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WILMINGTON, IL | WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2025 | A FREE PRESS NEWSPAPER (815) 476-7966

Residents displaced at Super Shine Motel

The Wilmington Fire District was called to the Super Shine Motel, 107 Bridge St., on Tuesday at 12:41 a.m. for a reported structure fire. Upon arrival, firefighters found smoke present in one of the rooms of the one-story portion of the motel. Firefighters attempting to locate the fire found a small fire in the attic space above the utility room area which was quickly extinguished. The cause of the fire appeared to be electrical in nature and ComEd was requested to the scene. Electrical service to the one-story portion of the hotel was turned off. The fire along with the loss of power to the building displaced approximately eight residents. Some residents were able to seek alternate shelter however three residents along with three dogs were relocated by Wilmington Police and Fire District personnel to the Wilmington ESDA building on N. Main St. which served as a temporary warming shelter. Red Cross was contacted and responded to the temporary warming shelter to assist the displaced residents. Temporary alternate lodging was arranged for the residents with Wilmington ESDA assisting with relocation to an area hotel and the temporary warming shelter was closed. The Super Shine Motel was evacuated on January 26, 2024 due to flooding from the ice jams on the Kankakee River.



EIGHT RESIDENTS at the Super Shine Motel were displaced during an early morning fire on Tuesday. Wilmington firefighters put out a small fire above a utility room as electricity was knocked out to the entire building. Photo courtesy Wilmington Fire District

‘THANKS MURPH’

WHS gym dedicated to long-time Hall of Fame wrestling coach

STAFF REPORT

Wilmington High School honored retired wrestling coach Rob Murphy on Thursday with a ceremony to rename the high school gymnasium in his honor. The event took place at the start of an ICE Conference quad meet celebrating Murphy's remarkable career spanning nearly three decades at WHS. Murphy, who retired in 2022, left an indelible mark on the school and the sport. "In honor and recognition of your outstanding career, Wilmington High School is dedicating this gym as the Rob Murphy Gymnasium," announced WHS Principal Scott Maupin as Athletic Director Brian Goff presented Murphy with a plaque that will be identical to one that will be on the wall by the main gym entrance. Murph accepted it, raised it up to the crowd, which included several past wrestlers. He was given a long standing ovation as Maupin read a long list of laurels. As the head wrestling coach from 1994 to 2022, he led his teams to 570 dual meet wins, three IHSA Class A Dual Team State Championships

(2007, 2008, 2009), six state trophies, 10 conference championships, and 12 regional championships. His guidance shaped 129 state qualifiers, 52 state place winners, and 10 individual state champions, including his sons Robbie and Jake. "Murphy's dedication to the sport earned him numerous accolades, including induction into the Illinois Wrestling Coaches and Officials Association Hall of Fame in 2011 and the National Wrestling Hall of Fame in 2023," Maupin noted. Murph's wrestling journey began in middle school and continued through high school at Coal City, where he earned All-State honors as a linebacker and was a two-time state wrestling qualifier with a record of 96-14, finishing third in state his senior year and helping the Coalers earn their first state wrestling trophy with a runner-up finish. He later competed at Joliet Junior College and Olivet Nazarene University, achieving numerous collegiate honors, including three NCCAA championships and three NAIA national qualifications. After serving as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army Reserve and teaching at Lincoln Community High School from 1988 to 1994, Murphy began his storied coaching career at

Wilmington. His contributions extended beyond coaching; he was active on the IWCOA executive board for 25 years and was deeply involved in fundraising, co-chairing Illinois/Indiana dual events, and hall of fame committees and past president. Murphy's dedication symbolizes his legacy of excellence, leadership and commitment to his athletes. His passion for the sport and community leadership inspired generations of wrestlers and coaches, Maupin said. Murphy expressed his gratitude for the honor with a big wave as his wife Tina and their three children, Robbie, Jake and Erin, and seven grandchildren, have supported his journey. The evening also included dual matches featuring Wilmington, Streator, Coal City and Herscher, reflecting the competitive spirit Murphy championed throughout his career. As attendees stood for the National Anthem before the matches, the newly named gymnasium stood as a testament to a coach who dedicated his life to wrestling and the success of his athletes.



RETIREDCOACH Rob Murphy is given a standing ovation while accepting a plaque on Thursday when Wilmington dedicated the gym in his honor. Photo by Warren Miller



THE FAMILY behind the man. Rob Murphy and his wife Tina devoted 28 years to the Wilmington wrestling program and supporters of all sports as they raised three Wildcat athletes—Robbie, Jake and Erin. Pictured (from left) are Jake, his sons Kane and Kyler (front) and his wife Gina; Erin Fultz and her husband Robert, Tina and Rob Murphy; and Robbie who is married to Amanda (not pictured) with children Avery, Evelyn, and Warren. Also not pictured are Erin's children Kassi and Cooper.

Mystery 'boom' rocks parts of Will, Grundy counties

BY ROSE PANIERI
STAFF WRITER

At approximately 10:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 17, a mysterious "BOOM" rocked parts of Will and Grundy counties, according to several sources, including the Grundy County Sheriff's Office. It wasn't a bird, plane, meteor, or "some hick blowing up tennerrite" as a Facebook post speculated. Nor was it the leavings of the Space X rocket, an earthquake, or a nuclear blast. On Jan. 17, the Grundy County 911 center

received several calls of a loud boom or a possible explosion near Dresden Road. Grundy County deputies, with the assistance of 911 dispatchers, contacted industrial plants in the area, and employees reported they heard a "boom," but all plants reported no problems. The Dresden Lock & Dam also reported hearing the boom, but reported no problems.

SEE BOOM PAGE 2



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Boom, continued from page 1

On Saturday, Grundy Sheriff Ken Briley spoke with the site Vice President of Dresden, who also reported no problems at the site.

"We are unaware of the origin of the boom or explosion and no further reports have been taken today, Jan. 18," Briley said.

Though Dresden was ruled out as the source of the boom, no one knows where it originated. Furthermore, the boom was reportedly heard as far away as Joliet and beyond.

Though the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) has documented several fault lines in Illinois, including New Madrid, Wabash Valley Seismic Zones, and Sandwich Fault Zone, USGS maps indicate no seismic activity in the area last Friday.

Nor was it a "sonic boom," a sound associated with shock waves created when an object travels faster than the speed of sound. Nor was a meteor in the process of disintegrating above Illinois.

Some surmise Elon Musk and the explosion of his SpaceX Starship caused the boom. However, the spaceship was launched on Jan. 16, and exploded over the Atlantic Ocean near the Turks islands.

Attorney Wysocki files Lesnik 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 JUNE R. LESNIK, Deceased;
No. 24 PR 692

CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given to creditors of the death of June R. Lesnik. Letters of Office were issued to Sharon Yak & Raymond Lesnik whose address is 1701 Mayfield, Joliet, IL 60435 as Independent Co-Executors, whose attorney of record is Marilyn L. Wysocki, 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 15th day of July, 2025, 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 claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

Marilyn L. Wysocki
For the Estate of June R. Lesnik,
Deceased

BY: Marilyn L. Wysocki
1861 Black Road
Joliet, IL 60435
815-725-8000
Atty No.: 06275404
Published in the Free Press Advocate, Wednesday, January 15, 22 and 29, 2025.

Guy 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 Naquita Nichelle Guy TO Naquita Nichelle Scott, Case No. 24 MR 510

NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that the undersigned on behalf of herself, Naquita Nichelle Guy adult, shall appear in the Will County Court Annex Building, 100 West Jefferson Street, Joliet, IL 60432 courtroom 905 at 9:00 a.m. on the 19th day of February, 2025 before the judge assigned to hear said matter, and then there present a petition requesting the name of Naquita Nichelle Guy be changed to Naquita Nichelle Scott.

Naquita Nichelle Guy
Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, Jan. 22, 29 and Feb. 5, 2025.

Attorney McGrath files Santangelo estate notice

PUBLIC 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
MARY JO SANTANGELO, Deceased.
Case No.: 24 PR 679

CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given to creditors, of the death of MARY JO SANTANGELO, of Manhattan, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued December 20, 2024, to JOSEPH SANTANGELO, Independent Administrator, whose address is 964 Vinings Blvd., Gallatin, TN 37066, 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 22nd day of July, 2025, 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://www.illinoiscourts.gov/fac/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.

Joseph Santangelo,
Independent Administrator
of the Estate of
Mary Jo Santangelo, 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 Jan. 22, 29 and Feb. 5, 2025.

Village of Symerton to hold hearing vacating property

PUBLIC NOTICE

Legal Public Notice of the Village of Symerton, Will County, Illinois pursuant to 65 ILCS 5/1-2.6 amending the Village of Symerton Code of Ordinances: AN ORDINANCE VACATING CERTAIN PORTIONS OF NORTH STREET AND TRAVERSE STREET AND AUTHORIZING THE CONVEYANCE OF SAID PROPERTY IN THE VILLAGE OF SYMERTON, ILLINOIS, after public hearing, was approved and passed on the 13th day of January, 2025, by the Village Board of Trustees at their regular monthly Board Meeting.

A copy of the ordinance can be viewed by contacting the office of the Village Clerk, Village Hall, 18385 W. Commercial Street, Symerton, Illinois during regular working hours at (815) 476-6266.

Dated this 13th day of January, 2025.
Eli Geiss, Mayor
Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, January 22, 2025.

Elwood Fire Protection District accepting bids for a Training Tower Concrete Foundation

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Elwood Fire Protection District will be accepting sealed bids for a Training Tower Foundation (Concrete).

Bid specifications/packets are available for pick up at the Elwood Fire Protection District 309 W. Mississippi St., Elwood, IL 60421, Mon-Fri, 8:30am- 2:30 pm. A mandatory pre-construction meeting will be held on January 24, 2025 at 9:00am at the Elwood Fire Protection District (address above). Bids must be submitted by 9:00 am, January 31, 2025. The bids may be mailed to: Elwood Fire Protection District 309 Mississippi Street Elwood, IL 60421, or dropped off in person 8:30am-2:30pm, Mon-Fri. The Fire District will not receive bids after 9:00am on January 31, 2025. All bids shall be opened at the Elwood Fire Protection District on January 31, 2025 at 1:00pm. The Fire District reserves the right to reject any and all bids. Any questions should be directed to Chief Locacius at clocacius@elwoodfpd.com.

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Jan. 15 and 22, 2025.

Kowalkowski 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 Wacław Kowalkowski TO Larry Kowalkowski, Case No. 2025MR000016

NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that the undersigned on behalf of himself, Wacław Kowalkowski, adult, shall appear in the Will County Court Annex Building, 100 W. Jefferson St., Room 905 at 9:00 a.m. on the 11th day of March, 2025 before the judge assigned to hear said matter, and then there present a petition requesting the name of Wacław Kowalkowski be changed to Larry Kowalkowski.

/s/ Wacław Kowalkowski
Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, January 22, 29, and February 5, 2025.

Attorney McGrath files Wheeler estate notice

PUBLIC 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 JAMES EDWARD WHEELER, Deceased.
Case No.: 24 PR 541

CLAIM NOTICE
Notice is given to creditors, of the death of JAMES EDWARD WHEELER, of Manhattan, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued September 9, 2024, to MICHAEL LEE PASCOE, Independent Executor, whose address is 12965 W. Bruns Rd., Manhattan, IL 60442, 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 15th day of July, 2025, 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://www.illinoiscourts.gov/fac/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.

Michael Lee Pascoe,
Independent Executor of the Estate of James Edward Wheeler, 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 Jan. 15, 22 and 29, 2025.

City seeks input on playground concepts for South Island Park

BY ROSE PANIERI
STAFF WRITER

The city of Wilmington wants your help in planning a new playground for the South Island Park, and quite a number of residents are excited at the idea of an updated playground.

The city will be replacing the South Island Park playground in the coming months, and is seeking input from residents on three different design options.

Mayor Ben Dietz assured residents that the new playground will be "modern, safe, and accessible," featuring a poured-in-place floor.

"Also included will be a multi-use path going from the south end of the island to the concession stand, which will improve safety and accessibility for everyone," Dietz said.

The playground design was inspired by the "Kiddie Korral" previously on the island, which featured a rocket-designed sliding board.

Option 1: Features the rocket slide and activity center, along with a cascade climber, space travel panel, bubble panel, double swoosh (double slide), and sidewinder.

Option 2: Features rocket slide and activity center, Zipkrooze (a mini zipline), Sidewinder and double slide, loop arch, storefront panel, cozy dome, natural stone stepper, curved balance beam, Wobble Pod, Netplex (climbing structure) and Rushwinder slide.

Option 3: A large slide and activity center, Zipkrooze, Saddle Spinner, Boogie Board, Tightrope, Blender, Overhead Trekker, Sol Spinner, Quantis, (activity center), Alpine Slide, and motion structures.

For more in-depth descriptions of playground features, visit NuToys Leisure Products (nutoys4fun.com).

"The proposed project will add to the soon-to-be realigned Park Street creating a beautiful and safer entrance both the North and South Island Parks," Dietz said. "This will also be in addition to the new kayak launch (North Island) slated for installation later this year."

The vast majority of comments on the mayor's Facebook page about the playground were positive.

"Great news! So glad to see we are looking for ways to keep our youth engaged," Christal Anne Rivera commented.

One concern among residents was accessibility. Would the playground truly be accessible?

"None of them look accessible to handicapped children. The pictures only show a child seated in a wheelchair being able to touch the most outer edge of any of the equipment Zoom in and look at all the cool things all the other kids will be able to do," Christina Gowdy VanDuyne commented.

The mayor advised her and others, who have specific concerns, to be sure to comment on the survey.

"If you have a picture or link to a specific product that you have in mind please provide it," Dietz commented. "I have looked through dozens of catalogues and the choices are nearly endless."

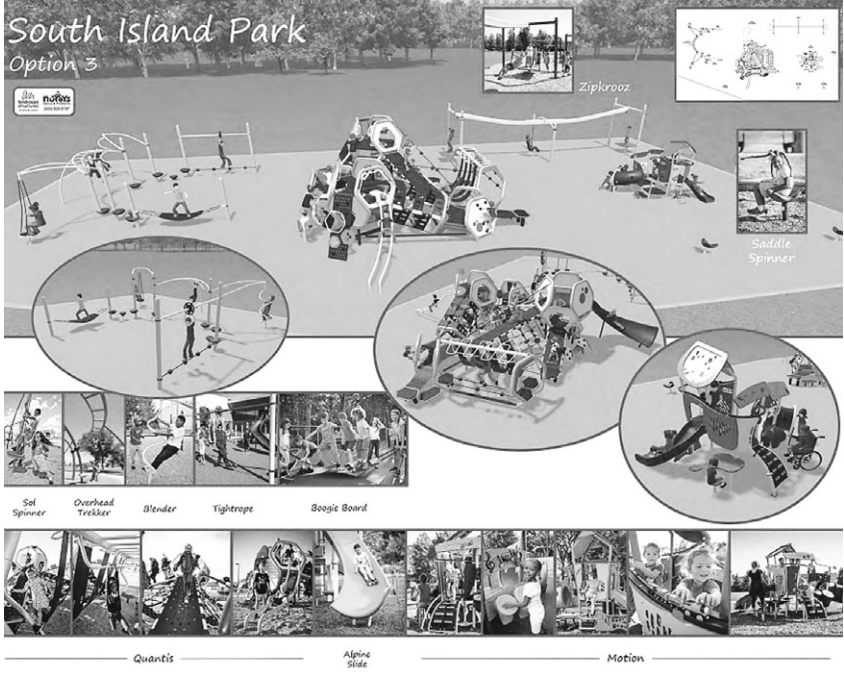
Residents may access the playground survey by visiting <https://forms.gle/K5vzaKnaZuuqmk5C8>



PLAYGROUND OPTION 1



PLAYGROUND OPTION 2



PLAYGROUND OPTION 3

Dabulskis on deans list

The University of Wisconsin-Madison has recognize Jenna Dabulskis of Wilmington. to the Dean's List for the fall semester of the 2024-2025 academic year.

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Eric D. Fisher, publisher

Among the icebergs or taking it cool along the Kankakee River

Now that the cold has really set in, ice is forming on the Kankakee. The river doesn't freeze as fast or as deep as it used to. Not only because of global warming, but because of the various places that add warm water back into the stream, such as the hydroelectric dam in Kankakee. In the 19th century the river was usually frozen over by January.



TIME WAS....
Sandy Vasko

In January 1879 Ed Conley, editor of the Wilmington Advocate took a trip to an icehouse to see exactly how it was done. The following was his description of a long lost business.

"On Wednesday morning we were seized with a desire to pass an hour among the icebergs - a sort of pocket edition of icebergs - such as are being packed in rapid succession at the ice houses just south of this city. Once behind Doc. Stinson's nags time and space were annihilated - in just about no time, and there we were gazing upon the broad bosom of the Kankakee, with its white carpeting leading to an almost limitless expanse. The scene is laid at the east end of the big dam, where Messrs. Trott & Swarthout's large icehouses - five in one - are located. (note: Dr. Stinson Trott was then the Mayor of Wilmington.)

Out upon the river was a small army of men and boys; some sawing, some pushing the big cakes; some keeping clear the channel or separating the huge cakes - or perhaps propelling them through the 'straight and narrow path' that leads to the houses. The ice was about 18 inches in thickness - 16 inches of which was clear and solid as could be desired; the sections were sawed into cakes about two feet each way, giving them a weight of about 200 lbs. each.

After due process they arrived at a point perhaps 100 feet from the ice house; here they were floated one by one in rapid succession on to an endless chain work (propelled by a powerful water wheel,) which carried them high in the air and dumped them into an inclined plane tramway, which led into the ice house then in process of being filled. In slid the cakes - five or six in a minute - to be taken charge of by a squad of packers, each provided with a sort of a pike and hook combination, which placed the cakes in a proper position very readily.

It was a slippery work, and it behooved each man to take care of his own shins. When nothing interrupted the packing went on at the rate of about a ton (10 or 11 cakes) in a minute. The capacity of the five compartments is



ON THIN ICE - Cutters harvested ice from local waterways, including the mill race canal in Wilmington where this photo was taken. This crew, like those who worked the Custer Park area of the Kankakee River, probably coveted an ice cover of two feet, compared to the few inches they were cutting.

about 6,000 tons, so that considering the means the filling will not be such a Herculean job after all. The water wheel, which does the hoisting, is an immense saving of manual labor, and to witness its operation is enough to well repay one for a visit to the ice field."

In this article Mr. Conley didn't explain how the ice stayed frozen throughout the coming year. First, the icehouses were built with double walls. Between the walls they used anything they had for insulation, but usually it was straw or shredded paper. Secondly, the ice blocks were packed around with straw as well. Using this method, icehouses could provide Wilmington saloons with cold beer all summer long.

The Wilmington Creamery, which produced tons of butter throughout the year, was also a huge user of ice. In addition the C & A Railroad bought many tons of it to help keep the produce cold on its way to St. Louis or Chicago. However, the industry was short lived. Soon mechanical refrigeration took over.

In that same edition of the Advocate Mr. Conley printed a short poem to do with winter. And with three more months of winter before us, I hope you enjoy them

Ode To A Winter Tools
Oh, the snow plough, the beautiful snow plough,
Butting the drifts that you get through no how,
Nobody thanks you for what you don't do,
Everyone thinks that you ought to go through;
Raving, Craving, Raising a row,
Nobody loves you, you sturdy snow plough

Oh, the snow shoes, the beautiful snowshoes,
Things that no fellow knows just how to use;
Flat as a shingle and broad as they're long,
Awkward to fit in the lines of a song;
Crawling, Sprawling, One little cruise
On you is sufficient, unlovely snow shoes.

Oh the snow shovel, the useful snow shovel,
Welcome alike at the palace and hovel;
Scraping out paths at the first dawn of light,
Rattling across the bleak sidewalks at night,
Raking, Scraping, What in the devil
Would we do with out thee, oh homely snow shovel?



Photo courtesy Warren Miller

REESE VAN DUYN (seated middle) starting outside hitter for the Wilmington Wildcats, recently signed to continue playing volleyball at the collegiate level at Millikin University where she will study nursing. She was joined by her parents David Van Duyn and Megan Van Duyn, along with her siblings Dane Van Duyn, Taylor MacDonald and Neve Van Duyn during the signing.

VanDuyne to play for Big Blue

BY BROOKLYN FLORES
WHS STUDENT REPORTER

Wilmington senior Reese Van Duyn signed a national letter of intent to play volleyball at Millikin University in Decatur, IL. She plans to study nursing while continuing her sport at the Division III school. Van Duyn has been playing volleyball since she was 7 years old. Van Duyn said she wanted to continue playing at the collegiate level, because it helps keep her disciplined in academics and athletics. She also said, "I also love the sport so much and knew from when I was little I wanted to play collegiate volleyball." She said part of her reason for her starting was her two sisters. "While growing up with my two sisters they both played volleyball and I wanted to join in. From going to watch them play at

the varsity level at Wilmington, to the collegiate level, I always trained myself to be as good as them. Looking up to both my sisters having so much fun, I did what any little kid did and I copied them," Reese said. During her time as a Lady Wildcat she was captain her freshman and sophomore year, as well as received all academic honors all four years. Reese helped her team her senior year to a 27-9 record, a Regional Championship, undefeated Conference Champions, which is the first time in Wildcat history and runner up in the Sectional Championship. Van Duyn ended her career with 232 kills, 198 digs, 36 total blocks and 50 aces. Besides being a leader on the court, she is also an outstanding student and was nominated to the Homecoming Court.

"Reese is an amazing player that could fill in different positions when needed to. She always has a smile on her face that lights up a room. I know she is going to succeed at Millikin, and I can't wait to watch her play," commented Wilmington coach Kelly Van Duyn. Reese said she is excited to meet new people in college as well as travel with the team all around three states and build a bond with her teammates and coaches. She chose Millikin because of how supportive and positive the coaches were. She also said she loved the team atmosphere and it has a lot of similarities towards Wilmington volleyball. She recently signed to become a Big Blue athlete in the company of her parents, three siblings, grandmother Sandy Reeves and coach Van Duyn.

Coach Lockwood deserves the honor

BY BROOKLYN FLORES

Todd Lockwood has been coaching track and field for 45 years. He has coached at both Reed-Custer and Wilmington, currently working with the WHS track team.

Recently he was inducted into the ITCCCA's Coaches Hall Of Fame and as a long-distance runner under his tutelage, I believe Coach Lockwood was more than worthy of this induction. He has made an impact on the sport but more so on the lives of so many athletes.

Coach Lockwood is an amazing coach. He has inspired so many athletes to become state contenders, set school records and more. I know I can trust him with helping me come up with a race strategy and he's always there to calm my pre-race nerves. I am confident that he knows what he is talking about when we discuss what I need to do to improve.

But Coach Lockwood isn't only a great coach because he knows so much about the sport but because he genuinely cares about his athletes.

One of the many great things about Coach Lockwood is he notices all his athletes. I remember the year I started track how included I felt simply because he paid the same amount of attention to me, a little freshmen, as he did to all the older, more experienced, talented track and field athletes.

Even though he only coaches track and field he supports his athletes in all they do. Oftentimes, I see him in the stands of football, basketball and volleyball games. He makes sure we know that

he is proud of us not only for our accomplishments in track but those we make in other sports, clubs and things we do.

One thing I admire is that he goes above and beyond his expected coaching duties. There have been countless times he will spend extra time or days to work with individuals who are seeking extra help and practice.

Coach Lockwood has not only made a difference in my running but my life too.

Anyone who's worked with Coach Lockwood also knows his stance on mentality. It's all about overcoming those 6 inches between your ears.

One of the biggest credits I give Coach Lockwood is helping improve my confidence. He's helped me gain the ability to train and practice confidently and to race and compete with confidence.

By helping me improve my thinking before races he has helped me improve my confidence in my day to day life. The strength and confidence I have in my own identity and ability is largely because of him.

Coach Lockwood is part of the reason so many athletes enjoy being in track. His banter and attitude makes the atmosphere of practices and meets more enjoyable for everyone.

Aiden Poulos, an athlete on the track and field team in Wilmington commented, "He's one of the greatest motivators around and makes track feel like more than just running around with a bunch of people."

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A bad decision

WILMINGTON—Who at city hall thought it was a good idea to build a large truck stop within the city limits? And can anything be done to stop this train wreck? Was the traffic taken into consideration? Or noise from nonstop trucks or how this is gonna affect the home values of Waters Edge Subdivision? Should be quite a show for the residents of Waters Edge once it's up and running, plenty of truckers and night time tow-behind camper traffic. Let's see how the police handle crime at our new truck stop. Should be quite a show Wilmington.

See what's happening

BRAIDWOOD—For those of you who believe that one of the mayoral candidate is not running to seek revenge, it must be nice to live with blinders on. This person was let go from his position with the city and now he wants revenge on them and anyone else who remained in their positions. Kissing puppies and hugging kittens for his Facebook followers is what this person is all about. The praise and accolades from the public is what he seeks, not the responsibility of running our local government, increasing business, economic and residential growth or bringing the years of neglected infrastructure and equipment of our city's various departments up to par so that our city employees are able to do their jobs safely and proficiently. In the famous words of former Commissioner Smith, you'd have to be completely totally blind to not see what's going on here.

Divider in chief

BRAIDWOOD—On July 1, 2024 Justice Sotomayor stated unhappily that "the President is now a king above the law" in her dissent of the Supreme Court's immunity ruling. It's also frightening that Trump announced during the election campaign that he intends to become dictator on day one. But it's not surprising considering that Trump holds nothing but disdain for the poor and middle class except to get their vote. Consider Trump's antagonism toward California whose people are suffering incomprehensible tragedy. It's nothing new. Remember how shabby Trump treated Puerto Rico, whose people are U.S. citizens, when 2,975 people died from category 5 Hurricane Rita in 2017? In contrast, remember how well Trump treated the red state of Texas after category 4 Hurricane Harvey killed 103 people one month earlier? Yes, Trump plays favorites and I am in solidarity with those unfortunate people who suffer at Trump's hand. In fact most Americans are adversely affected because freedom of speech has been eroded throughout the country changing the content of newspapers, books and broadcasting. Therefore as Trump takes the oath of office I do not consider Trump my president, neither my king nor my dictator but the divider-in-chief of my country.

Well overdue

BRAIDWOOD—Since the city administrator is getting so many things done before the election coming up, how about the land mine of a hole on Vita Lane and at intersection of Visa Lane and Ridge Street? The road is destroyed completely cracked and damaged. How has this not been repaired as well as so many other streets in town in dire need? Maybe Commissioner Walsh should take a ride and see it since he's in charge of streets and public improvements.

False prophet lost

SHADOW LAKES—Just wondering what good journalistic news station like Newswhacks would be saying if Harris had won and insisted on the flag not being at half staff for her inauguration? P.S. Democrats were not the ones who kicked

and stomped their feet for four years because their false prophet lost the election fair and square. Brian

Long-term benefits

BRAIDWOOD—Thank you to the City of Braidwood for holding the recent town hall meeting. It was extremely informative and provided a lot of great insight as to how attracting business and commerce to a community really works. There's so much more to it than anyone can even imagine. The fact that car dealerships are one of the most sought after businesses because of their huge benefit to the sales tax base of a smaller community like ours speaks volumes about our community and how much we will benefit once the two dealerships open up in town. It just goes to show that sometimes a community has to give a little up front in order to reap the long-term benefits further down the road.

Voters beware

BRAIDWOOD—As of Wednesday, Jan. 22, we have 69 days until the election for mayor, finance and accounts and public health and safety commissioners. Make sure to get out and vote. Mayor Karen Hart is currently filling a vacancy in her position and running in her first election. If elected mayor on April 1 she will be keeping both the current city administrator and the 5th city clerk since 2019. So make your votes count Braidwood residents. Todd Lyons for Mayor and Jim (Moose) Mikel for public health and safety. Let's get Braidwood on track with the correct type of growth like Diamond, Wilmington and Coal City.

A sad man

WILMINGTON—I enjoyed reading the comments in the Sound Off on Jan. 15th regarding President Carter's funeral. I watched the service and it was a very nice tribute. I know President Carter was not perfect, no person is perfect and I always say when my house is clean I can pick up stone and throw it because as the scripture in the Bible says "Yet he who is without sin cast the first stone." The tributes that were said were nice and it was nice to see something told about President Carter or even President Ford's son about the relationship that President Carter and President Ford acquired over the years. To see people smile, laugh and enjoy themselves. Mr. and Mrs. Biden, Mr. Obama, Mr. and Mrs. Bush and Mr. and Mrs. Clinton all had smiles on their face. Mr. Trump sat there with a scowl, like he had a bug up his butt. It was really disgusting that he could not even crack a smile in remembering President Carter. It's really sad I have never seen a man so unhappy in my life.

Pay back time

WILMINGTON—There was a caller from Coal City that stated "election is over people and Trump won fair and square so get over it and stop complaining." Oh just like you did Jan. 6, 2021.

Overpaid appointees

BRAIDWOOD—There is only one employee who has the most to lose in the upcoming election and one would think he's running for mayor. The city administrator is the highest paid employee making a salary of \$10,062 a month with seven weeks paid vacation, given a new city vehicle which he takes home every night, gas paid for by the city and takes every Friday off. His annual salary is \$120,744 before extra benefits. As a single mom I would love to have a job where I'm given seven weeks paid vacation from the day I start, 5% raise every May 1 and take every Friday off to spend a long weekend with my kids, wow. The city clerk is making \$4,546.53 a month, \$80/hr. less than a former qualified long time city clerk with an annual salary of \$54,558. Administration



Department has a budget of \$1,806,000 and I bet taxpayers would love to see where all that money is being spent on.

The sore loser

WILMINGTON—To the Sound Off poster of "Fair and Square." You are correct, Trump won in 2024 fair and square. Biden won in 2020 fair and square. So explain why the 2020 loser tried to overthrow the government but nobody has attempted that after the 2024 election? Republicans are screaming because Michelle Obama is not attending the inauguration. The 2020 loser didn't attend in 2021 and that was OK.? Want more?

Take 'em down

DIAMOND—I'm calling about people leaving their political signs in their yards. The election was two months ago it's time to take them down especially the little house by the railroad tracks in Coal City. We know you support Trump and he won, it's time to put them away. I put my Kamala away and I don't see the purpose of you leaving yours up for so long and it makes the city look tacky. So please take them down.

Suffered with Biden

DIAMOND—Trump did not win because he is so great. He won because the past four years with Biden hurt everyone and there had to be a change one way or another. Kamala could have won until she stated in an interview that she would change nothing that Biden did. That sunk her battleship immediately. So who was left? In January of 2021 when Biden was inaugurated, inflation was at a comfortable 1.4% and the national average price for gas was \$2.33. We all know what happened very soon after that. A couple writers out there stated that Trump does not care about inflation and he could care less about average Americans. I guess that statement applies more to Biden than Trump at this point. What did he do in his four years to end this? I guess he did not care about the average people then. Someone else states that Trump wants to spill American blood. How many wars were there from 2016-2020? How about the Israel-Hamas war? Soon after Trump won the election he gave a stern warning to Hamas to let loose of those hostages before he is inaugurated. A few days before his inauguration Hamas is handing over hostages. Biden could not do that in 15 months? On the world political stage Biden is considered weak. Then the botched Afghan exit where 13 of our troops were killed. Talk about spilling American blood. We suffered with Biden for four years and probably will with Trump too. If you want to hear something positive go talk to the leaders of your town. They understand what we say. Let Trump make his mistakes and call him out on it. Although, as long as you all keep blaming him for Biden's disasters I will be here to remind you of the truth. Your friendly neighborhood Independent, John.

His supporters

WILMINGTON—Not all of Trump's supporters are racists, but all racists support Trump.

Not a clue

COAL CITY—For the person that wanted "transparency," take a look at your own party which gives very limited access to Biden and hid Biden's dementia and failing cognitive issues for years. By the way, check on how many vacation days he took during his term, more than he worked. This just didn't have happen overnight. All he does is just do what someone tells him to say or do. I ask you... who do you think is actually running this country, since Biden doesn't have a clue? This is what really scares me about the Democrats. They hide everything and

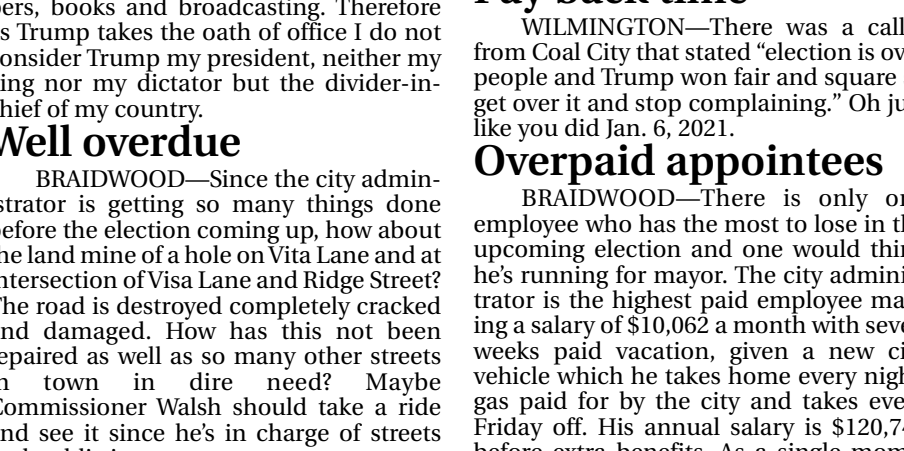
never tell the truth or keep their promises. Give President Trump a chance and then evaluate his performance on immigration, economy, security and strengthening our country on the world stage.

Beware of scammers

WILMINGTON—Many voters chose Trump because they thought he is good for the economy. When Trump became president in 2017, he inherited an economy that was thriving and he continued to run it by favoring the wealthy causing income inequality to soar. And then Covid happened which Trump refused to acknowledge and it exploded across the country. Did you know that President Obama wrote a manual on how to handle pandemics due to his administration's successful elimination of Ebola, the flesh-eating disease? But the spiteful Trump had thrown that manual into the trash, hitting the 'delete' button because he was too stupid to realize he might need it someday. And that's one of the many ways Trump mishandled Covid, driving the economy into the ground and leaving the Biden administration to dig its way out. Furthermore, Trump personally declared bankruptcy six times and no U.S. banks would do business with him except Deutsche bank. And despite his father's help bailing out his failed casinos in which the house always wins, Trump was never a successful businessman but rather a good reality show host. Unfortunately, Americans never discerned that his acting skills serve him well as an imposter. Irene

A vicious cycle

GARDNER—To the Trump supporter saying we're outnumbered, I think he needs to read the page again. Yes, his convicted felon and sexual predator won the election, but it was far from "fair and square." With the help of disinformation, thousands of lies, voter suppression, threats, and of course the help of Russia, China, Hungary, and the rest of his dictator friends, he pulled it off. Oh, and let's not forget the billionaires. The grift has never stopped and the money is just pouring in for him, but it won't help you. It always goes in his pockets. In years to come we'll find out that there were many other cases of voter fraud as you all like to call it. Now that you're happy and about to destroy our country and our Democracy enjoy what is about to come. You won't get what he promised you and you may never get to vote again. You'll be ruled by the billionaires you said you hated. Tax cuts for them will come out of your pocket. We'll lose our insurance, Medicare, Medicaid, Snap, and any other good thing we have. Prices will NOT come down as they were starting to the last four years. You were just so impatient with inflation and the price of eggs (and by the way, the reason is bird flu) you wouldn't believe the truth. So many good things were done in the last four years and we could have made great strides in these next four, but now we'll have to suffer through all of this garbage and hopefully start over again, because that's what we do. Republicans destroy the economy, and Democrats have to come in and clean it up. It's a vicious cycle. So many people died because of how your guy ignored Covid and Biden got us back. It takes time and he did it. What happens when the next pandemic comes along? How many people will die because of him this time? Conspiracy theories instead of science. Stupidity instead of common sense. The rule of law is dead and our Democracy may well be also. He wasn't my president last time and he won't be this time either. The norms are gone and there is only one party on the side of Democracy, and it isn't the Republicans. We will fight again, and we will win honestly. May God help us thru this hell we're entering into, and God bless our troops and Veterans.



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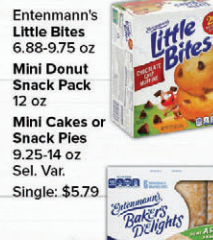


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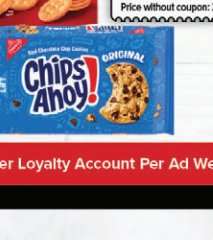
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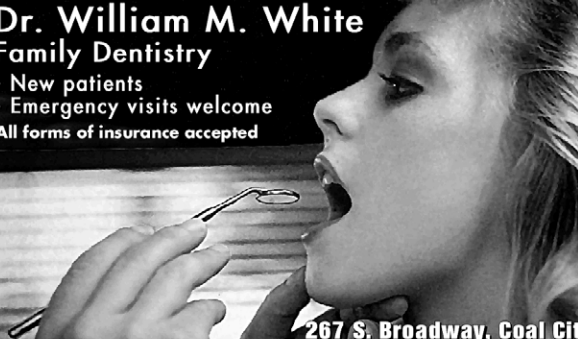
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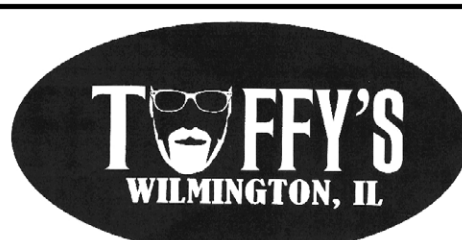
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Madigan should've known better

Former Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan's longtime law firm partner Vincent "Bud" Getzendanner testified in Madigan's defense against numerous federal charges last week.

One of the main themes of Getzendanner's testimony was the property tax firm's process of weeding out clients and potential clients who could pose a conflict of interest to Madigan.

Getzendanner testified "there would be a meeting once or twice a year involving Madigan's statehouse legal staff regarding Madigan & Getzendanner clients," Sun-Times reporter Jon Seidel reported from the courtroom. Getzendanner would also periodically send the firm's client list to some of Madigan's Statehouse staffers so that they could check it against legislation that was currently before the Illinois House, Seidel noted.

The jury was also shown emails from Madigan's legislative staffers to Getzendanner regarding inquiries about the firm's clients, or whether some entities with issues before the legislature were clients.

"There was a constant back and forth between Mike's legislative staff and the law office,"

Getzendanner told jurors, according to Dave Byrnes with Courthouse News.

Getzendanner also testified that he had the final say about whether to bring in clients.

As an example, in a memo shown to jurors from Getzendanner to Madigan, Getzendanner wrote, "No file is accepted and opened until I do a review to determine if the firm's representation would constitute a conflict, or the appearance of a conflict, with your legislative duties," reported the Tribune's Jason Meisner.

Jurors were shown a chart of Madigan clients with notations from various folks about potential conflicts. "Most entries on the chart say, 'no conflict,'" reported Seidel. Madigan attorney Dan Collins highlighted one email that read, "possible appearance of conflict; principal owner of Walton is Neil Bluhm who is principal owner of Rivers Casino. Very thin connection, but err on side of caution."

This thorough and nearly constant vetting process is why the people who thought they knew Madigan well firmly believed that he under-



CAPITOL FACTS
Rich Miller

stood where the legal lines were and that he had never crossed them. Some still believe that's true today.

Clients with land-transfer issues would definitely be screened out, Getzendanner testified, according to Seidel. "That's a category where you absolutely could not take on a client."

And yet, the prosecution has shown jurors evidence that Madigan did, indeed, work on legislation to help a real estate investor by trying to move a Chinatown land transfer bill through the House. The feds also presented evidence that allege a successful transfer would've resulted in legal business for Madigan & Getzendanner from that developer.

The deal was being put together by then-Chicago Ald. Danny Solis, who became a mole for the FBI after being confronted with his own lawbreaking. As I've told you before, Madigan instructed Solis to reach out to Michael McClain to see if he could help. McClain was Madigan's top advisor and the trial's Madigan co-defendant.

Madigan later told Solis that he was considering approaching the Illinois Department of Transportation about the transfer, because the agency was an important part of the process. He then told Solis, "I'm trying to figure out a way to

approach it," suggesting that he was trying to help with the transfer while avoiding leaving his fingerprints.

Madigan suggested at one point that McClain talk to a Senator, then received a briefing from McClain about legislators who were opposing the bill.

At one point, Solis told Madigan that if the House Speaker could "take care" of that Chinatown transfer by the end of spring session, "I'm confident they'll appreciate it and ... sign you up on after May," as their property tax attorney.

OK, wait a second. Didn't Getzendanner testify under oath that he had the final say in taking on new clients and that there was no way a client with a land transfer bill would ever be accepted? And wasn't there a massive and ongoing client vetting process?

It doesn't matter to the feds. Policies can be changed, after all. And they have enough recordings to suggest Madigan was pushing the bill and was being told he'd get a new client out of it.

"One of my regrets is that I had any time spent with Danny Solis," Madigan told jurors, according to the Sun-Times.

The trial is wrapping up as I write this. But whatever happens, Madigan should've known better than to have ever worked with Solis. He brought all this on himself.

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

KofC Youth free throw contest to be held Jan. 25

All boys and girls ages 10 through 14 are invited to participate in the local level of competition of the Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship.

The Wilmington Knights of Columbus #11149 will host the local contest on Saturday, Jan. 25. Registration will be 8:30 a.m. and competition will begin at 9 a.m. in the St. Rose Parish gymnasium, 626 S. Kankakee St., Wilmington.

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

The Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship is spon-

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

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

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

Entry forms will be available at the contest or contact Eli Geiss at 779-227-5075.

Final week to recycle your used Christmas lights

The Braidwood Lions Club is collecting used/non-working strands of Christmas lights thru Jan. 31.

Collection bins will be located inside Whitmore Ace Hardware in Braidwood and Coal City. The Lions will also accept them during the club's Christmas Tree sale fundraiser during hours of operation.

All proceeds from the recycling will benefit the Braidwood Lions

Club's sight and sound services for the visually and hearing impaired residing in the Braidwood, Godley and Shadow Lakes communities.

Please place all strands of lights into plastic bags before placing them into the collection bins.

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Those claims cattle causing global warming

Dear EarthTalk: I've heard that cattle cause a large share of global methane emissions that fuel global warming. What can be done besides reducing or eliminating meat consumption?

- N.V.



Methane is a greenhouse gas that is 28 times more potent than carbon dioxide (CO2) when trapping heat in the atmosphere and is responsible for nearly half of the 1.1-degree Celsius increase in global temperatures. The gas is short-lived and gets broken down into CO2 and water vapor after a decade.

Cattle are ruminants: their stomachs allow them to digest fiber-rich foods like grass and hay. This produces methane, expelled as gas when cattle belch. Every year, a single cow will belch around 220 pounds

of methane, which is oxidized to CO2, absorbed by plants and reintroduced into cows' diets.

One of the most promising ways to reduce methane is altering cows' diets. Methane is primarily produced by the digestion of fiber, so feeding cattle grains and fats like corn and barley may lower methane output. A study led by CU Boulder, NIST, and Kansas State University explored this idea, feeding cows sorghum, a more sustainable crop requiring less water and fertilizer.

Initial findings reveal minor differences in emissions, but further research will determine if these changes are statistically significant. Another approach, tested by scientists at UC Davis, involved adding one percent red seaweed to cattle feed, which reduced methane emissions by up to 60 percent without affecting milk production.

Another potential solution is genetic selection. Cattle living on the same farm, eating identical amounts of feed, can produce different amounts of methane because of certain genetic traits. Scientists are exploring possibilities of



ONE OF THE most promising ways to reduce methane is altering cows' diets.

breeding for these traits or breeding cattle with bulls to reduce emissions.

Additionally, methane reducing feed additives, which incorporate less than one percent of cattle diets, can interrupt the methane-formation process and reduce emissions. However, certain additives require further approval for animal health. Methane-reducing vaccines are also a viable solution that requires further testing, and are unlikely to be available before the end of the decade.

Changing management practices is expensive and many farmers have no economic incentives to

adopt such methods.

Therefore, many countries and organizations are developing a Payment for Environmental Services (PES) program to financially support these changes. Economists argue that these programs need to be tailored to meet the specific funding needs of farmers across different regions. Emissions intensity varies greatly across different countries based on their income level, with 6-16 times more intense emissions in lower income countries, due to less efficient systems.

Anyone can make a difference by supporting sustainable agriculture,

Gas prices creeping up, but there are still a few bargains

Average gasoline prices in Illinois have risen 2.5 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.23/g, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,378 stations in Illinois. Prices in Illinois are

0.9 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 2.1 cents per gallon higher than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has increased 8.1 cents in the last week and

stands at \$3.6 per gallon.

Locally, gas prices are creeping up, though you can still get gas for \$2.98/g at BP on Lorenzo Rd., Wilmington. However, it will cost you \$3.21/g at Circle K.

In Braidwood, expect to pay \$3.14/g at Casey's all or \$3.39/g at Marathon.

Coal City's prices have spiked. Gas at Shell is \$3.27/g and \$3.29/g at BP.

Nor will you save much by traveling to Morris where gas runs \$3.19 at BP up to \$3.29 at Shell.

Finally, Bourbonnais has gas for \$2.99/g at Road Ranger, but it spikes up to \$3.19/g at other locations.

"It was only a matter of time before the national average began to rise, with oil prices last week reaching their highest level since

July. Diesel prices have also jumped, driven by cold weather that has boosted heating oil demand," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy.

"In addition, with President Trump's inauguration, there could be price impacts depending on the executive orders he is preparing to sign. We'll be closely monitoring potential impacts from any orders, while the threat of tariffs and possible retribution from Canada remain top of mind."

The cheapest you'll find gas in Illinois is \$2.84/g while the highest was \$4.49/g, a differ of \$1.65/g.

Wilmington Freemason's chili cook-off seeks entries

The Wilmington Freemasons Lodge #208 will be having their 15th annual Chili Cook-Off and bake sale to fund the Pedals for Progress program/bookfair for Wilmington schools on Sunday, Feb. 2 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Tasting and a bowl of house chili \$10 for adults, \$5 for kids over 11 and free

for kids 11 and under. There will also be \$1 hot dogs available.

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

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

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OBITUARIES

Norman Lutes



COAL CITY—Norman Dale Lutes, 76, of Coal City, passed away on Thursday, Jan. 16, 2025 at his home.

He was born on July 18, 1948 in Newport, AR to Clyde Lutes and Elsie (McSpadden) Latham. Norman served his country honorably in the United States Army during the Vietnam Era. He married Belinda J. Moore on May 4, 1981 in Pontiac, IL. Together, they raised their daughters. Norman retired in 2012 after 34 years at Akzo Nobel as a Lead Maintenance Mechanic. He loved helping his family, neighbors and friends.

He is survived by his wife of 43 years, Belinda Lutes; his daughters, Bryn (Rene` A. Garza) Lutes and Afton (Andy Vota) Lutes; his grandchildren: Westin Serena, Wyleigh Serena, Monique Waddell, Kenneth R. Smith and Kenneth E. Bannon III; his great-grandchildren: Cadence Kent, Kash Smith, Kye Smith, Joseph Bannon



and Rhonda Bannon; his sister, Becky (Dean) Haldorson and many nieces, nephews, brothers and sisters-in-law.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his daughter, Rhonda Swanson; his brother, Douglas Lutes and his brother, Troy Lutes (in infancy).

Cremation rites have been accorded.

Memorial Visitation will be from 2 p.m. until the time of the memorial service at 5 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 23, 2025 at Ferrari Funeral Service, 1044 Ferrari Dr., in Coal City.

Inurnment will be private at Braceville Gardner Cemetery.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guestbook at www.ferrari-funeral.com.

Ferrari Funeral Services of Coal City are entrusted with arrangements.

Karen Shroba

Karen Rae Shroba, 76, formerly of Wilmington, passed away on Jan. 11, 2025.

Karen was born in Joliet on Dec. 14, 1948. She attended Catholic schools throughout her life, honored to be a graduate of the first co-ed class at Providence Catholic High School in New Lenox in 1966. Shortly after high school, she met the love of her life, Larry. Karen and Larry were married in the fall of 1973 and welcomed their children, Kevin and Angie shortly afterwards. Karen was just as strong as a supporter of Larry, as he was for her. They made a good team. They spent over 40 years at the home Larry lovingly built for them to raise their family in. She, along with Larry, gave Kevin and Angie an idyllic childhood filled with so many happy memories of time on the river, camping, vacations to Florida, all day pool days, and inside the walls of the family home.

Karen was happy to be a stay-at-home mom for many years. This allowed her to cart Kevin and Angie off to their multiple activities and volunteer her time as Cub Scout Leader and Brownie Leader. Once the kids were old enough to be "Latchkey Kids," Karen returned to the work force. She worked for many years at a local bank, close enough to allow her to run home over lunch break and check in. She also had many happy years as an administrative assistant at Horseshoe Casino. Her final place of employment was at Riverside Diabetes Center, where she made many friends and genuinely enjoyed helping the patients who came for appointments. Her pleasant nature and easy smile were appreciated and a welcome sight for many patients. She was also very active in the Women's Club at Providence Catholic High School when her children were enrolled.

In her retirement, Karen loved to travel to Florida where each year she and Larry became snow birds. They spent time visiting her only sister there, as well as making



many new friends. Serious games of Scrabble, trips to the beach, and late nights with multi-course dinners and drinks were the norm. She and Larry also spent time exploring areas of South Carolina, South Dakota, Arizona, Wisconsin and Michigan. She'd already be planning the next trip while on their current vacation.

Karen was a true friend to many. She was described as loving, fun, and always welcoming. She didn't hesitate to step in and help a friend in need. Karen would never turn down a shopping trip and spent many years braving the Black Friday crowds with her special friends: Lynn, Mary and Chris. She will be dearly missed by beloved family friend of over 50 years, Nancy. Karen also loved a "fancy" cup of coffee and any kind of dessert, especially chocolate. Even as her health failed, her eyes would light up at the mention of chocolate. She loved gathering family and friends together to share a meal.

Karen was a loyal wife, caring mother, and doting grandma who will be missed fiercely. Heartfelt thanks are extended to the entire staff at Vista Grande Villa and Tammy at Careline Hospice. We appreciate the love and respect you always showed.

She is survived by her strongest supporter, her husband of 51 years, Lawrence (Larry). She was the proud mother to son, Kevin (Becky) Shroba and daughter, Angie (Ted) Lefere. Her favorite title was "Grandma" and she will be greatly missed by her grandchildren: Andrew and Daniel Shroba and Maggie, Helen, Luke and James Lefere.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Elmer and Pauline Weese and older sister, Lynn Weese.

The family is having a private, local service. Karen's life will be celebrated with family and friends at a later date in Illinois and details will be forthcoming.

Desnoyer Funeral Home in Jackson, MI is entrusted with arrangements.

Robert Walsh

COAL CITY—Robert Joseph Walsh, 72, of Coal City, passed away Saturday, Jan. 18, 2025, at his home.

Born Oct. 26, 1952, in Joliet, Bob was the son of Kenneth and Elsie (Unger) Walsh. He was raised and educated in Coal City and graduated from Coal City High School with the class of 1970. On June 24, 1978, he married the love of his life, Susan at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Roman Catholic Church in Coal City, and together they shared 46 years of marriage.

His career began immediately after graduation and never truly stopped. Bob started his professional journey at Fluor Construction, Reichhold Chemical and Wolven TV + Appliance, gaining a wealth of experience before branching out on his own. In 1986, he founded Walsh Appliance Repair, quickly becoming a trusted figure in the community. He was the first-person people called when things went wrong with their appliances. No matter the time of day or night, Bob was always there to lend a hand, offering his services with unmatched generosity and dedication. His reputation for reliability and kindness was well-known, and he became a beloved fixture in the lives of many; whether it be fixing an appliance or providing much needed additional space at The Diamond Self Storage.

Outside of his work, Bob had a deep love for sports, particularly his local Chicago teams. He was an avid supporter of the Bears and the White Sox, always keeping up with their games and cheering them on. Sports weren't his only interest, though. Bob also relished spending quality time with his family at the Coal City Area Club, where they created many cherished memories. He had a deep appreciation for the outdoors, and as an avid hunter and fisherman, he often spent afternoons enjoying nature. Whether casting a line or simply enjoying the peace of the outdoors, those moments were precious to him.

Above all, Bob's family was his greatest joy. He was a proud father and an even prouder grandfather, always attending his grandchildren's extracurricular activities, particularly their sports events. To his family, Bob was more than just a relative—he was a steadfast, generous, and fun-loving figure, someone they could always count on. His dependability, compassion, and selflessness were qualities that defined



him, making him not just a loved one, but a true gentleman in every sense of the word. He was the kind of person who would drop everything to help others, and his legacy is one of kindness, loyalty, and unwavering support.

Survivors include his wife, Susan Walsh, of Coal City; two children: Kelli (Peter) Ogrodnik, Christopher (Allison) Walsh; five grandchildren: Madeline Ogrodnik, Peter Ogrodnik, John Ogrodnik, Harrison Walsh, Ace Walsh; his mother-in-law, Gloria Zerboglio; one sister, Ann Stansberry; two sisters-in-law, Lori (John) Halliday, Julie (Darren) Stiles, and numerous nieces and nephews, as well as several cousins.

Bob was preceded in death by his parents; one brother, Kenneth (Murphy) Walsh; his father-in-law, Robert Zerboglio and one brother-in-law, Robert Stansberry Jr.

The family will receive friends for a visitation at Reeves Funeral Home, 75 N. Broadway St., one block north of Illinois Route 113 in Coal City on Wednesday, Jan. 22, 2025, from 4 p.m. until 7 p.m., and again on Thursday, Jan. 23, 2025 at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Roman Catholic Church, 195 S. Kankakee St. in Coal City from 10 a.m. until time of funeral service at 11 a.m. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated with Father Josh Miller presiding and Deacon William Dunn assisting.

Pallbearers will be: Adam Walsh, Davis Walsh, Kyle Halliday, Colin Stiles, Peter Ogrodnik and Bobby Stansberry III. Honorary Pallbearers will be: Earl Fatlan, Ed Unger, David McCluckie and Raymond Berta.

Cremation rites will be accorded following the services, and a private inurnment will take place at a later date.

Preferred memorials may be made out to Lightways Hospice or to Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Roman Catholic Church.

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

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

Gregory G. Fisher

WILMINGTON—Gregory G. Fisher, 75, of Wilmington, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2025 at OSF St. Clare Medical Center in Princeton, IL.

Born on June 24, 1949, in St. Paul, MN, Greg was a son of George Harrison and Janet (Dike) Fisher. He spent his early years in Ivanhoe, MN, before moving with his family to Fort Madison, IA, in 1963. There, Greg graduated from Aquinas High School.

In 1980, Greg relocated to Wilmington, where he planted lasting roots. Known for his culinary skills, he initially worked as a chef before joining the family business, The Free Press Newspapers, where he skillfully managed the information technology department. Greg's passion for technology led him to attend the DeVry Institute of Technology in Chicago, and he remained a trusted resource for staying ahead in the ever-evolving tech world.

Greg's love of cooking was a defining feature of his life. He generously shared his talents with various organizations, finding joy in serving others through his culinary expertise. In addition to his love for food, Greg delighted in the timeless charm of movies.

Survivors include his siblings: Dr.



Marc (Kris) Fisher, of Manteno; Alan (Suzanne) Fisher, of St. Charles; Eric (Janet) Fisher, of Wilmington; Jeffrey (Mary Theresa) Fisher, of Coal City; Joy Africano, of Buffalo, NY; Janet Sue (Thomas) Schatz, of Lemont and Beth (James) Brace, of Westmont; 21 nieces and nephews and numerous great-nieces and great-nephews.

Greg was preceded in death by his parents.

The family will receive friends for a visitation at Saint Rose Catholic Church, 604 S. Kankakee St. in Wilmington on Thursday, Jan. 23, 2025 from 10 a.m. until time of funeral service at 11 a.m. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated with Reverend Sebastian Gargol presiding.

Burial will follow in Mt. Olivet Catholic Cemetery in Wilmington, where Greg will be laid to rest with his parents.

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

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

Thomas Murray



HAZEL CREST—Thomas "Tom" Murray, 83, of Hazel Crest, IL, formerly of Wilmington, passed away Monday, Jan. 13, 2025 at Charter Senior Living in Hazel Crest.

Born Aug. 26, 1941 in Joliet, Thomas Henry was the son of Harold and Martha (Rowe) Murray. He was raised and educated in Lockport and graduated from Lockport Township High School with the class of 1959. Tom then attended Joliet Junior College before enlisting in the United States Army, serving honorably from 1963 to 1965. On June 12, 1976, he married Angela P. Jangula in Channahon, and together they made their home in Wilmington.

Tom worked for the Exxon Mobil Joliet Refinery as an operator for 23 years until he formally retired. He attended Saint Rose Catholic Church in Wilmington, and will be remembered for his mechanical inclinations. If something was broken or not quite working just right, he had the natural talent and determination to fix it. Tom was very content to retire and spend time on his mini farm and work out in his garage. Above all else, he was a husband, father, and grandfather, who provided for them



the best he could and set a great example for those who were dear to him.

Survivors include his wife, Angela Murray, of Hazel Crest; four children: Matthew Murray, of Conway, AR; Kathryn Murray (Charlie Corrigan), of LaGrange Park, IL; Daniel (Candice), of Hensley, AR and David (Jennifer) Murray, of Braidwood, as well as nine grandchildren, one great-grandchild, and two sisters: Kay (the late Jerry) Stonitsch, of Florida and Jane (Don) Carter, of Osage Beach, MO.

Tom was preceded in death by his parents.

Funeral services were held Monday, Jan. 20, 2025 at Baskerville Funeral Home in Wilmington. Burial followed at Woodlawn Memorial Park in Joliet where Tom was laid to rest with his parents.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guest book at www.ReevesFuneral.com, upload photographs, and share Thomas' memorial page via social media.

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

Peter F. Runions Sr.

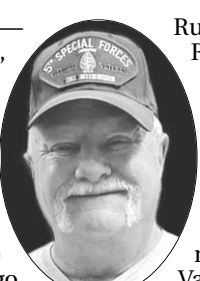


WILMINGTON—Peter F. Runions Sr., 72, of Wilmington, passed away unexpectedly on Sunday, Jan. 19, 2025 at Ascension St. Joseph Medical Center in Joliet.

Born March 6, 1952 in Chicago, Peter Francis was a son of Charles Sr. and Agnes (McCue) Runions. He was raised in Chicago and graduated from Fanger High School with the class of 1970. Pete enlisted in the United States Army and was proud to be a member of the 5th Airborne Special Forces Group. During his military service, he was a tunnel rat and even acted as the personal driver to General William Westmoreland.

Pete worked as a car salesman for many years at Mancari's Chrysler Jeep Dodge in Crestwood, IL, and in his later years he worked as process server and as a volunteer cross guard for the Reed-Custer School District in Braidwood. He enjoyed playing in his regular APA Pool League, starting at the Wilmington VFW Post and continuing to play at several other establishments in the area. He loved working on cars and going for bike rides, either bicycles or motorcycles. Pete will be most remembered as a true family man, devoting himself to raising his kid and spoiling his grandchildren.

Survivors include his wife, Christine Runions, of Wilmington, who he married on June 1, 1995; five children: Nicholas (Annette) Runions, of New Lenox; Joshua



Runions, of Orland Park; Tony Runions, of Wilmington; Eric (Lisa) Runions, of Coal City and Peter F. Runions Jr., of Wilmington; three grandchildren: Dominic, Madison and Lilly; his mother-in-law, Beatrice Blaha and sister-in-law, Kathy Blaha, both of Oak Lawn, IL and several nieces and nephews, including Carol Vanderploeg.

Pete was preceded in death by his parents, and his father-in-law, Henry Blaha; three siblings: Patrick Runions, Charles Runions Jr., and Becky Best and three nieces: Cynthia, Char, and Connie.

The family wishes to extend their most sincere appreciation to Dr. Daniele De Girolami for his years of friendship and care to Pete and his family.

The family will receive friends for a visitation at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 E. Kahler Rd., in Wilmington on Friday, Jan. 24, 2025 from 4 p.m. until the Celebration of Life at 7 p.m.

Cremation rites will be accorded following the services and Pete will be laid to rest at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood.

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

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

Shane Pampuch

DIAMOND—Shane James Pampuch, 56, of Diamond, passed away on Friday, Jan. 17, 2025 at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago.

Born on July 1, 1968 in Joliet, he was the son of James and Judith (nee Moats) Pampuch. On March 27, 1993, he married Lynn Crompt at the First Presbyterian Church in Braidwood and together they built a life revolving around their love of each other and their family. He was a laborer for nearly 27 years at Ardex Americas in Bourbonnais and was also employed at Berkots in Wilmington as a stocker.

A Chicago Bears fan, he also enjoyed watching the old classic TV shows. He enjoyed fishing. He was a family man and more than anything enjoyed spending time with his wife, children and grandchildren, especially family game nights. Shane leaves behind a legacy of love and kindness that will be felt for generations. He is dearly missed by all who loved him.

Surviving are his wife, Lynn Pampuch; children: Jamie Crompt (Gary Donnelly), of Monroe Center, IL; Kaitlin Pampuch, of



Diamond; Michael Pampuch (Alex Michalak), of Norfolk, VA and Madison Pampuch, of Diamond; grandchildren, Bradyn and Aubrey Donnelly; mother, Judith Pampuch, of Joliet; sister, Shilo (Pat) Canning, of Paducah, KY; brother, Shannon Pampuch (Pat Mayfield), of Joliet and beloved dogs, Lexi and Rosie.

Preceding him in death were his father, James Pampuch and grandparents.

Cremation rites have been accorded. Memorial visitation will be held at R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory on Saturday, Jan. 25, 2025 beginning at 10 a.m. until time of funeral service beginning at 1 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be directed to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

For more information and to visit his 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 has been entrusted with arrangements.

OBITUARIES

H. Paul Fruland

MORRIS—H. Paul Fruland, 89, of Morris, passed away peacefully on Jan. 18, 2025, surrounded by his loving family.

Paul was the beloved husband of his high school sweetheart, the late Charlene Fruland and a devoted father to DiAnn Hillesland, Mike Fruland, Heidi Wozniak (Bob), and Eric Fruland (Ann). He was a proud "Bumpa" to 10 grandchildren: Zachary (Claire) Hillesland, Haley (Noah) Hirshman, Michael (Ali) Fruland, Joshua Fruland, Lauren (John) Rerucha, Wyatt Fruland, Meg (Jackson) Mihevc, Matt Wozniak, Lila Fruland and Will Fruland and six great-grandchildren: Ava Kulka, Owen and Hadley Fruland, Jax and Josie Rerucha, and Lottie Hillesland. He was also a cherished uncle to Ed (Jan) Harseim, Carlene (Dave) Reid, Tom Harseim, Amy (Patrick) Snow and Brian Fruland.

Born on March 19, 1935, in Morris, he was the son of Earl and Charlotte Fruland. He was the older brother to Doug and Dick (Kathy). Paul graduated from Morris Community High School in 1953, attended Northern Illinois University and later pursued studies at Worsham College of Mortuary Science. He joined his father as the funeral director at Fruland Funeral Home and served the community with compassion until his retirement. He also served on the Board of Directors at the Morris Savings and Loan for many years.

A man of unwavering faith, Paul was a devout member of Bethlehem Lutheran Church, where he served as an usher for over 70 years, rarely missing a Sunday. He was known for his deep love of family and always put them before himself. Paul's life was a true reflection of his moral compass, guiding those around him with kindness, humility, and love.

Paul's heart was full of pride for his Norwegian heritage, and this was only second to his hometown, which he referred to as the "garden spot of the world." His daily

routine included a 38-minute walk and daily coffee with his lifelong friends, a tradition that spanned more than 50 years. There, he joked that discussions revolved around sports when they were young, politics in midlife, and health in their later years. He was an avid Redskin fan, known for walking the sidelines. He enjoyed classic movies, especially his favorite, It's a Wonderful Life—a film that reflected his small town values. To his family, Paul was George Bailey, always ready to lend a hand, offer a word of wisdom, and show up for every occasion, no matter how big or small.

He was preceded in death by his parents, wife, Charlene; brother, Doug, and son-in-law, Dan Hillesland. Paul leaves behind a legacy that will live on through his family, friends, and all who had the privilege of knowing him. Simply put, Paul was the best son, brother, husband, father, grandfather, uncle, friend and neighbor.

The family will receive friends for a visitation at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 202 W. Jefferson St. in Morris on Jan. 28, 2025, from 10 a.m. until time of funeral service at 12 p.m. Pastor Patrick Lohse will officiate and interment will follow in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Morris.

A special thank you goes out to Carlene and Dave Reid and Ed Harseim for their above and beyond generosity and support over the last several years.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that donations be made to Operation St. Nick or Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

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

Funeral services and arrangements have been made under the direction and care of Reeves, Baskerville and Fruland Funeral Homes.

Mildred Dyer

MORRIS—Mildred "Millie" Margaret Dyer (née Weitz), 83, of Morris, passed away peacefully in her sleep on Jan. 19, 2025 at Arcadia Nursing Home.

Born July 31, 1941, in Morris, Millie was the daughter of Herb and Genevieve "Toots" Weitz. She was a graduate of Morris Community High School with the class of 1959. She went on to further her education at Illinois State University, graduating in 1963 with a bachelor's degree in education.

Millie married Harold Schofield in 1963. As they made their home in various cities in Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin, they had three children: Sally, Steve and Lisa.

She returned to Morris in January 1983, where she attained her master's degree in curriculum and instruction at Illinois State University and dedicated her career to teaching Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd graders for 17 years. She loved her students, especially finding joy in singing silly songs, helping with crafts, and finding unique Halloween costumes.

Millie married the love of her life, Hank Dyer, in June 1994, with whom she spent 17 wonderful years. She loved spending time with her family, friends, and with her dogs and cat. She had a very good sense of humor and a wonderful laugh. She enjoyed knitting, was an avid reader, and was an excellent baker.

She was a long-time member of the First United Methodist Church of Morris, where she served as the Handbell Director for many years and volunteered for various programs, including PADS and St. Vincent's Table. With a passion for helping others, she served as a County Board Member and on its various committees for 20 years. She also participated with the Grundy County Retired Teachers Association, the Grundy County Historical

Society, the Grundy County Republican Women's Group, and other community groups.

Millie touched many lives in her lifetime, and her legacy will still live on for many years to come.

Millie is survived by her children: Sally (Roger) Hausken, Steve (Amy) Schofield and Lisa (Patrick) Simpson. She was a proud grandmother to Kate (Glenn Tallar) Hausken, Lauren (Ethan) Barse, Amanda Schofield, Sarah Schofield, and Michael Schofield, and she was blessed with great-grandchildren: Caleb and Myles Barse, Vivian and Lance Tallar. Millie is also survived by her sister, Judy (Walt) Roll, numerous cousins, nieces and nephews.

Preceding her in death were her parents, Herb and Toots Weit; her husband, Hank Dyer and many beloved pets.

The family will receive friends at the First United Methodist Church, 118 W. Jackson St. in Morris on Saturday, Jan. 25, 2025 from 9 a.m. until time of funeral service at 11 a.m. with Rev. Dr. Keck Mowry officiating.

A private family burial will take place in Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood.

Memorial donations can be made to the First United Methodist Church, 118 W. Jackson St., Morris, IL 60450 or the Pine Bluff Animal Hospital, 7995 E. Pine Bluff Rd., Morris, IL 60450.

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

Funeral services and arrangements have been made under the direction and care of Reeves, Baskerville and Fruland Funeral Homes.

Lois A. Newell

MORRIS—Lois A. Newell, 92, of Morris, passed away Friday, Jan. 17, 2025 at Serenity Care in Morris.

Born May 3, 1932 in Deer Park, IL, Los Arlene was the daughter of Sigurd and Delia (Voll) Ostby. She was raised and educated in Serena, IL where she graduated from high school with the class of 1950. On June 28, 1960 Lois married Elmer Newell in Morris where together they built their home and raised their family.

She made her family her number one priority, working hard to raise the children and maintain the family home. Lois was a familiar face at Dairy Queen in Morris where she worked part-time for 25 years, and hired out her ironing services to help make ends meet. She was a long time member of Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Morris and featured her lovely singing voice with the Sweet Adeline Ladies singing group. Lois took pleasure in hand crafts such as latch hooking and crochet, and would often collaborate with her husband painting the wooden crafts he would create.

She could be described as "an angel on Earth," whose giving nature and generous spirit was readily available for anyone in need. Lois' happy disposition was infectious, often able to brighten anyone's day simply by being in her presence. She loved her family dearly, especially her grandchildren, and though it is difficult to say goodbye to her, all can find comfort that she is reunited with her beloved Elmer.

Survivors include her three children: Cathy (Dan) Odell and Pam (the late Chris) Jonesen, both of Morris and Brian (Vicki)

Newell, of Newark, IL; seven grandchildren: Nicholas (Tara) Odell, Ben Odell, Pete Odell, Nikki Hardecopf (Eric Bebar), Brandon Newell (Missy Pumphrey), Ryan (Katie) Newell and Brianna (Eric) Koester; nine great-grandchildren: Tayton, Kendon, Brayden, Gannon, Bryson, Kaden, Keeli, Colton and Alex; one sister-in-law, Loretta (the late Marion) Ostby, of Marseilles and one brother-in-law, Richard Newell, of Los Angeles, CA and several nieces and nephews.

Lois was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, one son, Albert Newell, and two grandsons: Albert Jr. and Josh Newell; and two brothers: Harry (Kathy) Ostby and Dale (Carol) Ostby.

Per Lois' wishes, cremation rites are being accorded.

The family will receive friends for a memorial visitation at Fruland Funeral Home, 121 W. Jefferson St., in Morris on Monday, Jan. 27, 2025 from 10 a.m. until the time of memorial service at 12 p.m. Pastor Steve Larson will officiate, and burial will follow at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Lois' memory to the family for distribution to local charities of their choosing.

Family and friends are encouraged to log onto www.FrulandFuneralHome.com to sign the online guest book, upload photographs, and share Lois' memorial page via social media.

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

John Mikula

GOOSE LAKE—John Mikula, 84, of Goose Lake, formerly of Lockport, IL, passed away Friday, Jan. 17, 2025 at his home.

Born Aug. 18, 1940 in Lockport, John Raymond was the son of John and Victoria (Dobosz) Mikula. He was raised in Lockport and graduated from Lockport Township High School. John worked for Caterpillar Tractor Company in Joliet for 35 years until he retired in 1995, and then owned and operated Victoria's Antique Shop in Coal City for many years. He thoroughly enjoyed antiques and going to flea markets, selling every year at Dwight Harvest Days, and even learned how to sell goods and discover great finds on eBay.

John bought his property in Goose Lake in 1972, and built his home from the ground up and moved in 1974. He had a natural instinct for craftsmanship, particularly carpentry, and used his skills not only to build his home, but also remodel several additional homes. John was a member of the Goose Lake Club and Coal City Area Club, as well as the Fraternal Order of Eagles and Loyal Order of Moose in Morris. He was quick with a joke for every occasion, was an avid Chicago Cubs and Bears fan, and was always up for a game of cards or solving puzzles. Many memories were made staying at Fitzgerald's Motel in Wisconsin Dells, where remembered as one of their favorite families.

Survivors include his wife, Sharon Mikula, of Goose Lake; five children: Amber Mikula, of Plainfield; Angela (the late David) Stirbis, of Ottawa; John (Sue) Mikula, Jr., of Warner Robins, GA and Joseph (Tina) Mikula and James Mikula,

both of Morris; one step-son, Donald (Laura) Bedford, of Waterloo, IL; 12 grandchildren: Ashley (Rusty) Fosnaugh, Kourtne Huddleston, Corey (Megan) Mikula, Kammiroen (Phillip) Reilly, Kelsey (Ryan) Boese, Chayancze Stirbis, Joshua Mikula, Caitlin Mikula, John "Jack" Mikula, Loren Mikula, Austin Bedford and Nicholas Bedford; nine great-grandchildren: Blake and Luke Fosnaugh, Brooke Huddleston, Lydia and Zoi Mikula, Creed and Blare Reilly, and Nora and Tucker Boese; one sister, Carol (the late Leon) Bazzarone, of Coal City; one brother-in-law, Alan (Judi) Bachert, of Wildwood, MO and several nieces and nephews.

John was preceded in death by his parents and one sister, Jacqueline (Howard) Mau.

Per John's wishes, cremation rites are being accorded.

The family will receive friends for a memorial visitation at Peace Lutheran Church, 101 Candlelight Drive in Morris on Saturday, Jan. 25, 2025 from 9 a.m. until the time of memorial service at 12 p.m.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in John's memory to: Grundy County P.A.D.S., Grundy County We Care, or to the Grundy County Community Foundation.

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

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

John P. Marshall



WILMINGTON—John P. Marshall, 81, of Wilmington, and formerly of Chicago, passed away unexpectedly on Friday, Jan. 17, 2025 at Ascension St. Joseph Medical Center in Joliet.

Born May 18, 1943, in Chicago, John Patrick was a son to John and Sophie (Strzemp) Marshall. He was raised and educated in Chicago and went on to honorably serve in the United States Army. John worked as a surveyor with Local 130 until retirement. He enjoyed photography, music, and collecting coins, rocks, gemstones, and fossils.

A devoted grandfather, John cherished time with his grandkids and will be remembered for his humor, simple nature, and love of life's small joys.

Survivors include his son and daughter-in-law, John C. and Andrea Marshall, of

Ocala, FL; four grandchildren: Alexander "A.J.," Juliana, Blake and Joshua and his half-sister, Debbie Ivankowski, of Tinley Park, IL.

John was preceded in death by his parents and one brother, Ronald.

Cremation rites have been accorded, and he will be laid to rest in Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood with military honors at a later date.

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

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

Georgia Sewall

ELWOOD—Georgia Sue Sewall, 94, of Elwood, passed away Thursday, Oct. 17, 2024 in Elm Grove, WI.

Born Jan. 29, 1930 in Chicago, Georgia was a daughter of Alois and Vivian (Millard) Haid. She was raised and educated in Downers Grove, IL, and on June 24, 1950 she married Robert F. Sewall in Chicago.

Professionally, Georgia contributed her skills to the Chicago Tribune's advertising department as a sales representative, later serving as an Administrative Assistant at Lewis University. Known for her expertise as a seamstress, she dedicated time to independent work, helping those in need of her craft.

Georgia was a committed community member, attending Elwood Community Church, and taking part in both the Elwood History Club and the Jackson Twilighters Club. Her dedication to local history and honoring the memory of Civil War veterans was notable; she collaborated with the Veteran's Administration to restore and replace neglected headstones, ensuring these soldiers were remembered with dignity. Additionally, Georgia was passionate about genealogy and enjoyed various hand crafts, particularly cross-stitch and embroidery.

Georgia's devotion to family, history, and community, along with her love for crafting, left a lasting legacy for all who knew her.

Survivors include her three sons:

Steven (Sharon) Sewall, of Brookfield, WI; Mark (Nga) Sewall, of Georgetown, TX and Paul (Laura) Sewall, of Haslet, TX; five grandchildren: Nicole (Ben) Miller, of Knoxville, TN; Jennifer Sewall, of Grand Junction, CO; Jillian (Billy) Thomas, of Haslet, TX; Bethany (Daniel) Gallagher, of Peotone and Megan Sewall, of Norman, OK, as well as seven great-grandchildren and one sister, Jane (the late Joseph) Srail, of Statesville, NC.

Georgia was preceded in death by her parents and her husband; one brother, Roger Haid, and her brother and sister-in-law, Ralph Sewall and MaryAnn Sewall.

Per her wishes, cremation rites have been accorded.

The family will receive friends for a memorial visitation Jan. 28, 2025 at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 E. Kahler Rd., in Wilmington from 10 a.m. until the time of the memorial service at 11:30 a.m.

Inurnment will follow the service at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood where Georgia will be laid to rest with her late husband.

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

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

David J. Ligocki

CRYSTAL LAKE—David J. Ligocki, 65, of Crystal Lake, IL, passed away Tuesday, Jan. 14, 2025, at Northwestern Central DuPage Hospital in Winfield, IL.

Born March 14, 1959, in Chicago, David was a son of John and Regina Ligocki. He was raised in Schaumburg, IL and graduated from Proviso West High School. David worked in retail for his remaining years in the workforce until he retired. His last position was a manager for Walmart in Palatine. He found great purpose in putting in a hard day's work. David was extremely mathematical and enjoyed being around people. Though gone too soon, he made an impact on many people and tried the best he could to leave a positive legacy behind.

Survivors include his daughter, Kelsey Ligocki, of Essex and his stepson, Daniel Shock, of Michigan; two grandchildren:

Jack and Jordan Nelson-Ligocki; and one brother, Scott (Heather) Ligocki and their family.

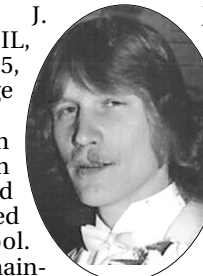
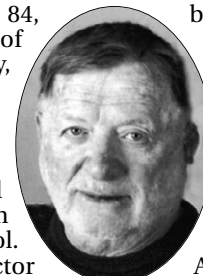
David was preceded in death by his parents and one sister, Tina Ligocki.

The family received friends for a visitation at Baskerville Funeral Home in Wilmington on Friday, Jan. 17, 2025.

Per David's wishes, cremation rites were accorded following the visitation.

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

Services and arrangements were made under the direction and care of Reeves & Baskerville Funeral Homes and Crematory in Wilmington.



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Georgia Southern University recognizes President's list

Georgia Southern University recently recognized approximately 2,520 students on the Fall 2024 President's List. Rylee Endrst of Diamond has been named to the list for excellence in academics.

To be eligible for the President's list, a student must have at least a 4.0 grade point average and carry a minimum of 12 hours for the semester.

OBITUARIES

Kurt L. Mathes

GARDNER—Kurt L. Mathes, 81, of Gardner, formerly of Tuscola, IL, passed away Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2025 at Morris Hospital.

Born Dec. 14, 1943 in Cleveland, OH, Kurt was the son of Walter Mathes Jr. and Gladys (Nicholl) Mathes. He was raised in Lakewood, OH, graduated from Lakewood High School, class of 1961, and completed a Bachelor's Degree in Chemical Engineering at Case Institute of Technology in Cleveland, OH. On May 29, 1969, Kurt married Betty Lou Griffin in Tuscola, which they would call their home for the next 19 years until they relocated to Gardner in 1988.

He worked as a chemical engineer for Millennium Chemical Plant in Tuscola from 1965 to 1988, and later relocated to their Morris facility, now known as LyondellBassel, and worked there until he retired in 1998. Kurt was an avid golfer for his entire life, playing regularly at the Dwight Country Club. He was blessed to share 55 years of marriage with his loving wife, Betty, who was his best friend and companion.

Survivors include his wife, Betty Mathes, of Gardner; one sister, Karen McIntyre (Mark Minns), of Grafton, OH; nephew, Brain McIntyre; niece, Stacy (Rob) Bolin; great-nieces and nephews, Erin and Collin McIntyre, Caleb and Noah Daw, and Sophia Bolin; and many cousins.

Kurt was preceded in death by his parents, Walter and Gladys Mathes.

Per his wishes, cremation rites are being accorded and there will be no services at this time.

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

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

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HELP WANTED

Friends Over Fifty has an immediate need for two full-time schedulers. We help the elderly maintain their independence by providing in-home companionship and other non-medical assistance with Activities of Daily Living. This is largely an administrative position in our office with minimal care duties. Some travel may be required within Will and Grundy counties. Although office hours are 9-5, M-F, you must commit to taking responsibility for our scheduling phone on nights and weekends alternating with other office staff. Training is provided as well as PTO, partially self-funded insurance plan available and employer matching IRA. Salary range is \$17-\$20 per hour with bonus incentives. Apply online today at <https://fofseniorcare.ersp.biz/> employment or call 815-545-4760. cc3-5

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CLUES ACROSS

- "Loser" rocker
- Partner to relaxation
- Mixing
- Winged nut
- Expression of blame
- Vast ocean
- Comedienne Gasteyer
- Multiply
- Meat from a pig (French)
- Related
- Rocker Stewart
- Surprise completely
- Loon
- Canister
- Large, deep-bodied fish
- Takes forcefully
- Oil cartel
- Palmer and Hepburn are two
- More than one
- Places down purposefully
- Pitching statistic
- Type of sword
- Witnesses

CLUES DOWN

- Aires, city
- Coarse grass
- Type of gene
- Door handle
- Competition
- Muslim ruler title
- Hunting expeditions
- Large mollusk
- Bind securely
- Former U.S. presidential candidate
- 2-point plays in football
- Breezed through
- Type setting

- Felt for
- Codified rules
- Small dome
- Chevrolet
- Male reproductive gland
- Controversial beliefs
30. Z Z Z
- One who confines another
- Bishop
- Garlands
- Bird that flies by the coast
- Optical device
- Greek goddess of discord
- Some are "Rolling"
- Formerly (archaic)
- Thrust a knife into
- German river
- Atomic #26
- Make a grotesque face
- Primordial matter of the universe
- Chinese philosophical principle

WILDCAT SPORTS



Photo by Eric Fisher

DRIVING TO THE basket for the Lady Wildcats during a recent home game is Alaina Clark.

Lady 'Cats have a big game Thursday

The last time the Lady Wildcats lost was Dec. 16 when they fell 41-34 to Herscher. Since then they have won seven straight, beating Reed-Custer 37-29 on Thursday.

Wilmington used a pressure defense to hold the Lady Comets to just two points in the fourth quarter, rallying from a 27-24 deficit after the end of the third quarter for the come-back win.

Sophomore Sami Liaromatis paced the Lady 'Cats with 16 points, six rebounds and eight steals. Skylar Rossow finished with 10 points and seven rebounds while dishing out six assists.

Scoring four points each were Nina Egizio and Melia Hincherrick while

Nikki Quigley tallied three points.

Tuesday's contest against Beecher was all Lady 'Cats as they won 44-31.

Liaromatis was on fire with a double-double of 21 points, 11 rebounds and five steals. Quigley stepped up for 11 points and four rebounds. Hincherrick scored five points, Taylor Stefancic tossed in three points while Anna Morgan and Alaina Clark had two each.

Wilmington (16-4 overall, 6-2 in conference) will be tested Thursday when Manteno comes to town. The Panthers are 16-2 overall and 7-1 in ICE play. Then on Monday they will host Herscher.



Photo by Elaine Fisher Ohlund

SHOOTING For the Lady Wildcats during a home contest is Nikki Quigley.

'Cats rebound with a victory over Westmont

The Wildcats boys basketball team took a beating against the conference leading Bulldogs but bounced right back with a win over Westmont on Saturday.

Wilmington's offense was clicking against the Sentinals, something they couldn't do against Streator the night before, with nine players putting up points.

Senior Ryan Nelson paced the 'Cats with an impressive 19-point, 11-rebound performance on Saturday to put his team in front early and never look back.

Brysen Meents chipped in with eight points while Ryan Kettman muscled up seven points while grabbing seven rebounds.

The controlled the boards with 33 rebounds total as they improved to 13-6 overall, 4-3 in the conference.

Also scoring for the 'Cats were Lucas Rink and Declan Moran with four points each. Walter Gross and Hunter Osipavicius came off the bench for three points each, Kyle Farrell had two and Drew

Jackson one.

Wilmington had a miserable time at Streator (14-4, 7-0) as they struggled in the first half against the hosts who won it 58-21.

The 'Cats were 7-for-35 from the field and had 13 turnovers.

The best they got was five points from Moran, followed by Meents with four, three for Kettman and two each for Nelson, Farrell, Ryker Feil and Reegan Bolin.

On Wednesday they ran over Gardner-South Wilmington 51-22 behind the hot hand of Rink who scored 17 points including five three-pointers.

Kettman tossed in 11 points and pulled down six rebounds while Nelson finished with seven points and eight rebounds.

Also helping out were Meents with six points, Zach Ohlund with four and two each for Joey Lewsader, Farrell and Moran.

Wilmington will host Manteno, who they lost to before, on Friday. On Tuesday they host Herscher who they beat 37-35 earlier in the season.



Photo by Elaine Fisher-Ohlund

WHS SENIOR Reegan Bolin puts up a shot during Friday night's game against Streator.



Courtesy photo

TAKING FIRST PLACE at 190 pounds during the Reed-Custer wrestling Comet Classic on Saturday is WHS junior Logan Van Duyne.

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WMS girls opens vball season with a victory

The Wilmington Middle School volleyball teams kicked off their season the week of Jan. 13. Eighth grade went 1-1 beating Reed-Custer but losing to Morris Grade School in a close 3 game match.

Against Reed-Custer, 25-23, 25-21, Nadine Liquid led her team with 8 aces and 10 digs. Violet Turcany had 4 aces, 3 digs and 2 kills. Against MGS, 17-25, 26-24, 23-25, Liquid again led defensively with 20 digs, 3 aces, 3 assists and a kill. Izzy Edgeworth had 11 digs, 4 assists and 3 aces. Kelsie Roeder added another 6 aces to go with her 2 kills and 2 digs.

Seventh grade went 2-0 to start off their season beating RC 25-16, 25-22 and MGS 22-25, 25-22, 25-17. Against Reed-Custer Kenzie Lupinski led her team with 5 aces while Brooklyn Long added another 3 aces and a kill and Aubrey Ptacek had 2 aces and a kill. Against MGS, Lilly had 6 aces and Long and Lupinski both had 5 aces.

Sixth grade also started their season off with a bang! The A team lost their first match against Seneca 17-25, 16-25. Maevie Bryant had 5 digs and 4 aces. Aria Jandeska had 3 aces. Both Brooke Dickover and Emily Van Duyne had 10 digs. The B team won 25-20, 25-23. Morgan Kelly led with 7 aces and 4 digs. Brie Talley had 10 digs while KJ Skole had 7 digs and 5 aces.

They then faced Reed-Custer. The A team lost 19-25, 26-24, 3-15. Van Duyne

led the team with 9 aces and 6 digs. Bryant had 5 aces and Aryanna Prinko had 8 digs. B team won 25-6, 25-9. Morgan Kelly had an amazing night behind the service line with 21 aces. Talley added another 6 aces and 7 digs. Both the A and B teams won against MSG to finish out the week. A team won 22-25, 30-28, 15-13.

Bryant led again with 6

aces and Van Duyne and Grace Keane were right behind her with 4 aces each. Dickover led with 11 digs. The B team won 25-27, 25-16, 15-4. Jandeska had 11 aces with Skole and Aleah Sanchez right behind her with 7 and 5 respectively. Madison Smith led with 8 digs.



Photo by Elaine Fisher-Ohlund

WILDCAT LUCAS RINK dribbles around an opponent to take the ball to the basket. Rink is averaging 13 points a game.