

WHS speech team  
heads to sectionals



Lady Cats push  
through busy week



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## Wilmington Park District continues to grow

BY MARNEY SIMON  
EDITOR

The Wilmington Park District has made some big changes over the past two years, first with the hire of Wilmington native Kirsten VanDuyne as Executive Director, then with new members voted in or appointed.

The new leadership has spearheaded a lot of changes for the district in that time, changes that have been well received by members of the community as offerings and events have drastically increased, especially after pandemic restrictions were relaxed.

VanDuyne said a big push for the district over the past year has been to add to its program offerings. For the district, it's all about serving the community.

"We've had a lot of new programs come out that have been extremely well attended and sold out, but we're happy to be able to offer them to everybody," VanDuyne said. "As a park district, we like to be able to offer programs to the masses. They're here in town, they're affordable, and the participation level has been exceptionally high."

In December, the park district was able to offer a six-week open-gym

basketball for youth, held at the gymnasium at St. Rose school.

The program was open for elementary aged children ages 6-11, to get them learning and ready for team play before they enter middle school organized sports.

VanDuyne said 60 children signed up for the program.

"That was kind of a lead in to our scrimmage team, to get our first year off the ground," she said. "We ended up having eight teams across two different age brackets. We called them our scrimmage teams for this year, and we're super excited. The kids really seemed to enjoy it and learned a

lot. We're excited to grow that program and offer it to the community and expand with even more teams for next year."

The district was also able to offer classes for youngsters looking to try their hand at dance.

"We also started beginner tap which was an exciting new program in the dance realm, that was for ages 4-plus" VanDuyne said. "This was for kids trying to decide, do they like it, do they want to try and continue and get competitive and join a dance troupe. We had a session in December, and a session that was January-February and they both sold

out. So, we have another session coming up for mid-February through spring break. That session is available to sign up now, and we will be adding a beginner ballet class."

The district has also added to its exercise options. While free weights and machines are part of the Water Street Fitness facility, the district has also organized additional group classes.

"One of the classes we added this year was low impact chair classes," VanDuyne said. "So, this is for every-

SEE PARKS, PAGE 2

## It's all for Kuzma Care Cottage!



SIS photo

AS A COMMUNITY service project, third graders at Stevens Intermediate School in Wilmington collected non-perishable food and hygiene items to support Kuzma Care Cottage, the local food pantry. Second, third, fourth, and fifth grade students, along with the staff, participated by bringing in items for the drive throughout the week. The third graders collected 950 items to donate to Kuzma. The third graders ran the drive, and were excited to serve our community through everyone's efforts. Our third grade students and teachers say thank you to everyone who sent in items with their students.

## Prom ready at Whitmores? All for a good cause!



Photo by Marney Simon

DRESSES IN A hardware store? It might not be the typical item you see on display, but these formal gowns at Whitmore Ace Hardware in Wilmington are just a small part of the dresses collected this year for the Melissa's Closet and Crystal's Jewelry Box event. Since 2011, the annual prom dress drive and sale has outfitted more than 4,200 high school students for prom, with dresses available for just \$5 each. The event was created in honor of Melissa Michalowski and Crystal Carr, who were Reed-Custer High School seniors when they were both tragically killed in a car wreck in December 2008. Melissa was an employee at Whitmore Ace Hardware in Braidwood, where she left a mark on her co-workers as a shining star who was always happy to come to work and help people. After considering the high costs of attending prom, the staff decided to host a dress drive in honor of Melissa and Crystal, who never got to attend their prom. In the first year, the collection totaled 120 dresses. Now, the event takes up the entire gymnasium at Godley Park District, with more than 2,000 dresses available. Dresses, shoes and accessories for donation can be dropped off at all 13 Whitmore Ace Hardware locations. Melissa's Closet and Crystal's Jewelry Box takes place on Saturday, March 4 from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. at the Godley Park District gym. More information on the event can be found on the Melissa's Closet and Crystal's Jewelry Box official Facebook page, @MelissaCrystalProm. Proceeds go toward a scholarship fund.

## Chamber accepting applications for Hometown Heroes banners

The Wilmington Chamber of Commerce is now taking applications for its 2023 Hometown Hero banner program.

The Chamber coordinates the hanging of banners along Wilmington's major streets recognizing current and former residents who have served our country in a branch of the military.

Banners purchased for 2023 will be displayed from

Memorial Day through Veteran's Day for two years on poles along Route 53 (Historic 66) and Route 102 in Wilmington.

Each 24"x28" banner includes the veteran's name, branch of service, years active, and a photograph. Request for specific display locations cannot be honored, and banners are likely to appear in different

SEE BANNERS, PAGE 2

## Wilmington Town Hall set for Thursday

Wilmington Mayor Ben Dietz and members of the Wilmington City Council will host a Town Hall Meeting on Thursday, Feb. 9, at 6 p.m., at the Wilmington High School Cafetorium.

The Town Hall is slated to be a state of the city type presentation, as Dietz will provide a 2022 progress report and a projected outlook for 2023 and beyond.

The meeting will also

include a question and answer session for the general public.

The Town Hall meeting is free to attend, and residents are encouraged to come and provide their input and discuss their priorities and goals for the City of Wilmington.



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Regular Sale Price: 2/\$5



# Parks

body of all abilities, all ages, anybody who wants a low impact workout. If you are capable of stepping it up a notch, you can do modifications to make it a more intense workout, but otherwise we teach it at a basic level. It has been fantastic to watch it grow.”

Those classes take place three times a week, which can be paid by the session or class by class.

“Anybody of all ages, abilities, levels can do it,” she added. “You can make the modifications lesser or stronger to your abilities until you get where you want to be.”

The district also added a toddler time program on Fridays.

“It’s cold out. We have bounce houses, we have mats, we have dodgeball, we have balance beams. We get it all out and parents get to hang out while kids get to interact and play with each other,” VanDuyne said.

Toddler time runs on Fridays from 10:30 a.m. until noon, and works with a punch card system, so parents and toddlers can come when it works out. VanDuyne said so far, attendance has been good without being overwhelming for the children or staff.

“It’s good to get those toddlers out and running, in an organized recreational space,” she added.

VanDuyne said all the positive changes over the past two years have been a group effort.

“It took time and the team,” VanDuyne said. “I think we’ve had a really amazing

team, we’ve grown together for the last year and a half, and really finding everybody’s strengths. It really was about finding the team to execute it, because this is not something that one person is capable of doing alone. It took some time to grow together and find the strengths and now I think we have a really exceptional team in place.”

The district is now working on spring and summer programming, including adult sand volleyball leagues on the courts at Children’s Memorial Park.

“We’re really excited about that, I think that’s a great age category for the area that is not well represented, that 18-plus that is very active and likes to be out in the summer,” VanDuyne said.

The district is also looking to add a bags event for children, to complement the adult teams that play each year, especially during Catfish Days.

VanDuyne said the district will begin indoors and hopefully grow.

The district has also partnered with Lincoln Way Special Recreation to create opportunities for bowling, which will start a new session in the spring.

The district’s other big additions over the past two years have been special events. Up next, Daddy-Daughter date night, set for Feb. 25, with tickets currently available on the website.

A Mother-Son night is also being planned.

The district will host a Disney family trivia night in March. A senior luncheon is also planned for March 17.

And, the popular farmers market will continue this summer, but moved to the new

downtown parking lot, since the events were so popular they quickly outgrew the space next to Water Street Fitness.

The farmers market will take place the third Thursday of the month from June through September.

“We’re very excited that everybody enjoyed them and we can continue to grow the market,” VanDuyne said.

One big project for the Park District Board is the creation of a new strategic plan. VanDuyne noted that the last strategic plan was created not just under different elected and appointed leadership, but also prior to the pandemic.

“The world has just kind of shifted and changed. So, we’re working on a new plan, and our three-, five- and 10-year goals for moving forward with the district,” she said. “It is nice when you have a strategic plan that you’re working off of to meet your goals. I would like to see the new plan have a lot more detail.”

Organization of the strategic plan is just in the beginning phase. The board will eventually hire a firm for the final creation of the plan, but VanDuyne said it will incorporate feedback from the board, staff, and the community.

As far as changes at Children’s Memorial Park, plans remain in the work, but some budget issues have pushed back the timeline.

Since last summer, the district has been working on upgrades for the park, including plans to add a 1,000 foot U-shaped accessible asphalt walking path with a story walk around the perimeter of the park.

The story walk will be a series of signs on posts that

will have a QR code. Visitors can scan the boards and pull up a story to read, and the stories can be switched out on a schedule.

The district is currently working on the construction schedule. The library has purchased the story walk, but final costs for adding the walking path are yet to be hammered out. The effort has been put on hold briefly as the price of asphalt continued to rise over the past year. Final plans will be dependent on costs.

“I am still hopeful of getting this off the ground this year,” VanDuyne said. “It’s unfortunate, but it’s still moving, just moving slower than we had originally planned on it being.”

VanDuyne also said the installation of inclusive playground equipment is still in the planning phases for the park, but she’s hopeful that will come sooner than later.

The Rotary Club has spent the past year raising money to purchase that equipment, an accessible “wego-round” structure that accommodates wheelchairs.

“I’m working on the costs for the installation under the equipment,” VanDuyne said. “It’s not necessarily the equipment that is any issue, it’s the installation of the material under the equipment that we had to have sent out, to make sure we can fit it in our budget.”

VanDuyne said she hopes to have updates for the board on the upgrades at the park by March.

Information on the district, including programs, registration, special events, and board news, can be found online, [www.islandparkdistrict.com](http://www.islandparkdistrict.com).

# Banners

locations in their first and second years.

The cost to participate in the program is \$150 total for the two-year period. The deadline to apply is March 31, or until all spots are full. Applications will not be accepted for 2023 after this date.

Nominees must meet all of the following requirements: Be a current or former resident of Wilmington. Served in the U.S. Armed Forces. Meets one of the following criteria: a) Is currently on active duty b) Honorably discharged c) Died in the line of duty.

The following information must be provided: • Signature for photo release. If living, the veteran must sign • Photograph of the veteran in uniform (see details below) • Copy of a military verification form (DD214, military ID, etc.)

The program requires an original photograph of the veteran in uniform. Original prints, 35mm slides, or film strips can be accepted. No acceptable are: Copies made on a home printer, copies made at a photo service, digital photos of a printed photo, photos clipped from a newspaper, or your own digital scan of the photograph.

You must submit an

original photograph for scanning. Original photos will be returned. No photo has been damaged or lost in the production of these banners. Your photo will be available for pickup after we have scanned it for your banner. Photos need to be at least 3x5. Larger is better as the photo on the banner will be enlarged to nearly two feet tall.

All applications, supporting documentation, and photos are to be submitted exclusively at Spins & Needles, 614 Davy Lane in Wilmington.

The number of locations available are limited. Spaces are given on a first come, first served basis. At the end of the two-year display period, applicants will be contacted to pick up their banners. Banner displays cannot be extended beyond the second year, but you may reapply to have a new banner printed using the same information. You do not need to resubmit service verification or the photo. Any banners not picked up will become property of the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce.

Applying for a banner as a surprise to a living veteran is not permitted. Questions? Email [info@wilmingtonilchamber.org](mailto:info@wilmingtonilchamber.org). For an application visit [wilmingtonilchamber.org](http://wilmingtonilchamber.org) or printouts are available at the Free Press Advocate office, 111 S. Water St., Wilmington.

# WHS remembers Amy Salaba during Amy’s Corner Week

BY CHLOE PROFFITT  
STUDENT REPORTER

This week Wilmington High School is remembering Amy Salaba, a happy, motivated and thoughtful alum to WHS.

Salaba made a name for herself as a friendly, giving student from her first day at WHS in 1999. She was very involved at school, spending all four of her senior high years as a library aide, and one year even put together the annual senior video by herself—a task that is usually tackled by a team of students. Amy’s love for reading is what truly made her stand out.

When Salaba died Jan. 2, 2005, just a few weeks before turning 20, Wilmington suffered a great loss.

In 2006, with the help of

the Salaba family, WHS introduced Amy’s Corner in the school library in her memory.

Amy’s Corner offers new and popular teen fiction books through the generous donations of the Salaba family. Over half the books in the library have been funded by these generous donations. All books included in Amy’s Corner are marked with a little butterfly sticker.

This week, to celebrate Amy, the school has put together dress up days and games all set up in the library. This week dress up days are as followed: Monday, favorite book character, Tuesday, comfy day, Wednesday, comic day, Thursday, heart day and Friday, purple and white.

The donations made from the family have truly transformed the library into the place it is today.

Photo by Chloe Proffitt

**BAGS IN BUCKETS—WHS senior Aubin Shields tries the bag toss, just one of the games being offering in the WHS library during Amy’s Corner Week. Waiting for a turn are Parker Hazzard and Decklan Proffitt.**



*Attorney Zadrozny files Bukowski estate notice*

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
LEGAL NOTICE  
STATE OF ILLINOIS  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE  
TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, WILL  
COUNTY, ILLINOIS -  
IN PROBATE

In the Matter of the Estate of HENRY BUKOWSKI, deceased.  
Case No. 23PR09

**CLAIM NOTICE**  
Notice is given of the death of Leonard Bukowski of Beecher, Illinois. Letters of Office were issued on January 27, 2023 to Leonard Bukowski whose address is 1135 Clark Ln, Des Plaines IL 60016 as Independent Executor.

The estate will be administered without Court Supervision, unless under section 28-4 of the Probate Act of 1975 (755 ILCS 5/28-4) any interested person terminates independent administration at any time by mailing or delivering a petition to terminate to the court clerk.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of Andrea Lynn Chasteen, Circuit Court Clerk, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois, or with the representative or both on or before the 8th of August, 2023, or if mailing or delivery of this notice form the personal representative is required under by Sec. 18.3 of the Probate Act of 1995, the date state in that notice.

Any claim not filed within that period is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Circuit Court Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney, if any, within ten (10) days after it has been filed with the court clerk.

E-filing is now mandatory for documents in civil cases with limited exemptions. To e-file, you must first create an account with an e-filing service provider. Visit <http://efile.illinoiscourts.gov/service-providers.htm> to learn more and to select a service provider. If you need additional help or have trouble e-filing, visit <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/FAQ/gethelp.asp>, or talk with your local circuit clerk’s office.

Leonard Bukowski, Independent Executor.  
Artur Zadrozny, Attorney at Law,  
Attorney No. 6308234, 636 S River Rd, Suite 100G, Des Plaines, IL 60016, 847-450-0505, [artur@zadroznylaw.com](mailto:artur@zadroznylaw.com).  
Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, Feb. 8, 15 and 22, 2023.

*Attorney Meents files McGee 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 DAVID EARL MCGEE, Deceased; No. 2022PR793

**CLAIM NOTICE**  
Notice is given of the death of David Earl McGee, Letters of Office as Independent Administrator were issued on January 27, 2023, to Jason Scot McGee, whose address is 4603 W. Dane Court, New Palestine, Indiana 46163; whose attorney is Meents Law, P.C., 25158 West Eames Street, Unit A, Channahon, Illinois 60410. Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before August 9, 2023, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a Claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

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

Jason Scot McGee  
Independent Administrator of the Estate  
of David Earl McGee, Deceased  
Frank J. Meents  
25158 W. Eames Street, Unit A  
Channahon, Illinois 60410  
Telephone: (815) 534-9515  
Facsimile: (815) 534-9516  
Attorney Code: 06298859  
E-mail: [frank@meentslaw.com](mailto:frank@meentslaw.com)  
Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, Feb. 1, 8, and 15, 2023.

*Kuffels file petition for adoption*

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
STATE OF ILLINOIS,  
COUNTY OF WILL,  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE  
TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
No. 2023 AD 06


IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION FOR ADOPTION BY:  
AARON MARKHAM KUFFEL  
KEISHA ANTOINETTA KUFFEL, Mother  
PETITIONERS,  
TO ADOPT  
JAYLON ANTHONY PRINCE LEWIS  
A Minor  
Case No. 2023 AD 06

**ADOPTION NOTICE**  
To: All known & unknown fathers  
Take notice that a petition was filed in the Circuit Court of Will County, Illinois, for the adoption of a child named JAYLON ANTHONY PRINCE LEWIS. Now, therefore, unless you all known & unknown fathers, and all whom it may concern, file your answer to the Petition in said suit or otherwise file your appearance therein, in the said Circuit Court of Will County, Room 141 of the Clerks Office Building at 100 W. Jefferson St., in the City of Joliet, Illinois, on or before the 23rd day of March, 2023, a default may be entered against you at any time after that day and a judgment entered in accordance with the prayer of said Petition.  
Dated January 30, 2023  
Andrea Lynn Chasteen  
Clerk of the Circuit Court

Signed and sworn to before  
Laura Warren  
Notary Public State of Illinois  
on January 9th, 2023.  
Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, February 8, 15, and 22, 2023.

Coffee & Newspapers

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# Breakfast at school

**Mon., Feb. 13:** Trix, animal crackers, fruit punch and choice of milk

**Tues., Feb. 14:** waffles, orange juice, choice of milk

**Wed., Feb. 15:** Frosted Flakes, honey grahams, grape juice and choice of milk

**Thu., Feb. 16:** blueberry muffin, string cheese, applesauce cup and choice of milk

**Fri., Feb. 17:** Reese’s cereal, bug bites, apple juice and choice of milk

# 209U Lunch menu

**Mon., Feb. 13:** chicken patty on bun, broccoli cheese rice, sorbet cup and choice of milk

**Tues., Feb. 14:** hot dog on bun, nachos and cheese, baby carrots, strawberries and choice of milk

**Wed., Feb. 15:** egg rolls, veggie fried rice, fortune cookie, pineapple and choice of

milk

**Thurs., Feb. 16:** italian beef w/ mozz., cheesy hash browns, diced mangos and choice of milk

**Fri., Feb. 17:** biscuit and gravy, go gurt, hash brown, banana and choice of milk

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

# What’s using the most energy

If you are concerned about your electric bill, becoming aware of the biggest energy using items in the home may help you control those costs.

Air conditioning is the highest cost item which is why reflective roofs are a great investment. Insulation is also a great way to address both heating and cooling use. With a clothes dryer coming in third, it may be worth the time to use a drying rack or clothes line when possible.

Gamers may be surprised at the amount of energy used by game consoles and should look online for ways to connect these to reduce some of the energy demand. Simple hair styles can also reduce the demand from hair dryers and straighteners and free some personal time!

# Getting married? Let’s plan your future together.



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Eric D. Fisher, publisher  
Marney Simon, editor



# The sweet summer of 1862, the smell of success

People stood taller, pride was on the faces of man, woman and child but best of all was, of course, the money. At last Wilmington was not just another small town; she was a seaport.

Grain was king, bringing more and more money into the village every day. And with this money, she could afford to pay for the goods coming in, now available in large quantities for cheap prices.

During 13 days, that covered the end of July, the beginning of August, 188,000 ft. of lumber came into town on the canal boats plus one boat entirely filled with casks of salt. The building boom was on, not only for human habitation, but for farm buildings.

Barn raisings became the social activity of the day in the country. In town, frame buildings sprouted like mushrooms. During that same time period, 13,200 bushels of corn left the port of Wilmington, most bound for Chicago.

All of this was going on, but in the back of everyone's mind was the War. What was thought to be a short skirmish had blossomed into a civil war that touched the lives of all.

On August 16 a bitter sweet event was held on a canal boat and barge. "On Saturday last Maj. Hammond, Capt. Gardner and Lieut. McConnell chartered the steamer "Pioneer," for the purpose of giving the brave volunteers under their command, and their favorite dulcineas (ladies), a gala trip down the river.

At half past two P.M., the steamer loosed from its moorings, having in tow the "Monitor," for the more ample accommodation of those on board. A prolonged cheer, a rousing huzza, (such as only a soldier by the side of his sweet-heart can give) wafted a brief adieu to those on shore."

"Music, under the direction of Fife-Major Young and Major Hammond, Jr., was discoursed in lively martial strains. All were joyous; all were happy! Cape Stewart, Islands No 1 and 2, Bowen's Point, and Fort Merrill, were severally neared and passed.

From the latter a salute was given, the stars and stripes were hoisted, and the gay little steamer "spoken," which, by order of Capt. Gardner and Com. Cozzens, was rounded too and effected a landing, receiving as reinforcements to the merry crowd aboard, more merry couples."

"Thus, passed Saturday with our brave volunteers. Our hearts go out after them. May Heaven preserve, is our wish and prayer."

With the coming of fall, and the closing of the I & M grain warehouse space was at a premium, waiting for the opening of the spring boating season. It was good times for a few years, then it all came to a screeching halt in the spring of 1867.

Following a very cold winter that saw the ice on the river reach 2 feet in places, a sudden warm spell coupled with warm rains turned the river into a frightening sight.

Giant icebergs traveling rapidly down the river, rising river levels and massive ice blockages at the railroad bridge and the 1862 dam created a scene of devastation unlike anything Wilmington had seen before.

The Joliet Signal described it, "On last Wednesday and Friday, our neighboring city of Wilmington was completely submerged. A gorge of ice formed in the Kankakee River just below the city, and the water was backed up to an unprecedented height.

Indeed, it is said the water was fourteen feet deep in the main business streets. People removed from their houses and alarm and consternation spread everywhere.

In a few hours however, the immense dam of ice gave way and bridges, including the magnificent bridge of the Chicago & Alton railroad, and houses and an indescribable mass of lumber, timber, etc. were swept off. The damages must be immense."

"We have received the Wilmington Independent giving the full particulars of the calamity. The damage occasioned by the flood is estimated at one hundred thousand dollars (\$3,010,000 today).

Alden & Smith, Belz & Keough, Odell & Casey, Loudon & Wilson, Pennington, Fisher & Co. being the heaviest losers. It will take some time for that flourishing city to recover from the damage."

Very few frame buildings in the downtown survived; brick buildings incurred some damage; limestone resisted the water best, but interiors of all were destroyed.

Mr. Small had a huge lumber yard on the island, which added to the flooding leaving huge planks piling up along with the ice at the bridge.

Mr. Alden, one of the biggest investors in the dam project had his warehouse on the north end of the island disappear before his eyes, leaving only the limestone foundation.

This was the second time that the improvements on the Kankakee had been destroyed by spring freshets. It had been paid for by investors, many of them Wilmington business men. All was lost. The cry of one and all was "Never again!" But they were wrong.



TIME WAS....  
Sandy Vasko



A PHOTO OF the Alden warehouse in 1867, it disappeared a few hours after this was taken.

## WHS's speech team moves on to Sectionals

Wilmington High School Speech team took eight events to the IHSA Speech Regional with three events advancing to the IHSA Sectional in Morris on Saturday.

Senior Ella Cooper is the Regional Champion in Poetry Reading. She also placed 4th in Radio Speaking. Junior Jonathan Mossell and senior Bryce Jewell also placed 4th in Humorous Duet Acting, and advanced to the Sectional Competition.

Only the top four competitors in each category will advance to sectionals. At sectionals only the top three competitors in each category will advance to the state competition in Peoria on Feb. 17th and 18th.

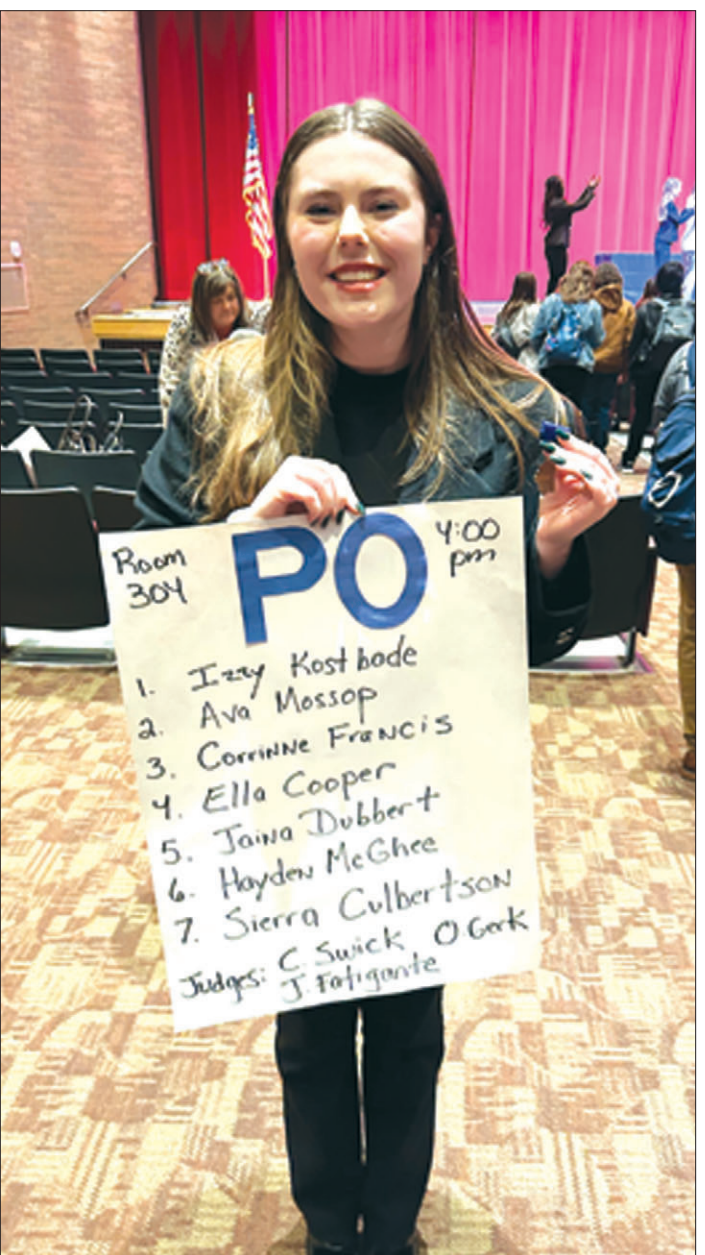
Students begin working on scripts for the season in October, and compete from December through mid-February with the hopes of continuing on to state. These three students have shown incredible dedication, determination, and drive to win throughout the season.

They continually make adjustments to their delivery, acting, and interpretation of the script.

Other students who competed at the IHSA Regional included senior Tristen Doyle, juniors Gracie Loveland, Emilia Williams, Channing Sexton and Treyton Arnold; and sophomore. Nolan Moran.



WHS SPEECH participants Jonathan Mossell and Bryce Jewell won 4th place in Humorous Duet Acting during the IHSA Regionals.



WHS SPEECH participant Ella Cooper with her first place Poetry Reading medal and her final round poster.

## Schnittger named to dean's list

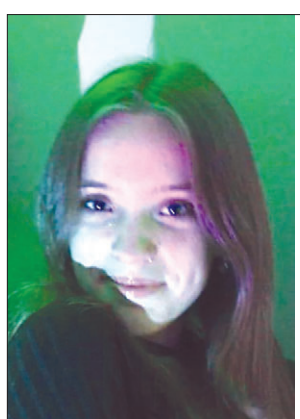
David Schnittger, of Wilmington, has been named to Monmouth College fall dean's list, 2022.

To be eligible for the Dean's List, students needed to take at least 3.0 academic credits while maintaining a grade-point average of at least 3.5.

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## WHS senior of the week

BY CHLOE PROFFITT  
WHS STUDENT REPORTER



BRITTANY BUFTON

Each week the Free Press Advocate features members from the Wilmington High School class of 2023. Featured this week is Brittany Bufton who completed our questionnaire.

**Brittany Bufton**  
*What do you plan to pursue upon graduation?* Veterinarian medicine  
*What is something most do not know about you?* I grew up on an island before moving to Illinois.  
*Favorite thing on the school menu?* Mac and cheese  
*What is one thing you refuse to eat?* Oysters  
*If you could travel anywhere, where would you go?* Thailand  
*What class would you create?* A vet class where you can strictly learn about animals.

*Famous Person (dead or alive) you would like to meet and why?* Bob Marley, he has interesting views on the world and life.  
*Teacher shoutout?* Mrs. Morrison!  
*Advice you would give to underclassmen?* Don't be so worried about what people think about you and the petty drama. It will pass by next week.

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## See the truth

BRAIDWOOD—Why is every article written on the front page about the things the Braidwood administration and police department do for the city is positive and yet every comment written in Soundoff, by the same person, is negative? When the paper writes an article it is written on facts. When this administration took over they spent the first year digging the city out of the huge debt the past administration had created. The administration and the police chief have worked hard to improve the city and help create a caring community. They increased the sales tax revenue by 61% and it will continue to increase as new businesses are built. Young people are moving to Braidwood to raise their families instead of moving out. All this is fact. Please remember, anyone can make up anything. Research and see the truth. The city is in great shape.

## Thinking twice

WILMINGTON—Reading the negative comments about the Wilmington Area Historical Society. Are there secret meetings going on at different places within this community? If so what are your reasons for these meetings? Is there something that's not being told to the other board members? Is there a reason for these secretive meetings? Are the ones who meet at these meetings hiding important information from the public, but they can be sneaky without being noticed? Can this board tell the community what is really going on? I was told that there will be a new board in March. Is this because certain board members and members are refusing to obey the bylaws and the constitution? I think throwing out the Robert's rules at a meeting from a gentleman who's just a member. What is your clout in this community besides serving on other boards in Wilmington? As I remember the actions you voting the secretary off the board of the Wilmington Area Historical Society along with others. Prior to my knowledge I never saw you at a meeting until then. Are these the intentions of the board and others to overthrow the current board? Isn't this going against the bylaws and constitution as it's stated? I have some great articles and artifacts depicting Wilmington and its forefathers that has a lot of information that would benefit the museum. I decided the Wilmington Area Historical Society is not worthy of these artifacts and articles I have in my possession until they decide to have a decent board who will be working towards the future for the museum and not against the current board. Don't the residents of Wilmington deserve the truth that's being said behind the scenes? I heard there is a museum in Pontiac depicting history of Wilmington. I don't know how many residents are as disgusted with this museum as I am. Until then I will keep my artifacts and articles that would benefit the museum.

## Need for more staff

COAL CITY—In a recent Coal City District 1 board meeting our special education manager was describing the need for more special education staff in our schools due to move ins. One of the board members was noticeably frustrated about the move ins. That is what happens when your district is a light house. It attracts families who need services. Our district is not financially hurting. To provide an excel-

lent education we need staff and decent class sizes not an artificial turf field or a shiny new addition to our schools.

## Work for us

BRAIDWOOD—In response to meeting minutes. It is becoming clear that someone on the Braidwood City Council does not want the Braidwood citizens to know what is said and done at the meetings. What council members and most politicians are forgetting is they are suppose to work for the people and the improvements of the community not just for themselves. I think it's time everyone on the city council be replaced now.

## Just a reminder

COAL CITY—The next Coal City Area Club meeting is Tuesday, Feb. 14 at 7 p.m. at the club office. The senior members changes are on the agenda. Being a former board member myself, in my opinion this matter could have been handled in a different way. Come and voice your opinion. Kenneth Mack

## Santos an excellent pick

As a lifelong proud Democrat I had a good laugh when I heard that Trump is once again running for president. He lost the popular vote in two elections in a row and in 2024 he will get the hat trick. When he runs he will need someone to fill the ticket as vice president. Mike Pence is off the list since he's probably still running away from the mob Trump sent to hang him two years ago. But there is a new face who is a prefect match for trump though it's harder to believe he is more of a fraud and a better liar than Trump. Of course I am speaking of the new congressman, George Santos. Next week I expect him to tell us that he invented the alphabet and that he has walked on the moon on more than one occasion. He is part of the Republican freak show that is now in control of the US House and the Nation's capital. Included in this group are election deniers, a high school dropout, shameless publicity hounds and quanon conspiracy idiots. I can't imagine who votes to put these people in office but just read Sound-off every week and you will discover how crazy the Right Wing nuts are. The Republican party has been promoting stupidity and lies for years and now we are sadly living with the results.

## Smoke and mirrors

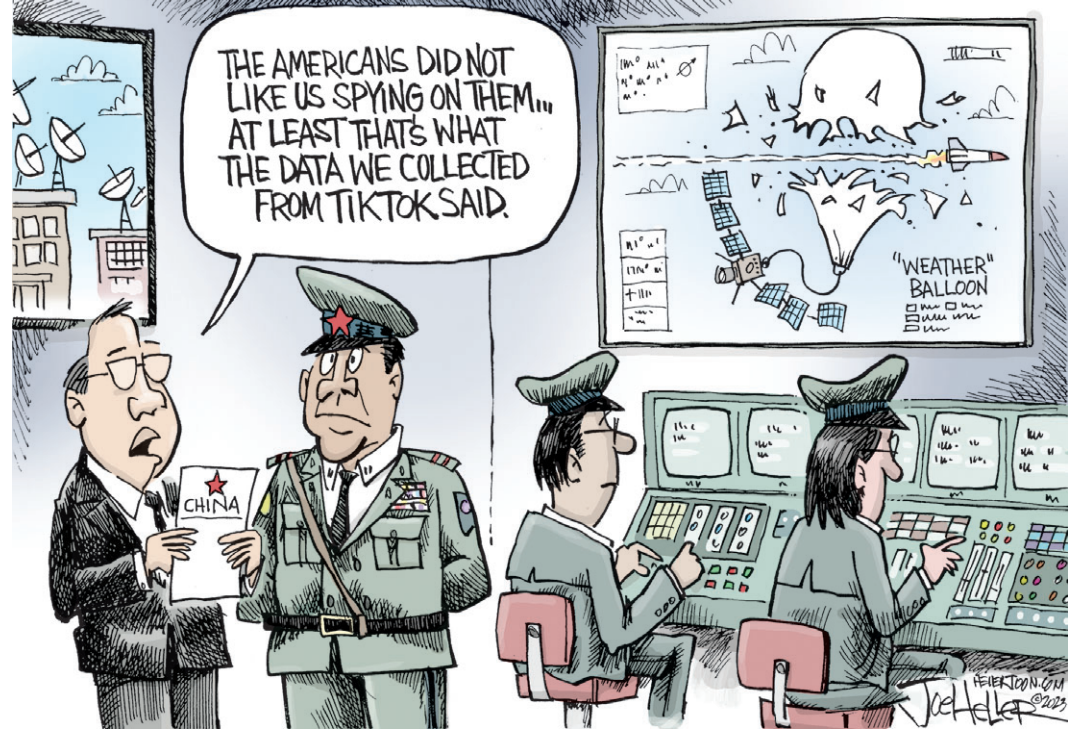
BRAIDWOOD—Braidwood residents beware. It's election time and you're going to see lots of baited promises and lucrative future offerings by displaying what they want you to believe is yet to come out of city hall. It's all a desperate and elaborate display of smoke and mirrors in an attempt to lure your vote. Don't be fooled by the delicious icing covering the cake because the bakers only know how to cover up and disguise their rotten creations underneath.

## Enemies among us

SHADOW LAKES—For years I have been saying China is our biggest danger, not MAGA Republicans, not white supremacists. It's China and the politicians, movie stars, sport stars that support China because they are getting a piece of the pie. Know your enemy.

## Keep it civil

BRAIDWOOD—Every single person sitting at the head table of the council chambers dur-



ing the Braidwood City Council meetings should be ashamed of themselves. It is an absolute embarrassment to our community to watch the turmoil unfold and accusations being thrown back and forth for the public to see. From the way our mayor has used profanity to describe some Braidwood residents and the way our city clerk is trying to shame those seeking information, to the back and forth badgering and flogging between the city administrator and the street department commissioner. You are all adults and supposed to be role models for our younger citizens, so start acting like it instead of acting like little immature children. There's plenty of 10 year olds who act more mature, respectful and professional than any of you. The residents of Braidwood are sick and tired of it and we want it to stop.

## No Christian is hateful

DIAMOND—Regarding "Religion is dying" from Wilmington on Jan. 25, 2023. I can't believe it was your intention that you have started a discussion about the endless struggle between good and evil. As an atheist you do not believe in the existence of God. But He knows of your existence because He created you in His image. God is the utmost authority of love and good. Each and every human born is endowed by his creator with the ability to choose between good and evil over, and over and over each minute, day and year of his or her lifetime. Your mother chose life and love so you could be born. God gave each of us a free will or right to choose. It came from God and only God can remove it. Many people, institutions and governments have tried to remove our God given freedoms, the freedom to speak truth, the freedom to worship God both privately and publicly and the freedom to defend ourselves from evil encroachment. Historically, violence and sin have even involved what is called the "church." There have been and will continue to be "false prophets." They are not instituted by God but mankind's capacity to choose evil.

Religion is a broad general name for all such systems of beliefs from the earliest recorded history to the present day. Whereas Christians affirm the divinity of Christ Jesus, the only begotten son of God, in your own words Christianity is still the dominant religion in America as well it should be as our constitution, the bill of rights and our own very government itself was conceived, designed and dedicated to Christianity. Christianity is the personal relationship of a single person to Jesus. A congregation is any number of two or more people of like faith worshipping together. Both the worshippers themselves and the place where they meet are known as the "church." The "LGBTQ Community" was not created by the divine nor was it constituted as part of our country. It is a form of the "nones" you mentioned that don't belong to any form of religion, however they are endowed by their creator with the same ability to choose between good and evil as is the rest of humanity. You did mention the existence of heaven and hell. It is neither the duty nor the privilege of any human being to judge or decree where individuals will spend eternity. Jesus is our only judge, seated on His throne at the right hand of God. Jesus will decide where every individual will spend eternal life. As Christ was dying on the cross covered with every sin committed by mankind at that time before the birth of Christ and until the end of time. Some of His last words were forgive them Father, for they know not what they do. Christ's resurrection from the dead on the third day was His victory over sin and death. From the time of our birth until the day we die on this earth we have the right to choose good or evil. Jesus commands us to pray for our enemies that they might repent of their sins and seek God's forgiveness. No Christian is hateful, angry nor takes pleasure at what you do, say or the choices you make. "But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you then choose for yourself this day who you will serve. As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Joshua 24:15. Amen

## Commentary

# Illinois state leaders see taxpayers' 'no' as reason to just ask again

BY BRAD WEISENSTEIN  
ILLINOIS POLICY INSTITUTE

You've been in the supermarket and seen the beleaguered parent bugged by a child for a package of cookies. "No" is followed by asking again, and whining, and asking yet again.

Illinois taxpayers are seeing this scene, only they are the parents and state leaders the needy youngsters.

Voters already said "no" in November 2020 to replacing the Illinois Constitution's flat tax protection with a progressive state income tax. They did so by a nearly 7 percentage point margin.

But some in Springfield are refusing to take "no" for an answer.

The day after the proposal failed, Gov. J.B. Pritzker had his spokesman claiming voters were deceived into rejecting the tax, despite the \$58 million of his own money he dumped into his failed campaign that claimed taking another \$3 billion from Illinois taxpayers was

a "fair tax."

Duped? More like adults deciding Pritzker & Co. needed no more cookies – or rather denying them a way to consume taxes from different income groups, including retirees, whenever they wanted.

And don't forget that polls let slip exactly what the progressive tax could lead to.

"One thing a progressive tax would do is make clear you can have graduated rates when you are taxing retirement income," Illinois Treasurer Michael Frerichs said while speaking in 2020. "And, I think that's something that's worth discussion."

We also heard from indicted former Illinois House Speaker Mike Madigan's successor, Speaker Emanuel "Chris" Welch, when he let the proposal resurface about three months after voters rejected it.

"We need to tell the taxpayers how we will spend this money," Welch said in February 2021 at the Economic Club of Chicago. "Tie progressive tax(es) to paying off pen-

sion(s). Voters will trust us more."

Which brings Illinois taxpayers to state leaders' latest refusal to listen. On the heels of giving themselves 18% raises in their base pay, state lawmakers again are looking for that power to end the state's flat income tax of 4.95% and they expect voters to let them set whatever rates they wish by targeting whatever income groups they wish.

It's a progressive tax. They call it fair. And they are fine with ignoring the "no" from voters.

The chief House sponsor for putting the progressive tax on the ballot recently told Crain's Chicago Business he is planning to bring it back, maybe in a month, now that he's a state senator.

"If you really believe in something, you don't give up after one loss," state Sen. Robert Martwick, D-Chicago, said about reviving the plot. "It's the right thing to do."

Right for state lawmakers who want ever more to spend, even with a record \$46 billion

budget this year? Right for taxpayers who can only be sure their taxes will never go down in Illinois?

Pritzker reacted: "That's not something I am focused on this session." That's far from telling Martwick to stand down, but maybe Pritzker is getting the message?

Illinois lost a record 104,437 residents last year – the ninth straight year of population loss. Losses are because people are moving away. They've said they are moving away because of taxes, and for the better job and housing markets lower-tax states offer.

Whether they are insistent, or deaf or just want what they want regardless of the consequences, members of the new 103rd Illinois General Assembly should not take their supermajority status for granted. They may get what they want for now, but they also may get abandoned in the supermarket.

Brad Weinstein is the managing editor of the free market Illinois Policy Institute.

## IDENTITY THEFT TIP

Consider placing a freeze on your credit report if you are notified that your identifiable financial information has been compromised in a security or data breach. Doing so is free and can help prevent an identity thief from applying for and receiving approval to create a credit account using your name.

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# IL Legislature returns with Democrats in the supermajority

BY GREG BISHOP  
THE CENTER SQUARE

Illinois state lawmakers returned to Springfield Tuesday.

Both chambers have passed new rules for the 103rd General Assembly that began last month following November's election.

More than 1,300 bills have been newly filed in the Senate. Friday is the deadline for more.

The House has a deadline of Feb. 17 to file bills. There've been nearly 2,200 filed.

During debate last week over House rules, state Rep. Patrick Windhorst, R-Metropolis, urged for more equity in whether Republican bills, with bipartisan support, can get a fair hearing.

"It's no guarantee they would be voted on on the floor, just that they could be heard and voted on in committee," Windhorst argued. "And I think the members on our side of the aisle believe that's just fundamentally fair, it's a matter of fairness."

State Rep. C.D. Davidsmeyer, R-Jacksonville, said giving the Republican super minority a voice can be as simple as allowing equal time for witnesses during committee hearings.

"We wanted to ensure that all of our members of the committee, as well as all the members of the House of Representatives, have the opportunity to truly hear both sides of the issue," Davidsmeyer said.

House Speaker Emanuel "Chris" Welch, D-Hillside, said Democrats won the supermajority.

"We will not waste the people's time," Welch said. "There are 78 of us on this side of the aisle for a reason. The voters have spoken."

He laid out what he said is their priorities, like labor issues, access to abortion and election law among others.

"They want us to continue balancing budgets and helping working families," Welch said. "That's what we're going to do here. We're gonna do the serious work that we were sent here to do."

The Senate has hearings scheduled this week for committees touching on the judiciary, insurance and higher education this week.

The House has a subject matter hearing today to review the status of the state's evidence-based funding for K-12 education.

More hearings could be scheduled in the days ahead.

Next week, Gov. J.B. Pritzker delivers his budget and State of the State Address.



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## Lewis Univ. dean's list

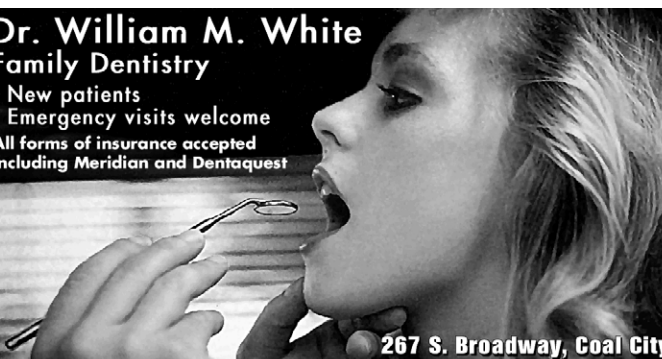
Just over 1,300 students were honored on the Lewis University Dean's List for the 2022 Fall Semester.

To be eligible for this honor, students must have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours during the semester with a grade point average of at least 3.5 and with no "D" or "F" grades.

Area students on the list include Jaden Christian,

McKenzie Marcum and Haley Crescenti, of Wilmington; Cain Headrick, of Custer Park; Lexi Banas, Jessica Leasure, Victoria Miller, Jevin Reed and Ryleigh Christensen, of Coal City; Nicole Wiltz, of Diamond and Alexander Crickman, Alec Dinh, McKenzie Ellison, Molly Gustafson, Kyla Kjellesvik, Jennifer Murphy and Jon Overton, of Morris.

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## If you favor rum, try a classic Jamaican Wray & Ting

In recent years both the whiskey and the rum world have been blessed with "cask strength" or "barrel proof" expressions from distillers, meaning that the spirits are bottled higher than the standard 80 proof. In some cases, much higher.

One of the highest-octane expressions in the rum world comes from Jamaican distillers Wray & Nephew. Despite the "overproof" bottling, Wray & Nephew has solidified its place in Jamaican culture as part of one of the most popular Caribbean cocktails, the iconic Wray and Ting.

Wray & Nephew began producing Jamaican rum in 1825 and has marketed many different expressions of their rum with varying degrees of success and staying power. The Wray flagship brand is their overproof white rum bottled at 63% ABV, or 126 proof.

Wait a minute, 126 proof? Is it flammable? As a matter of fact, it is. Outside of Jamaica Wray & Nephew overproof is primarily used as a "float" on top of flaming drinks and shots.

It has culinary applications as well, many chefs use the potent Jamaican rum to flambé desserts. Occasionally bartenders will use it to give a kick to an overly sweet drink such as a Rum Runner or a Zombie.

In Jamaica, they actually drink the Wray overproof, and they drink a lot of it.

Throughout the years I have heard that 90% of all rum consumed in Jamaica is pro-

duced by the Wray distillery, and I wondered exactly how Jamaicans were enjoying their Wray & N e p h e w . Overproof rum has a certain jet fuel burn to it, although it has sweet notes on the front end. The finish is every bit rough as you can imagine.

Sure, it's an acquired taste, but one that is celebrated on the island. Wray & Nephew overproof is a great source of pride for the island and toasting with the iconic spirit is a part of many milestones and celebrations in Jamaican life.

It turns out that the most popular rum in Jamaica is used to make the most popular mixed drink in Jamaica, the Wray and Ting.

Wray and Ting? We know by the name that the drink uses Wray & Nephew, but what is Ting?

Ting is a Jamaican grapefruit soda, one that is wildly popular on the island. Many tourists have enjoyed a Wray & Ting on a Jamaican cruise and attempted to replicate the drink at home using Squirt, or a store brand American grapefruit soda.

Squirt is not an ideal substitute for Ting as Squirt is sweetened with high fructose corn syrup whereas Ting is sweetened with pure cane sugar.



**THE SUNDAY COCKTAIL**  
**Brian Runq**

strong as it has ever been, it may be in a supermarket near you. Be sure to check the "international foods" section of your local store if you do not see Ting in the soda aisle.

I picked up a six pack at my local store and had a few sips of the Ting on its own, and it does have a unique and refreshing sweetness to it. I am not a huge fan of soda, but Ting over ice does the trick and tastes like actual grapefruit.

If you are unable to find Ting locally, it can be ordered from Amazon or any number of other online retailers. As mentioned earlier the distribution is getting better, and you have social media to thank for that.

Thousands of Facebook posts depicting vacationers with Wray and Ting has managed to create worldwide demand for Ting.

Pick up some Wray & Nephew overproof, and I hope that you can track down a six pack of Ting. Let's pour one of these.

One thing that you will

notice in the recipe below is that the starting point for this drink is 6 ounces of soda to 1 ounce of rum.

That seems like a bit much on the soda side, but remember that we are dealing with a rum bottled at 63% ABV. In terms of ABV, one ounce of overproof rum equals approximately 1 1/4 to 1 1/2 ounces of standard 80 proof rum.

If you want more kick in your Wray and Ting you can certainly turn up the heat by adding more of the overproof rum.

One more thing, and this is important: Don't forget the lime. I prefer to squeeze in at least 1/2 oz. fresh lime juice, maybe a bit more. Keep in mind that this is a 7 ounce drink on ice, it can take a little lime.

Simple as it may be, the Wray and Ting is a cultural phenomenon that must be sampled if you are a fan of Caribbean cocktails.

Building a dynamite reggae playlist is not a requirement to enjoy a Wray and Ting, but it certainly doesn't hurt either.

The classic Jamaican Wray and Ting is served over ice in a Collins (tall) glass.

Fill glass with ice and add:  
1 oz. Wray and Nephew White Overproof Rum  
6 oz. Ting Grapefruit Soda  
Squeeze in juice from one lime wedge

Stir and garnish with lime wedge

Until next week, enjoy responsibly.

## Illinois' biometric law strengthened by latest ruling

BY HANNAH MEISEL  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

SPRINGFIELD — People who've been subject to fingerprinting, face or retinal scans as either employees or customers of Illinois companies have five years to file lawsuits if they believe the business violated a stringent state privacy law, the Illinois Supreme Court ruled last week.

It's the latest in a handful of cases that have reached Illinois' high court in recent years, all refining the state's Biometric Information Privacy Act. Also known as BIPA, the first-of-its-kind law has, since 2008, made Illinois the only state that grants a private right of action to sue over the improper collection and mis-handling of biometric data.

Justices ruled BIPA has an unequivocal five-year statute of limitations on all claims under the law — not a one-year window as employers and business groups had hoped for.

In this case, logistics company Black Horse Carriers Inc., which has since been acquired by trucking giant Penske, faced a class action lawsuit. A former employee initiated the suit, alleging the company violated BIPA by requiring time clock fingerprint authentication without maintaining a publicly available policy on how the company would treat employees' biometric data.

The suit also claimed Black Horse failed to provide notice to employees that the timeclock was collecting their fingerprints, and didn't explicitly get employees' consent.

The company argued the court should've applied the one-year statute of limitations under Illinois' Right of Publicity Act. But the court unanimously disagreed.

In issuing a blanket five-year statute of limitations for all BIPA claims, the 5-0 majority of the court emphasized that "the full ramifications of the harms associated with biometric technology is unknown." Without the law, the court wrote, individuals whose biometric data was improperly collected or disseminated might never even know it — at least until they felt the consequences.

Nearly 1.5 million Illinoisans were eligible for their share of a \$650 million class action settlement with Facebook under BIPA in 2020, a five-year case that was one of

the first among thousands of suits filed under the law, with the trend really taking off around 2018, Kays said.

Thursday's opinion was another legal victory for proponents of BIPA — especially a handful of law firms specializing in filing class action cases over biometric data. Those attorneys have made the same basic argument in thousands of lawsuits over the last several years: if someone's identity is stolen, they can obtain a new social security number. But if their biometric data is stolen, it's impossible to get a new fingerprint or face.

So far, Illinois' high court has agreed — as did a federal jury in October, granting \$228 million in damages in a class action BIPA case against BNSF Railways, the first jury test of the law.

## Pritzker says COVID-19 disaster proclamation to end in May

BY HANNAH MEISEL  
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

SPRINGFIELD — Exactly 38 months after the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic, Illinois will no longer be under a disaster proclamation as of May 11,

Gov. JB Pritzker announced last week.

That's the same day President Joe Biden will end the national public health emergency, which just passed the three-year mark last week.

Pritzker had declared a public health emergency two days before the WHO's pandemic determination and has renewed his disaster proclamation every 30 days since then.

The repeated proclamations gave the governor authority for COVID-related actions such as closing schools, issuing stay-at-home orders and mandating masks and vaccines. But they were a source of consternation for Pritzker's political opponents.

The governor had slowly rolled back his COVID-19 mandates over the past year, including an action in October when he reversed the requirement for vaccines, testing and

masks in health care settings.

But Illinois is still one of seven states with some sort of COVID-related emergency proclamation on its books.

These disaster declarations have allowed those states — including Republican-run Texas — to continue benefiting from COVID-era bumps in federal reimbursements for programs like Medicaid, additional benefits for those on food stamps and the ability to quickly deploy emergency workers to respond to areas in need, like hospitals with severely short staffing.

"Our state's disaster proclamation and executive orders enabled us to use every resource at our disposal from building up testing capacity and expanding our health care workforce to supporting our vaccine rollout and mutual aid efforts," Pritzker said in a statement.

Pritzker said 1.4 million

children in Illinois received nutrition support under the additional Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits. He also pointed to the expansion of telehealth during the pandemic under his disaster proclamation, which has largely been adapted into state law after it proved popular with doctors and patients alike.

Opponents to Pritzker's repeated issuance of disaster proclamations insisted the governor was limited to the 30 days laid out in state law, but legal challenges to that effect ultimately failed after months of litigation.

The governor's disaster proclamation also allowed for the activation of the State Emergency Operations Center, which brokered cooperation between the leaders of different state agencies in response to COVID-19.

## As Illinois aims to add more wind farms, concerns raised about wildlife

BY KEVIN BESSLER  
THE CENTER SQUARE

As Illinois forges ahead with plans to assist in the adding of more wind farms around the state, environmentalists say there is a downside.

Hundreds of thousands of birds and bats perish annually in collisions with turbine blades and other equipment at renewable energy installations.

The country's solar farms have a bird problem as well. Utility companies reportedly have been finding bird carcasses littering the ground at their facilities for years. In 2016, a study by ScienceDirect estimated that the hundreds of utility-scale solar farms around the U.S. may kill nearly 140,000 birds annually.

During debate on legislation at the Illinois statehouse about county control over placement of renewable energy projects, state Sen. Chapin Rose, R-Mahomet, cited another study in which a large portion of the deaths involved eagles and hawks.

"Why is that important? Because they're the ones that keep all the other species in check," Rose said. "They are the ones who eat

mice and rats and prevent vermin from spreading disease."

Last year, a wind energy company was ordered to pay more than \$8 million in fines and restitution after at least 150 eagles were killed at its wind farms in eight states, including Illinois. NextEra Energy subsidiary ESI Energy pleaded guilty to three counts of violating the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Conservation biology professor Angelo Capperella at Illinois State University is concerned about bats, which help control insect populations.

"The bats are a really huge issue, one that I don't know how the wind farm companies are going to deal with it because bats have been declining for other reasons as well," Capperella said.

One solution would be to turn off the windmills at night when bats are migrating, Capperella said.

It now appears Illinois will become involved in the siting of wind and solar projects. Gov. J.B. Pritzker is expected to sign legislation which essentially takes away local control from counties for the siting of wind farms. It is a reversal from last summer when Pritzker said the state would not get involved.



# Who makes the best chili?



Freemasons invite you to turn in your best

LOOK WHO'S IN the kitchen. Ben Stickel may have a secret ingredient in his chili but to find out you'll have to come to the Wilmington Masonic Lodge, 311 Main St., Wilmington, on Sunday Feb. 26. From 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. the Wilmington Freemasons Lodge #208 will have its 13th annual Chili Cook-Off to fund the Pedals for Progress program. Tasting and a bowl of house chili is \$10 for adults, \$5 for kids over 11 and free for kids 11 and under. There will also be \$1 hot dogs available. Think you have what it takes to be the Chili King? To register as a contestant call Stickel 815-370-7331 or Matt Lohmar 815-210-9606.

# McDonough Street bridge to reopen, Jefferson St. to close

The Illinois Department of Transportation announced that the McDonough Street bridge over the Des Plaines River in Joliet will reopen, weather permitting, Monday, Feb. 13.

The bridge was closed in November as part of ongoing efforts to upgrade the movable bridges in downtown Joliet to allow them to be controlled

from a central location, creating a more efficient system of lifting and lowering the bridges and increasing safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and marine traffic.

Shortly after the reopening of McDonough Street, the Jefferson Street (U.S. 30) bridge will be closed until, weather permitting, the evening of Friday, Feb. 17. The

# Dropoff string lights, electronics Thursday

Will County's free electronics drop-off event will be held Thursday, Feb. 9, from 5-7 p.m. at the Wilmington City Hall parking lot, 1165 S. Water St.

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

Participants are reminded to remain in their vehicles at all times, show ID by holding it to the window for staff to see and then allow staff to remove items without assistance from each vehicle.

Items accepted include: Televisions (limit 2), monitors, printers, computers (desktops, laptops, notebooks, tablets),

electronic keyboards, fax machines, videocassette recorders, portable digital music players, DVD players, DVD recorders, video game consoles, small scale servers, scanners, electronic mice, digital converter boxes, cable receivers, satellite receivers, cell phones, computer cable, portable digital assistants (PDAs) and zip drives.

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

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

# Mobile food pantry coming Monday to So. Wilmington

Catholic Charities' Mobile Food Pantry will be distributing food on Monday, Feb. 13, at 4 p.m. at St. Lawrence Church (135 Rice Road in South Wilmington) in the church parking lot (rain or shine).

Catholic Charities and the Northern Illinois Food Bank have partnered to deliver nutritious food (meat, produce and nonperishable items) to people in need.

Participants are asked to

stay in their cars. The Mobile Food Pantry will use a "drive thru" method to distribute pre-packed groceries to ensure that all participants are safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

You do not have to be Catholic to participate. Catholic Charities helps people of all faiths and beliefs. For more information about Catholic Charities, please visit catholiccharitiesjoliet.org.

# SIUE fall deans list

Southern Illinois University announced the names of students qualifying for the fall 2022 dean's list, maintaining a grade-point

average of 3.5 or better and have 12 hours calculated (B is equivalent to 3.0; A to 4.0).

Among those students were Destiny Dodge and Colleen Feeney, of Coal City; Carley Wilkerson, of Wilmington and Elizabeth Carroll, of Mazon.

# Nutrition experts rank best diets

One month has passed and are you still sticking with that new year's resolution to try to lose weight?

There's a lot more to it than just grabbing every "reduced fat" item off the grocery store shelf.

Karen Whitehorn, MD, an OSF HealthCare internal medicine physician, hears questions all the time about diets. Her first question back is usually: what do you want out of your diet? Do you want to be healthy? Lose weight? Manage a medical condition? Sort through the details, and you'll find the best option.

U.S. News and World Report recently consulted a panel of medical and nutrition experts to rank the best diets. The Mediterranean diet topped the list. Dr. Whitehorn says this diet is based on the eating habits of people who live near the Mediterranean Sea. It's a plant-based diet, incorporating fruits, vegetables, whole grains, brown rice and seafood.

"The Mediterranean diet is actually pretty easy to follow. But you need to make sure you have the right food in your home," Dr. Whitehorn says. "It might be a little more difficult during the winter to get fresh fruits and vegetables. If you can't, frozen is OK. Canned is OK. But we recommend you rinse the canned food first to decrease some of the salt."

Number two on the U.S. News list is a plan Dr. Whitehorn recommends often: dietary approaches to stop hypertension, or the DASH diet. It recommends foods that are low in sodium

and high in magnesium and potassium.

Some people may incorporate fasting into their diet. Dr. Whitehorn says fasting, when done in consultation with a medical expert, can work. But she's hesitant to recommend it broadly.

"Our bodies need nutrients every couple hours. So to not eat anything for 12 hours can cause other problems," Dr. Whitehorn says. "If you're diabetic and don't eat for 12 hours, your blood sugar could drop too low. Then when you eat, it could go too high."

Watch out for fad diets on social media, Dr. Whitehorn says. Remember the saying: if it's too good to be true, it probably is.

"Fad diets are not consistent. They're not healthy. They don't provide you the nutrients you need. If it requires you to take a pill or drastically reduce your calories, it's not really a healthy diet. It can only be followed in the short term."

On the contrary, working out a diet plan with your health care provider has a better chance of achieving long term results.

"A healthy diet gives you the energy you need to do everyday activities," Dr. Whitehorn says. "It has been shown to increase your life expectancy. And it helps prevent chronic medical problems like high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer and heart disease."

Visit the OSF HealthCare website for healthy recipes.

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# OBITUARIES

## Kenneth E. Kern Jr.



**GODLEY**—Kenneth E. Kern Jr, 73, of Godley, passed away peacefully on Jan. 30, 2023.

He was born Aug. 12, 1949 to the late Kenneth Kern Sr. and Joyce (Kline) Kern.

He served time in the U.S. Army and was educated in Morris schools. Ken was a jack of all trades. There wasn't a thing he couldn't fix or didn't have a part for in his garage. He enjoyed spending time with his dog, "Buddy Bud," and was never hesitant to let everyone know that was his favorite child. He was a social butterfly and truly didn't know a stranger. He loved to entertain with stories of the past so outrageous one couldn't help but wonder if they had any merit, but also confident in their truth because he was also well known for his no nonsense honesty. Ken had a way of charming his way in to people's lives. With his piercing blue eyes, his snow white beard, and his infectious chuckle, he held an uncanny resemblance to Santa Claus. He will forever be missed for his never ending sense of



humor and his gentle hearted nature.

Kenneth is survived by his children: David (Kim) Kern, of Dwight; Robin Esparza and Dottie (Doug) Savarino, all of Braidwood and Cindie Kern, of Joliet; 11 grandchildren and one great-grandson as well as his siblings: Ray Kern, of Princeton; Gary (Linda) Kern, of Princeton; Debra (Eugene) Pfister, of St. Charles, MO and Don Kern, of Townsend GA.

Kenneth was preceded in death by his parents, sister-in-law, Louis Kern and grandson, Jensen Esparza.

Cremation rites were accorded. Graveside services will take place at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood on Friday, Feb. 17, 2023 at 1 p.m. with military honors being conducted. The family invites all their friends and family to join in a celebration of Ken's life immediately following the services at the VFW in Wilmington.

Preferred memorials in Kenneth's name may be made to the family for their distribution.

## Deborah A. Piazza

**GOOSE LAKE**—Deborah "Debbie" A. Piazza, 70, of Morris (Goose Lake), passed away on Sunday, Feb. 5, 2023 at Morris Hospital.

Debbie was born on Aug. 12, 1952 in Joliet to Howard A. and Joulé L. (nee Heck) Mead. She grew up in the Joliet area, attending St. Francis High School and later Joliet Central High School graduating with the class of 1970. Debbie married the love of her life, James A. Piazza, on Aug. 1, 1971 at St. Mary Carmelite Church. Together they raised a family of two children. While being a mother and homemaker, Debbie also worked as a tax preparer for H&R Block and also for her own business, TaxTyme, which she ran for over 20 years. Debbie had a variety of interests. She took pride in working on her yard and gardening. She enjoyed time with her family together at the lake with activities like boating, fishing and camping, always with an "Old Style" in her hand. She and Jim spent many years traveling to gulf side Florida beaches. Debbie relished time spent with her family during holidays with Christmas being her favorite. She was a great home cook and was famous for her baked beans, spaghetti, meatloaf and goulash.

She is survived by her husband of 51 years, Jim Piazza; their children, James A. Jr. (Cheryl M.) Piazza, of Belmont, NC and Carrie A. Piazza, of Coal City; their grandchildren: Bryce A.



Easton, Nathan J. Piazza and Nikala M. Piazza; her sisters, Dianna (Chuck) Anderson, of Rockford and Dannette (Jim) Young, of Bolivar, MO; brother, Howard (Mary) Mead, of Monona, WI; sisters-in-law, Chris Mead, of Joliet; Regina (Alex) Orta, of Clearwater, FL and Pam (Mike) Coyne, of Rutherfordton, NC; brothers-in-law, Terry Sr. (Barb) Piazza, of Joliet and Dan (Mary Lou) Piazza, of Sycamore. Also surviving are numerous nieces and nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews and great-great-nieces and great-great-nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Howard A. and Joulé L. Mead; her sister, Donna Mead; her two brothers, Barry Mead and Jimmy Mead and her father-in-law and mother-in-law, Al and Bernadine Piazza.

Cremation rites will be accorded. Memorial Visitation will be on Friday, Feb. 10, 2023 from 4 p.m. until 7 p.m. at Ferrari Funeral Services, 1044 Ferrari Drive, Coal City.

Memorials may be directed to the Shriner's Children's Hospital, 2211 North Oak Park Ave., Chicago, IL 60707. [www.shrinerschildren.org](http://www.shrinerschildren.org).

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guestbook at [www.ferrarifuneral.com](http://www.ferrarifuneral.com).

Ferrari Funeral Services of Coal City are entrusted with arrangements.

## Viva Jo Jelley

**CHANNAHON**—Viva Jo Jelley, 75, of Channahon, passed away Sunday, Jan. 29, 2023 at the Lightways Hospice Home in Joliet.

Born Aug. 14, 1947 in St. Clair County, East St. Louis, Viva was a daughter of Clyde Edgar and Elsie Marie (Dreler) Gordon. She was raised and educated in Belleville, IL and on Aug. 28, 1972, she married Bobby Jelley.

A dedicated member of Families of Faith Church in Channahon, Viva enjoyed Bible study, listening to oldies, and watching classic movies. Her life was centered on family, and she cherished the opportunity to care for her loved ones.

Survivors include her husband of 50 years, Bobby; three children: David (Barbara) Jelley, of Harvey, IL; Joe Jelley, of Wilmington and Lisa



Jelley, of Channahon, and two grandchildren, Mikayla Jelley and Matthew Jelley.

Viva was preceded in death by her parents, and one daughter, Amy Lynn Jelley.

Funeral services were held Sunday, Feb. 5, 2023 at Families of Faith Church in Channahon.

Cremation rites were accorded and Viva will be laid to rest in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Belleville, IL.

Family and friends are encouraged to log onto [www.BaskervilleFuneral.com](http://www.BaskervilleFuneral.com) to sign the guest book, upload photographs and share Viva's memorial page online through social media.

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

## Ida Hall

**MORRIS**—Ida Isabelle "Belle" Hall, 93, of Morris, and formerly of Wilmington, went home to be with the Lord on Thursday, Feb. 2, 2023. She had been a resident at Park Pointe Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center in Morris.

On Jan. 9, 1930 in Ripley, TN, Belle was one of the daughters born into the large family of Stanley and Laura (Brown) Minner. She was raised and educated in Ripley, and on Sept. 4, 1948, Belle married Fedric T. "Fred" Hall Sr. She was a long-time member of Island City Baptist Church in Wilmington and will be remembered for her love of church and family.

Survivors include children: Fedric "Fred" Jr. (Robin) Hall, of Kankakee; Gail Hall, of Wilmington; Amy (Tim) Suchaczewski, of Somonauk and Mark (Foog) Sritragul, of Thailand; seven grandchildren: Ryan Hall (Fiancé' Cierra Tawney), Zachary Hall, Greg (Marissa) Hall, Jessica Suchaczewski, Samantha Suchaczewski, Isaac Suchaczewski and Nina (Eric) Bronson; five great-grandchildren: Ben and Lucy Hall and Madelyn, Lorelei and Connor Bronson and one brother, Louis Minner, of



Tennessee, as well as several nieces and nephews.

Ida was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Fred Sr. on June 29, 2001; two daughters: Patricia Ann Hall and Sri-Arun Sritragul; son-in-law, James Gavros and many brothers and sisters.

The family will receive friends for a visitation at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 E. Kahler Rd. in Wilmington on Thursday, Feb. 9, 2023 from 2 p.m. until the time of funeral service at 4 p.m.

Belle will be laid to rest privately on Friday in Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood with her late husband, Fred.

Preferred memorials in lieu of flowers may be made as gifts in Belle's memory to a church or charity of the donor's choosing.

Family and friends are encouraged to log onto [www.BaskervilleFuneral.com](http://www.BaskervilleFuneral.com) to sign the guest book, upload photos or share Ida's memorial page online.

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

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## Evelyn Fennewald

**WILMINGTON**—Evelyn Lucille Fennewald (nee Brown), 80, of Wilmington, passed away peacefully on Saturday, Feb. 4, 2023 at her home.

Born Oct. 28, 1942 in Joliet, Evelyn was a daughter of Harry Glenn and Genevieve Lucille "Jean" (Muncy) Brown. She was raised and educated in Wilmington and graduated from Wilmington High School. Evelyn was a former member of First Baptist Church of Wilmington and currently attended and belonged to Saint Rose of Lima Catholic Church in Wilmington.

Evelyn had several places of employment over the years including Precision Components, Family Dollar Store and the Wilmington School District cafeterias. Most recently, she had worked for Chicagoland Speedway as a ticket taker. Evelyn took great pleasure in going for walks or dancing, but was happiest when she was spending quality time with her family and friends who she loved so much.

Survivors include her husband, Melvin A. Fennewald, who she married Jan. 8, 2004; one



sister: Kathleen (Max) Hoffman, of Channahon; one brother, Edward (Sandy) Scrogham, of Gardner; three step-children: Brenda, Melanie and Melody and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren, as well as nieces, nephews and cousins.

Evelyn was preceded in death by her parents, three siblings: Janet Brown, Roland "Ronnie" Brown and Robert (Sarah) Brown.

Funeral services were held at Baskerville Funeral Home in Wilmington on Wednesday, Feb. 8, 2023. Deacon Jay Ples from St. Rose Parish presided, and burial followed in Mount Olivet Catholic Cemetery in Wilmington.

Family and friends are encouraged to log onto [www.BaskervilleFuneral.com](http://www.BaskervilleFuneral.com) to sign the online guest book, upload photographs, and share Evelyn's memorial page online through social media.

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

## Vonda Smith

**WILMINGTON**—Vonda Smith, 65, of Wilmington, passed away unexpectedly on Sunday, Feb. 5, 2023 at Riverside Medical Center in Kankakee.

Born Oct. 7, 1957 in North Kingstown, RI, Vonda Leah was a daughter of Owen and Margaret "Peggy" (Starkey) Webb. She moved with her family to Wilmington where she graduated from Wilmington High School with the class of 1975. Vonda married Gary Lynn Smith and together they moved to California. They later relocated briefly to Kansas until returning to Wilmington in 1989. Vonda gained employment with Precision Components, Inc. in Wilmington where she worked for over 30 years.

Vonda was very active in her children's extra curricular activities, participating as a coach and scorekeeper with the Wilmington Baseball and Softball Association, and rarely missed one of their games. This commitment carried on through her grandchildren, sometimes traveling through multiple states to support their sporting events. Being a loving and committed wife, mother, and grandmother was Vonda's true calling in life. She loved spending time with her boys going camping and fishing, and always looking forward to their family trips to Missouri. Vonda was also a devoted daughter to her father, making sure he was always well taken care of. She enjoyed reading, especially Stephen King novels, and her regular Friday night card games, but family and friends always came first and she will be dearly missed by all who knew and loved her.

Survivors include her father, Owen Webb, of Wilmington; three children: Dale Smith, of



Wilmington; Derek (Tiffany) Smith, of New Lenox and Dustin Smith, of Wilmington; three granddaughters: Kendall, Kali and Kloe Smith, of New Lenox; one sister, Tonya (Ken) Hagemeyer, of Glendale, AZ and one brother, Kevin (Paula) Webb, of Wilmington; four brothers-in-law and numerous nieces and nephews.

Vonda was preceded in death by her mother, Peggy Webb; her husband, Gary Smith and one brother in infancy.

The family will receive friends for a visitation on Friday, Feb. 10, 2023 at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 E. Kahler Road in Wilmington from 4 p.m. until the time of funeral service at 7 p.m.

Cremation rites will be accorded following the funeral services.

Vonda will be laid to rest at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood on Monday, Feb. 13, 2023. Those wishing to attend are welcome to assemble at the funeral home on Monday morning beginning at 11 a.m. for a procession, which will depart at 11:30 a.m. Committal services are scheduled at 12 p.m.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Vonda's memory to a charity of the donor's choosing.

Family and friends are encouraged to log onto [www.BaskervilleFuneral.com](http://www.BaskervilleFuneral.com) to sign the online guest book, upload photographs, and share Vonda's memorial page via social media.

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

## Dr. Leon F. Spanbauer

**WILMINGTON**—Dr. Leon F. "Span" Spanbauer, 81, of Wilmington and formerly of Coal City and Varna, passed away peacefully at his home on Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2023, surrounded by his family.

He was born on April 12, 1941 in Glassport, PA to Joseph A. and Rhoda L. (nee Ranta) Spanbauer. He grew up in Pennsylvania, later attending St. Vincent's College and Loyola School of Dentistry. Span married Vonda Hanson on July 15, 1967 in Maywood, IL and together they raised a family of three sons. He opened his Coal City dental practice in 1971 and retired in 1999. After retirement, Span worked at the Edgewood Golf Course in McNabb. He was an avid golfer and also enjoyed hunting, fishing and stained glass projects.

He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Vonda Spanbauer; their sons and daughters-in-law, Michael and Tori Spanbauer, Jeff and Amy Spanbauer and Greg and Stephanie Spanbauer; eight grandchildren: Samantha and her hus-



band, Conner Sayers; Joey Spanbauer, Michaela Spanbauer, Brenden Spanbauer, Abigail Spanbauer, Wyatt Spanbauer, Aidan Bankovic and Andrew Bankovic; one great-grandson, Paul Sayers; his step-sister, Maggie Tyszkiewicz; his brother-in-law, John Hanson and his sister-in-law, Rosemarie Hanson. Also surviving are several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Joseph Spanbauer and Rhoda Spanbauer Kurta.

At his request, cremation rites will be accorded. A Celebration of Life will be held in the summer.

Memorials in Dr. Spanbauer's name may be directed to the Grundy County Animal Control, 310 E. Dupont Rd., Morris, IL 60450.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guestbook at [www.ferrarifuneral.com](http://www.ferrarifuneral.com).

Ferrari Funeral Services of Coal City are entrusted with arrangements.

## Joseph Nyhoff

**MORRIS**—Joseph "Jay" Nyhoff, 82, of Morris, and formerly of Chicago, passed away Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2023, at his home.

Born Dec. 11, 1940, in Chicago, Joseph James was the son of Joseph James Sr. and Marjorie L. (Powers) Nyhoff. He was raised and educated in Chicago's South Shore neighborhood; graduated from St. Ignatius College Preparatory School; and went on to earn his BA degree from Chicago Teachers College.

On Sept. 8, 1962, Jay married Dorothy O'Kane at St. Phillip Neri Church in the South Shore neighborhood, and together they made a home and raised their four children in Morris. Jay retired following 36 years of employment from the Department of Natural Resources, most recently as the Site Superintendent of Goose Lake Prairie State Park and Heidecke Lake. He was a member of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Morris, was a life member of the Knights of Columbus, and belonged to the Morris Moose Lodge 967. One who loved nature and was proud to have earned his Eagle Scout rank, Jay enjoyed hunting, fishing, watching the birds at the feeders he took care of in his backyard, and tending to his koi pond. Reading was an enjoyable pastime, and he took pleasure in building models, which included both train models and miniature dioramas. The family created many memories traveling domestically with their camper trailer, and nothing gave Jay greater joy than spending time with his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, sharing his love of the outdoors with them.

Jay had a passion for his work, and will be remembered for his articles which were published in both the Morris Daily Herald, as well as the local paper in Savanna, IL, when he was sta-



tioned at Mississippi Palisades State Park.

Survivors include his wife of 60 years; their four children: Pamela (Ron) Burton, of Marseilles, IL; Colleen (Michael) Ward, of Morris; Kevin Nyhoff (Darla Rahe), of Diamond and Amelia (Dale) Wren, of Morris; seven grandchildren: Jessica (Mike) Glaser, Nichole Ward, Brenton (Lindsay) Ward, Hollyn Kupiec, Jacob Zahn, Caleb Zahn, and Ellery Burton; two great-grandsons: Landon Kupiec and Hudson Ward; one sister, Mary Catherine Mierlak, of Morris and his brother-in-law, Michael (Nadine) O'Kane, of Thiensville, WI.

Jay was preceded in death by his parents, Marjorie L. Nyhoff and Joseph James and Elsie (Phillips) Nyhoff.

Funeral services were held Saturday, Feb. 4, 2023 at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Morris. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated with Reverend Jason Stone officiating and Deacon Paul Jung assisting.

Pallbearers were: Kevin Nyhoff, Brenton Ward, Ellery Burton, Ron Burton, Mike Ward and Dale Wren.

Green flameless cremation rites were accorded following the services, and he was laid to rest in Mount Carmel Cemetery in Morris.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Jay's memory to Goose Lake Prairie Partners, Inc., 5010 N. Jughtown Road, Morris, IL 60450 or to Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, 600 E. Jackson St., Morris, IL 60450.

Family and friends are encouraged to log onto: [www.ReevesFuneral.com](http://www.ReevesFuneral.com) to sign the guest book, upload photographs, and share Jay's memorial page online.

Funeral services and green flameless cremation arrangements were made under the direction and care of Reeves Funeral Homes, Ltd. in Morris.



# Barge traffic back to normal; lock closures loom

BY DANIEL GRANT  
FARMWEEK

Barge traffic is getting back to normal on the lower Mississippi River for what's typically a slower time of the year anyway.

"The water levels are back up to normal south of Cairo versus where it was in September and October," Tom Torretti, of Consolidated Grain & Barge Co., told FarmWeek at the Illinois Fertilizer and Chemical Association's (IFCA) annual convention in Peoria in mid-January. "The low water issue last year was the worst we'd seen since 1988."

The low water issues, which Torette said made parts of the mighty river temporarily look like a creek, snarled barge traffic and caused freight rates to skyrocket in 2022.

Fortunately, barges are moving again and freight rates are coming down as the planting season approaches. Much of the fertilizer and other input products used on Illinois farms arrive in the state via barge.

"After harvest, things slow down and then start picking up around February as shippers move fertilizer up the river system," Torretti said. "Bulk rate contracts out of New Orleans are 15 to 20% higher than a year ago. All our costs are up. But what southbound grain freight values do remains to be seen. They're back to normal for now."

When asked if farmers will have access to adequate supplies of inputs moved on the river this spring, Torretti said, "I think so (based on current conditions and barring spring flooding)."

"The fertilizer industry is so good at what it does, buyers



Photo by Army Corps Rock Island District

**A TOW ENTERS the lock chamber moving upstream at Brandon Road Lock and Dam in Joliet. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers plans to close four locks on the upper Illinois River at Starved Rock, Marseilles, Dresden Island and Brandon Road for rehabilitation work from June 1 through Sept. 30.**

always get their products," he continued. "Just, maybe not when they want it."

The barge industry added 226 new covered hopper barges to the fleet last year from previous orders, which will help increase the flow of products on the river system.

But, with the current cost of a new covered hopper barge between \$900,000 and \$1 million, the existing fleet of around 11,800 barges likely won't grow much more any time soon.

"Until steel prices come down, we probably won't see many new builds," Torretti said.

Meanwhile, the barge industry faces more shipping issues this spring and summer

— this time of the planned variety.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers plans to close three locks on the Upper Illinois River at Marseilles, Dresden Island and Brandon Road for rehabilitation work from June 1 through Sept. 30. The planned closure for work at the Starved Rock lock has been deferred to a later date, yet to be determined.

"There'll be no traffic at all. You'll have to plan accordingly," Torretti told attendees of the IFCA convention. "We've known about this for two years and been through this before. It is what it is."

The Corps previously closed five locks on the Illinois River at LaGrange, Peoria,

Starved Rock, Marseilles and Dresden Island from July 1 to Oct. 29, 2020, for major rehab and maintenance work.

"The timing of the repairs (this year) is after spring planting and before harvest, so it's probably the best time to do it," Torretti said. "But, when the locks do reopen, it will be a mad dash on all commodities. We potentially could be harvesting grain and will certainly be moving fertilizer to put down for the fall season."

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

# New kids programs

The Forest Preserve District of Will County will host two new programs for kids this month. The first is "Rivers of Color - Winter Greens" Saturday, Feb. 11, from 1 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. at the Four Rivers Environmental Education Center in Channahon.

Enjoy a short hike and discover the magic of mosses, and then head inside to make

your own plant creation to take home. Free, ages 10 or older. Register by Feb. 10.

On Wednesday, Feb. 15, "Little Explorers - Animals in Winter" will take place at Four Rivers from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Learn about animals in winter with a story, a hike, hands-on activities, crafts and free play. Free, ages 3-5. Register by Feb. 14.



Thank you Alex, the rest of the Baskerville crew and Michelle Clark for orchestrating David's service at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery on Friday the thirteenth of January, 2023. David had always wanted a bagpiper playing "Amazing Grace", and you made it happen Alex. The flag ceremony, taps, special gun salute, and personal care from Michelle Clark helped to honor my loving husband of almost 52 years. Our family and I will be forever grateful.

Matthew, Miranda, Mark, Jonah, Libby, Samuel,  
MacKenzie and Bonnie Huston

# Thank You

Thank you Wilmington Fire Protection Department for your response to my frantic call and for your valiant efforts to revive my husband on February 4, 2023 (and for even putting my groceries in the freezer when I had to hurriedly leave for Riverside). A special thank you to Todd Friddle for your care and compassion. Thank you Donna and Dale Kirk for driving me to Riverside. Thank you to those who gathered around me in the ER and a special thank you for Dr. Lacheta's attention and compassion. Our family has been so blessed by all of the beautiful cards, thoughts, prayers, meals, flowers, kindnesses, donations to David's memorials and love in action (even laundry and housecleaning) of many friends and family. May God bless all of you for your support at this very difficult time.

Matthew, Miranda, Mark, Jonah, Libby, Samuel,  
MacKenzie and Bonnie Huston and  
Suzanne and Jim Johnston

# Temporary halt for proposed CO2 pipeline

BY ZETA CROSS  
THE CENTER SQUARE

A proposed CO2 pipeline through parts of Illinois is on hold.

The Texas pipeline company Navigator has withdrawn its application for a certificate of authority to build a pipeline to carry liquid carbon dioxide through 13 Illinois counties.

Pam Richart, co-founder of the Coalition to Stop CO2 Pipelines, said Navigator has not been able to persuade landowners in Christian and Montgomery counties that a large repository of CO2 can be safely stored under their farms and land.

"Eighty percent of the landowners in Christian County who are in the sequestration area have refused to sign leases," Richart said to The Center Square.

Opponents are working closely with Montgomery County to help people there understand the implications and potential risks of injecting and storing large quantities of

CO2 in neighboring Montgomery County, Richart said.

The goal of the pipeline project is to transport CO2 from 32 different sites across 1,300 miles to central Illinois where the Cambrian-age Mt. Simon Sandstone Formation overlies the Precambrian granite basement of the Illinois Basin. Geologists believe concentrated CO2 can be safely injected underground under the Mt. Simon formation in a saline reservoir where it will take 100 years to calcify. If the CO2 is stored deep under the cap rock in central Illinois, geologists maintain that it will stay there. But there are no guarantees, Richart said.

"We are concerned that they can't guarantee that the CO2 will stay put and not move," Richart said.

People fear the CO2 could leak through the well itself. There could be fractures in the cap rock that are not mapped that will allow CO2 to leak.

"The cap rock may be damaged in the process of high-pressure injection of the

CO2," Richart said.

Leaked CO2 has the potential to contaminate local drinking water, Richart said.

"When CO2 mixes with water, it creates carbonic acid. That releases heavy metals and toxins from underground that can ruin the local water," she said.

If leaked CO2 rises to the surface and changes the CO2 levels in the soil, crop yields could be affected, Richart said.

"Plant roots would not be as strong, or as deep and or as dense," she said.

In Oklahoma and Texas, injection of wastewater in the ground has caused earthquakes, Richart said. Earthquakes would release the CO2 that they want to sequester, defeating the purpose of the effort.

"They say it won't happen here, but why should we believe them," Richart said. "It's happening in places where they are injecting lesser volumes of fluid at lower pressures than they intend to use here."

And there is the question

of the rights of the neighbors, Richart said. One neighbor may agree to have CO2 injected in their land, but the neighbor a mile or two away may not want the risk.

"The CO2 is going to move," Richart said. "The neighbor will wind up with CO2 under his or her property."

Navigator said it intends to file a new pipeline application with the Illinois Commerce Commission this month that would specify what route the pipeline will take. Opponents are anxious to see the proposed route, Richart said.

# Gas prices slowly dropping

Local gasoline prices are trickling down as in Illinois saw prices fall 6.3 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.59/g, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,378 stations in Illinois.

Prices in Illinois are 21.6 cents per gallon higher than a month ago and stand 2.2 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has fallen 5.2 cents in the last week and stands at \$4.60 per gallon.

"For the first time in 2023, the national average price of gasoline has seen a weekly decline, primarily thanks to a sharp and sudden drop in the price of oil," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy.

"While the decline in both gasoline and diesel prices is terrific, it's not unusual to see prices falling in February,

which tends to be the month with some of the lowest gasoline prices of the year thanks to seasonally weak demand.

The lowest price in the area on Monday was \$3.49/g in Braidwood and Wilmington. Coal City stations were \$3.69 to \$3.75/g on Monday.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Illinois was priced at \$3.07/g while the most expensive was \$4.79/g, a difference of \$1.72/g.

"For diesel, we're likely to see more declines, and potentially much more significant in the weeks ahead as imports of distillate have accelerated, leading to a sell off. And, with warmer weather ahead, demand may struggle as well."

"However, especially for gasoline, high levels of coming maintenance and the eventual transition to summer gasoline

could lead today's declines to reverse down the road. For now, motorists should enjoy the decline, but be wary as we're likely to eventually see increases again down the road," De Haan said.

# The many benefits of traffic roundabouts

There are some interesting changes happening to our roads and it may leave a few folks wondering about the reasons.

Take traffic circles, also known as Roundabouts. Instead of the usual "T" shape, with 2 or 4 stop signs or a traffic light; a circle is built where the streets intersect.

This formation allows vehicles to avoid a full stop when no traffic is coming,

gracefully making a right turn to enter the circle. This acts to slow the traffic overall but reduces idling and the severity of vehicular accidents when they happen.

The advantages are fewer crashes and less severe crashes, lower vehicle speeds, less vehicle pollution, lower maintenance costs as compared to a traffic signal, increased landscaping opportunities and reducing confusion.

## Prom Dress Collection

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Office help needed at a local sportsmen's club. Seasonal part time hours. Experience with computers and knowledge of Excel and Access preferred. Please send inquiries to wcsc1946@gmail.com cc2-13

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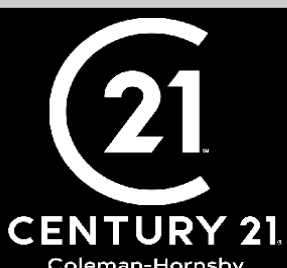
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# Own campaign loan backfires for DeVore

State records show that Dan Proft's People Who Play by the Rules PAC spent almost \$36 million during the second half of 2022, mostly on advertising boosting Sen. Darren Bailey's gubernatorial bid and opposing Gov. JB Pritzker.

Of that, \$2.4 million was spent on consulting. Former ABC7 political reporter Charles Thomas was paid \$100,000 in two \$50,000 installments. Thomas appeared in some of Proft's ads praising Bailey.

Tyrone Muhammed, the controversial founder of Ex-Cons for Community and Social Change, which bills itself as a violence interruption group, was paid \$250,000 for consulting work.

Proft's Starfish Consulting was also a recipient of almost \$535,000. But the highest paid consultant for Proft's PAC during the last six months of 2022 was a Chicago company called Salvo Page LLC, which got \$800,000, plus another \$111K for website services.

Salvo Page is not registered as a company with the state of Illinois. The only campaign payments to the company disclosed to the state were made by Proft's People Who Play by the Rules PAC. Google searches turn up nothing. Proft did not respond to repeated requests for comment over several days.

A search of Salvo Page's Chicago address on the State Board of Election's website turned up a clue.

Salvo Page shares a Chicago street address with Pipeline Media. The Columbia Journalism Review's Tow Center has done extensive reporting on Pipeline and similar companies. According to

that reporting, the company is run by Brian Timpone, a longtime Proft associate. I wasn't able to reach Timpone.

Richard Uihlein, who was the principal funder of Bailey's campaign via Proft's PAC as well as some direct contributions, controls a committee called Restoration PAC, which paid Pipeline and an affiliate company well over a \$1 million last year for various services, CJR's Tow Center reported last October.

And that brings us to Republican Illinois attorney general candidate Tom DeVore.

When DeVore busted the campaign contribution caps in his race last August with a \$250,000 personal loan to his campaign committee, some thought he might be opening the door to large contributions, perhaps from the billionaire Richard Uihlein.

Instead, all DeVore really did was allow Democratic incumbent Kwame Raoul to take a million-dollar contribution from Gov. JB Pritzker's campaign fund - \$940,100 more than Pritzker could've contributed had the contribution caps been in place. A few labor organizations also contributed sums slightly above the previous cap limit of \$59,900, but it wasn't much.

DeVore received a \$10,000 contribution from James Hoeg in late October, which was \$4,000 more than he would've been able to receive had it not been for the caps being lifted (Hoeg, by the way, recently



**CAPITOL FACTS**  
Rich Miller

contributed \$50,000 to Paul Vallas' Chicago mayoral campaign).

DeVore also received a \$50,000 contribution in late September from the Anthony M a r a n o Company (which sells produce to Chicago-area restaurants). The contribution was \$38,000 above the by-then-negated limit.

And that's it. \$42K is all DeVore appears to have netted from his cap-busting loan.

There's often an expectation when candidates loan money to their campaigns that they'll spend most of it. Instead, DeVore reimbursed himself almost all of that cash, including a \$200,000 payment on Oct. 14th, even though the campaign was entering its final few weeks, and then another \$15,000 the day after election day.

DeVore reported \$226,072 in contributions starting the day after he loaned himself that money, which was just about \$11,000 more than what DeVore reimbursed himself.

Outside of the loan repayment, DeVore reported spending less than \$142,000 in the fourth quarter, which ended December 31. By contrast, AG Raoul reported spending almost \$1.9 million in the same quarter.

DeVore spent just \$8,642.98 on advertising during the fourth quarter. Raoul reported spending almost \$1.7 million.

In other words, DeVore did not run a campaign

designed to win. But we pretty much knew that during the campaign itself. He got thumped by Raoul.

DeVore did manage to elevate and give voice to some folks on the far right. Shannon Adcock was a significant DeVore contributor, kicking in \$2,500 during September. Adcock is one of the founders of Awake Illinois, a far-right group that opposed pandemic mandates in schools that has since morphed into firing up moral panic over gays and trans people in schools, libraries and coffee shops. Vallas spoke at one of her events.

DeVore is now busily lining up clients to fund a third lawsuit against the state's assault weapons ban at \$200 a person. He raised more than half a million dollars with that same flat fee to fund his first two suits.

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

## Library to hold Craft Corner

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

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

# Congratulations!

## Chandler Wuchter

on making the  
**Dean's List of Scholars**  
for Fall 2022 at  
North Central College!  
**We are proud of you!**

**Chuck & Ginger, parents**

## Support group for people with oral, head and neck cancer

Morris Hospital will hold its next support group session for people with oral, head and neck cancer on Wednesday, Feb. 22, from 3-4 p.m. at the Radiation Therapy Center of Morris Hospital, 1600 W. U.S. Route 6 in Morris.

The support group is offered the last Wednesday of each month free of charge. Anyone who has experienced a diagnosis of oral, head and neck cancer and their family members are welcome to attend regardless of where cancer treatment was received.

The support group is led by an oncology nurse from the Morris Hospital Radiation

Therapy Center and is held in collaboration with SPOHNC, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to meeting the emotional, physical, and humanistic needs of people with oral or head and neck cancer and their caregivers. People who attend support groups often share experiences and advice in hopes of helping others cope with their life changing event.

Those planning to attend are asked to register online at [www.morrishospital.org/events](http://www.morrishospital.org/events), or call the Radiation Therapy Center of Morris Hospital at 815-364-8915.



A huge thank you to all who made our Spaghetti Dinner/Wonder Land Camp fundraiser a success.

Wilmington Moose Lodge 241/781, Women of the Moose, Wilmington Moose Riders, Wilmington VFW, The Wine Café, Fox's Pizza, Whitmore Ace Hardware, Mar Theater, El Patron Mexican Restaurant, Rosati's Pizza, Hog Wild, Faletti's Meats, Axe Factor, Al's Steakhouse, Crusade Burger, Southern Belle, Advanced Auto Parts, Babes Tap, O'Reilly Auto Parts, Crew Clips, The Purple Monkey, Audacious Ink, Darla's Deli, Magic Nails, Wilmington Pizzeria, Route 66 Bar, Mancuso Cheese, The Body Shoppe, The Pain & Wellness Group, FOP 94, Trinity Barkery, PMTT, McWethy's, Riverfront Lanes in Wilmington, and many people who donated various other baskets and raffle items.

And to all our volunteers, families, friends and especially all the people who attended and generously donated, we thank you tremendously.

**Thank you!!! Thank you!!! Thank you!!!**

The Henry Bilus Family

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Photo by Alyssa Ohlund

**WILMINGTON SENIOR** Aubyn Shields is focused on placing during the Geneseo girls wrestling Sectional which will be held Friday and Saturday. She is one of six female wrestlers who have contributed during the regular season.

## Lady 'Cats ready for sectional mat

BY CHLOE PROFFITT  
WHS STUDENT REPORTER

While wrestling may be a sport designed for men, women who wrestle have just as much grit, passion, and ambition. They have to put aside the stigma of women in wrestling and still put forth their best effort, if not more.

Why would a girl put her body through the constant cutting of weight and stress to perform well against mostly male opponents?

Because they will get to share in the lime-light starting Friday when a girls only sectional will be held for female wrestlers across the state.

Six WHS female wrestlers will get the chance to compete at sectional with hopes of advancing to the state finals in Bloomington on Feb. 24-25.

Aubyn Shields, senior and captain of WHS wrestling team, is one of those female wrestlers with seven years of experience on her side.

"There is a passive aggressive attitude from others when they hear I'm a female who wrestles, but my team is like a family. We all get along. We can laugh and dance but sill be

serious in the end," commented Shields.

Casey VanDuyne also is a senior wrestler at WHS who mostly takes forfeits for the team. Casey still shows up for everything though and is always there to support her team. Other honorable mentions to the team consist of Ava Couples, Alivia George, Skylar Ortiz and Priscilla Prescott.

The coaches are no different towards the girls. They still put an emphasis on having fun and working hard.

"I take what he has to say more seriously but the way he treats me is no different to the others," Shields said when asked about having her dad as an assistant coach.

2023 marks the second year IHSA will host a Girls State. Girls State consists of one class and consists of 256 teams compared to last years turnout of 180 teams. Girls Individual Sectionals will be held Friday and Saturday, February 10th- 11th. First, second, third and fourth place finishers from each of the 14 weight classes will advance to state.

You want to wrestle, but scared someone might say something because you are a girl? Shields says, "Do it. Don't hold back and don't let anyone tell you that you are not capable."



Photo by Alyssa Ohlund

**ADVANCING TO SECTIONAL**—Wilmington senior Hunter Hayes will compete in the Coal City Sectional this weekend after placing second in the regional at Reed-Custer at 195 pounds.

## Wildcats advance two to sectional

Coal City High School wrestled up to expectations Saturday during the Reed-Custer regional, capturing the team title with ease.

The Coalers (286.5 points) crowned eight regional champions, had three place in second and three third. All Coalers who wrestled advance to the Coal City Sectional on Friday.

Reed-Custer finished second in the team standing with 161 points, advancing two champions, four runners-up and a pair of third place finishers.

Wilmington, in seventh place with 50 points, qualified two wrestlers for sectional.

At 113 pounds, junior Landon Dooley (36-9) placed second to advance to the sectional. Dooley won by :55 fall over Aurelio Andrade (Peotone, 10-22) in his first match. In the semi-final Dooley shutout Seneca's Ethan Othon (38-9) with a 7-0 decision. Dooley faced Coal City's Brody Widlowski (32-1) in the title bout but lost by injury default to settle for second place.

He still makes the cut for sectional where he will have to finish among the top four to qualify forstate.

The other Wildcat to advance is senior Hunter Hayes (29-9) who placed third at 195 pounds.

Hayes started with a 1:00 fall over Rorey Hart (Peotone, 17-15) before getting pinned in 3:01 by Seneca's Chris Peura (41-6). Hayes fought back through the consolation bracket with a :22 fall over Landon Burkhardt (Dwight) and a 3:04 fall over Maxwell Joseph (Clifton, 20-12) to earn third place.

Competing but not placing for the Wildcats were Matt Crichton (145), Matt Swisher (152) who finishes with a 20-17 record, 170-pound freshman Logan VanDuyne (18-13), Parker Adams at 182 with a 19-13 record, 220-pounder Memphis Iwen (7-14) and Brody Benson (17-14) at 285 pounds.

Champions for Coal City included 106-Culan Lindemuth, 113-Brody Widlowski, 132-Jake Piatak, 138-Brant Widlowski, 145-Mataeo Blessing, 170-Derek Carlson, 182-Braiden Young and 195-Joey Breneman. Coming in second place were Coalers 120-Aidan Kenney, 220-

## E-tickets must be purchased online for wrestling sectional

Coal City High School, 655 W. Division St., will host the IHSA Class 1A Individual wrestling sectional on Friday and Saturday, Feb. 10-11.

On Friday the preliminary-quarterfinal round will start at 5 p.m. Then at 9 a.m. Saturday the first round of wrestlebacks will be at 9 a.m.; 10:15 a.m. will be the semi-finals and 2nd round of wrestle backs; then at 11:45 will be the semi-final wrestlebacks. Lunch break will be 12:30 p.m. Finalist line-up and introductions at 2 p.m. with the finals; session 2 at 2:15 p.m. Times are subject to change.

Doors will open 45 minutes before wrestling begins. E-Tickets must be purchased

at <https://gofan.co/app/school/IHSA>. Tickets are \$7 per session with three different sessions: session 1 - Friday night, session 2 - Saturday morning until approximately 2 p.m.; and session 3 - the finals, after 2:15 p.m.

The gym will be cleared after session II on Saturday

A video can be watched on how to buy tickets at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tkZqTY5d6Bg>.

For IHSA wrestling info visit [www.ihsa.org/Sports-Activities/Boys-Wrestling/State-Series-Information-Results](http://www.ihsa.org/Sports-Activities/Boys-Wrestling/State-Series-Information-Results)

For questions on the sectional contact CCHS Athletic Director, Dan Hutchings at [dhutchings@coalcityschools.org](mailto:dhutchings@coalcityschools.org).

Drake Dearth and 285-Michael Gonzalez while placing third were 126-Brock Finch, 152-Landin Benson and 160-Jack Poyner.

## Combes selected to Hall of Fame

**THE WILMINGTON MIGHTY Cats Wrestling Club** congratulates Coach Todd Combes on being inducted into the Illinois Wrestling Coaches and Officials Association Hall of Fame Class of 2023. He will receive this award at the Illinois State Wrestling Tournament on Friday, Feb. 17. Coach Todd has dedicated years to building and shaping future wrestlers. The Mighty Cats team is honored to have him and congratulate him on such a remarkable accomplishment in this sport. Coach Todd said, "These kids are doing one of the toughest sports, and when they step on the mat, they always feel like my own kids. I'm always excited to see their improvements as individuals and as a team. I love coaching The Mighty Cats more than they know." Todd Combes is an overall 4 time Illinois State placer, resulting as a 2 time State Runner Up and 2 time State Champion for the Coal City Coalers. He stands out in receiving this honor because he is part of a select group of coaches that were also wrestlers. The Illinois Wrestling Coaches and Officials Association recognizes moral character as a major factor in the selection process. Coach Todd has been an exceptional role model for The Mighty Cats throughout his years.



**Attorney Wysocki files Kristofer 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  
LEONA M. KRISTOFER, Deceased; No.  
2022 PR 765

**CLAIM NOTICE**  
Notice is given to creditors of the death of LEONA M. KRISTOFER. Letters of Office were issued to George L. Kristofer whose address is 328 Parkshore Drive, Shorewood, IL 60404 as Independent Executor, 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 25th day of July, 2023, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the clerk must be mailed or delivered by claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.  
Marilyn L. Wysocki  
For the Estate of Leona M. Kristofer, Deceased

BY: Marilyn L. Wysocki  
1861 Black Road  
Joliet, IL 60435  
815-725-8000  
Atty No.: 06275404  
Published in the Free Press Advocate, Wednesday, Jan. 25, Feb. 1 and 8, 2023.

**Attorney Lynch files Jonish 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  
JOSEPH F. JONISH, Deceased; No.  
23PR39

**CLAIM NOTICE**  
Notice is given to creditors of the death of Joseph F. Jonish. Letters of Office were issued to Nichola L. Blowers whose address is 905 Krings Lane, Joliet, Illinois 60435 as Independent Executor, whose attorney of record is Jennifer M. Lynch of 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 8th day of August, 2023, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the clerk must be mailed or delivered by claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.  
Jennifer M. Lynch  
For the Estate of Joseph F. Jonish, Deceased

BY: Jennifer M. Lynch  
1861 Black Road  
Joliet, IL 60435  
815-725-8000  
Atty No.: 06275404  
Published in the Free Press Advocate, Wednesday, Feb. 8, 15 and 22, 2023.

**Tax Deed filed for 1775 Vista Dr.**

### PUBLIC NOTICE

TAX DEED NO.: 2023TX000006  
FILED:1/9/2023  
TAKE NOTICE

County of Will  
Date Premises Sold: December 9, 2020  
Certificate No.: 19-03864  
Sold for General Taxes of (Year): 2019  
Sold for Special Assessment of (Municipality) and Special Assessment Number: N/A  
Warrant No.: N/A  
Installment No.: N/A  
THIS PROPERTY HAS BEEN SOLD FOR DELINQUENT TAXES  
Property Located at: 1775 Vista Drive, Wilmington, IL 60481  
Legal Description or Property Index No.: 08-24-01-100-007-0000

This notice is to advise you that the above property has been sold for delinquent taxes and that the period of redemption from the sale will expire on July 5, 2023.

The amount to redeem is subject to increase at 6 month intervals from the date of sale and may be further increased if the purchaser at the tax sale or his or her assignee pays any subsequently accruing taxes or special assessments to redeem the property from subsequent forfeitures or tax sales. Check with the County Clerk as to the exact amount you owe before redeeming.

This notice is also to advise you that a petition has been filed for a tax deed which will transfer title and the right to possession of this property if redemption is not made on or before July 5, 2023.

This matter is set for hearing in the Circuit Court of Will County in 100 W. Jefferson St., Joliet, IL 60432, Room 905, on July 18, 2023 at 9:00 AM.

You may be present at this hearing, but your right to redeem will already have expired at that time.

**YOU ARE URGED TO REDEEM IMMEDIATELY TO PREVENT LOSS OF PROPERTY**

Redemption can be made at any time on or before July 5, 2023 by applying to the County Clerk of Will, Illinois at the Office of the County Clerk in Joliet, Illinois.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT THE COUNTY CLERK**  
302 North Chicago St.  
Joliet, IL 60432  
815-740-4615

Private Equity Group, LLC  
Purchaser or Assignee  
January 16, 2023  
Bruce Smoke  
Joshua Smok  
Bruce Smok  
Occupant

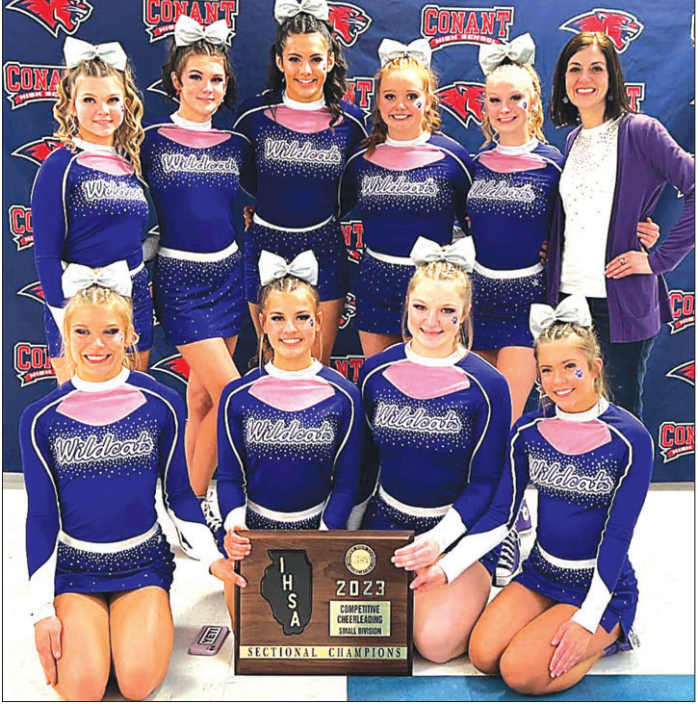
Lauren Staley Ferry, County Clerk of Winnebago County, Illinois  
Claimants, Judgment Creditors, and Decree Creditors, if any of the above described as "Unknown Owners"

"Unknown owners or parties interested in said land or lots"  
8139-929555

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, Feb. 1, 8, and 15, 2023.

## Cheer team takes 9th at state

**THE WILMINGTON CHEER** team finished 9th in the state on Saturday in Bloomington. The Lady Wildcats were crowned sectional champions the week before at Hoffman Estates (Conant) High School, finishing with an 87.53 score to top the 15-team field. They competed Friday in the small team bracket against 24 other teams. They made it to the final round on Saturday which featured the top 10 teams in the small school division. They scored an 86.40 in the finals behind first place Johnsborg (93.83), Columbia (93.35) Breese (89) and others. Pictured with the sectional championship plaques are (kneeling, from left) Aliza Hannan, Rylee Kettmann, Hannah Melvin and Ava Rabideau. Standing are Jamie Cahill, Jessica Matyasec, Sara Falcon, Erica Maynard, Kaylen Hansen and coach Jeannine Bejlovec.



### Notice of Foreclosure of 725 E. Elmo Court

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE 12TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS

GRUNDY BANK; Plaintiff, -v- DANIEL DIETRICH, TARYA L. DIETRICH, ILLINOIS HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, UNKNOWN OWNERS, AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS; Defendants,  
Case No. 22FC1371

#### NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE

The requisite Affidavit for Publication having been filed, notice is hereby given you, Unknown Owners and Non-Record Claimants, Defendants in the above-entitled cause, that the above-entitled Mortgage Foreclosure action was filed on December 27, 2022 and is now pending.

1. The names of all Plaintiffs and the Case Number are identified above.  
2. The Court in which this action was brought is identified above.  
3. The names of the titleholders of record are Daniel Dietrich and Tarya L. Dietrich.  
4. A legal description of the real estate sufficient to identify it with reasonable certainty is as follows:

Lot 11 in Unit 1 of Mourning Subdivision, a Subdivision of Part of the Northwest Quarter of Section 19, in Township 32 North, and in Range 9 East of the Third Principal Meridian, According to the Plat Thereof Recorded April 3, 1969 as Document No. R69-5780, in Will County, Illinois

5. A common address or description of the location of the real estate is as follows: Commonly known as: 725 E. Elmo Court, Godley, Illinois 60407  
Permanent Index Number: 24-19-102-002-0000

6. An identification of the Mortgage sought to be foreclosed is as follows:

a. Names of Mortgages: Daniel and Tarya L. Dietrich  
b. Name of Mortgagee: Grundy Bank  
c. Date of Mortgage: December 2, 2013  
d. Date of Recording: December 20, 2013  
e. County Where Recorded: Will  
f. Recording Document Identification: R2013142537

NOW, THEREFORE, unless you, Unknown Owners and Non-record Claimants, file your answer to the Complaint for Foreclosure in this cause or otherwise make your appearance therein, in the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson St., Joliet, IL 60432, on or before February 8, 2023, default may be entered against you and each of you at any time after that day and a Judgment for Foreclosure may be entered in accordance with the prayer of the Complaint for Foreclosure.

E-filing is now mandatory for documents in civil cases with limited exemptions. To e-file, you must first create an account with an e-filing service provider. Visit <http://efile.illinoiscourts.gov/service-providers.htm> to learn more and to select a service provider. If you need additional help or have trouble e-filing, visit <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/faq/gethelp.asp> or contact the Clerk of this Court.

James M. Durkee - Trial Attorney  
(6296297)  
Geiger, Durkee & Vazquez LLC  
415 Liberty St.  
Morris, IL 60450  
815-942-5072  
staff@mglawoffices.com

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, Feb. 8, 15 and 22, 2023.

Andrea Lynn Chasteen, Circuit Clerk



# WILDCAT SPORTS



Photo by Alyssa Ohlund

RECOVERING A LOOSE BALL for the Lady Wildcats is senior Breanna Horton.

## Lady 'Cats netters have a busy week

The Wilmington Middle School volleyball teams had another busy week of games starting on Monday, Jan. 30 ending on Thursday, Feb. 2. The eighth grade team won 1 out of four matches.

Their losses were to Limestone (25-18, 15-25, 15-25), Seneca (22-25, 23-25), and Saratoga (14-25, 20-25). They ended the week on a high note, beating Mazon 25-19, 25-18.

Sami Lairomatis and Taryn Talley both had 10 kills with Addison Van Duyne right behind them with 9. Van Duyne also had 9 aces for the week. Keeley Walsh put up another 7 aces with Lairomatis adding 5 more for the week.

The 7th grade team also won 1 match out of the 4 this past week. They beat Seneca 25-19, 25-17. They lost to Limestone (18-25, 25-23, 14-

25), Saratoga (20-25, 25-23, 14-25), and Mazon (22-25, 24-26).

Serving the matches close. Caroline Smith and Mollie Bohac both had 9 aces each for the week with Taryn Gilbert with 8 and Sophia Albright with 5. Madisyn Knight had 8 kills to go along with her 2 aces.

The 6th grade team had 3 matches last week winning 1 out of the 3. Both the A and B

teams beat Seneca. A team won 25-12, 25-19 while the B team won 25-27, 25-18, 15-13.

They lost to Limestone(A team 14-25, 14-25 / B team 16-25, 20-25) and Saratoga (A team 20-25, 19-25 / B team 17-25, 18-25). From the A team Chesnee Geiss had 10 aces with Nadine Liguide with 6 and Emilie Strong with 4. From the B team Tracy Jones led with 9 aces and Aubri Christiansen had 8.



Photo by Alyssa Ohlund

FOCUSED ON SCORING against a Reed-Custer defender last week is Wilmington junior Gracie Sanders. The Lady 'Cats lost 43-30 at home.



Photo by Alyssa Ohlund

ELBOWS UP and on target for the varsity Lady 'Cats is sophomore Skylar Rossow.

## Alverno Inferno the right team for Del Angel

BY CHLOE PROFFITT  
WHS STUDENT REPORTER

Raena Del Angel, a senior player on the WHS softball team, recently signed a letter of intent to play for Alverno College, an all girls private college in Milwaukee, WI. While there she plans to double major in dental hygiene and business.

Del Angel started her recruiting process her sophomore year.

Ever since she watched the Women's College World Series in Oklahoma City, she knew collegiate softball was going to be a part of her future. She knew she wanted a smaller school and the minute she stepped onto Alverno's campus it felt like home.

"I can't explain it, but I knew instantly," commented Raena.

Her future coach, Shawn Jarmus, makes her feel confident as a player, not only for his program but as an individual.

"He is so much fun!" exclaimed Raena.

Del Angel said playing softball gives her confidence and allows her to challenge herself. It is an escape from the outside world and when she is



IT'S OFFICIAL - Wilmington softball senior Raena Del Angel signs a letter of intent to play for Alverno College in Milwaukee, WI. She was joined by her family in the WHS library last week in making her announcement. With her are (seated, from left) her father Ray, Raena, mother Shay and sister Ali Del. Standing are friend Kade Lewis, WHS Coach Jack Skole and her brother Mason.

playing it is her only focus. So many individuals work hard to come together as a team to achieve one goal. Raena loves being competitive and softball holds her accountable to make a difference in her team.

Raena would like to thank

her parents, Shay and Ray Del Angel, more than anyone in the whole world.

"I appreciate them for putting in the time, money and hope in me for making my dreams come true. Mom and Dad if you are seeing this I love

you and appreciate you so much," commented Raena.

Good luck to Raena as she goes into her high school softball season and accomplishes even more her final season as a Lady Wildcat.



Photo by Alyssa Ohlund

DRIVING THE BASELINE against Reed-Custer's Josh Bohac is Wilmington senior Ryder Meents. The Wildcats hosted the Comets Friday, losing 69-40.

## Shooting Comets burn the Wildcats

The home court advantage didn't help the Wilmington boys basketball team on Friday when they went up against the hot-shooting Comets from Reed-Custer.

The visitors shot a blazing 25-for-55 from the field and were 11-for-11 at the free throw line to oust the 'Cats 69-40.

It didn't help that when Reed-Custer made eight three-pointers as they built a 21-7 lead after one quarter and 36-11 margin my half-time.

Wilmington was out-rebounded 32-23 as the Comets were too tall underneath.

Wilmington has a record of 11-10 while the Comets are 22-4 overall, 10-2 in the ICE conference.

### Overtime loss

The Wildcats lost in overtime on Tuesday to Herscher, 52-49.

It was a tough outcome for Wilmington after getting 20 points scored by senior Ryder Meents. He also was credited with two rebounds and two assists.

Other Wildcat contributors included Joey Cortese with six points and eight rebounds, Kyle Farrell with six points and seven rebounds, Ryan Nelson tallied six points and five rebounds while Reid Juster finished with five points, eight rebounds and six assists. Cade McCubbin also helped out with five points, four rebounds and five assists.

The 'Cats play at Lisle Friday before hosting Peotone on Tuesday.



Photo by Alyssa Ohlund

HUSTLING AFTER the ball as it bounces out of bounds is Wilmington sophomore Kyle Farrell who managed to keep it in play Friday while hosting Reed-Custer.



Photo by Alyssa Ohlund

ONE STEP AWAY from going up for a basket while battling Reed-Custer at home Friday is Wilmington junior Joey Cortese.