

How Jug
Town got
its name



Four Wildcats
named All State



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WILMINGTON, IL | WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19, 2024 | A FREE PRESS NEWSPAPER (815) 476-7966

Best local concert you'll hear this summer

BY ROSE PANIERI
STAFF WRITER

The love of music led Wes Smith, and his wife, Tracy Smith, to start the Wilmington Area Community Band (WACB) 17 years ago. Forming the band was a labor of love between two dedicated musicians.

Wes plays tuba while Tracy is a keyboardist. It may sound sappy, but you might even say they make beautiful music together.

"I had grown up in the Pekin area which has had a municipal band for years," Wes said. "I played during high school band back in the 80s and I missed it. I wanted to get some kind of community band back together."

It takes a considerable amount of dedication (and a boatload of lung power) to play a tuba. Smith's tenacity carries over into keeping WACB on the right track.

"I'd say that playing a tuba would probably count as physical education in certain circles," Smith said, grinning.

Meanwhile, Tracy, who just retired her position as music teacher at Stevens Intermediate School, District 209-U, is WACB's music director. She's in charge of music selection for the season, which she begins in February, while a librarian keeps the folders full of music in good order.

When she's not conducting WACB, Tracy, a trumpeter in college, plays keyboard for area musicals.

Strike up the band

Way back in 2007, the Smiths



Photo by Eric Fisher

DIRECTOR TRACY SMITH signals for the clap and scream from the percussion section during the first Wilmington Area Community Band concert of the season. There were 57 musicians who kicked off the summer season concert with the second planned for this Sunday at 6 p.m. at Wilmington's Memorial Park at Vine and Williams streets.

called every musically-inclined person they knew to let them know of their plan to create a community band. Much to their delight, 20 musicians jumped on the bandwagon immediately.

"Starting the band had to do

with people," Wes Smith said. "We reached out to musicians, who we knew loved to play, but may not have played for years."

The Smiths made the most of the 20 top tier musicians they recruited that first year. The goal

of the ensemble was to have fun while giving back to the community by offering a free summer concert series. The concerts were a vast success with both musicians and audiences.

"Some of our audience mem-

bers have been with us from the start," Smith said. "I've still see some of the same faces I noticed way back in 2007."

With the help of local businesses and community groups, the school district, and social media, WACB grew. Word traveled far and wide, drawing musicians from area towns, but also from Morris and Joliet. Everyone wanted in on the action.

Even better, those interested do not have to audition for a spot. Anyone who plays a band instrument is welcome and when it comes to music making, age is mostly a number.

"Our youngest musician this year is a sixth grader," Smith said. "But we've also got people who are in their 70s playing."

Pandemic pause

WACB hit its stride quickly, barreling along full steam ahead when the COVID-19 pandemic canceled the 2020 season.

"That was a really difficult time for us, just like it was a tough time for everyone," Smith said. "COVID really sidelined us, and no one was really sure which way it might go."

After a summer off the band returned, growing more popular than ever, even collaborating with other ensembles such as the Joliet American Legion Band, Route 66 Band, and the Great Lakes Navy Brass Quintet.

City support

With concerts come practice, not to mention practical issues like obtaining permits and reserving the venue.

"The city is so supportive," Smith said. "Wilmington High
SEE BAND PAGE 2

Story Walk makes its debut in Northcrest

WELCOME IMPROVEMENTS were made to Northcrest Park on Wednesday when Lucas and Sons Paving put down a new coat of asphalt on the former skate board park which will now serve as a full basketball court, two pickleball courts, shuffleboard grid and hopscotch. The Wilmington Park District and Wilmington Public Library District worked together to also create a story walk featuring 24 stations where a story is told while progressing the trail. The walk was completed just in time for Saturday's Summer Reading Kickoff party which featured knight shield and crown making, jousting, face painting, a sword fighting skit, magician and more.

Photos by Eric Fisher



Dangerous heat through Sunday

The official start of summer will bring high levels of heat and humidity on Thursday as the daily high forecasted through Sunday will top 90 degrees. Add in increasing humidity it will feel like 100 degrees across the Midwest.

The National Weather Service issued an Air Pollution Action Day on Monday for southern Will County and warned that it will likely continue through the week.

An Air Pollution Action Day is declared when weather conditions are such that widespread ozone and or particulate levels are expected to be at or above the unhealthy for sensitive groups category of the air quality index for multiple days.

Active children and adults, especially people with pulmonary or respiratory disease such as asthma, should limit prolonged outdoor activity.

"High temperatures aren't just uncomfortable; they can be downright dangerous," said Tom Sivak, FEMA Region 5 regional administrator. "While certain populations like small children, outdoor workers and older adults, may be especially vulnerable, extreme heat can affect us all. Have a plan to stay safe

and cool then check on your family, friends and neighbors to ensure they're staying safe and cool too."

Stay indoors as much as possible and limit exposure to the sun. If you don't have access to air conditioning at home, find places in your community with AC, such as a local cooling center, library or shopping mall.

Keep your home as cool as possible. Roughly 40% of unwanted heat buildup in homes is through windows. Use awnings or curtains to keep the heat out, and check the weather stripping on doors and windows to keep the cool air in.

If you must be outside, find shade.†Avoid strenuous activity, cover your head with a hat wide enough to protect your face and wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.

Drink plenty of water, never leave people or pets in a parked car.

It's a hot start for summer although there should be relief late on Sunday when a storm front moves through dropping the temperature into the 80s.





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Band,

continued from page 1

School allows us to practice in their music room, we work with the city to reserve Veteran's Memorial Park as well as the chamber of commerce, park district, and the newspaper. Our longest supporter has been the Wilmington Rotary Club."

This summer's concert series kicked off on Sunday, June 9 with the theme "To Be Young Again," featuring soloist, Lisa Lestina.

WABC has grown exponentially over the years. The band has more than doubled since 2007.

"I counted 57 musicians that day," Smith said. "We have flute, clarinet, drums, saxophone, French horn, trombone, euphonium, tuba and much more. And we're always looking for a good bassoon."

The Wilmington Area Community Band will perform the following Sundays at Veteran's Memorial Park, 125 Vine St. in Wilmington. Concerts begin promptly at 6 p.m. Bring lawn chairs or a blanket. There will be food vendors at each concert.

To help offset expenses like insurance and music, upwards of \$1,200 each season, The Sweet Treat Raffle is held during intermissions. "We have some very talented bakers in the band," Wes noted.

The concerts are moved to Wilmington High School during extreme rain or heat. Signs are posted the day of the event when there is a move.

June 23: "We Love our Country" with a duet by Emilia Williams and Gracie Loveland

July 14: "Color our World" with Soloist Tami Surdey

July 28: "Treasure and the High Sea" with Soloist Bonnie Houston

Aug. 11: "Movies, Musical and Favorites" with Soloist Sarah Lanoue

For information, please visit Facebook @WilmingtonILBand.



THE WOODWIND SECTION for the Wilmington Area Community Band includes clarinetists Rachel Barks and Casey Crompt.



THE WILMINGTON AREA Community Band includes musicians of all ages. Playing trumpet in the brass section are (from left) Dylan D., Pete Bianchetto and Grace S.



BAND DIRECTOR Tracy Smith conducts the first concert of the season.

Attorney Scott files Danielson claim notice

PUBLIC NOTICE

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF JUNE C. DANIELSON, Deceased; NO. 2024PR198

Notice is given of the death of JUNE C. DANIELSON of Wilmington, IL. Letters of Office were issued on May 23, 2024, to PAUL PREUSSE, Executor, 26692 Raphis Royale Blvd., Englewood, FL 34223, whose attorney is BARMANN, BOHLEN & SCOTT, P.C., 700 N. River Dr., Kankakee, Illinois 60901.

Claims against the Estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, Will County Courthouse, River Valley Justice Center - Probate Division, 3208 W. McDonough, Joliet, IL 60431 or with the Executor, or both. Any claim not filed within six (6) months from and after the date of first publication, or, if applicable, within three (3) months from and after the date of mailing or delivery of Notice to Creditor, whichever is later, shall be barred. Copies of a claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered to the Executor and to the Executor's Attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

DATED: June 10, 2024
PAUL PREUSSE, Executor of the Estate of JUNE C. DANIELSON, Deceased

BRIAN D. SCOTT
Attorney Reg. No. 06322809
BARMANN, BOHLEN & SCOTT, P.C.
Attorney for Estate
700 N. River Drive
Kankakee, IL 60901
(815) 939-1133
scott@kankakeelaw.com
Published in the Free Press Advocate on June 12, 19 and 26, 2024.

Elwood School District proposed amended budget available

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given by the Board of Education Community Consolidated School District #203 in the Country of Will, State of Illinois, that a proposed amended budget for said school district for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2024 is on file and conveniently available to the public for inspection at 409 North Chicago Avenue, Elwood, Illinois, in the school district office from May 14, 2024 until June 18, 2024. Notice is hereby given that a public hearing on the said proposed amended budget will be held at 6:00 p.m. on the 18th Day of June 2024, at Elwood School, 409 North Chicago Avenue, Elwood, Illinois.

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, June 19, 2024.

Attorney Lynch files Weaver 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 GAY C. WEAVER, Deceased; No. 24PR281

Notice is given to creditors of the death of Gay C. Weaver. Letters of Office were issued to Jeffrey Weaver whose address is 18022 Armitage Court, Homewood, IL 60430 as Independent Administrator 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 5th day of December, 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 claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

Jennifer M. Lynch
For the Estate of Gay C. Weaver, Deceased

BY: Jennifer M. Lynch
1861 Black Road
Joliet, IL 60435
815-725-8000
Atty No.: 06275404
Published in the Free Press Advocate, Wednesday, June 5, 12 and 19 2024.

Hoods up for a good cause



THE ANNUAL Cruisin the Green car show was held Saturday on the lot of the Winchester Green Shopping Center, attracting approximately 50 classic vehicles. The Rusty Nutz Car Club based in Joliet helped to coordinate the event along with alderman Tom Smith. Proceeds raised will be given to Kuzma Care Cottage in Wilmington. Three rows of vehicles, some modern and some old, stretched the length of the parking lot. Among the classics was this 1958 Ford Fairlane in its original condition owned by Kenneth Fransen from Stone City, Indiana.



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.

Attorney Meents files Tousignant 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 LOREN EUGENE TOUSIGNANT, Deceased; NO. 2024 PR 312

Notice is given of the death of Loren Eugene Tousignant, Letters of Office as Independent Executor were issued on June 13, 2024, to Patricia Bryant, whose address is 282 May Road, Dunlap, Tennessee 37327; 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 December 20, 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 to the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

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

Patricia Bryant
Independent Executor of the Estate of Loren Eugene Tousignant, Deceased

Frank J. Meents
Meents Law, P.C.
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
Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, June 19, 26 and July 3, 2024.

Tax Deed filed for 1505 Amber Dr.

PUBLIC NOTICE TAKE NOTICE CERTIFICATE NO. 20-00074

TO: Matthew Ceh
Roberta Ceh
Occupant
Illinois Attorney General
IL Dept. of Employment Security
IL Dept. of Employment Security
Will County Clerk
Dallas Ceh
Winston Ceh

Persons in occupancy or actual possession of said property; Unknown owners or parties interested in said land or lots.

A Petition for Tax Deed on premise described below has been filed with the Circuit Clerk of WILL County, Ill. as Case No. 2024TX000107

The Property is located at: 1505 Amber Dr., Wilmington IL 60481
Property Index Number: 03-17-23-303-004-0000

Said Property was sold on 1/10/2022 for Delinquent Real Estate Taxes and/or Special Assessments for the year 2020.

The period of redemption will expire on 10/4/2024. On 10/29/2024 at 9:00 AM the Petitioner will make application to such Court in said County for an Order for Issuance of a Tax Deed.

Ivy Jack, Inc, Petitioner
Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, June 5, 12 & 19, 2024.

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Eric D. Fisher, publisher

Only the name remains, Jug Town

How many times have you passed that road, or even driven down it? Have you ever wondered how Jug Town Road got its name? Let's board the time machine to the 1850's to get a look at "Jug Town."



TIME WAS....
Sandy Vasko

I suppose most of us who are not farmers don't think much about the soil below our feet. But a farmer will tell you that the type of soil makes a great difference. In general, the area around the coal mines had poor soils, not good for growing things. Much of the land was marshy, with quicksand everywhere. Goose Lake was more of a shallow marsh than a true deep lake in the "Wisconsin" sense of the word. But near its west end, a bed of clay was discovered.

Perhaps in this day and age, that discovery would not mean much, but in mid-19th century it meant a lot. Clay is the main ingredient in pottery.

WMS announces third trimester honor roll

Sixth grade honor roll

Caden Argenta, Payden Backhoff, Lillian Bailey, Bristol Billingsley, Tessa Biskupski, Skylar Boersma, Amber Bradley, Hayley Carrillo, Savannah Dannelley, Lillian Davis, Andres Diaz, Dylan Dietz, Zoey Dominguez, Chloe Eisenhour, Jack Grygiel, Aiden Gunty, Kate Guzman, Kati Guzman, Claire Hall, Lorelai Hand, Mason Hansen, Russell Hawkins, Talon Hincherrick, Johanna Laud, Carissa Leonard, Brooklyn Long, Ercole Long, Kensington Lupinski, Lilly McMahon, Mauricio Mejia, Anthony Miraglia, Lily Mitchell, Erik Morris, William Panepinto, Arieana Perry, Tyler Redwitz, Aiden Riggs, Cooper Rivera, Madison Rivera, Brysen Ruggiero, Brynne Ryder, Carissa Sapp, Hannah Stiehler, Isaac Svartoien, Jackson Sweeney and Tucker Thompson.

Sixth grade "A" honor roll

Aiden Browning, Christopher Brueggert, Nathan Cutter, Raelynn Grygiel, Holly Holm, Oliver Kruck, Aiden Lawson, Henry Lewis, Kaylee Lovig, Baylee McInerney, Luke Medlin, Layla Pape, Edie Petrovich, Charlie Prendergast, Aubrey Ptacek, Markus Sogale, Gage Sorensen, Jayce Strong, Tandon Sukle and Jackson Van Duyne.

Seventh grade honor roll

Peyton Adams, Joseph Banas, Levi Beasley, Aubrey Becker, Ricardo Castro,

And pottery was an absolute necessity in the household. Pottery vessels held everything from water to sauerkraut, from sausages preserved in their own fat to homemade cherry wine.

In late 1855 William White came to this area from Utica, New York where his family was engaged in the pottery business. Together with Charles Walker, the firm of White and Company built a pottery works near the clay deposits. In his old pottery works in Utica, the clay was mined elsewhere and delivered to the pottery, costing quite a bit of money for transportation. Here there would be no delivery costs. We will see later that this was a fatal decision.

It was also about this time that a new use for pottery became popular. Clay field tiles to drain city sites had long been used. But it wasn't until the mid-

19th century that farmers learned that rich soils lay below marshy areas, and draining them meant a huge increase in production.

Two different sites produced both tiles and household pottery. But the pottery works were only part of the community that lived there. There were two boarding houses and at least four homes to house the workers and their families. There was also a school house, a communal room or hall, and at least two stores. The 1860 census tells us that there were nine households there, with a total of 55 individuals.

At the tile production site, tiles were formed by extrusion, then dried and stacked into a kiln, then fired. After cooling, the tiles were stacked in the yard for transportation elsewhere.

At the stoneware manufactory the vessels were formed by hand. The process began by mining the clay from the banks of Goose Lake, then transporting it to the workshop site.



A PHOTO TAKEN of the people who worked at the Jug Town pottery, standing in front of one of their production buildings.

It was dumped into "clay pits" to freeze over the winter. Passing through the freeze/thaw cycle greatly increased its workability. It was then passed through a mill to pulverize it, mixed with water to a proper consistency and finally turned on wheels.

The craftsmen that lived at Jug Town were highly skilled. They earned \$42.50 (\$1,470) per month, compared to average unskilled laborers who made only \$3.50 (\$120) per month. The less skilled workers at the tile factory made \$26.00 (\$900) per month.

The stoneware produced there consisted of minimally decorated salt-

glazed jars, bowls (milk pans) and jugs. All of them more or less made individually, by hand. Thus, any Jug Town Pottery you may find today varies in size, shape, and decoration.

In the end, the firm of White and Walker went out of business; they were never able to pay back the \$10,000 they originally borrowed to start the pottery works.

They soon discovered that transporting heavy, bulky, breakable goods over poorly developed swampy roads to get to the I & M Canal was extremely costly. In addition, their remote location in the swamps of Goose Lake made marketing a problem. The partnership and

pottery works were dissolved in 1866.

The 1874 plat of Grundy County shows two "old potteries" still on the map, but by 1890 they no longer appeared on the plat maps. By 1910 the majority of the buildings were in ruins, the foundations were removed and the land plowed over for planting. The large drying shed was still upright; it was divided in two and half moved to another farm site. The kilns lasted a bit longer.

In 1969 the State of Illinois purchased the site and other property to create Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area.

Berkot's earns Award of Merit



THE WILMINGTON CHAMBER presented an Award of Merit to Berkot's Super Food in Wilmington. Chamber President Steve Evans (right) hand Bob Albright, Berkot's store manager, with the certificate acknowledging its \$2 million investment in the community by expanding and remodeling its Wilmington location. Berkot's expanded into what was the Family Dollar store next door, with a new entrance, deli section, doubling the size of its produce section, meat department and frozen sections. The chamber appreciates their efforts to keep area residents shopping locally.

Library to host nature walk at Midewin

The Wilmington Library will be hosting a nature walk series focusing on various aspects of the great outdoors, including wildflower and bird identification at a different nature center/park each month.

The first nature walk will be on June 20 at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie north of Wilmington. Transportation is on your own and walks will begin at 10 a.m., weather permitting.

PERSONAL INJURY

**Block, Klukas & Manzella & Shell, P.C.**

Attorneys at Law

Michael D. Block • Elizabeth A. Klukas • Thomas J. Manzella
Bryan L. Shell • Aaron B. Morrow • Tyler W. Juckins

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One store town

WILMINGTON—It is so sad that we've now become a one grocery store town. Went to shop at Valle's Produce Sunday and the store was closed up. I've shopped there all the time when it was Baron's Foods, Bellettini Foods and then Valles Produce. In it's heyday it was like going to visit family with all the friendly workers who gave good customer service, fresh meat and produce and the hard-working people in the deli baking bread, doughnuts and frying the best chicken. But that all started to go away when the dollar stores came to town. See what dollar stores do to small towns. We had three in Wilmington when Bellettini's sold to Valle's and it didn't take long before things went downhill. I suppose some of it was self-inflicted but I know when the dollar stores came you didn't see them donating back or sponsoring any youth sports team. Bellettini's sponsored my grandson's baseball team, gave so much to Kuzma Care Cottage and helped local groups like the Lions and Rotary use the BBQ sandwich trailer. You won't see the dollar stores doing that. No, the dollar stores come in, steal away what grocery business they can and take their profits out of the community. They rely on little to no customer service, making you self check-out. I refuse to spend my money at a dollar store because they do more harm than good for small towns. Let's hope this town doesn't become like other small towns and become a grocery desert.

How we got here

SHADOW LAKES—It's kind of strange how nobody talks about the biggest Trump accomplishment during his presidency. I'm talking about the tariffs war. The brilliant idea of imposing a big tax on imports at a time when everything was shut down because of the pandemic. The U.S. is heavily dependent on imports from almost every country in the world but specifically from China. Trump's tariffs raised prices on almost everything we buy at the store. That, in combination that production was shut down because of the pandemic, caused one of the worst inflations this country had seen in decades. The Biden administration is not free of responsibility because they might have been able to roll back some of the tariffs to bring down prices. But why would they, they're the government and the government loves tax money. They don't care much how they get it. The tariffs' impact has settled and inflation is going up at a more sustainable rate. Wages are going up for most Americans and eventually will catch up with inflation. Unfortunately, wages are not going up for everyone, some people are being left behind. And those people are the ones who are more susceptible to fall victims to Trump's lies. But if you're not happy with the economy just remember how it got to where it is now.

Blind council

WILMINGTON—Great job Wilmington City Council. Your backwards thinking by not letting Berkot's sell full liquor is a slap in the face to the shoppers of Wilmington. Why must you always protect a few businesses? Why are you so hard headed that you refuse to allow competition to exist? Why even bother with "shop local" campaign? Things like this is why money goes to other towns. It is sad that the council only thinks of a few businesses and not the people of the town. Let the consumer decide where they want to shop.

Speeders beware

COAL CITY—At the Coal City Area Club a lot of new members and a lot of old members are speeding through the campgrounds. You are being watched and could cost you and your family time away from the club, Camping areas are 5 mph. With the Fourth of July coming up and lots of family and friends at the club, extra caution is needed. Let's not ruin your day or ours by speeding. It's only a slight second

Letter to the editor

If Trump is the best the Republicans can do then God help us

As Americans prepare for another presidential election we should reflect on our former presidents - most of whom served with honor and distinction at home and abroad.

A sterling example is that of former president, Jimmy Carter, a Christian and most decent man who, with his wife, devoted their lives even after the White House to humanitarian work all over the world.

The Republican party, dredging the bottom of their candidate barrel, offer as their best candidate a man who is a convicted felon (now banned from 34 countries), a serial adulterer, pathological liar, greedy grifter, sexual predator, philanderer, narcissist, slanderer, Nazi sympathizer, thief of government document and insurrectionist. He attempted to extort \$1 billion from the oil companies in exchange

for reactions when a child or adult walks out and you have to stop. "Be Safe, Drive Safe" enjoy.

Lost leadership

BRAIDWOOD—Lost: Honest, dependable, trustworthy and open leadership. If found please return to city hall. Please help us find true leadership; it have been missing for several years.

Open to terrorists

WILMINGTON—Homeland Security and the FBI now say because of our open southern borders a terrorist attack is now not a if, but a where and when. Liberals call Trump and his voters Nazis and white supremacist but it's the liberals and their college kids that support Hamas and attack Jews so who are part of the problem.

Flower thief

COAL CITY—This is to the low-life who stole the potted flowers from my mother's grave around Memorial Day. I don't know why I'm putting this in the paper because you probably can't read, but that was such an inhumane act.

Wake up America

DIAMOND—The people that don't understand why anyone would vote for President Trump do not understand the meaning of freedom. You have closed your eyes to the way the Americans are being treated by today's leaders and you also must realize the judicial system is corrupt. But you live in an area or have a life of luxury which does not include the poor or disabled, senior citizens that live on a fixed income that struggle with high prices. So why don't you move to Chicago and pretend there is no crime caused by policies in favor of criminal activity. So go commit a crime and claim to be a migrant and you will go free to commit more crimes. Wake up to reality. When God was passing out brains did you think he said trains and you asked for the caboose?

Respects nobody

BRAIDWOOD—I don't understand how women can vote for Trump. He has no respect for them. He flip flops on abortion as well as other issues. At a rally in Las Vegas he talked about sharks, who cares. He just talks about himself constantly. He has no respect for veterans, he's a draft dodger and said John McCain was a loser since he was a prisoner for five years. Really? He pardons all his buddies, do you see Biden pardoning his son? He's a bully just like Putin. Do you want him to run our country? Think hard before you vote!

Call and wait

DIAMOND—So there's another defund the police movement and all our leaders will say is "they must get money from somewhere, but not our pockets or our protection of tax payers funds." So if your life is in danger you will have to wait for help to arrive and if you take the law into your own hands then you will be put into jail. So what our leaders are really saying is that they don't want to give any help to the citizens. But if the American citizens want any help just tell them to call ghost busters.

In the minority

WILMINGTON—The Republicans have lost the popular vote in the last seven out of eight presidential elections which explains why they have given up on Democracy. They have to rely on the electoral college which was written into the Constitution to appease the slave states. And that is why we have a tyranny of the minority.

Outrage for veterans

COAL CITY—A few weeks ago we honored those who gave the ultimate sacrifice on Memorial Day. A few days later we honored the troops who stormed the beach at Normandy which was the beginning of the end for Hitler's empire. Then last week we celebrated Flag Day. How

for political favors. He has even stooped to cheat at golf.

And what is the legacy of his previous term? How did he make an already great America "great again"? He never came to work until noon, he destroyed government documents, created the most corrupt and conflicted Supreme Court in history, wasted millions in taxpayer money building the wall to nowhere now rusting in the desert - not even a worthy tourist attraction. He embarrassed us at home and abroad.

He tore up the beautiful White House rose garden to hold a political rally so he could charge the attendees \$1200/night to stay at his hotel. He held his brother's funeral in the White House so he could charge those invitees also at his hotel. He spent 250 days of his tenure at his residences (notably Mar-A-Lago) at a cost of \$10 million per visit to the government.

Sound-Off is a 24-hour phone line provided to give readers a chance to voice their opinions. The Free Press Newspapers reserves the right to edit remarks for taste, length, personal attacks, racism, threatening, calls for boycotts and libel.

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

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upsetting it was to find out that a Republican Supreme Court Judge was flying our American Flag upside down to support those fools who believed in the big lie about the last election. This disgusting man should resign from the court immediately for desecrating the flag that adorned the caskets of our nation's heroes. But apparently there are no consequences for what Supreme Court judges do. That huge rumbling sound you hear is not a thunderstorm or an earthquake. It is coming from the veterans cemetery in Elwood where our deceased veterans are rolling in their graves at this outrage.

Have money now?

BRAIDWOOD—Now we miraculously have money to buy new equipment. And Fay Smith was told he couldn't buy new equipment by the administrator on several occasions. You don't have money. Fay was trying to replace both 22 yr. and 28 yr. old dump trucks. Nope, no money. Same administrator is now in a purchasing frenzy. Why? Election in April 2025 and has to look good and says he's moving the city forward. The city recently purchased the administrator a new 2024 GMC SUV which is parked at his home but should be at city hall. At a recent council meeting the city purchased a new dump truck and at last week's meeting the street commissioner advised the council he's purchasing a new 2024 Chevy Pickup from Arnie Bauer for the street foreman, waiving competitive bids to keep purchases local since they will be part of Braidwood. How can you waive competitive bids when you never advertised in the paper of circulation for any bids to be submitted? Making phone calls to ask for quotes isn't how it works Mr. Administrator. Competitive bidding is a process of issuing a public bid with the intent that companies will put together their best proposal and compete for a specific project or purchase. Competitive bidding allows transparency and equality of opportunity. Bids are then submitted from different companies, next a bid letting and last a recommendation for bid approval by the city council. This hasn't been the case with this administrator and council for the last five years which is a violation of the law.

Cut the grass

BRAIDWOOD—I went to visit my father's grave at the Mount Olivet Cemetery in Braidwood. I was shocked how tall the grass is. Why haven't they been cutting? We make monthly donations to the cemetery maintenance fund. Where is this money going? Workers need to step up or step down.

Long Trump list

GARDNER—Yes, it does take a long time to talk about all of Biden's accom-

plishments and that should be a good thing. The list gets longer and longer every day. Your two words for Trump were hilarious and sad at the same time. Peace and prosperity are the furthest things to describe him. So, here is a long list of words that do actually describe him, but it's definitely not all of them. It would take me days to put them all down. Here we go - Convicted felon by a jury of his peers, convicted of sex abuse by a jury of his peers, convicted of fraud, traitor, liar, dictator wannabe, psychopath, cruel, uncaring, no empathy, only thinks of himself, wants loyalty, but can't give it, calls soldiers and Veterans suckers and losers, doesn't want to be around wounded vets because they "make him look bad," thinks John McCain was a loser, wants to make America "white" again not great again), thinks there should be just one religion (and guess what that will be), brags about overturning Roe vs. Wade, degrades women and the disabled, thinks Nazi protesters were fine people, never did business with black people, wouldn't rent them apartments, had 4,000 lawsuits before he desecrated the White House for four long years, started an insurrection where his supporters beat police officers (so much for back the blue) and tried to have his Vice President and others hanged. It was all out there for everyone to see. The financial "wizard" has been bankrupt five to six times (Daddy bailed him out of every jam), never paid his contractors, and lied about his taxes. He quotes Hitler and loves dictators. Hates Democracy because there are rules. He got us out of the nuclear deal with Iran and now they have more power and weapons. He took us out of the Paris Climate agreement. The weather gets worse and worse every day. We're either on fire or under water. He wanted to shoot peaceful protesters and told the border patrol to go ahead and shoot migrants and he would pardon them later. And finally (but not really), he hates his supporters. He told his buddies that he only needed you to vote for him one more time in 2020 and he wouldn't have to deal with you again. He, his Republican puppets, and Fox News just keep saying the dumbest things to see how much you'll swallow and you never disappoint. They literally can't keep a straight face when they say it. He can't put a sentence together and brags about passing a dumb test that doesn't mean anything. I take it every year. Big deal. Over compensating? He projects everything he has done, will do, or is thinking about doing onto someone else. He's a scared little creature who is only running to stay out of jail. He's stolen classified documents and shown them to God only knows who and is a huge security threat to everyone. So much crime - More later if I have time....VOTE!

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Lions youth fishing derby delayed till fall

The Wilmington Lions Club's annual youth fishing derby at the South Island pond which was scheduled for Saturday, June 22 is

being delayed. Organizers made the decision to postpone the event after discovering the pond is choked with weeds and is too shallow to sustain stocked fish. The pond was once 8 feet deep but in recent years has filled in to only 18 inches in most places, allowing grasses to grow in the shallows. It's deepest spot is 4 feet but that's in a limited area. Lion John Persic said Monday its conditions are not right for a fishing contest, especially if youngsters were to get snagged in the weeds.

Bird viewing offered at Lake Renwick

The Will County Forest Preserve District will be offering Lake Renwick Migratory Bird Viewing, 8 a.m. to noon on Saturday, June 29, at the Lake Renwick Heron Rookery Nature Preserve, Plainfield. See herons, egrets, cormorants and eagles during these weekly viewing sessions while preserve access is restricted for nesting season. Volunteers and staff will be on hand to answer questions. Free, all ages.

Coffee & Newspapers
One wakes you up
One opens your eyes

How can Metra be trusted now?

"What was supposed to be a simple storage warehouse for the Metra transit agency has now buried the nation's fourth-busiest commuter rail system in a sinking money pit, the ABC7 I-Team has learned."



CAPITOL FACTS
Rich Miller

The Chicago broadcast station's scoop last week is an almost perfect encapsulation of why northeastern Illinois' mass transit fiefdoms need to be busted and reformed. For your background, the Chicago regional transit system is facing a steep \$730 million operating funding fiscal cliff in Fiscal Year 2026, which starts a year from July 1. Gov. JB Pritzker and several legislators are demanding that, in exchange for any new operating money, the management of the Chicago Transit Authority, Metra, Pace and the Regional Transportation Authority all be reformed. They've all operated as fiefdoms for decades, resisting accountability, cooperation and any attempts to streamline management. The Chicago Transit Authority is the most well-known villain in the transit governance debacles, but

it clearly ain't alone. Metra bought a south suburban warehouse for \$6.8 million in 2020. The purchase did not follow any formal purchasing procedures because, apparently, Metra doesn't have any. Nobody at Metra would even admit to knowing who touted the property, which was owned at the time by a Metra hand sanitizer provider. "The [internal Metra report] also stated it could not identify which Metra staffer initially brought the Harvey warehouse property sale option to the Executive Leadership Team prior to its board approval," ABC7 reported. Was the property brought to the agency by an independent broker? "No," Metra's CEO Jim Derwinski told his board last month. "(T)his was mostly our engineering and materials management team out looking for something that was available," Derwinski said, according to the ABC7 report. Unreal. "Derwinski said the agency was facing potential layoffs of its workforce

[during the pandemic] and Metra's Executive Leadership Team saw the building purchase as an opportunity to repurpose employees to work on and make improvements to the warehouse," the station reported. Um, they have no union contracts over there? Metra bought the property "as-is," and has since spent another \$11.1 million. But the property will require "tens of millions of dollars more to finish," and will take at least two more years, the report continued. OK, look, Harvey definitely needs investment. And I will be the first to admit that our state procurement laws are an unnecessarily complicated mess. Small businesses and non-profits simply do not have the ability to navigate those laws unassisted, which makes handing out grants an excruciating process. But, I mean, what the heck is going on over there? Metra is throwing tens of millions of dollars at a warehouse without any sort of purchasing process? The board seemed to be surprised at how deep a hole the agency had dug itself into during its meeting last month. That's a massive failure by the board, but where the heck are the operating rules?

The thing that just completely blew my mind about the ABC7 story was Derwinski's cavalier attitude about the taxpayer money it had spent and is committed to spending in the future. Metra was running short on operating dollars during the pandemic, Derwinski explained, so the agency "saw an opportunity to shift workforce into this building at that period of time to keep them working under capital dollars." The original purchase was made with state Rebuild Illinois bond funds. "The fiscal cliff is an operating dollar problem," Derwinski said. "The capital dollar side about making, taking care of the assets that we're entrusted to take care of, that's this conversation right here. The fiscal cliff, it's real. It's big. But that really has to do with the operation." Excuse me, but how the heck is the state government supposed to trust Metra to spend a massive operations bailout wisely when it's blowing tens of millions of capital dollars on a boondoggle with no discernable process and almost criminally lax oversight and shrugging it all off as no big deal? This is exactly why reforms are necessary. Bust. The. Fiefdoms.

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Local students named to dean's list

Local students named to the dean's list at Iowa State University in Ames, IA include Claire Hennessey, of Gardner and Veronica Koca, of Wilmington. Students named to the dean's list must earn a grade point average of at least 3.50 on a 4.00 scale while carrying a minimum of 12 credit hours of graded course work.

Grygiel earns Chamber trophy



CHAMBER AMBASSADOR Wendy Hill, (left) with the Wilmington Coalition, presents Sara Grygiel, of Old National Bank, with the Employee of the Month trophy. The nomination to the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce stated, "Sara always steps up to the plate and is eager to help any co-worker or customer that needs it. She takes initiative even if unsure of the task or project as well as being a mentor to the newly hired. She has the respect and gratitude of clients and co-workers." To nominate a worker at a Wilmington business that you find to be pleasant and helpful, email that person's name and place of business to info@wilmingtonilchamber.org.

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Retired WHS teacher digs up the history of a mining town

Retired WHS teacher Richard Joyce has authored a book on the mining days in the coal town of Spring Valley, IL in Bureau County titled "Spring Valley is a Mining Town".

Many miners and their families from Braidwood, Coal City and surrounding towns moved to Spring Valley after the mines opened there in the mid-1880s.

The town was wracked by labor struggles, contentious elections, religious battles over control of the public schools, controversy concerning saloons and the activities associated with them, the antics of political anarchists, and disputes over the assessment of coal



DICK JOYCE

company property.

In 1894 a Chicago newspaper stated that half of Spring Valley's popula-

tion was fighting the other half. Their disagreements were economic, political, cultural and religious.

Joyce explains the causes and consequences of these disputes as well as the reasons why they eventually faded in importance. He contends that although workers in the late 19th century lost numerous historic strikes, workers in Spring Valley were able to exercise control over certain aspects of life that were important to them in spite of the opposition of the corporation that owned the mines, started the town and tried to assert its power.

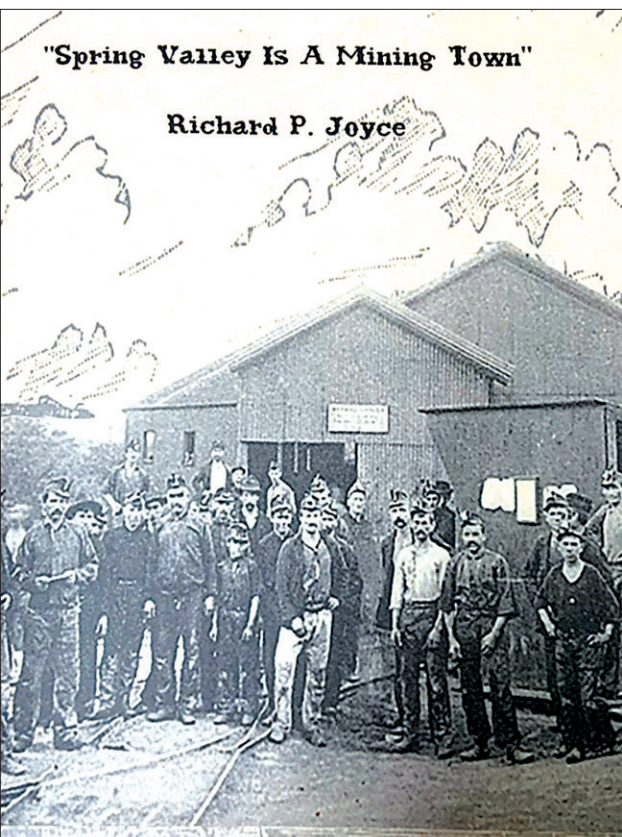
It is the story of the response and resilience of working people in the face

of corporate power.

The coal company needed the labor of its mostly-immigrant workforce but often disliked the workers' beliefs and behavior.

Joyce gathered information from old newspapers, city council and school board meeting minutes, union records, court cases, city directories, county histories, census and Ellis Island records and personal correspondence.

Wilmington High School computer teacher Jeff Mison formatted the book and designed the cover. The book is available from lulu.com or from the author by emailing him at joyces90@comcast.net.



Falling demand equals gas for less

Average gasoline prices in Illinois have fallen 3.9 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.72/g, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,378 stations in Illinois. Prices in Illinois are 14.8 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 30.0 cents per gallon lower than a year ago.

In Braidwood, gas is \$3.79/g across the board, and the same is true of Coal City, even without Will County taxes. In Wilmington, Mohsen has gas for \$3.36/g and at Circle K it will run you \$3.79/g on Monday.

Further afield, Morris ran the gamut from \$3.36/g at Casey's to \$3.55/g at Pilot. Expect to pay \$3.03/g at Bourbonnais Gulf, and \$3.59/g at Gas and Wash.

"Since the national average price of gasoline fell to its lowest June level since 2021 last week, we've

seen the drop in prices take a break," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy.

"Also factoring in gasoline demand that has been running a bit weaker than expected, market fundamentals look pretty good right now if you're a motorist."

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Illinois was \$2.99/g while the most expensive was \$5.19/g, a difference of \$2.20/g.

Farmers market June 20

The Wilmington Park District will be holding the first farmers market of the summer on Thursday, June 20, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on North Water Street.

The street and public parking lot will be blocked off to allow for live music, vendors with locally sourced veggies, and good eats from food trucks. Come browse the creative works of local makers and artisans. Other market dates will be July 18, August 17 and September 19.

TWO SETS OF TEACHERS.

Trouble Feared at Spring Valley at the Opening of the Schools.

Spring Valley, Ill., Aug. 31.—Trouble is expected here tomorrow with the opening of the public schools. Two sets of teachers have been engaged and both will attempt to teach. The fac-

SIXTY-SEVEN SALOONS

Spring Valley Has Big Revenue for Small City.

"With sixty-seven saloons and two or three wholesale houses taking out licenses and increased water rents, Spring Valley property owners should be almost exempt from paying taxes. Forty-five thousand dollars—well, that is a pretty large sum for a city the size of this."—Spring Valley Press.

Ullrich graduates Blackburn College

Logan Ullrich of Diamond, graduated Summa Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Biology - Environmental Track from Blackburn College during the institution's 155th Commencement ceremony on May 11, 2024.

MINERS ARE SHOT.

The Regulars Taken to Spring Valley to Quell the Disturbance of Alien Miners Received

With Volleys of Stones at the Depot—Regulars Fire Into the Mob—Two Rioters Killed.

The Entire Town Terrorized by the Foreigners—\$55,000 Worth of Goods has Been Stolen.

Killed in the Battle. Spring Valley, Ill., July 11.—For the first time during the disturbances created by rioting foreign strikers in the Spring Valley region blood was shed yesterday.

PREVENT MEN FROM WORKING.

Wives of Spring Valley Miners Guard the Mouth of the Work Shaft.

Spring Valley, Ill., Oct. 1.—Wives of miners living near No. 1 shaft took a hand in battle today to prevent men from working in that pit. Notwithstanding the fact that the

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OBITUARIES

Charlie Brown

 VENICE, FL—Charles “Charlie” Brown, a man of unwavering dedication and service, passed away on Friday, May 10, 2024, at his home in Venice, FL at the age of 80.

Born on Oct. 5, 1943, in Joliet, Charlie was the son of Charles O. and Kathryn J. (Patch) Brown. Charlie embarked on a life filled with commitment, passion, and service. In 1964, he married Kathy Jisa, and together they built a life centered around family and community. They raised two children, Colleen, and Thomas, instilling in them the values of integrity, compassion, and hard work.

Charlie's dedication to his country was evident from a young age, as he proudly served in the United States Navy during the Cuban Missile Crisis. His service to his country was matched only by his commitment to his profession. For 28 years, Charlie served at the Illinois Bell Telephone Company, retiring as an Outside Plant Engineer. Never one to rest on his laurels, he continued his career following his retirement with Byers Engineering Co. and MFS Network Technologies, where he held various managerial and supervisory positions including Operations Manager, Engineering Supervisor and Project Manager.

In addition to his professional endeavors, Charlie was deeply involved in his community, serving in various capacities that showcased his leadership and commitment to public service. He served as the Building Inspector for the Village of Diamond and played a vital role on the Village's Planning and Zoning Board. His dedication to education led him to serve on the Coal City Community Unit District #1 School Board, where he advocated for the betterment of the local schools.

Charlie's commitment to public safety was exemplary, as evidenced by his seven years of service on the Coal City Emergency Squad where he was the Squad's first Certified EMT (A). In addition, he dedicated himself to 20 years with the Coal City Fire Protection District, where he was the district's first State Certified Fire Service Advanced Firefighter/Fire Service Instructor and Fire Service Officer with an associate degree in Fire Science. He was proud to have retired as Deputy Chief. His passion for safety extended beyond his professional life, as he worked as an independent safety consultant, sharing his expertise in Industrial First Aid, CPR/AED and defensive driving with certification through the National Safety Council.



A man of many talents and interests, Charlie was a writer, contributing articles on historical military firearms to Small Arms Review/Small Arms of the World magazines. He was a dedicated Life Member of the Illinois State Rifle Association and belonged to the National Rifle Association, embodying his passion for firearms and marksmanship.

Charlie was an active member of the St. Juvin Post #1336 VFW, where he served as Commander and in addition served as Vice Chair of the Grundy County Veteran's Assistance Commission. His dedication to his fellow veterans was unwavering, and he leaves behind a legacy of service and sacrifice that will be remembered for generations to come.

Charlie's passing leaves a void in the lives of all who knew him, but his memory will live on in the hearts of his family, friends, and community. His legacy of service, integrity, and dedication will continue to inspire us all. May his spirit soar high, forever remembered as a true patriot, leader, and friend.

Charlie is survived by his loving wife, Kathy; children, Colleen M. (Roger) Bottens and Thomas C. (Margaret) Brown; grandchildren: Caitlin (George) Lynch, Zac Bottens, Tyler Bottens, Lauren Brown and Alexa Woolcock; great grandchildren, Aaron and Colin Lynch and a host of friends, and comrades-in-arms who were touched by his kindness and generosity.

Charlie was preceded in death by his parents and one grandson, Dillon Bottens in infancy.

In honoring Charlie's wishes, 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 IL Route 113, in Coal City on June 21, 2024, from 9 a.m. until time of VFW Chapel Service and Final Salute at 10:45 a.m. A private family graveside service with full military honors will follow in Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Charlie's memory to St. Juvin Post 1336, P.O. Box 191, Coal City, IL 60416.

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

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

Monique Speer

ODELL—Monique Speer, 84, of Odell and formerly of Blue Grass, IA, passed away unexpectedly on June 12, 2024 at Carle BroMenn Medical Center in Normal, IL.

Born May 26, 1940 in Baie-des-Sables, Quebec, Canada, Monique was one of nine born to Antoine and Lucienne (Ouellet) Thibeault. Raised and educated in La Matanie Regional County south of the St. Lawrence River it is here that Monique spent her formative years and completed her primary and secondary education.

Monique's journey brought her to the United States, where she met the love of her life, Edward James Speer III in Davenport, IA. They were joined in matrimony on June 29, 1968. The couple first made their home in Davenport, later moving to Blue Grass, IA, and eventually settling in Odell, following Ed's job transfer.

In 2000, Monique proudly gained her United States citizenship, earning dual citizenship with the U.S. and Canada. She embraced her new country with pride while cherishing her Canadian roots. In addition to being dedicated to the home and finding joy in working in her yard, Monique will most be remembered as a devoted wife.

Survivors include her loving husband, Edward; siblings: Carmelle (Jean-Marie) Livisque, Rolande (Yvon) Ouellet, Nicole Poirier, Jean-Guy Thibeault, Denis (Ramone) Thibeault and Lucien Thibeault; one sister-in-law, Margaret (Dana) Curtin



and many nieces and nephews. Monique was preceded in death by her parents and two siblings: Jeanine Thibeault and Gaston Thibeault. Family and friends are invited to join together on Monday, June 24, 2024 at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 E. Kahler Rd. in Wilmington from 10:30 a.m. until time of funeral service at 11:30 a.m. Burial will follow in Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood at 1 p.m. Those wishing to attend the services virtually are welcome to join the live stream available through Monique's memorial page beginning at 11:30 a.m. It will also be available on-demand following the service. Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Monique's memory to a charity of the donor's choosing. A sincere thank you is extended to Dr. Sriratana and all the caring professionals at Mid-Illinois Hematology and Oncology Associates for their care given to Monique in the past months. Family and friends are encouraged to log onto www.BaskervilleFuneral.com to sign the guest book, upload photographs and share Monique's memorial page online through social media. Funeral services and arrangements have been made under the direction and care of Reeves & Baskerville Funeral Homes.

Mikey McKendrick

JOLIET—Mikey McKendrick, 33 of Joliet, died Tuesday, June 11, 2024, at Silver Cross Hospital in New Lenox.

Born on Sept. 6, 1990, in Downers Grove, IL, Mikey is the son of Kenneth McKendrick and Joy Heinz. He was raised and educated in Wilmington; graduated from Wilmington High School with the class of 2009, and made his home in Joliet.

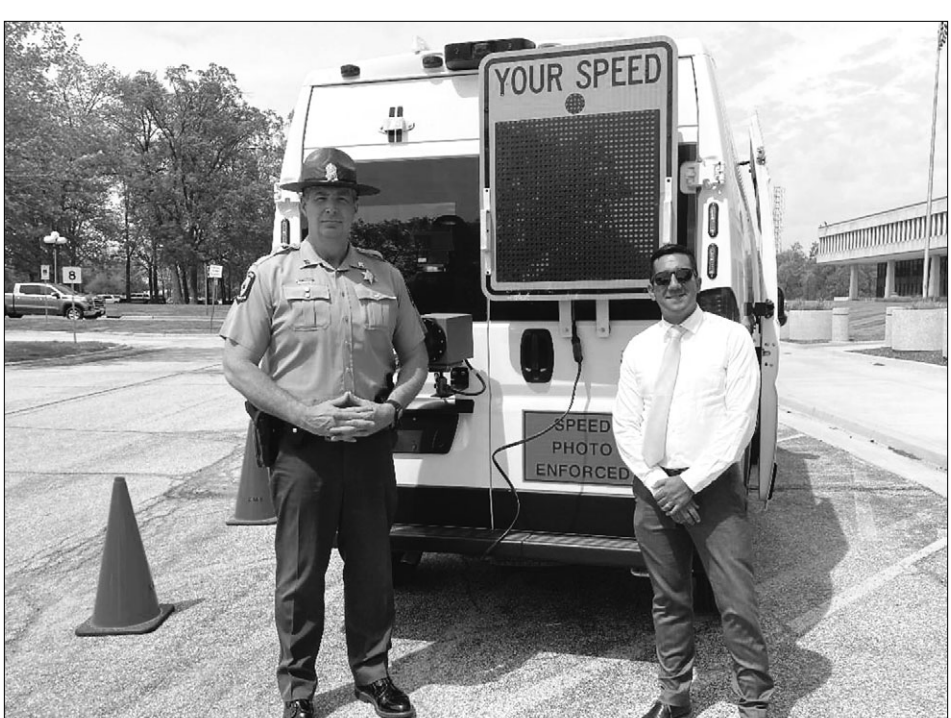
Mikey loved spending his free time with his fishing pole in hand, growing to learn the best fishing spots in Minnesota, where he would go every year on his annual fishing trips. He also had quite an artistic side, particularly with drawing and sketches. He was simply the best, possessing a gentle demeanor coupled with a heart of immense compassion. Mikey will be remembered as a loving father, son, brother, and friend to all.

Survivors include his parents: Kenneth (Cheryl) McKendrick of Wilmington and Joy Heinz of Joliet; his two children: Jayden and Ellie; nine brothers and sisters: Melissa (George) Hitzelburger, Beth (David) Dotson, Diana McKendrick



(fiancé: Joe Tilton), Kristin McKendrick, Alanna (Austin) Kletcke, Jessica Griffey, Staci Griffey, T.J. Griffey, and Joshua Griffey; as well as numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews. Mikey was preceded in death by his maternal grandparents: Leonard (Cora) Heinz; and paternal grandparents: Earl (Ruby) Miller. Cremation rites have been accord-

ed. The family will receive friends for a memorial visitation at Baskerville Funeral Home, 700 East Kahler Road, in Wilmington on Wednesday, June 19, 2024, from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. A memorial service will follow on Thursday, June 20, 2024, in the funeral home at 11:00 a.m. Family and friends are encouraged to log onto www.BaskervilleFuneral.com to sign the guest book, upload photographs and share Mikey's memorial page online through social media. Cremation and memorial services have been made under the direction and care of Reeves & Baskerville Funeral Homes and Crematory in Wilmington.



ILLINOIS STATE POLICE Capt. Bill Langheim and Highway Safety Programs Unit Chief Juan Pava stand in front of one of the five new photo enforcement vans that will be used in work zones to ticket speeders.

Good reason to slow down in work zones

IDOT is unveiling five new photo enforcement vans that will be used throughout Illinois work zones starting this construction season, a continuation of a program that traces back 20 years ago.

The vehicles are the result of a new contract with Modaxo, which allows for as-needed equipment updates and a “train the trainer” program that will put operations firmly in the hands of IDOT and Illinois State Police.

Bearing clear markings designating them as speed photo enforcement vehicles, the vans feature updated technology and a large sign that displays the speed of approaching vehicles. Highway Safety Programs Unit Chief Juan Pava said the improved technological features are a boon to the program.

“We are going to have lidar-based speed detection, which is a huge improvement over our previous contract that had radar speed detection,” Pava said. “We have new cameras with much higher resolution, as well as new safety features within the

units to keep the troopers who are deploying them safe.

“We’re hoping that with this new technology, we’ll be able to get better metrics to truly understand the speed issues in work zones and increase the effectiveness of the speed photo enforcement program.”

The vehicles will be used exclusively in work zones while workers are present, as mandated by the 2004 passage of the Automated Traffic Control Systems in Highway Construction or Maintenance Zones Act.

IDOT determines where the vans should be deployed, with ISP troopers staffing them and handling any necessary ticketing.

“Speeding is one of the main causes of crashes in work zones,” said Pava. “The vans give drivers ample warning that they may be going over the speed limit and the incentive to slow down before a speeding event is captured.”

The goal is to save lives.

“This is not a revenue

generating program. The primary benefit is speed reduction and behavior change,” said Work Zone Safety Engineer Nathan Peck. “That’s why we use a big white van. We want it to be visible. It’s all about deterrence, presence and visibility.”

According to Pava, Illinois boasts one of the longest-standing speed photo enforcement programs in the nation.

“The original speed photo enforcement program was based on a study we did with the University of Illinois back in 2004, which demonstrated that the speed photo enforcement units decreased speed in work zones on average by about 8 mph, which brings average speeds closer to the posted work zone speed limits,” Pava said.

ISP Capt. Bill Langheim said that he’s seen the program work firsthand.

“When drivers see these vehicles, it slows down traffic,” Langheim said. “These are effective tools.”

Inside Out 2 movie an opportunity for parents to talk about kids’ emotions

Anxiety, envy, nostalgia, embarrassment and...ennui?

Four of the new emotions in the newly released Disney/Pixar movie Inside Out 2 – the latest peek inside the mind of now-teenage girl Riley – are sure to ring a bell.

But what’s ennui?

A quick Google search will tell you it’s just another word for boredom. But there’s more to it than that, says Kyle Boerke, PsyD, a clinical child psychologist and the director of behavioral health outpatient services for OSF HealthCare.

And you can also count Dr. Boerke as a fan of the Inside Out franchise. He says the first movie and the trailer for the second get a lot right when it comes to kids’ emotions and how parents can help.

Ennui demystified

Dr. Boerke says ennui (pronounced awn-WEE) describes an angst or listlessness-type boredom that develops in the pre-teenage or teenage years. It can show itself in adulthood, too, but the younger years are the prime time.

“As we learn to regulate our emotions better, you’re going to see less of that emotion overtly,” Dr. Boerke says. “It will still be there, but we’re learning to express it better.”

Children experiencing ennui may mope around the house or not be interested in things they used to, like playing with Legos.

Parents can help

Should we learn about

emotions from Hollywood? Common sense says to take everything on our screens with a grain of salt and to talk to a health care provider for trusted advice. But Dr. Boerke says parents can use the Inside Out movies to teach kids about healthy behaviors.

“The biggest thing we can do with children from a young age is understanding and naming emotions,” Dr. Boerke says. “If I can get a two, three or four-year-old naming emotions, I have succeeded. And the first Inside Out movie did a fantastic job with that.”

Some things to consider when chatting before, during or after these movies:

- There are no “bad” emotions, Dr. Boerke says. “If something sad happens, it’s okay to be sad. If something frustrating happens, it’s okay to feel anger,” he says.

- “While there are no bad emotions, I can express an emotion in a bad way,” he adds. “I can express happiness in a bad way by overindulging in something. Or sometimes happiness comes out as anger. I’m so excited and happy that I go and tackle my friend to the ground.”

- Dr. Boerke says ennui, like other emotions, has a good middle ground. Children shouldn’t be overstimulated or completely bored. But somewhere in the middle lies a silver lining: a spark of creativity. A child may, out of boredom, go outside and kick a soccer ball around, sparking curiosity in a new hobby.

Or they may call a classmate, leading to a new friendship. Dr. Boerke says sometimes it takes a mental health professional to light the spark.

“Often, I don’t even say things that are different than what parents say. But I’m not mom or dad. I’m not the caregiver,” Dr. Boerke remarks. “It’s what we call behavioral activation. Let’s come up with things to do to help you become less bored.”

- Don’t bottle up emotions. Inside Out 2 even addresses this in a tongue-in-cheek way, showing Riley’s emotions from the first movie – joy, sadness, anger, fear and disgust – in a literal bottle.

“If they do it as well as I think they will, this will be a great conversation starter,” Dr. Boerke says.

“An emotion, if left to its own devices, is going to come up. You’re going to express it, hopefully appropriately. And it’s going to go back down again,” he adds. “However, if we bottle that emotion up, it’s going to fester and rise until it can’t be controlled. Then it comes out in an inappropriate way.”

For example, a child may continually bottle up frustration over being asked to clean their room until they trash the room. Long term, behaviors like this can impact a litany of things: the child’s mental health, physical health, performance in school and relationship with peers. Plus, it strains the rest of the family.

-- Mike B., Austin, TX

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REAL ESTATE

SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE OF 1222 PARK DR, WILMINGTON, IL 60481 (Single Family). On the 11th day of July, 2024 to be held at 12:00 noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 904, Joliet, IL 60432, under Case Title: **LAKEVIEW LOAN SERVICING, LLC** Plaintiff V. **JACQUELINE HAMBRICK; O'DEKIRK, ALLRED AND ASSOCIATES, LLC, UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS** Defendant. Case No. **22 FC 0293** in the Circuit Court of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, Will County, Illinois. Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County. In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the

purchaser of the unit, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and legal fees required by sub-divisions (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: 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. Published in the Free Press Newspapers on Wed., June 19, 26 & July 3, 2024.

REAL ESTATE

SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE OF 1803 Roberts Street, WILMINGTON, IL 60481 (single family). On the 11th day of July, 2024 to be held at 12:00 noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 904, Joliet, IL 60432, under Case Title: **Planet Home Lending LLC** Plaintiff V. **Cody England; United States of America; Unknown Owners and Non Record Claimants** Defendant. Case No. **23 FC 0783** in the Circuit Court of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, Will County, Illinois. Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County. In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the purchaser of the unit, other than a mortgagee,

shall pay the assessments and legal fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 and the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Illinois Condominium Property Act. Pursuant to Local Court Rule 11.03 (J) if there is a surplus following application of the proceeds of sale, then the plaintiff shall send written notice pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/15-1512(d) to all parties to the proceeding advising them of the amount of the surplus and that the surplus will be held until a party obtains a court order for its distribution or, in the absence of an order, until the surplus is forfeited to the State. For Information Please Contact: **INTERCOUNTY JUDICIAL SALES CORPORATION** 120 W. MADISON STREET SUITE 718 CHICAGO, IL 60602 P: 312 444-1122 X102 F: 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. Published in the Free Press Newspapers on Wed., June 19, 26 & July 3, 2024.

REAL ESTATE

SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE OF 725 East Rose Lane, Godley, IL 60407 (The property is a single family. The property has a two car garage. The garage is attached. The exterior is vinyl siding. The color is yellow. The gas is on. The water is on. The property does not have a fence. The vacancy is unknown for this residency.). On the 27th day of June, 2024 to be held at 12:00 noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 904, Joliet, IL 60432, under Case Title: **FLAGSTAR BANK, N.A.** Plaintiff V. **Michael J Toothman** Defendant. Case No. **23 FC 0246** in the Circuit Court of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, Will County, Illinois. Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County. In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS

605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the purchaser of the unit, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and legal fees required by sub-divisions (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: **MCCALLA RAYMER LEBERT PIERCE** 1 N. Dearborn Suite 1300 Chicago, Illinois 60602 P: 312-346-9088 F: 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. Published in the Free Press Newspapers on Wed., June 5, 12 & 19, 2024.

REAL ESTATE

SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE OF 903 ARROWHEAD DR, ELWOOD, IL 60421 (Single Family). On the 11th day of July, 2024 to be held at 12:00 noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 904, Joliet, IL 60432, under Case Title: **LAKEVIEW LOAN SERVICING, LLC** Plaintiff V. **LACILLIA T. JONES AKA LACILLIA T. ALEXANDER; JEROME C. ALEXANDER; MEADOWBROOK SUBDIVISION COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION; VILLAGE OF ELWOOD; UNKNOWN OWNERS AND NON-RECORD CLAIMANTS;** Defendant. Case No. **22 FC 1070** in the Circuit Court of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, Will County, Illinois. Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County. In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS

605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the purchaser of the unit, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and legal fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 and the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Illinois Condominium Property Act. Pursuant to Local Court Rule 11.03 (J) if there is a surplus following application of the proceeds of sale, then the plaintiff shall send written notice pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/15-1512(d) to all parties to the proceeding advising them of the amount of the surplus and that the surplus will be held until a party obtains a court order for its distribution or, in the absence of an order, until the surplus is forfeited to the State. For Information Please Contact: **ANSELMO LINDBERG OLIVER LLC.** 1771 W. Diehl Rd. Suite 120 NAPERVILLE, IL 60563 P: 630-453-6960 F: 630-428-4620 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. Published in the Free Press Newspapers on Wed., June 19, 26 & July 3, 2024.

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WILDCAT SPORTS

Summer camp a hit with upcoming Lady 'Cats

The Wilmington High School softball camp wrapped up last week at the varsity softball field with over 30 girls in attendance over two days.

The June 10 - 11 camp focused on improving fundamentals with fielding ground balls, working on a dropstep in the outfield and catching fly balls as well as executing routine outs when the ball is in play and how to run the bases.

Camp ended with a friendly sprinting competition where the girls raced each other from home plate to the fence.

It was a great two days filled with fun, camaraderie and lots of energy! A big thank you to the varsity softball players who came out to help run camp: Aly Allgood, Ashlyn Warriner, Addison Billingsley, Lexi Strohm, Sami Liaromatis and Taryn Gilbert.



SUMMER SOFTBALL CAMP— The WHS softball program put on their summer camp last week with these participants. Front row: Kate Dillon, Izzy Reich, Etti Howard, Anslee Delehanty, Eva Skole, Kelbie Niehls, Brynn Dillon, Kaitlyn Miller and Morgan Robinson. Middle Row: Elly Grygiel, Teagan Tenn, Maeve Bryant, Sutton Proctor, KJ Skole, Emily Georgeff, Joei Florian, Lucy Rozak, Aislynn Carrico, Katelyn McDevitt, Madison Smith and Kylie Burgess. Back Row: Taryn Gilbert, Aly Allgood, Izzy Edgeworth, Chesnee Geiss, Natalie Strohm, Aby Winker, Carsyn Hansen, Fiona Medlin, Jayden Vance, Ashlyn Warriner and Addison Billingsley.

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Four Wildcats win All State honors

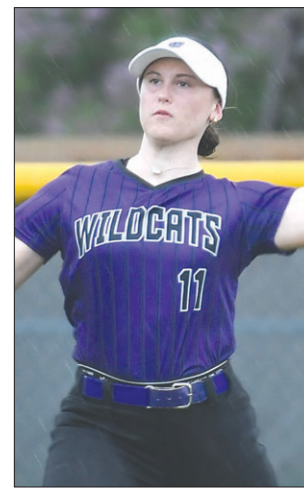


Photo by Elaine Fisher-Ohlund
FIRST TEAM ALL STATE honors go to Wilmington sophomore Molly Southall who was chosen by the Illinois Softball Coaches Association. Southall led Wilmington during a 17-6 season, second place in the conference, with a .667 batting average that included 12 home runs and six triples. Southall also led the team with 42 hits and 49 RBIs.



Photo by Elaine Fisher-Ohlund
WHS JUNIOR Lucas Rink was selected to the 2024 Illinois High School Baseball Coaches Association 2A All State Team. Rink had a total of 98 strikeouts over 62 innings, with only seven walks and 45 hits to end up with a 9-2 record. His ERA heading into the state finals was an impressive .50



Photo by Elaine Fisher-Ohlund
WILMINGTON JUNIOR Kyle Farrell was also selected to the 2024 IHSBCA 2A All State team. Farrell had a total of 97 strikeouts over 65 innings to remain undefeated as a starter with a 10-0 record. He gave just 30 hits and 25 walks to end up with a 1.21 ERA.



Photo by Elaine Fisher-Ohlund
WILMINGTON SOPHOMORE Taylor Stefancic was named to the Illinois Softball Coaches Association's 3rd team All State. Stefancic led the Lady Wildcats in stolen bases with nine, had 35 hits, scored 35 runs and had a batting average of .486. Her on base percentage was and impressive .606 as she aided her team to a 17-6 season.

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