will officiate, and cremation rites will be accorded following the services.

John will be laid to rest in the Braceville-Gardner Cemetery Columbarium.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in John's memory to the Coal City United Methodist Church, 6805 E. McArdle Road, Coal City, IL 60416.

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

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

Gwendolyn Panici

COAL CITY—Gwendolyn Joyce Panici (nee Dierking), 89, of Coal City, passed away Friday, Dec. 16, 2022 at Goldwater Care Nursing Home in Pontiac, IL.

Born Jan. 17, 1933 in Beecher, IL, she was the daughter of Emil and Louella Mae (nee Burns) Dierking. She was a graduate of the Crete-Monee High School with the class of 1951. Gwen formerly owned and operated Mr. Softy Ice Cream in New Lenox and Sugar Cone Ice Cream in Richton Park, IL. She enjoyed sewing, making quilts, cooking, and most of all loved spending time with her family. She was hardworking, kind, loving, devoted, and overall a good person, who will be greatly missed by many.

Surviving are two daughters, Suzan Panici-Hakey, of Braidwood and Laura (Greg) Pearson, of Orland Park, IL; one son, Bruce Panici, of Wisconsin; one step-daughter, Lana (Rich) Bogden, of North Carolina; 15 grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren, sister-in-law, Beverly Dierking, of New Port Richey, FL and numerous



nieces, nephews, and their families.

Preceding her in death were her parents, husband, Emanuel Angelo Panici, (1982) who she married in 1953; step-sons, Robert Panici and Joseph Panici; brother, Richard Dierking; and sister, Shirley (Harold) Parkinson.


Cremation rites have been accorded. Memorial visitation for Gwen will be at the R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory, Braidwood, Saturday, Jan. 14, 2023 from 3 p.m. until the time of memorial services at 5 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in her name may be directed to the Alzheimer's Association.

For more information and to visit her online guestbook, please log on to www.rwpattersonfuneralhomes.com or find them on Facebook.

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

Bruce Trotter

 GOOSE LAKE TWP.—Bruce A. Trotter, 85, and a life-long resident of Goose Lake, Township, Grundy County, passed away Thursday, Jan. 5, 2023 at the Lightways Hospice Home in Joliet.

Born Aug. 30, 1937 in Goose Lake Township, Bruce Anthony was a son of Robert Winston and Anna Marie (Baudino) Trotter. He attended the Coal City schools and graduated from Coal City High School with the class of 1955. Following high school, Bruce entered the work force before going on to serve in the United States Army and United States Army Reserves from 1960 until 1966. On Dec. 18, 1970, Bruce married Deanna "Dede" Savage in the New Hope Church in Gardner, and together they settled at the home in Goose Lake Township, where they started their family.

Bruce spent his career in construction, and retired from Local 130 in 2000. He served the Township in various capacities over the years, but most notably as road commissioner for over 30 years, retiring in 2018. Bruce was a member of the Coal City United Methodist Church, and will be remembered as one who always kept active and busy. He was willing to help anyone in need; he loved animals, and his family was always his first priority.

Survivors include his wife of 52 years, Dede; son and daughter-in-law, Michael and Cathy



Trotter, of Yorkville; two granddaughters, Morgan and Lauryn Trotter; one brother, Robert (Elizabeth) Trotter, of Morris; his aunt, Catherine Baudino, of Morris; sister-in-law, Brenda (Col. Thomas) Boyd, of Moline, and numerous nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews.

Bruce was preceded in death by his parents, sister and brother-in-law, Jean and Louis Naretto; one sister in infancy, and his father-in-law and mother-in-law, Dean and Helen Savage.

The family will receive friends for a visitation at Reeves Funeral Home, 75 N. Broadway, one block north of IL Route 113 in Coal City on Thursday, Jan. 12, 2023 between the hours of 4 and 8 p.m. Funeral services will be Friday, Jan. 13, 2023 at 10 a.m. in the funeral home with Reverend Jay Regennitter from the Coal City United Methodist Church officiating. Burial will follow.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Bruce's memory to the Coal City United Methodist Church, 6805 East McArdle Road, Coal City, IL 60416 or to Lightways Hospice.

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

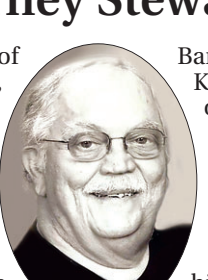
Funeral services and arrangement have been made under the direction and care of Reeves Funeral Homes, Ltd. in Coal City.

Barney Stewart

COAL CITY—Barney Stewart, 78, of Coal City, and formerly of Chicago, passed away unexpectedly on Sunday, Jan. 1, 2023 at his home.

Born June 23, 1944 in Chicago, Barney was a son of Hugh Stewart and Emily (Joseph) Smolka. His career was that of a Stationary Engineer and he was a member of IUOE Local 399. Barney worked at various places throughout the years, but most notably at The Chicago Tribune and the Hotel InterContinental. He was a member of the Coal City Area Club, which aligned with his love of the outdoors and fishing. He took pleasure in gardening, trees, rocks and landscaping, and enjoyed science fiction both literary and on television. In addition, Barney was a woodworker and could often be found tinkering in the shed with his tools. He also had a great love for animals, particularly dogs. Gone from our sight, Barney leaves behind a legacy of great pride for his home and most importantly, his family.

Survivors include his wife, Nancy (nee Harvey), who he married June 9, 1972 in Chicago; two daughters: Elizabeth (Stephen) Scofield, of Bristol, England and Debbie (Rich) Carollo, of Aurora, CO; six grandchildren: Andi Stewart and Chris Fischer, who were raised by



Barney and Nancy; George Carollo and Kevin, Thomas and Anthony Stewart; one very special great-granddaughter, Lizzy Marie; two brothers: Chris (the late Harriette) Smolka, of Hawaii and Joey (Carol) Smolka, of Colorado; one sister-in-law, Linda Harvey-Knight and numerous nieces and nephews.

Barney was preceded in death by his parents, one son, Troy Stewart; his father-in-law and mother-in-law, Roland and Victoria Harvey, and two brothers: Douglas Stewart and John Smolka.

Funeral services were held Monday, Jan. 8, 2023 at Reeves Funeral Home in Coal City. Rev. Jay Regennitter from the Coal City United Methodist Church officiated. Burial followed in Braceville-Gardner Cemetery.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Barney's memory to PAWS Chicago.

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

Funeral services and arrangements were made under the direction and care of Reeves Funeral Homes, Ltd. in Coal City.

Immaculate Conception to hold benefit for local family

Immaculate Conception Church Braidwood is holding a multicultural fundraiser to help a church family in need.

Lazara Yanira Carrasco, age 35, was hospitalized on a ventilator for seven months due to COVID. She is currently on a waiting list for a lung transplant.

She, her mother, and brother Enrique are struggling to pay for her insurmountable medical bills. Lazara also has two small children.

The fundraiser is a multicultural potluck Saturday, Jan. 21, in Fr. White Hall, 110 S. School St.

Food will be served from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. with carry outs available. Doors will open at 4 p.m. for anyone wanting to help by donating a heritage dish to pass.

A freewill donation for dinner will be accepted to help offset Lazara's medical bills. Please call Tami Favero 815-458-6802 for more information.

Morris Hospital offers CPR and First Aid Training

The power of CPR AED training was never more evident than during the Jan. 2 incident involving NFL player Damar Hamlin.

Hamlin, a safety with the Buffalo Bills, went into cardiac arrest after a tackle during the nationally televised Monday Night Football game. The quick actions of training staff and immediate use of life-saving resuscitation efforts were universally praised as the reason behind Hamlin's remarkable recovery.

This incident is an important reminder to all about why CPR AED training is vitally crucial to saving someone's life. With that in mind, Morris Hospital & Healthcare Centers is offering the American Heart Association's Heartsaver CPR AED & First Aid Training

course on Tuesday, Jan. 17, from 4-8:00 p.m. at Shabbona School, 725 School St., Morris. Participants should enter through Door #26 on the southwest corner of the building near the gym.

The course is for anyone interested in learning skills that could save the life of a loved one, friend, co-worker, or community member. Participants will learn the skills needed to perform high quality CPR, proper use of an automated external defibrillator (AED), relief of foreign-body airway obstruction, and basic first aid. The cost is \$110 and includes American Heart Association materials.

Register online at www.morrishospital.org/even ts. For more information, call 815-705-7360.

U.S. dairy poised to grow

BY DANIEL GRANT
FARMWEEK

Milk demand is projected to grow by 21% globally between 2020 and 2030, according to Matt Daley, president of GEA Farm Technologies.

And he believes much of that demand could be met by U.S. dairy farmers.

"With more people, more dairy is consumed," Daley said this month at the Agricultural Bankers Conference in Omaha, Nebraska. "What's amazing is we're doing it with fewer cows."

"A dairy cow in the U.S. produces two to three times more milk because there's more sunshine and greater access to grains (than other parts of the world)."

The world population reached an estimated 8 billion people as of Nov. 15, a new milestone in human development. The rising population and a growing middle class in some areas likely will drive increased demand for dairy products.

But with tighter environmental regulations in Europe, dairy output could actually decrease in that part of the world. Daley believes dairy expansion is also unlikely in New Zealand.

"Who's slated around the world to produce more milk? It's us in the U.S.," he said.

Technology and automation will be critical for U.S. farmers to continue to boost milk output with fewer cows. GEA manufactures about 25% of robotic milking technology in North

America, according to Daley.

"As long as we can expand processing capabilities, we'll produce more milk, because the world needs it," he said. "As labor continues to get tighter, more automation will come."

GEA is quoting plans for new dairy plants in Nebraska, Kentucky and Georgia and three new whey distilleries are going up in the U.S.

DEA is also building more concentration facilities, which separate the milk and can lower shipping costs by 70%.

A strong appetite for dairy is also driving local demand, which bodes well for small dairies looking for niche markets.

"The last four or five years, we've never put in so many small cheese plants," Daley said. "The craft cheese industry is booming. A lot of dairy farmers are making their own cheese and selling it locally."

If you've never heard of DEA Farm Technologies, chances are you've eaten food produced with its technology or at a plant it built. DEA is one of the world's largest system suppliers for the food, beverage and pharmaceutical sectors.

"We do food on a small and massive scale," Daley said. "Every third chicken nugget in the world is produced with GEA technology. If you eat cheese, GEA technology likely sliced it and put it in the package."

About a quarter of processed milk in the world comes from GEA or is processed with its equipment.

It will be months for court to decide on SAFE-T Act

Kankakee County Judge Thomas Cunningham set off a chaotic chain reaction Dec. 29 with his ruling that the General Assembly overstepped its constitutional grounds when it voted to eliminate cash bail. Cunningham essentially said that a cash bail requirement, even though not specifically mentioned in the constitution, could be inferred; and that the General Assembly had exercised powers that properly belonged to the judicial branch.

Judge Cunningham's ruling only applied to the jurisdictions where 64 lawsuits had been filed to block implementation of the law on January 1, without regard to the fact that some cities are in multiple counties. Aurora, for instance, is in four counties, including Kane and DuPage counties, which did not sue to stop the law from taking effect. Aurora is also in Kendall and Will, which were plaintiffs. Naperville straddles DuPage and Will counties.

Some county leaders who were not part of the lawsuit added to the confusion by filing for local Temporary Restraining Orders, often giving minimal or even no warning to the attorney general's office. Some counties actually filed for TROs without giving any notice at all to the AG's office, including Alexander, Lawrence, Pike and St. Clair, according to the office.

It seemed to some that a few counties may have been coordinating their efforts to thwart the attorney general's efforts to dispute their TRO demands. In Menard County, for instance, the AG's office asked for a one-hour delay while they argued in another county. The request was ignored, and the state's attorney reportedly entered the

TRO without any ability for the state to respond.

Finally, on Dec. 30, the Democratic state's attorney for Kane County, Jamie Mosser, and the Republican state's attorney for DuPage County, Bob Berlin, filed an emergency motion for a supervisory order from the Illinois Supreme Court. Mosser had supported the push to eliminate cash bail and Berlin helped work behind the scenes to get the revisions in place during veto session.

The two pointed to the massive jurisdictional issues and the TRO filings and asked the court to "enter an order sufficient to maintain consistent pretrial procedures because without such an order, defendants in different jurisdictions will be subject to different treatment upon arrest and throughout pretrial proceedings, creating an equal protection problem for citizens across the state."

The Supreme Court complied within hours, staying the effective date of the SAFE-T Act's cash bail provision during an expedited appeal process and effectively stopping the chaos from spreading further.

When asked by reporters last week, Gov. JB Pritzker said he expected the Illinois Supreme Court to decide what to do about the state's cashless bail law "sometime in the next few months."

That could well be, but the top court won't even hear oral arguments in the case until March.

A joint motion filed with the Supreme Court by the state



CAPITOL FACTS
Rich Miller

and the county plaintiffs set out an agreed briefing schedule and the Supreme Court adopted it. Opening briefs will begin in late January and will run through the end of February. Oral arguments will be held during the court's March calendar.

From there, it'll be up to the Supremes to hash out their decision and draft their opinion(s). So, it could possibly be a while.

Meanwhile, a poll taken November 15-20 by Impact Research found that 32 percent of voters had a favorable view of the SAFE-T Act, which included the elimination of cash bail, while 40 percent had an unfavorable view. The super-controversial law was the subject of millions of dollars in campaign advertising, not just statewide, but also in state legislative districts.

So, it's not surprising that those who had a strongly unfavorable view of the law out-

numbered those with strongly favorable views by 20 points (34-14). Even so, 28 percent had no position on the law. Criticism of the law didn't seem to ultimately harm Democrats except maybe in a couple of legislative races.

The poll of 800 likely 2024 voters with a margin of error of +/-3.5 percentage points was taken for a group called Giffords, a gun control organization founded by former Congresswoman Gabby Giffords.

The poll also found that Gov. Pritzker's favorables were 51 percent, while his unfavorables were 46 percent. 29 percent had a very favorable view of Pritzker, while 40 percent had a very unfavorable view of the incumbent.

And 41 percent of those polled said they had a positive view of the National Rifle Association, while 53 percent had an unfavorable view (46 percent said they had a very unfavorable view).

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

Mobile food pantry coming to Wilmington

Catholic Charities of Joliet will be hosting a mobile food pantry at Kuzma Care Cottage, 635 S. Main St., Wilmington on Tuesday, Jan. 17, from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Participants need to line up in the St. Rose Church parking lot by entering on the Main Street side. The mobile food pantry will use a "drive thru" method to distribute

food. Please clear space in your trunk or backseat so volunteers can load boxes of food directly into your vehicle.

Food is free to neighbors in need; no ID, proof of address or income is required. Everyone is welcome. Food is distributed on a first-come, first served basis, while supplies last.

A Note of Thanks from the Wilmington Lions Club

The Wilmington Lions Club would like to thank all the community organizations and businesses for your part in making the Island Christmas Walk held on the North Island a success again for 2022. We are grateful for your efforts. We acknowledge the following for their part in the Walk: Wesley 4H Hustlers, Bonfield Lions Club, Facetastic Faces face painting Kelly Surma (artist), Free Press Newspapers, Wilmington Baseball and Softball Association (WBSA), Wilmington Chamber of Commerce, Wilmington Coalition (WCHC) our Spyder Saturday Sponsor, Wilmington Collision Minion Monday Sponsor, Wilmington Fire Department, Wilmington Library, Wilmington Park District our Co partner, Wilmington Police Department, individual volunteers who lended a helping hand you know who you are.

Finally, Mike Kelly for being so Jolly in his red suit and his sidekick Elf. The undertaking lasted for the Christmas Season Kicking off November 26 through December 31. Weather wise, Mother Nature was not kind a few nights we were not able to open or literally keep the lights on. We would also like to extend a gracious Thank You to the generous visitors for your monetary donations which will in part be used right here to help folks in our community. Happy New Year from the Wilmington Lions Club. WE Serve.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX INCREASE FOR ELWOOD COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT #203

I. A public hearing to approve a proposed tax levy increase for Elwood Community Consolidated School District #203, Will County, IL, for 2022 was held on December 13, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in the Board of Education meeting room, 409 North Chicago Avenue, Elwood, IL.

Any person desiring to appear at the public hearing and present testimony to the taxing district may contact Mr. Tim Page, Superintendent, Elwood Community Consolidated School District #203, at 409 North Chicago Avenue, Elwood, Illinois, telephone number 815-423-5588.

II. The corporate and special purpose property taxes extended for 2021 were \$5,029,893.

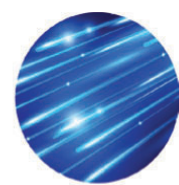
The proposed corporate and special purpose property taxes to be levied for 2022 are \$6,620,000. This represents a 32% increase over the previous year.

III. The property taxes extended for debt service and public building commission leases for 2021 were \$0. The estimated property taxes to be levied for debt service and public building commission leases for 2022 are \$0. This represents a 0% decrease over the previous year.

The estimated total property taxes to be levied for 2022 are \$6,620,000. This represents a 32% increase over the previous year.

Jennifer Wedic, Secretary Board of Education

Elwood CCSD 203, Will County, Illinois



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

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Amana white gas dryer made in the USA, works great \$75. Bisque, cast iron double bowl kitchen sink with Kohler faucet/pull down sprayer and soap dispenser great condition \$80. 815-634-0861. ca2-3

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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

SERVICE & REPAIRS

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

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

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1	9	3	2	5	8	4	6	7
9	2	4	7	8	3	6	5	1
5	1	7	9	4	6	3	8	2
3	6	8	5	1	2	7	4	9
8	3	2	6	9	4	1	7	5
4	5	1	8	3	7	2	9	6
6	7	9	1	2	5	8	3	4

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WILDCAT SPORTS

Two Wildcat wrestlers place at The PIT

Two of four WHS wrestlers placed during the Princeton Invitational Tournament on Saturday.

The 59th annual tournament, known as The PIT, features some of the best Class A wrestlers in the state from 33 different schools.

Coal City won the overall team championship with 245.5 points, far surpassing second place Dakota (188) and Port Byron (176). Wilmington finished 28th overall while Reed-Custer came in 11th.

At 113, Wildcat Landon Dooley (27-6) placed 4th. Zhyler Hansen (Sterling Newman Central Catholic) upended Dooley in the opening round with a fall 1:58. But credit the WHS junior for climbing through the wrestlebacks with five victories to make it to the third place match.

Dooley won by :26 fall over Jayden Sanchez (Reed-Custer) then pinned Nathan Harrison (Roxana) in :25 seconds. He won a 6-0 decision over Tharren Jacobs (Port Byron) then got a 2:15 fall over Nolan Ziman of Manteno and :51 fall over Kale Stirn Aledo (Mercer County). To decide third place he squared off against Kobe Brent (LeRoy) 21-8 but was pinned in 2:20.

At 195, Hunter Hayes (19-5) placed 5th

after going 3-2 in the tourney. Hayes won a 2-1 decision over Ethan Mick from Dixon for his first round win. In the quarterfinal Hayes recorded a 16-6 major decision over Tristan Staggs (Litchfield). He was pinned in the first round of his semifinal match against Aiden Sancken from Gibson City (G.C.-Melvin-Sibley). Then in the consolation semi Josh Harris (Byron) defeated Hayes by 7-4 decision. Hayes uprighted himself in the fifth place match, beating Wyatt Dothager (Vandalia) by a 9-4 margin.

At 170, Logan VanDuyne (11-8) had two wins and two losses. He lost to Robert Watt (Roxana) fall 0:24 and by 1:28 fall to Carson Etheridge (Princeton). VanDuyne's wins were both by pin over Garron Perzee (Clifton Central) and Gavin Minter Aledo (Mercer County).

At 285, Wildcat Brody Benson (12-11) started with a 602 decision over Kamden Weinert (Taylor Ridge) before falling 3:13 to Issak Espenschied (Petersburg (PORTA)). Benson got a 2:49 fall in the wrestlebacks over David Meece (Orion) but was stopped by Aydin Cornell (Gibson City (G.C.-Melvin-Sibley) with a 1:10 fall.



Photo by Eric Fisher

TRYING TO ESCAPE - Wilmington's Ava Cupples pushes out in an effort to escape her Peotone opponent on Thursday during a home meet.



Photo by Eric Fisher

ON THE ATTACK at 113 pounds on Thursday is Wilmington junior Landon Dooley (right) who placed 4th during the Princeton Invite Tournament over the weekend.



Photo by Eric Fisher

WILMINGTON JUNIOR Brody Benson works on his Peotone opponent during a home meet on Thursday. Benson wrestled well during the Princeton Invite over the weekend, going 2-2.

Put your health first this New Year!

Start the New Year out right by scheduling your annual check-up with your primary care provider! Annual check-ups help you monitor existing health issues, keep you up-to-date on vaccinations and screening tests, and increase the likelihood of detecting new health issues before they develop into something serious.

If you have fallen behind with your routine check-ups, the New Year is the perfect time to get back on schedule.



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Wildcats start new year with a new outlook

Back-to-back victories for the Wilmington boys varsity basketball team has the players and coaches believing they can turn things around in the second half of the season.

The Wildcats had a dismal 2-4 record a week before break and since the Marquette Holiday Tournament and victories on Friday and Saturday, their record has improved to 8-5.

On Friday the Lions took a 13-8 lead in the opening quarter before Wilmington settled down, passed the ball around to an open man, to go on a 17-14 run to close within 27-25 at the half.

In the third they outscored

the visitors to take the lead 35-34 in the third. They held on to win it 47-46 despite a three-point shot by Lisle at the buzzer. Thankfully the 'Cats were already up by four points.

Reid Juster and Ryder Meents paced the 'Cats with 12 points each. Juster also grabbed 10 rebounds despite Lisle having a couple of taller players. Wilmington's Joey Cortese fought hard all night to finish with 9 points and 9 rebounds.

Cade McCubbin was busy with 7 points, 5 assists and 3 rebounds while Kyle Farrell tallied 2 points, 5 rebounds, 5 assists and great defense. Ryan Nelson put up 6 points while

pulling down 4 rebounds. On Saturday the 'Cats traveled to Grant Park where they left 57-43 victors.

Meents was on target with 23 points and three rebounds. Juster ended up with 10 points, 12 rebounds and 5 assists. Cade McCubbin chipped in with six points and seven rebounds while dishing out five assists. Also scoring for the 'Cats was Joey Cortese with 14 points off 11 rebounds.

The Wildcats travel to Peotone Friday. They have yet to play the Blue Devils this season so it will be a challenge. On Tuesday they travel to Manteno.



Photo by Eric Fisher

DRAWING A FOUL while being defended by Lisle from all sides is Wilmington center Joey Cortese who managed to get off the shot.