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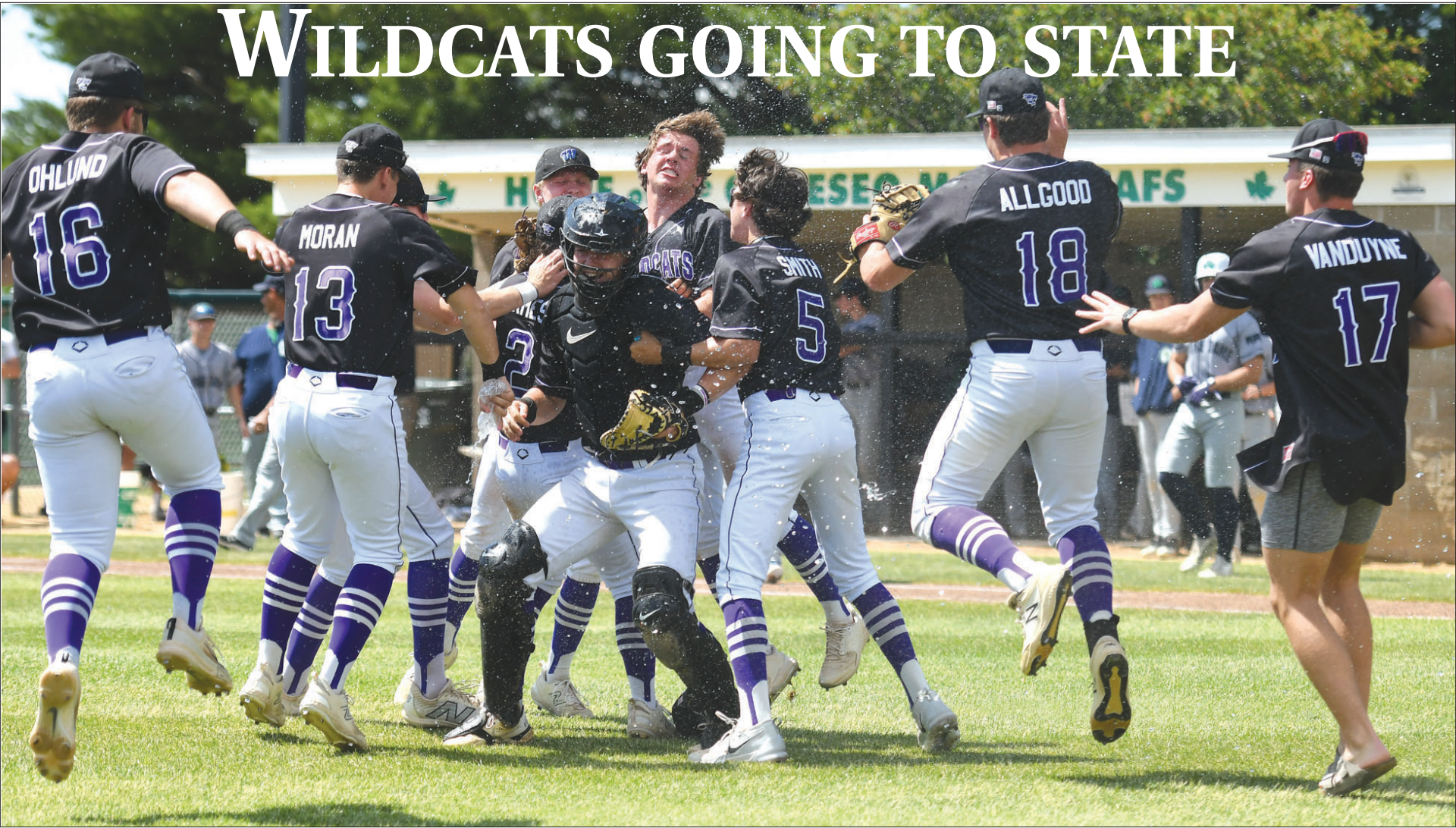
Town has a college
national champion



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WILMINGTON, IL | WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 2024 | A FREE PRESS NEWSPAPER (815) 476-7966



WILDCATS SURROUND pitcher Kyle Farrell after he struck out 11 batters and gave up only one hit during a 5-0 Super Sectional victory over Peoria Notre Dame on Monday, advancing them to the Final Four state tournament on Friday and Saturday in Peoria. For details turn to sports.

Gemini Giant takes a short vacation

BY ROSE PANIERI
STAFF WRITER

Wilmington's biggest celebrity made a guest appearance over the week-end thanks to a little cooperation with the city leaders.

The Gemini Giant statue, now owned by the city, made a stop at the American Giants Museum in Atlanta, IL for its grand opening on Sunday.

Discussion took place during the May 21 city council meeting that the Gemini Giant would stop at the museum en route to the ReGiant restoration shop. The visit required the approval of the Joliet Historical Museum which bought the former Launching Pad Restaurant

Route 66 icon in March and donated it to the City of Wilmington.

Organizers of the American Giants Museum came to Wilmington the day the giant was bought by auction, lifted it off its base and transported it to the city garage on a custom trailer.

They were thrilled to have a guest appearance lined up for their grand opening.

"This will be a great opportunity to take a look at the famous Route 66 spaceman one final time before he goes into restoration. He was joined by a new Texaco Big Friend giant and another Chicagoland giant.

During the meeting the city council agreed to con-

ditions governing outgoing loans with the Joliet Area Historical Agreement and agreed to complete the loan agreement with the museum.

Among other things, the city of Wilmington agrees to provide insurance coverage on the Gemini Giant in transit and on premises and cannot reproduce the Gemini Giant in any media for purposes of sale without permission of the museum.

Mayor Ben Dietz spoke briefly about the sign "Future Home of the Gemini Giant" erected in South Island Park.

Boundary line shared with Channahon

The city council revisited an intergovernmental boundary line agreement

between the city of Wilmington and village of Channahon.

The two cities had a previous agreement that yields any future annexation for Channahon to homes south of the DesPlaines River. Wilmington, if it were to annex in that direction, would remain south of Blodgett Road.

They agree to not annex any unincorporated territory within such area nor enforce zoning ordinances, subdivision control, official map, or other municipal authority unless mutually agreed upon.

Both towns agree that it is not in their best interests to engage in disputes

SEE CITY COUNCIL PAGE 2

Council tables hard liquor request for Berkot's Super Foods

BY ROSE PANIERI
STAFF WRITER

Like "Beauty and the Beast," the liquor license issue in Wilmington is a tale as old as time.

At the May 21 Wilmington City Council meeting, Luke Kotara, owner of Berkot's Foods, and Kamlesh Patel, of Mobil Gas For Less station in the 200 block of East Baltimore St., petitioned the city council to approve licenses for the sale of hard liquor – in addition to beer and wine – at their respective businesses.

Kotara spoke of staying relevant in the grocery game, especially with a Jewel-Osco store about to open in Diamond.

Patel is happy in Wilmington. He plans to remodel his Mobil station, and wants to improve business and give his customers what they want. They want liquor, and Patel believes the customer is always right.

Though the requests for liquor licenses appeared reasonable enough, an dark pall hung over the council chambers when the issue was presented.

In fact, a couple of the alderpersons turned an alarming shade of scarlet, complete with sour expressions, reminiscent of a poster featuring women carrying signs proclaiming: "Lips that touch liquor shall not touch ours."

This might have been

overlooked, even anticipated, if Wilmington was a different sort of town: One filled with teetotalers, and the majority of citizens against imbibing "demon rum." However, Wilmington has three liquor stores, a mile or so apart, and enough taverns and clubs to keep a significant percentage of its 5,500 residents pleasantly tipsy.

"They will definitely kill us"

The reaction of our representatives is a conundrum, indeed, but only if you weren't in the area 14 years ago. It was then that Angelo's Liquors, Wee Sip Liquors, and Midtown Mart took a stand against an interloper who got too big for his britches.

That interloper just happened to be Luke Kotara, but there were others, too, who wanted to serve or sell liquor. Kotara had indeed asked Marty Orr, the mayor and liquor commissioner at that time, for a liquor license, and was turned down flat.

So at that May, 2010, city council meeting, Orr proposed the creation of a new class of liquor licenses, that would allow dine-in restaurants to serve beer and wine, and another license that would permit retailers to sell packaged

SEE LIQUOR REQUEST PAGE 2



THE GEMINI GIANT pays a visit to the American Giants Museum in Atlanta, IL during its grand opening weekend.

Photo courtesy American Giants Museum



BERKOT'S
SUPER FOODS

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Blue Bunny
Ice Cream- 46-48 oz
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\$3.99
EACH

Liquor license,

continued from page 1
beer and wine.

Berkot's request for a liquor license was quickly denied.

"I think we have more than enough opportunities in this community, on any side of town you go to, to buy beer and wine. I'm not in favor of adding more," Alderman Jonathan Mietzner said at the time. Mietzner is again faced with a vote for a liquor license upgrade for the grocery.

It didn't kill them

Orr's proposal was finally approved in October, 2011, with no limitation on the number of the beer and wine licenses available. Berkot's then won the right to sell beer and wine in August, 2011.

Twelve years after getting the right to sell beer and wine, the three liquor stores and Berkot's appear to be coexisting in a semblance of harmony.

At the May 21, city council meeting, there were no representatives from Wee Sip, Angelo's or Midtown Mart present. In fact, aside from Kotara and Patel, not a single resident was there talking about the evils of demon rum and a society headed for Hades. Not one.

Still, Patel's request was denied. Two alderpersons, Kevin Kirwin and Ryan Jeffries voted to approve the license, but Ryan Knight, Dennis Vice, Thomas Smith and Todd Holmes denied it.

"We were trying to explain to them [the city council] that we don't want to make a big liquor store," Patel said following the meeting. "Customers who walk to our store have requested we carry hard liquor. By our remodeling we are making our station an asset to Wilmington, and we are trying to meet the needs of people who live here."

The city council postponed its decision for Berkot's due to the absence of two alderpersons (Leslie Allred and Mietzner). The matter was tabled until the June 4 meeting.

Wilmington Berkot's recently completed a \$2 million dollar remodel. In addition, Berkot's is under pressure from the impending opening of Jewel-Osco in Diamond this fall. Of it's 17 stores, only one doesn't offer hard liquor, in Wilmington.

City council,

continued from page 1

with respect to the annexation of territory.

The proposed boundary line and a draft of the proposed agreement is on file and available for public inspection at Wilmington City Hall, 1165 S. Water St.

As required, the public notice was published in the April 10 Free Press Advocate.

Catfish Days contracts

The city council approved contracts related to Catfish Days as follows:

Laser Encore: \$6,500; Rick Lindy and the Wild Ones Band: \$1,200; Dinner Bell Productions: \$2,000; Double D Booking: \$3,500; Miller's Petting Zoo: \$1,800; and Crosstown Exotics: \$400.

Police Pension Board approval

Dean A. Shepherd was

approved for appointment to the Police Pension Board for two years, May, 2024 to May 2026.

Shepherd is a longtime Wilmington resident and is an Edward Jones financial advisor.

Workforce kiosk

The city council approved the ongoing memorandum of understanding between the Workforce Center of Will County and the city of Wilmington.

A SiteKiosk by Will County's Workforce Services Division is helping local residents find jobs.

Located at the Wilmington Public Library, 201 S. Kankakee Street, the program enables residents to develop Your Resume Using WinWay Resume

Software, Access to Workforce Services Division's online job board, access the internet with computer stations and use printer and copy machines to assist in job search.

Cost recovery

The city council studied a motion to repeal and replace chapter 46 of ordinance regulating cost recovery

In a memo from city administrator Jeannine Smith to Mayor Dietz and the city council, she explained a resident applied for a building permit for work he would be completing himself. Staff and the building inspector worked with him to produce plans in accordance with approved building codes.

"The resident completed the work but did not pick up or pay for the permit," Smith said. "As I was reviewing the city code for work without permit, I wanted to ensure we had language in the municipal code that permitted collection of fines."

In reviewing the current code, it was discovered that it contains a scrivener's error – or unintentional mistake referencing a section that does not exist. The language was changed to omit the error, allowing the city to take appropriate action in such cases.

SCADA repairs source

Director of public works James Gretencord, reported that the water and sewer department have used two separate companies for upgrades for SCADA (*supervisory control and Data Acquisition) systems.

"After meeting with multiple SCADA contractors and checking references," Gretencord said. "I am recommending we move forward with Concentric Integration as our first contact for future repairs and upgrades."

Some benefits cited were the hourly rate charged is the same for regular hours, emergencies, weekends, holidays and overtime, and there is no minimum call-out charge during normal business hours.

Internet Service

The city council approved the participating addendum with NASPO, and T-Mobile to provide internet services to the water reclamation plant at a cost of \$37.80 per month.

Other business, the city council:

- Approved the regular meeting minutes from the May 7 meeting.
- Approved bill payment in the amount of \$336,184.54.

- Approved rental of a compact track loader and trailer from Altorfer Caterpillar for \$9,300.
- Approved and authorized payments of up to \$50,160 from Street Sweeping Services in fiscal 2025.

- Approved the purchase of 150 tons of hot mix asphalt and prime to exceed \$9,500.

- Approved the purchase of residential water meters from Utility Pipe Sales for \$61,632.

- Approved \$545 to Lee's Rental Inc., for a 20 x 20 foot tent related to the 2024 Let Freedom Rock celebration.

- Approved an invoice of \$15,100, to Macon County Law Enforcement Training Center for training for a new police officer.

Hike the Kankakee Sands

The Forest Preserve of Will County is hosting a Take It Outside Hike - Summer Stroll at the Kankakee Sands Nature Preserve in Custer Township.

Two 90-minute sessions at 10 a.m. and noon will be held on Sunday, June 9 at the Kankakee Sands Preserve, which is located on Highway 113 between two miles east of Braidwood.

Register by June 9.



Courtesy Photo

MAYOR BEN DIETZ (left) congratulates Dean A. Shepherd on his appointment to the Police Pension Board.

Thank You!

I would like to thank James Gretencord and the Public Works department for installing the Wilmington Hometown Hero banners in time for the holiday weekend.

Much appreciated,
Steve Evans
President-
Wilmington Chamber of Commerce

Keith Cagle Sewer & Drainage files as new business

PUBLIC NOTICE

Assumed Name Publication Notice

Certificate 35075 was filed in the office of the County Clerk of Will County on April 16, 2024 wherein the business firm of Keith Cagle Sewer & Drainage, located at 583 Belmont Dr., Romeoville, IL 60446 was registered; that the true or real name or names of the person or persons owning the business, with their respective post office address, is as follows:

Owner Name: Keith Cagle
Owner Address: 583 Belmont Dr., Romeoville, IL 60446

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and Official Seal at this 4th day of March, 2024.

Ricardo Tapia-Quijas
Notary Public

Published in the Braidwood Journal on Wednesday, May 22, 29 and June 5, 2024.

Attorney Meents files Raymond Kabat 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 RAYMOND CHESTER KABAT, Deceased; No. 2024 PR 227

CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given of the death of Raymond Chester Kabat, Letters of Office as Co-Executors were issued on May 6, 2024 to Angelique M. Mercado whose address is 276 Silverado Street, Bolingbrook, Illinois 60490 and Cheryl C. Huff whose address is 603 Mahoney Drive, Minooka, Illinois 60447; whose attorney is Meents Law, P.C., 25158 W. 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 November 25, 2024, 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.

Angelique M. Mercado and Cheryl C. Huff

Co-Executors of the Estate of Raymond Chester Kabat, Deceased

Frank J. Meents
Fisher Meents LLC

25158 West Eames Street, Unit A
Channahon, Illinois 60410

Telephone: (815) 534-9515
Facsimile: (815) 534-9516

Attorney Code: 06298859
E-mail: frank@fishermeents.com

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, May 15, 22 and June 5, 2024.

Miller petitions for name change

PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS
COUNTY OF WILL, SS
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION TO CHANGE THE NAME OF Tenisha Ann Miller To Asa Ray Laveau, Case No. 24 MR 165

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned on behalf of herself, Tenisha Ann Miller adult, shall appear in the Will County Court Annex Building, 100 West Jefferson Street, Joliet, IL 60432 courtroom 905 at 9:00 a.m. on the 24th day of June, 2024 before the judge assigned to hear said matter, and then there present a petition requesting the name of Tenisha Ann Miller be changed to Asa Ray Laveau.

/s/ Tenisha Ann Miller
Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, May 22, 29 and June 5, 2024.

Attorney Meents files Patricia Spangler estate claim

PUBLIC NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF MARY PATRICIA SPANGLER, Deceased; No. 2024 PR 210

CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given of the death of Mary Patricia Spangler, Letters of Office as Co-Executors were issued on May 6, 2024, to Thomas Richard Spangler, whose address is 17930 W. Commercial Street, Wilmington, Illinois 60481 and Joseph Roy Spangler, whose address is 18634 Kahler Road, Wilmington, Illinois 60481; whose attorney is Meents Law, P.C., 25158 W. 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 November 25, 2024, 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.

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Thomas Richard Spangler and Joseph Roy Spangler

Co-Executors of the Estate of Mary Patricia Spangler, Deceased

Frank J. Meents
Meents Law, P.C.

25158 W. Eames Street, Unit A
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Attorney Code: 06298859
E-mail: frank@meentslaw.com

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, May 15, 22 and June 5, 2024.

Triangle Mini Storage gives notice of disposal

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice of Possible Sale and Disposal

To: Alex Harris, Terrie Gallegos, and Retha Goodwin

Notice is hereby given that a possible sale or disposal of personal property will take place as allowed by the IL Self Storage Facility Act 770 ILCS 95. This property includes household goods, furniture, totes, electronics, a riding lawn mower, and more. It is in spaces 215, 341, and 426 at Triangle Mini Storage, 24616 W Stripmine Rd, Wilmington, IL 60481.

Potential sale will take place online.

Listing Date: May 24, 2024 12:00 pm
Ending Date: June 7, 2024 12:00 pm

Location: selfstorageauction.com
Auction IDs 412096, 412100, and 412107.

This notice is being given by Anthony Miceli of Triangle Mini Storage.

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, May 22 and May 29, 2024.

Attorney Meents files Marion Kabat 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 MARION A. KABAT, Deceased; No. 2024PR226

CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given of the death of Marion A. Kabat, Letters of Office as Co-Executors were issued on May 6, 2024 to Angelique M. Mercado whose address is 276 Silverado Street, Bolingbrook, Illinois 60490 and Cheryl C. Huff whose address is 603 Mahoney Drive, Minooka, Illinois 60447; whose attorney is Meents Law, P.C., 25158 W. 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 November 25, 2024, 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.

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Angelique M. Mercado and Cheryl C. Huff

Co-Executors of the Estate of Marion A. Kabat, Deceased

Frank J. Meents
Meents Law, P.C.

25158 W. Eames Street, Unit A
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E-mail: frank@meentslaw.com

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, May 15, 22 and June 5, 2024.

Attorney Meents files Johnson 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 MARIE ELEANOR JOHNSON, Deceased; No. 2024PR289

CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given of the death of Marie Eleanor Johnson, Letters of Office as Independent Administrator were issued on May 13, 2024, to Richard Alan Johnson, whose address is 32386 S. Old Chicago Road, Wilmington, Illinois 60481; whose attorney is Meents Law, P.C., 25158 West Eames Street, Unit A, Channahon, Illinois 60410. Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before November 25, 2024, 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.

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Richard Alan Johnson

Independent Administrator of the Estate of Marie Eleanor Johnson, Deceased

Frank J. Meents
Meents Law, P.C.

25158 W. Eames Street, Unit A
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Attorney Meents files Francis 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 JACQUELINE IRENE FRANCIS, Deceased; No. 2024 PR 248

CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given of the death of Jacqueline Irene Francis, Letters of Office as Supervised Executor were issued on May 6, 2024, to Douglas J. Francis, Sr., whose address is 189 Eon Lane, Wilmington, Illinois 60481; whose attorney is Meents Law, P.C., 25158 W. 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 November 25, 2024, 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.

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Douglas J. Francis, Sr.

Supervised Executor of the Estate of Jacqueline Irene Francis, Deceased

Frank J. Meents
Meents Law, P.C.

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Attorney No: 06298859

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Eric D. Fisher, publisher



THE WILMINGTON WILDCAT Band played patriotic tunes during the Memorial Day Celebration on May 25

Photo by Rose Panieri

Wilmington honors veterans on May 25

May 25 was the perfect day to honor our lost veterans. Skies were blue and temperatures were in the 70s.

Pat Nugent of American Legion Post 191 gave the welcome. Rev. Larry Crawford gave the invocation and sang the National Anthem.

Speakers included Ben Stickel, Scott Durano and Nugent.

A crowd of more than 100 gathered to watch the parade, which began at 11 a.m. from Steven Intermediate School to Veterans' Memorial Park.

A memorial service was held for veterans who

lost their lives serving in the military.

The Wilmington Wildcat Band played patriotic tunes, honoring veterans.

The symbolic placing of the wreaths was conducted by the American Legion Post 191, VFW Post 5422 and the American Legion Post 191, Ladies Auxiliary.

The ceremony closed with the VFW Post 5422 rifle salute.

Festivities were followed by a lunch in the Veterans Memorial park. Chefs were Rich Prinkco and Harry Miller.



The Memorial Day Celebration in Wilmington



THE MEMORIAL DAY Celebration in Wilmington on May 25.

A veteran worth remembering, E. D. Conley

We celebrated Memorial Day this week. There are many veterans worth remembering from Wilmington. I chose Ed Conley, former owner and editor of the Wilmington Advocate. Not so much for his time serving in the Civil War, he was only a private, but for his life long stance against the wrongs of his time.



Sandy Vasko

Conley was born in Canada in 1844, his family then moved to New York, coming to Wilmington in 1847. In the 1850 census he is listed as living with his parents and 7 brothers and sisters in Wilmington. At the age of 10 years old, Ed went to work as a printer's devil at the Wilmington Herald newspaper while also attending school. After the death of his father, the family split up. In 1860 Ed is listed as living with the Harbottle family as an apprentice cabinetmaker and undertaker.

In 1863, at the age of 19, Ed enlisted in the 39th Illinois Voluntary Infantry, serving until December of 1865. His enrollment records list him as from Wesley Township. During that time, he saw real history in the making. He was there when Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox, and frequently saw Grant, Lincoln, and other history makers first hand.

After returning to Wilmington, he once again took up undertaking and

furniture making, but it did not suit him. He tried being a drug store clerk, but again it was not satisfying. The 1870 census finds him in Hennepin, Minnesota where he is living in a boarding house, working as a lumberman.

Throughout his life, he continued to write for the Wilmington newspaper, sometimes articles, sometimes poetry. During the Civil War, he wrote long letters describing the men and battles, that were printed in the People's Advocate. He signed them simply, "A volunteer from Company E."

In 1871, R. W. Waterman, hired Ed as managing editor of the People's Advocate. He quickly bought controlling interest in the paper and soon became its sole owner. He changed the name to simply The Advocate.

He wrote in the first edition as editor, "My belief is, that a country newspaper's sphere of usefulness is generally limited to the town, county, and then state in which it is published. To serve the home interest of subscribers and advertisers will be our first endeavor, while to publish a live, healthy, first class paper, will be our great object and aim."

As editor, Conley pulled no punches. He called them like he saw them. In 1873 John

Daniels, first mayor of Wilmington, banker and land speculator went bankrupt taking about a half a million dollars out of the pockets of Wilmington citizens. Conley lost his savings as well, and from then on, he hounded Daniels wherever he went. He said in one of his editorials, "The little devil is growing bolder in his commercial operations. No matter; the widows and orphans curse will follow him while he breathes."

Other than his hatred of evildoers, Conley had no prejudice against any man, regardless of station in society or color of his skin. We read the following, "Almost everybody knows old darkey Tom. On Monday he met us as though he had something to say; and he proceeded: 'Mr. Conley, there's a Sunday school master, Tom Redman, up our way, on Forked Creek, you know, and he said that he didn't want to go to Heaven if they allowed niggers there. Now, that was personal, and I want you to blast him!' I told him I would."

When only 14 people showed up for a cultural lecture called "A Blind Man Eloquent" he berated the townspeople, "It is a downright shame that entertainments of refinement and culture are invariably financial failures in this city, while vulgar, coarse circuses and burnt cork minstrelsy, often bordering on indecency, never fail to bring out a full house. Such a state of things is to be expected in second class towns like Joliet and Pontiac, but that intelli-

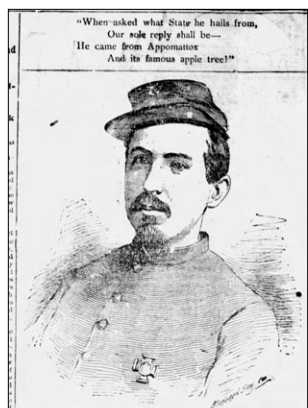
gent Wilmington should develop such a popular taste is a matter to be deplored."

In 1886 Conley made a bid for postmastership of Wilmington, but was rejected. Whether from that disappointment or from simply wanting to move on to bigger and better things, he sold the Advocate in 1887 and moved to Joliet where he purchased the Joliet Signal.

In 1894 he ran for public office, Will County Treasurer. His Civil War background was hailed. He became "The Man From Appomattox." However, he was a Democrat, and it was Republicans that held sway in the County.

He published the Signal until his death in 1904. In his extensive obituary in the Signal, we read, "At the time of his death Mr. Conley was in the employ of the Chicago Telephone Company, and while he was in poor health the past winter, he still attended to his duties. He was struck by a coaster (horse drawn sled) on Western Avenue hill, Joliet, last winter, and had not been so well since that time. The immediate cause of death was kidney and liver trouble."

His family brought his body back to his beloved Wilmington, where he rests among his friends and neighbors.



A DRAWING DONE from a photo taken of Ed Conley, when he was stationed at Appomattox, Virginia. While there he saw Lee and surrendered to Grant.

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Any other day

COAL CITY—Can the Coal City School Board please adjust the schedule to not schedule the high school commencement ceremony on Mothers Day? It is terribly inconvenient for families and staff to have to juggle activities for multiple events taking place on the same day. Perhaps a weeknight or a Saturday. Actually, any day except Mother's Day.

We pay taxes too

WILMINGTON—FIX NORTH KANKAKEE STREET!

How far we have fallen

WILMINGTON—It was unthinkable only a decade ago that our president would attempt to overthrow a national election by using deadly violence. It was unthinkable that this same president would demand absolute immunity. And it was unthinkable that this same president would threaten to dismantle the Constitution by promising to establish a dictatorship for the purpose of assassinating his political rivals. When our nation was founded almost 250 years ago, it was truly unthinkable that any of these threats would plague our nation any time during its future. For example, just 20 years ago the outcome of the 2000 national election was in doubt but Al Gore graciously conceded to George Bush despite ample evidence that Gore was the true winner. Therefore it's essential at this time of chaos that true patriots tirelessly demand justice in spite of the evil that has plagued us in fewer than 10 short years from a failed businessman who is the first president to be impeached twice and the first president ever to be criminally charged.

Irene

Biden's list

DIAMOND—Someone last week mentioned some great accomplishments from Biden. He has produced 15 million new jobs and unemployment is at a record low. Why stop there? There are many more accomplishments we can thank Biden for. High interest rates affecting young people wanting to buy a home, along with a 40-year record high inflation that hits the poor the hardest. Let's not forget the high gas prices and open borders.

A sinister side

BRAIDWOOD—Imagine for a moment a man that flaunts his love for community and seemed so dedicated thereto suddenly declining to help and support that same community. Seems odd. That was the case when a former

chief and social media oligarch refused to help Braidwood's Cop on a Rooftop event. Paw Patrol's "Chase" was often seen waving at motorists and getting hugs and high fives from kids in years past. However, that appearance was denied by the former chief who took possession of the "uniform" when he departed. It's my understanding he was even offered compensation for the uniform and refused. Then, to further his jab at Braidwood, he was rather quick to share and support the City of Wilmington's Cop on a Rooftop effort. I don't know, seems rather immature for someone that was so adamant about Braidwood's success and the good things that happen for this city. Perception is everything these days, and right now it seems there is a more sinister side to someone that says they'll run for mayor.

Can't afford that

BRAIDWOOD—To all of the people in Braidwood who have the expensive tastes for public amenities like a pool, expansive playgrounds, splash pad, recreation centers, programs for children, fitness center, etc., ask yourself this question. Would you be okay with, and able to afford a \$1,000 + property tax increase to pay for these things? You can't have expensive things and pay what currently is, in all reality, dirt cheap property taxes. If you want to pay Naperville or Bolingbrook tax rates, please move because the rest of us living in Braidwood can't afford that.

Selling out America

COAL CITY—If you don't believe that people crossing the southern border are receiving more benefits than the U.S. citizens, and do not believe that if the next election keeps this administration in office that your legal rights will decline and more taxes will be taken from your payroll check so you can support more people from foreign lands, then the only suggestion to you would be for you go find a mirror and take a good hard look at the brain behind the face you see. All you will see is distortion of true facts about how our country is being turned over to foreign governments. So answer this question if you can. Why is a foreign government allowed to purchase land or own any business in the USA?

All a farce

MORRIS—Veteran expecting help from the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs can forget about it since they withhold documents from the veterans that they did not have the right to receive from a different government facility instead of the documents being sent to the veteran.



And don't concern yourself about receiving any help from any other veterans organization because they promise everything and give nothing which all the veterans organizations have been doing for decades. Just ask yourself how many veterans have asked for help and received nothing from any veterans organizations and how many veterans are without legal rights or are forced to live on the streets without any type of funds. Veteran organizations that say they will help the veterans are speaking with a split tongue and each and every veterans organization is a farce which includes all the private veterans organizations.

Not your responsibility

BRAIDWOOD—I found it interesting this past week when a familiar face made a comment on the Braidwood and Surrounding Area page post about the idea of a splash pad within the city. The post said "On Aug. 16 of last year I sent every council member photos of a beautiful park with a splash pad, pickle ball courts, and basketball courts, along with a picnic area and gazebo. I think a park like this should be a priority, it would help bring the community together and provide family entertainment." Huh. Aug. 16 of last year. I do believe the author of that post was still chief of police then. So let me get this straight, you turned your focus to other issues other than the ones you were directly responsible for? You sent every council member information on this park project? Was that done on city time? I think you were paid rather well to work on the police department. So you'll come through on things that aren't your responsibility, albeit a nice thought and put the department and the employees you're directly responsible for on the back burner? Again, it's another social media post where you seem to want people to know you had the idea first, otherwise you wouldn't have put the exact date you had the idea. Again, if it wasn't your idea or if you didn't somehow benefit, you never would have made the comment. Just remember, you can only inflate a balloon so much. Hopefully the residents see that as well.

Honoring Veterans

BRAIDWOOD—At Memorial Day we remember those who died for our country. But not as "suckers and losers" the way Trump describes the brave men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice and not by the insults which Trump cast upon Senator John McCain who was captured and tortured for years by the enemy. Our military leaders and statesmen at the very top, such as John Bolton who views NATO as the most valuable accord ever created, also reveal that Trump endangers our national security because he is not savvy enough to value our international alliances dedicated to freedom rather than despotism. Furthermore, Trump's domestic policies discourage free speech and encourage a police state atmosphere similar to those authoritarian countries he loves of which we witnessed during his presidency. Let's return to our patriotic roots by honoring veterans and exposing the likes of Trump whose cowardice got his daddy to excuse him from military service.

To get more votes

WILMINGTON—Every week we are treated to a column two of democratic propaganda by the same person about how wonderful illegals aliens almost like we don't have TV news or the Internet and can't see the real truth. Why do the Dems want 12 million illegals in the country? 1) The census. White middle class are leaving blue cities so they have to keep the population up or loose seats in the House. 2) if the Dems win in November they can fast track illegals for citizenship and have 12 million new Democratic voters. It's that simple.

Before you vote

COAL CITY—What are the ideal traits of a leader? As Socrates said these qualities are essential to a leader: Wisdom, temperance, courage and justice. Before you vote in the November election please read "A Warning." It is an eye opener. Did you ever hear Bush or Reagan complain? So it's cold in the court room, try working outside in 10 below. What a crybaby! Wake up people, read and think twice before you vote!!

Letter to the editor

Prescription drug discount program threatened

Prescription drug discount program a vital lifeline to affordable health care. Time is running short on the Illinois legislative session, and we are dialing 911 for the critical 340B drug discount program to protect patient care.

We represent 54 community health centers across Illinois providing care to more than 1.5 million people – many who are low income, uninsured, or underinsured.

For more than 30 years, we have used the federally approved 340B drug discount program as a lifeline: It dramatically decreases the cost of prescription drugs, and we use those provide affordable access to life-saving drugs and prop up other care that is underfunded or not available at all without

these discounts.

Free colonoscopies and mammograms, mobile clinics and free transportation to appointments are not a luxury for people without other options. They're a necessity, and they happen at our clinics and at hospitals across the state only through the 340B program.

Today, 340B is holding on by a thread – and time is running short. In some Illinois counties, patients are being forced to travel far out of their way to get vital medications. With the uninsured, that simply isn't an option – and their health will suffer greatly for it.

In a recent letter to the four legislative leaders, Governor and other leadership in Springfield, we warned that staff layoffs and service cuts are immi-

nent if something isn't done soon.

Five other states have approved, and 20 others are considering, a solution modeled in Senate Bill 3727 that would simply stop the harmful restrictions on 340B that are threatening care. We are confident it will work here if given the opportunity. In Arkansas, multiple court rulings have now upheld a similar law despite a hard legal fight against it by the drug companies.

We call on the legislature to approve Senate Bill 3727 now and assure Illinoisans we will continue to support and protect health care options that are under attack.

Ollie Idowu, President and CEO, Illinois Primary Health Care Association, Springfield.



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Tips for your financial spring cleaning

As Americans kick off the spring season by cleaning, sorting and tidying up around the house, Grundy Bank is encouraging consumers to add financial organization to their spring-cleaning to-do list.

To help, Grundy Bank has highlighted six tips for organizing your financial house.

"People are motivated to get things done when the weather warms up and the flowers bloom, which makes it an ideal time to look closely at your savings and spending habits," said Kevin Olson, President & CEO of Grundy Bank. "Putting in the work now will help you live your best life in the months ahead."

Grundy Bank recommends these six tips to help consumers organize their finances:

- Review your budget. A lot can change in a year. If you've been promoted, had a child, or become a new homeowner or renter, be sure to update your budget. Determine what

expenses demand the most money and identify areas where you can realistically cut back. Develop a strategy for spending and saving - and stick to it.

- Evaluate and pay down debt. Take a look at how much you owe and what you are paying in interest. Begin paying off existing debt, whether that's by chipping away at loans with the highest interest rates or eliminating smaller debt first.

- Set up automatic bill pay. By signing up for automatic bill pay, you'll never have to worry about a missed payment impacting your credit score. You can set it so that money is withdrawn from your checking account on the same day each month.

- Sign up for e-statements, paperless billing and text alerts. Converting to paperless billing will help keep your house - physical and financial - cleaner and more organized, and will help protect you from fraud.

- Check your credit report. Every year, you are guaranteed one free credit report from each of the three credit bureaus. Take advantage of these free reports and check them for any possible errors. Mistakes can drag down your score and prevent you from getting a loan, or cause you to pay a higher than necessary interest rate.

- Manage your money on the go. Utilize your bank's mobile app to check your balance, pay your bills, transfer funds, deposit a check and send money to friends or family wherever you are.

Grundy Bank is a leading community bank in Grundy County that is dedicated to providing hometown service while offering big bank products to their clients.

For locations and information on Grundy Bank call 815-942-0130 or visit grundy.bank.

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One of the strangest roll calls in IL House

I'm not sure I've seen a stranger roll call than last week's House vote on Senate Bill 2978. The data privacy bill is an initiative of Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias, and he was on the House floor during the debate.



CAPITOL FACTS
Rich Miller

The far-right ginned up social media opposition to the bill by claiming that it would allow non-citizens to vote. More than 1,400 electronic witness slips have so far been filed in opposition.

Groups like the Illinois Freedom Alliance and the Illinois Conservative Union claimed on Facebook that the bill will "interfere with verification of citizenship of voters." The Illinois Family Institute went even further in a recent email blast, claiming, "As it is written, this bill will likely be used to allow non-citizens to vote in our elections."

Accusations from the far-right that Democrats will use the votes of undocumented residents to "steal" the 2024 election have gained significant national traction over the

past months. Usually, no evidence is presented, and you can chalk up this latest freakout to yet another misunderstanding of the basic law-making process.

The offending language is actually already in state statute, an official with the secretary of state's office explained during a House Executive Committee hearing last week. The bill drafters simply "re-coded" it. A search of state statutes shows those claims to be accurate.

The official also said that the secretary of state voter registration system "does prevent anybody that is not provided citizenship information from being transmitted to register to vote."

But the loud, conspiracy-minded opposition stampeded Republican committee members away from the bill, and so it passed the committee on a partisan roll call.

The ACLU of Illinois is also strongly opposed to the bill, but for an entirely different reason.

The civil liberties

group claims the measure "could be read as permitting data-sharing with federal or out-of-state law enforcement who are investigating or enforcing laws that criminalize abortion or gender-affirming care in other jurisdictions."

"We believe that the bill should be amended to be clear that our data should not be used to identify people seeking, providing, or assisting with reproductive or gender-affirming care — health care Illinois has made a policy decision to protect," The ACLU IL continued. "This could be accomplished by enacting provisions similar to last year's automated license plate reader bill."

Secretary Giannoulias never convinced the group to drop its opposition.

Rep. Kelly Cassidy (D-Chicago), a legislative leader on abortion and trans rights, rose in debate to point out that, "Indiana law enforcement could ask the secretary to provide information related to an Illinois license plate on a car used in connection with an Indiana resident accessing abortion care in Illinois."

Rep. Cassidy also objected to the bill by noting that it does not have the same standard language inserted "several

times" in other bills to make it "explicitly clear that the data would not be used to identify people seeking, providing or assisting with lawful health care." She also said she was "deeply concerned" that the data could be sold, "given that that's allowed as well."

In a shocking defeat, the entire Republican caucus and three House Democrats voted "No," while numerous other Democrats skipped the vote. The bill wound up with 57 votes, three shy of passage, as Secretary Giannoulias looked on. He doesn't think I've ever seen a legislative chamber reject a bill supported by a statewide officeholder while that official was standing among the members.

The sponsor, Rep. Margaret Croke (D-Chicago), put it on what's called Postponed Consideration, meaning she could bring the bill up for a vote again. Some House Democrats were legitimately absent, but this bill needs to be retooled.

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

United Methodist to host blood drive

Coal City United Methodist Church (located at 6805 E. McArdle Road in Coal City), will host a Community Blood Drive in conjunction with Versiti Blood Center on Tuesday, June 4 from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Anyone willing to donate blood should contact Karen Hart at 708-217-5808 to schedule a pre-

ferred time or register online at versiti.org/il.

Walk-ins are also welcome, but appointments are recommended.

Bring a photo ID, eat a good meal, and be sure to drink plenty of water before donating. Please consider giving blood, one pint of blood can save up to three lives.

Visit Goose Lake Prairie June 1 for Cabin Fest

The Cragg Cabin on the grounds of the Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area near Morris will serve as the backdrop for the Cabin Festival.

The event, sponsored by the Goose Lake Prairie Partners, will get underway at 10 a.m. on Saturday, June 1. Programs and activities will continue to 3 p.m.

Originally located in Mazon, the reconstructed Cragg Cabin came to the park in 1975.

During the Cabin Festival, visitors to the park will have an opportunity to step inside and view the interior of the

cabin. There will be authentic pioneer crafts by Prairie Partners as they reenact life on the prairie in the 1830s.

There will be a food tent, mountain dulcimer music, children's games and more.

The event is free and open to the public. Visitors are encouraged to bring cameras.

The park is located at 5010 N. Jugtown Road north of Coal City. For more information visit the Prairie Partner's website at <http://www.goose-lakeprairie.org/craggcabinfestival.htm>

Price at the pump jumps nearly 18¢

Average gasoline prices in Illinois jumped 17.8 cents per gallon last week, just before the Memorial Day weekend, averaging \$4.02/g, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,378 stations in Illinois.

The price dropped 10¢ overnight in Braidwood from \$4.29 to \$4.19 on Tuesday. In Wilmington the price ranged from \$3.79 (Mohsen) to \$4.19 yesterday while in Coal City the average was \$3.93.

Cheaper gas was being reported in Morris at \$3.74 and in Bourbonnais at \$3.56.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in southern Illinois was priced at \$3.18/g yesterday while the most expensive was in Chicago at \$5.19/g, a difference of \$2.01/g.

Prices in Illinois are 8.9 cents per gallon higher than a month ago and stand 11.4 cents per gallon higher than a year ago.

The national average

price of gasoline has risen 1.2 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.56/g. The national average is down 6.5 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 1.2 cents per gallon higher than a year ago, according to GasBuddy.

"With the summer driving season now underway, average gas prices have seen ups in some areas and downs in others. Most states are seeing prices slightly below their 2024 peak thus far, with some refinery issues in the Great Lakes weighing on prices there, while other areas, like the West Coast, have seen notable relief with more coming," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy.

"June tends to be a month of smooth sailing, where we see gas prices decline in most areas, and that's a trend that looks the most likely for drivers, barring unexpected refinery snags or a tropical storm developing."

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A \$70,000 CHECK was presented to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation by organizers and volunteers from Constellation who sponsored the annual "Fishing for a Cure" bass fishing tournament held at Braidwood Lake. A total of 47 boats entered this year's tournament. With the help of several sponsors, over \$906,000 has been raised in the 23-year history of the tournament.

Fishing for a Cure raises \$70,000

Constellation's "Fishing for a Cure" tournament, held Saturday, May 18 on Braidwood Lake, raised an impressive \$70,000 for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, bringing the tournament's 23-year fundraising total to \$906,000.

Cystic fibrosis is a progressive, genetic disease that affects the lungs, pancreas and other organs of nearly 40,000 children and adults living with the illness in the U.S. The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation serves individuals with cystic fibrosis and is working to develop a means to cure and control the disease and improve the quality of life for those afflicted.

Logan Kap, 25, was born with cystic fibrosis and spent many years during his childhood in and out of hospitals getting

treatment for the disease. Logan has benefitted from Cystic Fibrosis Foundation services over the years and participated in a game-changing drug study several years ago that successfully created the medication allowing many with cystic fibrosis to live a normal life.

"I'm just happy to be here and be alive," Logan said Saturday at the tournament, recalling how just 10 years ago before the new drug was created, he was in and out of hospitals from week-to-week and those with cystic fibrosis were considered fortunate to live to the age of 30.

Inspired by Logan, whose father Mike Kap works at the Braidwood Clean Energy Center, Constellation employees chose Cystic Fibrosis Foundation as the 2024 beneficiary of this year's

"Fishing for a Cure" event.

"We were absolutely thrilled and honored to be the benefitting charity for this year's Constellation Fishing for a Cure," said Meg Schneider, executive director of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. "In the last decade, scientific research in the fight against cystic fibrosis has been groundbreaking and transformative. It is because of support like this that the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation will be able to continue on this incredible path of success and find a cure for those impacted by cystic fibrosis."

A total of 47 two-person teams entered this year's Fishing for a Cure tournament. Trey Budach (Morris) and Mike Hzechio (Minooka) took home first place and the \$4,000 top prize. Their three-fish total of 13.49 pounds was best in the tournament field.

Coming in second was Matt Leimach (Braidwood) and Nick Stuedemann (Morris), who caught fish totaling 12.6 pounds for a second-place finish and \$2,500. Third place and \$1,000 was snared by Bryan Partak (Marseilles) and Anna Moody (Big Rock, IL) with 10.19 pounds of bass. Seven other teams shared the remaining \$2,500 in prize money.

ESPN's Chauncey Niziol broadcasted live for his "Chauncey's Great Outdoors" radio show from Braidwood Lake and served as tournament host. A children's fishing derby was held in the morning at nearby Godley Pond.

Braidwood Station and several local sponsoring businesses and organizations made contributions

to the event. All proceeds raised through tournament entry fees, employee fundraising initiatives and sponsorships go to the recipient charity, which is selected annually by station employees.

Organizations and businesses contributing included Siemens Energy, Allied Power, Berkot's, City of Braidwood, Electrical Builders, Inc., Eures USA, NALCO, Northern Illinois Steel, Pullman, Reactor Services, Inc., J.F. Brennan Company, CSS Building Services, ChemTreat, Framatome and SCI Corporation.



Courtesy photos

FIRST PLACE WINNERS in the annual Fishing for A Cure bass tournament held at Braidwood Lake were Trey Budach (Morris) and Mike Hzechio (Minooka) took home first place and the \$4,000 top prize.



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Saturday, June 8


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◆ Lunch:	12:00 pm
◆ Awards:	12:30 pm

This is a free fishing derby for children ages 2 - 16 years old. Bait will be provided by the Park District, please bring your own fishing poles. A big thank you to all the local businesses that have donated to make the fishing derby a free event! 2023 Sponsors: Berkot's Foods, Village of Godley, Bedford Sales, D Construction, Sistek Sales, Pepsi. If you'd like to donate, please call the Park District.




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OBITUARIES

Yvonne Monson

Yvonne Monson, 86, passed away Saturday, May 11, 2024 at Aperiore Care in Niles, IL.

Born Jan. 20, 1938, in Channahon, Yvonne was the daughter of John G. and Marcella J. (Black) Barber. Yvonne's life was a tapestry woven from the vibrant threads of several Illinois cities, including Joliet, Wilmington, Diamond, Melrose Park, and Niles. Amidst her nomadic journey, she found solace and strength as a proud member of the First Baptist/Island City Baptist Church in Wilmington, where faith and community intertwined to shape her identity and values.

Survivors include her two children, Michael (Meena) Monson, of Chum Phae, Thailand and Eric (Liliya) Monson, of Lake Thunderbird, IL; one brother, Thomas Barber; eight grandchildren: Debra (Jay) Frazee, of Tarpon, FL; Christina Wallace, of Eau Claire, WI; Ashlie and John Maitrejean, of Muscoda, WI; Stephanie and Jeff Ahlers, of Pontiac; Alexis Monson, of Saint Anne, IL; Taylor Monson, of Coal City; Tiffany Monson, of Kewanee, IL and Vlad Stepanov, of Princeton, IL; 16 great-grandchildren: Kyah Robinson, Jessica Frazee, Trista Frazee, Parker Wallace, Jada Doval, Miles Maitrejean, William Maitrejean,



Emily Maitrejean, Madison Ahlers, Dallas Ahlers, Rayleigh Ahlers, Bentley Ahlers, Cassandra Collins, Donovan Collins, Walker Riley and Emersyn Knippenberg.

Special acknowledgements are extended to her wonderful friends, Pat Dempsey and Bonnie Huston. Yvonne was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Milton E. Monson; her daughter, Denise Henson and son-in-law, Thomas Henson, and her sister-in-law, Marsha Barber.

Cremation rites have been accorded. The family will receive friends for a memorial visitation at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 E. Kahler Rd. in Wilmington on Saturday, June 1, 2024, from 9 a.m. until the time of memorial service at 10 a.m. Burial will follow in Oakwood Cemetery, Wilmington.

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

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

Rennea Ruddy

LEMONT—Rennea Ruddy (nee Pawloski), 78, of Lemont and formerly Plainfield and Goose Lake Township, passed away on May 20, 2024, in Joliet.

She was born on Nov. 16, 1945, to her loving parents, Albert and Loretta Pawloski. Rennea was raised in Lemont and graduated from Lemont High School with the class of 1964. She continued her education at St. Joseph's Nursing School from where she graduated and went on to dedicate her life to helping others. Rennea spent her career as an ICU and Recovery Room Nurse and was instrumental in establishing District 202's first PTO group, as well as volunteering with numerous other Plainfield school programs. Rennea's dedication and quality of work were recognized by the State of Illinois after the 1990 Plainfield Tornado for her efforts and aid in feeding and caring for hundreds of displaced residents in the following days and weeks following the tragedy.

After retirement, Rennea kept busy with her husband, Tom, aboard their boat and traveling to many different places. She loved tending to her garden, fishing with the grandkids, and spending time with her dear friends. Rennea cared for Tom after he suffered a stroke, becoming his 24/7 caregiver. She never gave up on trying to give him a better quality of life. Determined, compassionate, and caring would be a few words to describe Rennea,

but to encapsulate her life and persona into this summary would be impossible.

She is survived by her beloved husband, Thomas Ruddy; her children: Todd (Jennifer) Ruddy, Julie Ruddy (Jeff Zwolinski) and Brian (Staci) Ruddy, as well as her grandchildren: Shawn (Alyssa), Jacob, James, Samantha, Jill, John, Conner, Peyton and Kaitlyn. Rennea was also cherished by her dearest friends: Darrell (Pat) Herman, Ron (Kathy) Kazmar, Deb (Mark) Arabajief, and many others she loved deeply.

Rennea was preceded in death by her parents.

Cemetery committal services will be held at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood on Friday, May 24, 2024 at 1:30 p.m. Those wishing to attend are requested to assemble at the cemetery by 1:15 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, preferred memorials in Rennea's memory may be made to St. Jude Children's Hospital (www.StJude.org or www.StJude.org).

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

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

Anthony Farrero



M A N T E N O — Anthony Louis Farrero, 80, passed away May 12, 2024

at the Illinois Veterans Home in Manteno.

Born on July 30, 1943 at St. Joseph's Medical Center in Joliet, Anthony was the son of Louis and Caroline (Stepnosky) Farrero.

Raised and educated in Coal City, Anthony lived the typical childhood of the times. Spending time with the neighborhood kids taking apart their bikes just to see who could reassemble them the fastest and fishing at Whitetie. In addition, he was active in Rainbow Council Boy Scouts of America (Troop #66) where he advanced to Explorers Crew. Anthony attended Coal City High School where he played on the baseball team and participated in track before graduating with the class of 1961. It was during these formative years he also acquired the nicknames: "Anchor" and "Tony."

Following high school, Anthony went on to graduate from University of Illinois at Champaign/Urbana where he received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Industrial Administration. While later being admitted to the Degree of Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering. He was a member of the Honorary Commerce Fraternity, Alpha Kappa Psi, and the Society for Advancement of Management. Anthony was recognized by the Department of Professional Regulation to practice as a Professional Engineer.

Anthony honorably served his Country during the Vietnam War for two years from May of 1966 until his honorable discharge in May of 1968.

Anthony was employed at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida where he was recognized for his dedication and support to the Space Flight Program. During his tenure with the Space Center, he will be remembered for acquiring hydrated ice cream from NASA for all to enjoy. Anthony later took on a position

with Dresden Nuclear Power Station in Illinois from where he formally retired.

Anthony was a member of Mid-America Carpenters Regional Council Union Local #916; belonged to the National Rifle Association and the National Archery Association, and was a lifelong member of Assumption Catholic Church in Coal City.

Anthony is survived by his daughter, Regina (Ken) West, of Rock Hill, SC and three grandchildren: Adam, Ryan and Lynzi; his sister, Carol (Matthew) Thraen; niece, Courtney Caroline Thraen and nephew, Matthew Louis Thraen, as well as several cousins.

Anthony was preceded in death by his wife, Bobbi Sue (Dubin) Farrero; parents and aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Cremation rites have been accorded. The family will receive friends for a memorial visitation at Reeves Funeral Home, 75 N. Broadway, one block north of Illinois Route 113 in Coal City on Thursday, May 30, 2024 from 4 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. A Mass of Christian Burial will follow in Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church, 215 S. Kankakee St. in Coal City at 6 p.m. Reverend Josh Miller will preside with Deacon William Dunn assisting.

Following Mass, military honors will be rendered, and a private graveside held in Mount Olivet Catholic Cemetery in Braidwood, where Anthony will be laid to rest with his parents.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Anthony's memory to Assumption Catholic Church in Coal City or to SamaritansPurse.org

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

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

Irene E. Schaefer

MORRIS—Irene E. Schaefer, 91, of Morris, passed away peacefully on Saturday, May 25, 2024 at The Gardens of Park Pointe in Morris with her daughter by her side.

Born Sept. 20, 1932 in Morris, Irene Elizabeth was the daughter of Adam and Mary (nee Kulof) Elinewski. She was raised in Morris, where she attended grade school and then graduated high school from St. Angela Academy. On Oct. 21, 1956, Irene married Robert William Schaefer, who tragically passed away on Dec. 5, 1969.

She continued her employment with First Midwest Bank in Morris, to support herself and her daughter. Irene was a devoted employee, holding several positions during her tenure with the bank, and retired from loan support after 30 years of loyal service. She proceeded to work part time at Hancock's Jewelers in Morris for several years, where she was a friendly and familiar face to many clientele.

Irene was a lifelong member of Immaculate Conception Church in Morris and was a devoted mother to her daughter, Nancy Jo. Everything she did was to make sure that Nancy was provided for and knew she was loved. Irene took great pleasure in craft shows, dancing, and elaborately decorating her home for every holiday. She especially enjoyed her regular Sunday outings with her daughter and Rich and his kids. These outings almost always starting off with cinnamon rolls which she would bake at home, creating treasured memories for all involved. Irene loved to cook for her family, constantly displaying her nurturing instincts by

preparing lunches for herself and her daughter, even after she was grown and moved out. She simply loved being with the people she loved, devoting her life to being the best mom and friend she could be.

Survivors include her daughter, Nancy Jo Schaefer, of Joliet and numerous nieces and nephews.

Irene was preceded in death by her parents, Adam and Mary Elinewski; her husband, Robert W. Schaefer and one brother, Walter (Lauretta) Kulof.

Per Irene's wishes, cremation rites have been accorded.

A visitation will be at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, 600 E. Jackson St., in Morris on Friday, May 31, 2024 from 9 a.m. until the time of funeral services at 10 a.m. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated by Reverend Jason Stone, and burial will follow at Mount Carmel Catholic Cemetery in Morris, where Irene will be laid to rest with her husband, Robert.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Irene's memory to: Operation St. Nick, P.O. Box 781, Morris, IL 60450 or Lightways Hospice, 250 Water Stone Circle, Joliet, IL 60431.

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

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

Harriet Y. Luce

CREST HILL—Harriet Y. Luce, 86, of Crest Hill, IL passed away May 26, 2024 at Lightways Hospice House with her daughter and son-in-law by her side.

Harriet was born in Braceville, the youngest child of Frank and Dorothy (Cook) Yoder. She grew up in her hometown and later graduated from Gardner-South Wilmington High School class of 1955 which had 31 original classmates. Their alumni still meets occasionally over the recent years. After graduation she worked at the Joliet Army Ammunition plant in Wilmington and in various secretarial roles then finally retiring from Deaton-Kennedy Company after 28 years. She never passed up the opportunity to talk to people whether she knew them or not about almost anything. She was always ready with a quip or a saucy comment.

Harriet really loved gardening, her flowers, and took pride in her yard so much so that she achieved her Master Gardener certificate. She enjoyed crossword puzzles and started each day with at least two. She loved her animals, especially her dogs. Camping with husband, Bud in their various campers and 5th wheel and traveling to various states was a favorite pastime. She also loved a yummy cocktail and chocolate in all forms.

Harriet believed in giving back to the community and volunteered as a Respite Care worker for Joliet Area Community Hospice, now known as Lightways

Hospice, served at Will County Animal Shelter and delivered Meals on Wheels.

She was a long-time congregant of Hope United Methodist Church where she served in various capacities and sewed with the "Bag Ladies" who sewed totes for school children in foreign nations as part of an outreach program.

Harriet is survived by daughter, Terry (Matt) Karales, of Joliet and numerous nieces, nephews and dear friends and two stepdaughters, Suzonne Pulaski and Myrna Luce.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 26 years, Harold "Bud" Luce; parents, Frank and Dorothy Yoder, sisters, Arlene (Lloyd) Decker and Delores (Glenn) Hammond, all formerly of Braceville; Shirley (Elmer) Rolando, formerly of Diamond and one brother, Lester Yoder, formerly of Braceville.

In lieu of flowers memorial donations can be made in her name to Hope United Methodist Church, 2506 Caton Farm Road, Joliet IL or Lightways Hospice, 250 Water Stone Circle, Joliet, IL 60431.

Cremation rites have been accorded and a celebration of life will be held on Friday, May 31, 2024 from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. with a chapel service beginning at 12:30 p.m. at Tezak Funeral Home, 1211 Plainfield Rd. Joliet. Inurnment will be held privately at a later date at Braceville Gardner Cemetery in Braceville.



Sign-up for senior citizen property tax freeze

Will County Assessment Office representatives will be at the First United Methodist Church, 401 E. Kahler Rd., Wilmington, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., on Tuesday, June 5.

They will answer questions and assist with exemption forms for Senior Freeze (total household income of \$65,000 or less), disability, and veteran exemptions.

Will County homeowners age 65 and older can also apply for the senior homestead exemption.

Those who were mailed an application should bring it with them along with their 2023 federal income tax return.

For more information visit www.will-countysoa.com or call Barb Valek at 815-740-4648.

Witness music history with Wilmington Public Library

Calling all music enthusiasts! The Wilmington Public Library District is thrilled to present an exclusive journey to witness the legendary Million Dollar Quartet at the Stolp Island Theatre in Aurora, IL. Join in for an unforgettable experience on Wednesday, Aug. 7, departing promptly at 10 a.m. from the library and returning by 5:30 p.m.

Immersed within the newly crafted ambiance of the Stolp Island Theatre, this captivating experience will transport you back to the moment when Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Carl

Perkins spontaneously united for a legendary jam session that etched its place in history!

The cost of this event is \$50, which includes both the ticket and transportation. Lunch will be on your own, offering you the opportunity to explore the various dining options located near the theatre.

Registration for this bus trip is underway until June 30, and the non-refundable payment is due at the time of registration. For further details, please don't hesitate to reach out to the library at 815-476-2834.

Strawberries off to early start

BY PHYLLIS COULTER
FARMWEEK

Fruit season got off to a quick start with strawberries in southern Illinois this year.

Strawberry picking started about two weeks, said Chris Eckert, president and CEO of Eckert's family farm.

"People are coming out. We are pleased with the amount of traffic," he said of customers' interest in the crop.

At Flamm Orchard in Cobden, strawberries started a full 10 days early. "We're not used to having it that early," Mike Flamm said. "Demand has been good."

It looks like apple season might start early this

year as well. And

Flamm believes a pretty good apple crop could be on the way. Eckert's apples look good, too, with no frost damage. They are past bloom and pollination. "We are pleased with the potential," Eckert said.

However, the next challenge is rain and keeping disease at bay, said the eighth-generation farmer.

Eckert is looking forward to The Cider Shed season which features hard cider and live concerts. "It's been a fun new adventure," he said of the cider bar that opened in 2022.

Blackberries are also looking good and will likely be ready the first week in June, he said.

Timing is notable this year, Eckert said of what

appears to be early fruit seasons in southern Illinois.

Farm Market opening season for Rendleman Orchards is coming near the end of June in Alto Pass.

Sirles is looking forward to the flower fields and developing the natural pollinator areas. They are working on getting a bee program started to eventually produce their own honey and honey products at Rendleman Orchards, which celebrated its 150th anniversary last year.

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.



Brown on two-time Indy 500 championship team

Courtesy photo

Illinois State Police warns residents of phone scam

**At Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area,
5010 N. Jugtown Road, Morris, IL 60450**



Exploring orbiting solar plants for clean energy use on earth

Dear EarthTalk: How feasible is creating orbiting solar plants that can beam energy down to Earth? If it's possible, when can we expect to see such tech implemented?
— PR., via email

In the 1941 short story Reason, science fiction author Isaac Asimov introduces a space station that produces energy by sending microwave beams to the planets. This concept is

closer to reality as international space programs and research labs test the technology necessary to bring it to life. Traditional solar technologies convert sunlight into usable energy here on Earth. However, their use is limited to daytime hours and restricted by weather and geography. The idea of an orbiting solar plant bypasses these restrictions, allowing energy harvesting above the clouds.



There are different designs, but the principles are similar: A large satellite transforms solar power into electricity using photovoltaic cells made of material that generates voltage and electric current when exposed to light. The power is then beamed down to earth by microwaves (or lasers) to dedicated receiving stations that turn the

energy back into electricity to get fed into the local grid. Entities such as the European Space Agency (ESA), Space Solar (a start-up in the UK), and the California Institute of Technology are investing working on launching this type of project. Besides the obvious benefit of having all sun, all the time, orbiting solar plants have various other benefits. There are no dangerous byproducts as there are for other energy production methods: no fly ash from coal or radioactive waste from nuclear power. The entirely renewable—it will not run out in the age of humanity—so it is harmless could help limit the impacts of climate change if adopted on a global scale. So why don't we already have these power-generating stations orbiting in space? There are still

challenges to overcome. The cost is prohibitive, the structure would need to be about 2,000 metric tons, roughly equivalent to the weight of 286 male African elephants and need to be a mile and a quarter in diameter, with a little over a half-mile-long transmitter. Another challenge is engineering, particularly the parts used for such power-beaming structures. Given the difficulty of reaching the satellites for maintenance and repairs, it is suggested that parts must withstand at least 15 years in space. Additionally, there's a need to improve the efficiency of current wireless power transmission to ensure that all the energy can be collected down to Earth. There are some significant drawbacks, too. Solar plants orbiting closer to Earth would transmit ener-

gy more easily, but light pollution would be difficult for humans and both flora and fauna to cope with. Research also suggests that exposure to artificial light at night can increase health issues in humans, including obesity, depression, diabetes and more. Whether Asimov's proposal from nearly a century ago will be implemented remains to be seen. The ESA has recently sought ideas to make it more feasible. "The potential of this concept to contribute to long-term sustainable energy is very high," says ESA Engineer Advenit Makaya. For the time being, you can invest in solar power on Earth and keep your eyes on the sky as the technology advances and costs drop. Send questions to: question@earthtalk.org.

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Sunday, June 2 — Harry Potter Night, 1:05 p.m.

Tuesday, June 4 — Pajama Night, 6:35 p.m.

Wednesday, June 5 — Polish Heritage Night, 6:35 p.m.

Thursday, June 6 — 80's Night Party, 6:35 p.m.

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District 209-U seeking bids for diesel fuel

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice is hereby given that the Wilmington Community Unit School District 209U, Will County, Illinois will receive bids for the purchase of diesel fuel for the 2024-2025 school year. Bid specifications may be obtained upon request from the Office of the Superintendent, Wilmington Community Unit School District No. 209U, 209U Wildcat Court, Wilmington, IL 60481 - Phone (815) 926-1751. All bids are to be received in the Office of the Superintendent at the above address on or before 2:30 PM, CDST, Tuesday, June 4, 2024 and will be opened publicly at that time. The Board of Education will make its decision on Monday, June 10, 2024, and reserves the right to waive any technicalities or irregularities and to reject any or all bids or any part or parts thereof.

By and for the Board of Education
Wilmington Community Unit School District 209U
Peggy Kunz, Secretary, Board of Education
Published in the Free Press Advocate Wednesday, May 22 and 29, 2024.

Sheriff's sale of 112 Wyndstone Dr.

PUBLIC NOTICE

PURSUANT TO THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT YOU ARE ADVISED THAT THIS LAW FIRM IS DEEMED TO BE A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.

STATE OF ILLINOIS)
COUNTY OF WILL) SS.
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS
FREEDOM MORTGAGE CORPORATION, Plaintiff,
vs.
UNKNOWN HEIRS AND LEGATEES OF RICHARD WHEAT, DECEASED; KIMBERLI EVON; SCOTT WHEAT; RICHARD WHEAT JR; VILLAGE OF ELWOOD; WYNDSTONE VILLAGE TOWNHOMES ASSOCIATION, INC.; AMIR MOHABAT, SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ESTATE OF RICHARD WHEAT, DECEASED, UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS Defendant.
No. 22 FC 0483

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE

Public notice is hereby given that pursuant to a judgment entered in the above cause on the 12th day of October, 2023, MIKE KELLEY, Sheriff of Will County, Illinois, will on Thursday, the 13th day of June, 2024, commencing at 12:00 o'clock noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 904, Joliet, IL 60432, sell at public auction to the highest and best bidder or bidders the following-described real estate:

THE WEST 38.12 FEET OF THE EAST 131.97 FEET OF LOT 2 IN WYNDSTONE VILLAGE TOWNHOMES UNIT 1, A SUBDIVISION OF PART OF THE EAST 1/2 OF THE SOUTHWEST 1/4 OF SECTION 20, TOWNSHIP 34 NORTH, RANGE 10 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED OCTOBER 13, 1992 AS DOCUMENT NO. R92-80523, IN WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS

Commonly known as: **112 WYNDSTONE DR, ELWOOD, IL 60421**

Description of Improvements: Single Family
P.I.N.: 10-11-20-308-017-0000

Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County.

In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the purchaser of the unit, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and legal fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 and the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Illinois Condominium Property Act.

Pursuant to Local Court Rule 11.03 (J) if there is a surplus following application of the proceeds of sale, then the plaintiff shall send written notice pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/15-1512(d) to all parties to the proceeding advising them of the amount of the surplus and that the surplus will be held until a party obtains a court order for its distribution or, in the absence of an order, until the surplus is forfeited to the State.

FOR INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:
INTERCOUNTY JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION
120 W. MADISON STREET SUITE 718
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602
P: 312 444-1122 X102

F:
Plaintiff's Attorney
Will County

Mike Kelley
Sheriff of
Will County

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, May 22, 29 and June 5, 2024.

Elwood Fire Protection District seeking bids for new doors, windows

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Elwood Fire Protection District will be accepting sealed bids for the purchase and installation of replacement windows for 6 doors and 13 fixed windows at the Elwood Fire Protection District. Bid specifications/packets must be picked up in person at the Elwood Fire Protection District 309 W. Mississippi St., Elwood, IL 60421, Mon-Fri, 8:30am- 2:30 pm. A mandatory pre-construction meeting will be held on June 6, 2024, at 10:00am at the Elwood Fire Protection District (address above). Bids must be submitted by 9:00am, June 10, 2024. The bids may be mailed to: Elwood Fire Protection District 309 W. Mississippi St., Elwood, IL 60421, or dropped off in person 8:30am-2:30pm, Mon-Fri. The Fire District will not receive bids after 9:00am on June 10, 2024. All bids shall be opened at the Elwood Fire Protection District on June 10, 2024, at 1:00pm.

The Fire District reserves the right to reject any and all bids. Any questions should be directed to Chief Locacius at clocacius@elwoodfpd.com.

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, May 29 and June 5, 2024.

Wesley Township Road District to do cleanup

PUBLIC NOTICE

Wesley Township Residents and LandOwners,

Wesley Township Road District will be cleaning the ditches, cutting shoulders, and reclaiming the Right of Way throughout the township. The replacement of driveway entrance culverts will be evaluated at time of ditch cleaning. If the township deems it necessary to replace the culvert it will be done at no cost to the homeowner. Culverts will not be installed on vacant residential lots.

Any structures on the Right of Way must be removed. Any structures on the Right of Way at time of construction will be deemed debris and disposed of. Any mailbox post that must be removed will be reinstalled by the Road District at no cost to the landowner.

During the upcoming monthly township meeting on June 11, 2024, the Road District will be presenting an ordinance to the Wesley Township Board for their approval that will prohibit constructing on, and or filling in ditches throughout the township.

If you have any questions on the project or the proposed ordinance, please attend the monthly meeting on June 17, 2024, at 6:30 pm @ 21333 W Ballou Rd. Wilmington, IL.

Leonard McCubbin
Road Commissioner

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, May 29, 2024.

OAK KNOLL
— Financial —
STRATEGIES

Presents:

Longest Day
Bowling Night!
WE'RE BACK...

\$100 A TEAM
6 PLAYERS
3 HRS OF BOWLING
SHOES INCLUDED

AWESOME RAFFLES
6 FOR \$5 OR
WINGSPAN FOR \$20!

Annual Event to Support:
OFA
A WOMAN'S FUNDATION OF AMERICA

June 20, 2024 / 5-8:00 PM
402 S Water St, Wilmington, IL

For Questions Call:
815-476-2105

Step 1: Follow the QR Code to register for your lane.
Step 2: Call Ashley at 815-476-2105 to confirm your lane!

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WILDCAT SPORTS

FINAL FOUR

Wildcats bent on winning 2A championship

BY ERIC FISHER
PUBLISHER

The Wilmington baseball team got one win closer to becoming the first-ever group of Wildcats to battle for a second state championship in the same school year.

The Wildcats punched their ticket to state Monday by beating Peoria Notre Dame, 5-0, in the Geneseo Super Sectional to advance to the Final Four in class 2A.

Two more wins and this group will add a state baseball trophy next to their football championship. Again, they have two victories to claim, starting Friday when they take on St. Anthony of Effingham at 7 p.m. at Dozer Field in Peoria.

If they beat the Bulldogs they will face either Maroa-Fosyth (24-4) or Sterling Newman Central Catholic (22-4-1) for the 7 p.m. championship on Saturday.

Wilmington was all business on Monday, relying on junior righty Kyle Farrell who gave up only one hit through seven innings. Farrell was impressive from pitch #1 to pitch #101, striking out 11 batters. Even in when backup Ryan Kettman was warming up in the bullpen in the 6th, Farrell asked

what was going on because he was ready to finish.

The Wildcats (27-1) scored to runs their first at-bat when sophomore Dierks Geiss, with the bases loaded, singled in two runs. The score remained unchanged until the bottom of the sixth inning when they proved once again that even the bottom of the lineup can hit the ball.

Brendan Moran singled to left field. Jack Castle became a substitute runner for Moran and advanced to third on a double by Reid Juster.

Castle scored on a pass ball and Juster scored on a single by lead-off batter Kettman, who ended up scoring on a single by Cade McCubbin.

Farrell then finished with three up, three down with a pop out, strike out and line out.

The 'Cats finished with 11 hits led by Lucas Rink who went 3-for-4 including a double. Geiss had two hits for two RBIs, Kettman two hits and one RBI, and one hit each for McCubbin (1 RBI), Joe Allgood, Moran and Juster, a double.

Bulldogs up next

St. Anthony enters the semi-final on Friday with a 24-5-1 record. They defeated Mt. Carmel 5-0 to claim the Carbondale Super

Sectional.

On paper, they match up evenly with the Wildcats with a .314 batting average while Wilmington is .323. Both teams have an on-base percentage of .422 while Wilmington holds the edge in winning percentage at .964 to .817.

Wilmington out-performs them on stolen bases 86 to 69 while St. Anthony bunts the ball often with 19 SACs compared to 7 for the 'Cats.

Their leading hitter is #16 Brock Fearday with a .430 average including seven home runs, 40 hits and 40 RBIs. Wilmington's best is Zach Ohlund with a .424 average, nine home runs, 39 hits and 46 RBIs.

St. Anthony has power hitters Brady Hatton with seven home runs, 34 hits, 28 RBIs; Connor Roepke with four HRs, 34 hits and 34 RBIs; and Beau Adams with four homers, 32 hits and 15 RBIs.

Wilmington has good depth through the lineup with Rink batting .390 with 41 hits, 25 RBIs, 10 doubles and three HRs; Kettman hitting .371 with 39 hits, 13 RBIs and six doubles; McCubbin with a .325 average with 27 hits, 16 RBIs and one homer; Farrell with 26 hits, 25 RBIs and two homers; and Geiss with .318 average with 26 hits and 25 RBIs. Juster

found his groove again Monday, getting his 25th hit with 19 RBIs, two homers to lift his average to .325.

The Wildcats have standout pitchers in Rink (9-1, .50 ERA) and Farrell (9-0, 1.21 ERA). Rink has struck out 96 batters and walked only four while giving up 31 hits. Farrell has 94 strikeouts against 25 walks while limiting teams to 27 hits.

Odds are the Bulldogs will start with Fearday on the mound. He has thrown most games with an 8-1 record, 1.77 ERA. He has been tagged for 59 hits in 67 innings, walking 21 while striking out 74. Their other option is Aiden Lauritzen with a 1.38 ERA and 6-0 record with 32 hits in 45 innings, 24 walks and 47 Ks. Joseph Tegeler, with a 4-2 record and 1.91 ERA, may see action too.

It may come down to who hits the ball best and the Wildcats have to edge with 261 hits in 28 games while St. Anthony has 246 in 30 games. The problem is they have 23 home runs compared to 18 for Wilmington. But add up the extra base hits and both teams have 75.

Sectional Championship

The 'Cats claimed the Beecher Sectional on Saturday, defeating Herscher 5-1.

The 'Cats gave up a run in the first before setting down and scoring two in the second, two in the third and then an insurance run in the fifth.

Rink gave up only two hits and one walk through seven innings, striking out 10 with no earned runs.

Among the highlights were home runs hit by Ohlund (2-for-3, two RBIs) and Farrell (1-for-2, 1 RBI). McCubbin (2-for-3, 2 RBIs) and Geiss hit a double each.

Sectional semi-final Wilmington rallied to defeat Chicago Christian 5-3 on Wednesday, thanks to a 14-strikeout performance by Farrell.

The 'Cats led 2-0 until the Knights plated three runs in the second. Wilmington regained the lead in the fourth with two runs, plus one more in the seventh to win.

Ohlund (two hits, one RBI), Kettman (two hits) and Juster each hit a double. Moran, Geiss and McCubbin also contributed hits.



Photo by Eric Fisher

WILMINGTON'S DIERKS GEISS rips a double during the sectional championship game against Herscher.



Photo by Eric Fisher

A HOT ONE hit to shortstop is no problem for Wilmington infielder Ryan Kettman who threw the runner out at first base.



Photo by Elaine Fisher-Ohlund

HIGH FIVES for Wilmington's Jake Castle after sliding into home during Monday's game against Peoria Notre Dame. Cats won 5-0.



Courtesy photo

A NATIONAL CHAMPION—Olivia Hansen (center) holds the NJCAA National Championship trophy softball trophy with her family (from left) Mason, Krista, Ella and TJ Hansen who attended the tournament over the weekend in Spartanburg, SC.

Olivia Hansen helps the Vikings win a national championship

St. Johns River State (FL) made its first appearance in school history at the 2024 NJCAA Division II Softball World Series in Spartanburg, NC, and walked away national champions.

This is the Vikings' first national championship title in softball which includes Wilmington freshman Olivia Hansen, daughter of Krista and TJ Hansen.

St. Johns River State (FL) dominated the national tournament

going 3-0 against opponents to stay in the winner's bracket.

The Vikings had the bats going for the championship final, defeating Kirkwood (IA), 7-5, to earn its first national title. The Vikings claimed the lead in the bottom of the second holding on until the top of the seventh when Kirkwood tied the game. As the home team, St. Johns River State entered the bottom of the seventh with one more at bat and took the victory with a

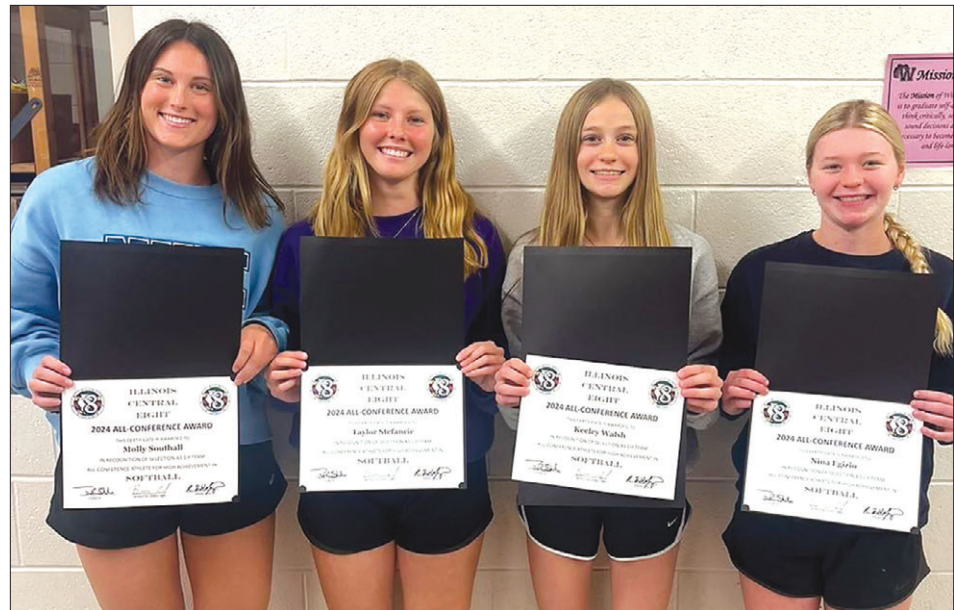
two-run home run to claim the national championship title.

Hansen went 1-for-3 during the championship, making her batting average .386 for the season. The Vikings finish the season with a 55-15 record.

The Wilmington High School 2023 graduate played in 40 games for St. Johns River State, pounding out 34 hits in 88 at-bats. She finished with six doubles, eight home runs and 32 RBIs.



THE WILDCAT CAPTAINS claim the sectional plaque on Saturday.



WHS photo

Four Lady 'Cats named All Conference

FOUR LADY WILDCATS were named All Conference players on the Illinois Central Eight softball team. Selected by conference coaches were sophomores (from left) Molly Southall and Taylor Stefancic and freshmen Keeley Walsh and Nina Egizio. Wilmington finished the season with a 17-6 record and second in the conference.