

# Forest Preserve buys 241-acre Hidden Lakes

STAFF REPORT

The Forest Preserve District of Will County has completed its first major land acquisition under its 2025-2030 Capital Improvement Program, purchasing a Custer Township property long known as the Savage Farm.

The 241-acre purchase, located near Coal City Road and Route 53, was finalized June 13 bringing the District's total land holdings to 23,449 acres. The acquisition is near two state-owned preserves, Hitts Siding Prairie Nature Preserve and Wilmington Shrub Prairie, and three Forest Preserve properties.

The property is part of a broader ecological region known for its rare sandy soils and rare plant and animal communities.

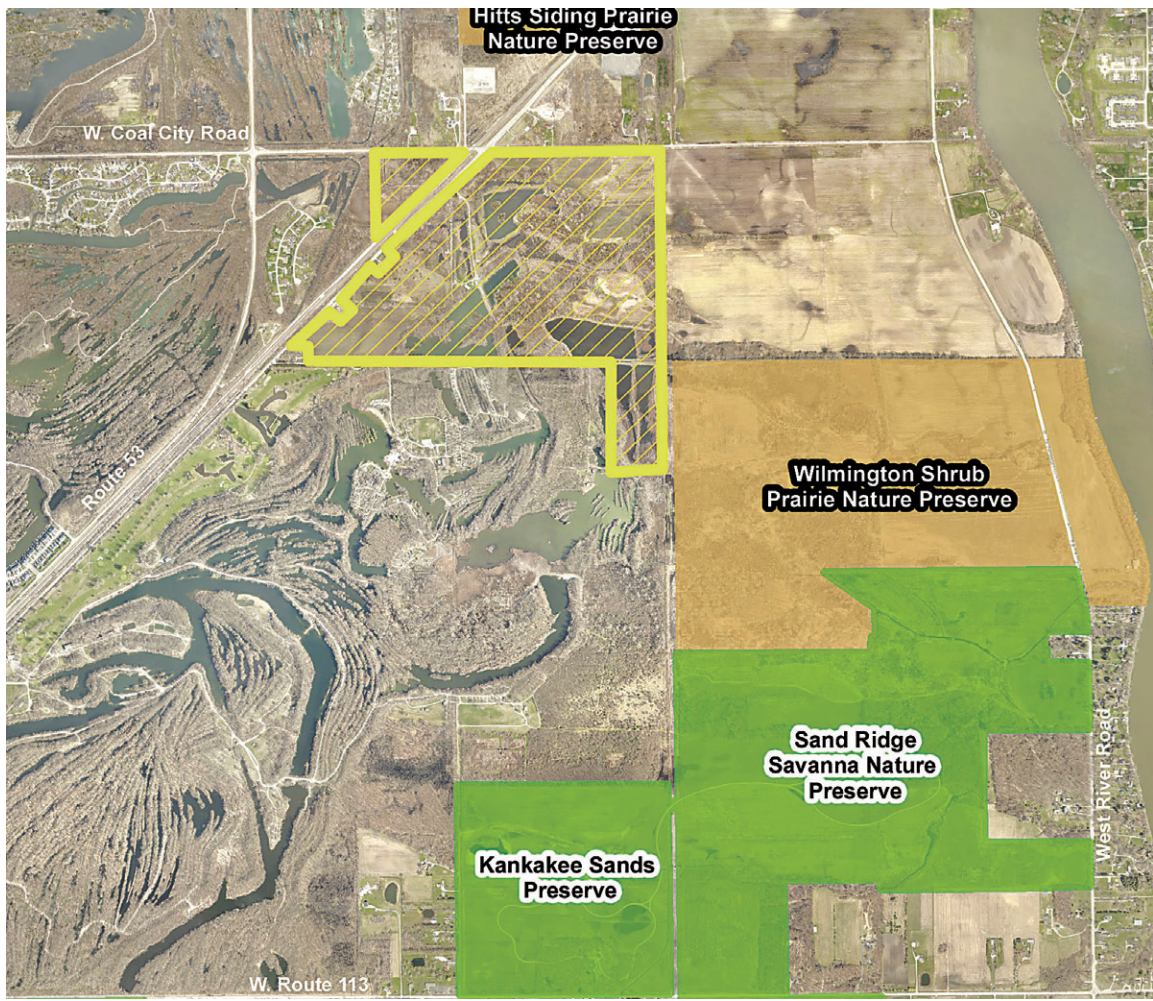
"This addition helps protect the rare sand communities of the Braidwood Dunes, Sand Ridge Savanna and Kankakee Sands Preserve complex and creates future possibilities for public fishing and recreation in Wilmington," said Cori Crawford, the Forest Preserve's real estate and data supervisor. "It's a true win for both conservation and the community."

The \$2.8 million acquisition was funded through a \$50 million general obligation bond issue approved by the Forest Preserve Board of Commissioners in 2024. Of that total, \$25 million is dedicated to land preservation, \$12 million to regional and local trail connections and new access areas, and \$13 million to habitat restoration.

The land closes a key gap between local, state and federal open space holdings, contributing to a corridor of more than 8,200 acres of ecologically significant habitat that includes private hunting and fishing clubs, the Des Plaines River Conservation Area, Goose Lake Prairie Nature Preserve in nearby Grundy County and Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie.

The property known as Hidden Lakes was leased by George Savage for fishing and duck hunting. In 2022, representatives from

SEE FOREST PRESERVE PAGE 2



THIS MAP SHOWS the location of the Forest Preserve District of Will County's recently acquired parcel of land in Custer Township located at the southeast corner of Highway 53 and Coal City Road. The 241-acre acquisition of the former Savage property is part of the District's 2025-2030 Capital Improvement Program.



COMING THIS FALL—The City of Wilmington is planning a walk path the length of the South Island park. The photo shows a red line where the path will be made from the bridge at the south tip, winding east of the youth league ball diamonds, north to a new playground and then the Gemini Giant, crossing Bridge Street ending at the North Island concession stand.

# Council approves \$449,918 park upgrades

**BY ROSE PANIERI**  
STAFF WRITER

Wilmington City Council approved a \$449,918 quote from Team REIL, Inc., of Union, IL for new playground equipment that will be installed at the South Island Park.

The cost includes removal of existing equipment.

The playground will include a rubberized surface, ground-entry wheel-chair accessible merry-go-round, zip lines, and swings for a variety of ages and abilities.

Wilmington Mayor Ben Dietz said a multi-use path will be paved, connecting the new playground and the Gemini Giant to what will be a new

entrance into the south park. The path will align with the present entrance to the North Island Park.

"Both of these projects went through multiple revisions based on feedback received from the community," Dietz said. "Thank you to those who provided your feedback, especially the kids, and our selection committee."

The playground is expected to be completed this fall.

The council also approved a rendering from Chamlin Engineering to extend the multi-use path the length of the South Island, winding east of the WBSA ballfields to the south island bridge over the mill race.

In other action during

the June 24 meeting, the council voted down a second request for a Class B liquor license by Kamlesh Patel of Mobil Gas for Less station. A Class B liquor license would allow Patel to sell hard liquor at the station.

In May 2024, Patel and Luke Kotara, owner of Berkot's Foods, both petitioned the council for an upgraded liquor license. Both were denied.

"We were trying to explain to them [the city council] that we don't want to make a big liquor store," Patel said at that time. "Customers who walk to our store have requested we carry hard liquor."

Patel has made several upgrades since the beginning of the year at the sta-

tion, including the reopening of a Subway and expanded public restrooms.

**Appropriation**

The council approved a revised appropriation ordinance for fiscal year 2024 to 2025.

The original General Corporate budget was amended from \$9,292,918 to \$9,760,918, and the Building Deposit Holding Account Fund was amended from \$174,750 to \$375,750. Total appropriations were amended from \$87,924,243 to \$88,593,243.

**Actuarial services**

The Council approved actuarial services provided by Lauterbach and Amen, LLP, Certified Public Accounting firm in Naperville.

The services included preparation of GASB (Governmental Accounting Standards Board) 74/75 actuarial valuation for April 30, 2025 to April 30, 2028 will total \$10,170.

**Community Concerns**

A donation of \$1,000 to Will County Center for Community Concerns (WCCCC) was approved.

In 2024, the agency provided Wilmington residents with \$146,645.85 in direct client assistance, utilizing 223 services. A total of 171 residents received utility assistance through LIHEAP for a total of \$110,401 as part of the total.

WCCCC provides housing counseling, utility support, home repair and weatherization, financial literacy education, tax

preparation assistance, homeless services and more. All services are provided at no cost to the recipient.

**Tree service costs**

The city approved payment of \$13,500 for the removal of 15 trees and 34 stumps on the North Island and South Island parks. The contract with Homer Tree Care, Inc. of Lockport, will take down those trees that are dead or damaged. Homer started removing trees Wednesday morning.

**Asset Essentials**

Brightly Solutions Asset Essentials is uThe

SEE CITY COUNCIL PAGE 2





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# Forest Preserve,

continued from page 1

ED3N, Inc. approached the Braidwood City Council interested in buying the land and developing it into a cannabis resort.

Their presentation to Braidwood included a concept plan for the resort which would include overnight accommodations, retail, restaurants, spas, parking, and outdoor activities, including the use of legalized cannabis while on site, designed to bring people in for a several day stay.

Obviously, that plan, which sought annexation into Braidwood, never evolved.

The Forest Preserve says the property still has strong recreational potential, with possible uses including hiking, fishing, kayaking and picnicking, as well as future access to equestrian and group camping.

Planning will begin soon, with a land use plan and conceptual master plan expected by 2030.

"With these foundational plans in place, the Forest Preserve will be well-positioned to pursue external funding opportunities - such as the Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development program or other grant sources - to support the phased development of the preserve," said Colleen Novander, the Forest Preserve's director of planning and land preservation for the Forest Preserve.

The District also recently acquired a 1.18-acre parcel for \$23,353 at Wolf Road and Route 30 in Mokena, expanding Hickory Creek Preserve.

The addition protects and buffers wooded floodplain and wetland habitat along a major tributary of Hickory Creek.

Because previous bond debt was paid off before the current Capital Improvement Program was launched, the Forest Preserve property tax rate will decrease about 27% this year, reducing the amount Will County residents pay for Forest Preserve services.



ARTIST'S RENDITION OF the playground that will be constructed in South Island Park.

# City Council,

continued from page 1

council renewed a three year contract with Brightly Solutions Asset Essentials for \$4,150.34 per year for three years, for a grand total of \$12,451.02. Last year, 667 work orders were created and completed by code enforcement and public works personnel using this system.

- A total of \$15,466.80 was approved to Underground Pipe and Valve, Co. of Shorewood for services related to the downtown infrastructure project.
- The council approved a quote from Utility Pipe Sales, Inc. of Evansville, IN, for \$34,454 for the city's water meter reading system.

## Annexation approved

The council approved a request by Nathan Redwitz, owner of Comfort and Sound Innovations, Inc., to annex property located at 32295 Route 53 (PIN no. 03-17-35-103-010-0000) into the corporate limits of the city of Wilmington. He was also seeking a map amendment to be zoned at B-3 General Commercial district with a conditional use and variances to allow a storage container one side of the property.

"I'm an insulation contractor, and I also run the holiday lighting outfit," Redwitz said. "And with the growth of both businesses, I am out of warehouse space."

In other business, the council:

- Approved contracts for the June 27 "Let Freedom Rock" celebration for Rodney Emling Portable Stage (\$1,300) and Prisci Pixy Face Painting and Art (\$1,250)
- Approved Catfish Days, July 24-27 contracts and agreements with Roy Gregorich (\$650).

## Attorney Meents files Lindmark 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 ALGOT CLARENCE LINDMARK,  
Deceased;  
No. 2025 PR 290

#### CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given of the death of **ALGOT CLARENCE LINDMARK**, Letters of Office as Independent Executor was issued on June 13, 2025, to Alan C. Lindmark, whose address is 206 Santos Avenue, 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 December 26, 2025, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a Claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

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

Alan C. Lindmark  
Independent Executor of the Estate  
of ALGOT CLARENCE LINDMARK,  
Deceased

Frank J. Meents  
25158 W. Eames Street, Unit A  
Channahon, Illinois 60410  
Telephone: (815) 534-9515  
Facsimile: (815) 534-9516  
Attorney Code: 06298859  
E-mail: [Frank@MeentsLaw.com](mailto:Frank@MeentsLaw.com)  
Published in the Free Press  
Advocate on Wednesday, June 25,  
July 2 and 9, 2025.

## Attorney Wysocki files Luciano 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 Patricia Ann Luciano,  
Deceased;  
No. 2025 PR 302

#### CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given of the death of **Patricia Ann Luciano**, Letters of Office as Independent Executor was issued on June 05, 2025, to Mark Luciano, whose address is 396 Dupahze Street, Naperville, IL 60565; whose attorney is Meents Law, P.C., 1861 Black Road, Joliet, Illinois 60435. Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the WILL County Courthouse, River Valley Justice Center, 3208 West McDonough Street, Joliet, IL 60435, or with the representative, or both, on or before December 20, 2025, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a Claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

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

Mark Luciano, Independent Executor of the Estate of Patricia Ann Luciano,  
Deceased

Marilyn L Wysocki  
Meents Law, P.C.  
1861 Black Road  
Joliet, Illinois 60435  
Telephone: 815-534-9515  
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E-mail: [MLWysocki@MeentsLaw.com](mailto:MLWysocki@MeentsLaw.com)  
Published in the Free Press  
Advocate, Wednesday, June 11, 18  
and 25, 2025.

# Council takes no action on solar farm annexation

BY ROSE PANIERI  
STAFF WRITER

Representatives from two solar energy corporations planning to build solar projects on land that will be annexed into the city, gave a presentation to the Wilmington City Council on June 17.

Cypress Creek Renewables and Emeren plan to lease approximately 100 acres of land along Illinois 53 and Coal City Road from Jim and Laurie Fleishman to construct a solar energy plant.

At this time, the Fleishmans are requesting annexation of their farmland into the city of Wilmington. If annexation is achieved, the corporations plan to request a special use permit from the Will County Board to establish solar energy plants.

On June 5, the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended annexation of the farmland to be leased to the corporations with two conditions 1. No battery storage will be permitted on the property, and 2. A solid fence be installed on property lines adjacent to residential properties.

## No union labor

If the projects are eventually approved, the corporations plan not to use union labor.

Jay Plese, who owns land across from the Fleishman farm along West River Road, and a couple of alderpersons didn't approve.

"I don't like the fact that it's a non-union job," Plese said. "I've been part of this blue-collar union community that supported our schools and everything else in my lifetime."

Another point of contention—or at least surprise—was the fact that the solar plants will be zoned agricultural, and taxed accordingly, rather than being zoned industrial at a significantly higher tax rate.

Katie Dean-Schlottman, a member of the Will County Board, the body of government ultimately responsible for approving the solar plant, chimed in on zoning.

"They are usually zoned agricultural which I think is crazy," Schlottman said. "It's not agricultural at all."

The tract of land in questioned consists of approximately 152 acres, and is owned by James and Laurie Fleishman of Verona. For the 152 acre parcel (PIN no. 03-17-35-300-002-0000), annual taxes are \$4,353 per year, and if the annexation is approved, the property will continue to be zoned agricultural.

Another 20-acre tract of land intended as part of the solar plant is already zoned within the boundaries of the city of Wilmington.

Previously, Cypress Creek had applied to Will County for a special use permit for a solar facility on

approximately 42.3 acres of the Fleishman property. However, in August 2022, the request was withdrawn.

## Cypress Creek Renewables

Cypress Creek Renewables approached the city council first. Headquartered in Santa Monica, CA and owned by EQT Infrastructure of Pittsburgh, PA. Cypress Creek will be conducting business under Fleishman Solar, LLC.

Cypress Creek project manager Ryan Anderson spoke of the safety of solar plants, stating the glass panels are designed to prevent hail and storm damage, and that even if the panels broke, engineers would be made aware of the damage within minutes.

A more significant risk of contamination may occur when spent solar panels are not property recycled. According to the EPA, the need to recycle them would prevent the possibility of cadmium and lead from seeping into soil and groundwater.

Anderson said that Wilmington will benefit from taxes generated.

"The tax impact over the life, and we've also negotiated a community impact payment... which the total payment project is \$60,000 and split proportionately based on size," Anderson said. "So, our responsibility for that is \$15,000."

There was discussion of what would happen if Cypress Creek went out of business or abandoned the project. Alderman Marty Orr asked whether the city would be left holding the bag.

Anderson explained that bonds will be filed with Will County for the decommission of the solar plant if the corporations declare bankruptcy.

Anderson said that appropriate fencing will be erected and landscaping planted to obscure the view of the solar panels.

A low humming noise, reaching up to 65 decibels, is produced when electricity is generated. The level of sound is roughly as loud as a vacuum cleaner, noticeable, but not harmful to hearing, according to Yale Environmental Health and Safety.

"Solar farms in general are extremely passive neighbors," Anderson said. "They don't need any kind of actual services."

Brothers Jack and Jay Plese reside on property abutting the proposed solar plants. The Plese brothers have agreed to disagree about solar energy.

Jack Plese said he's in favor of having a solar energy plant as a neighbor. He believes solar energy is the way of the future.

"It takes 377 gallons of water per person to generate electricity," he said. "Aquifers are going dry."

Jay Plese, on the other hand, is opposed to the solar plants. In addition to questioning the zoning and

why union labor isn't being utilized to build the plants, Plese expressed concern about road damage.

"I've been a farmer all my life, and an educator," he said. "I do not like solar fields. You're going to be using Coal City Road, which is a partnership road. I want to know what's going to happen with that road."

Anderson replied that upon completion of construction, Coal City Road would be repaired if damaged during construction of the solar plants.

"We will bring the road back to the same or better condition," Anderson said.

Jim Fleishman, owner of the parcel of land that will be divided into two distinct solar plants, also spoke.

"The farm has been in my family since the 1950s," he said. "We're talking about different energy productions."

Fleishman pointed out that most corn grown is used to produce ethanol, which he described as an unstable product. He also stated that he believes the use of Round-Up and other herbicides are worse for the environment than the production of solar energy.

## Emeren

Tessa Goodman, a project developer with the Emeren Group spoke about her corporation's role in developing the larger of the two solar plants.

Emeren operated as Zhejiang Yuhui in 2005. Julia Xiu is the interim CEO. Formerly known as ReneSola, the corporation's name was rebranded to Emeren Group Ltd., and is headquartered in Shanghai, China, with subsidiaries in Asia, Europe, and the United States. The corporations U.S. headquarters is located in Norwalk, CT.

Emeren will be conducting business under Wilmington Solar, LLC for this project.

With many of the general questions answered by representatives of Cypress Creek, presentation required less time.

Essentially, Emeren will be responsible for a much larger scale solar plant of more than 100 acres.

Goodman said that host community payments and property taxes over the 40-year life of the project will total \$6,097,769 or \$152,500 per year.

Ultimately, the annexation requests were tabled as the petitioners did not give official legal notice of the project to Custer Township.

The annexation request will be revisited at the city council meeting on Tuesday, July 1 at 7 p.m. in the council chambers, at Wilmington City Hall, 1165 S. Water St.

## District 209-U seeking bids for Building Trades work

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice is hereby given that the Wilmington Community Unit School District 209U, Will County, Wilmington, Illinois, will receive bids for excavating and concrete work, labor and material bids and/or proposals for the Wilmington High School Building Trades Project for the 2025-2026 school year. Bid specifications may be obtained upon request from the Office of the Superintendent, Wilmington Community Unit School District 209U, 209U Wildcat Court, Wilmington, Illinois—Phone (815) 926-1751. All bids are to be received in the Office of the Superintendent at the above address on or before 2:00 P.M. CDST, Tuesday, July 1, 2025, and will be opened publicly at that time. The Board of Education will make its decision on Monday, August 11, 2025, and reserves the right to waive any technicalities or irregularities and to reject any or all bids or any 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, June 18 and 25, 2025.



VERONICA JEANNE BUIS, of Wilmington, recently graduated from Iowa State University with a Bachelor's degree in dietetics. She will attend University of Minnesota to finish her Masters. Buis, the daughter of Bill & Theresa Buis, graduated from Wilmington High School with the Class of 2016.

## Attorney Anderson files Rusthoven 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 MARILYN L. RUSTHOVEN,  
Deceased;  
Case No. 2025 PR 300

#### CLAIM NOTICE

Notice is given to creditors of the death of Marilyn L. Rusthoven. Letters of Office were issued to Brian R. Rusthoven as Independent Executor, whose attorney of record is Edward T. Anderson of Chuck Bretz & Associates, P.C., 58 N. Chicago Street, 2nd Floor, Joliet, Illinois 60432. 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 December 11, 2025 or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Sec.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.

Edward T. Anderson  
For the Estate of Marilyn L.  
Rusthoven, Deceased

By: Edward T. Anderson  
Chuck Bretz & Associates, P.C.,  
58 N. Chicago Street 2nd Floor  
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Eric D. Fisher, publisher



# Spring cleaning? Not too late

It's officially Summer. That means that flowers, warm breezes and fun times outdoors are calling. But to my mother, it meant spring house cleaning, no matter that the calendar said summer. I could never figure out why people wanted to ruin a wonderful season with housework. So to spread the doom and gloom, today we clean up 19th century style.

For the larger part of the 1800's, most homes were heated with small stoves, usually located in the parlor, or any other part of the house where people gathered. These were put up in the fall along with the stove pipes, and usually vented out a side wall not a chimney.

They burned coal, although you could burn wood in them as well. The result of burning coal was evident all over the house, a thin layer of black soot covering everything.

In the spring the stove was removed along with the pipes, cleaned, oiled down and stored for the warm season. The hold in the wall was usually covered with a round decorative metal plate.

Heavy curtains that were hung in the fall to

keep out drafts were removed and replaced with lace ones to keep out the bugs while letting in the light. Since the winter curtains were not washable, they were hung on the line and beaten to get the dust and soot out.

Heavy carpets that were spread in the fall to keep the feet warm; then were removed as well. We would use a vacuum to clean them, but that modern device had not been invented yet. What was a housekeeper to do?

In the advice column of the Joliet Signal in September of 1873 we read, "By the middle of winter dusty carpets become a great annoyance to housekeepers, and the use of the broom raises a cloud of dust which settles in every crack and cranny."

"To remedy this, take a pint of bran, stir in enough water to merely dampen it, and then scatter it about the floor before sweeping. Besides laying the dust, the bran brightens the colors wonderfully, and it is sur-



Sandy Vasko

prising to see how fresh an old, faded carpet will look."

"Snow is good to prevent dusty sweeping, but the room must be cold, or it will melt and soil more than it cleanses."

My mother did this with throw rugs. During a very cold winter day, she would lay the rugs on top of the snow, throw more "dry" snow on them, and sweep them down. It really did brighten up the colors and seemed to clean them pretty well.

The article goes on to say, "Carpets should always have clean, dry straw evenly strewn under them; hay will not answer, as in damp weather it soon becomes musty. A think felted article is manufactured for that purpose, but though it saves the carpet from wearing upon the sometimes uneven floor, it does not answer the purpose of straw."

The next thing to do in the spring is dealing with the anticipated horde of creepy crawlies that appear in the house. And even in

the cleanest of houses, bed bugs could be a problem. The Signal article says that the solution to this problem was a solution, that is, a mixture of two pounds of alum dissolved in three quarts of water. Boil this until the alum is totally dissolved.

Then the paper recommended, "Apply while hot with a brush or use a syringe to force the liquid in the cracks of the wall and the bedstead. Scatter the powdered alum freely in all those places, and you will soon be rid of these insect nuisances which fill one with disgust."

Now for the painted walls, an 1862 Wilmington article recommends, "Use but little water at a time; keep it warm and clean by changing often. A flannel cloth is better than cotton. Be careful of soap, put but a little soap or skim milk in the water; add soap to the cloth when needed."

"A saucer of sifted ashes, used where paint is badly smoked or fly specks are thick, is better than soap; wipe last with clean damp towel, and don't spill a drop of water."

Now where did I put that saucer of sifted ashes I'd been saving?

# WHS posts second semester honor roll

**Superior Honors-GPA of 4.3 or higher**

**Grade 9:** Amy Chiappetta, Samantha Cutter, Haylee Fritz, Cruz Hincherrick, Abigail Kinnett, Finnegan Kruck, Chase Rabideau, Caroline Smith, Colin Strong, Kelly Tatera and Madisen Van Duyne.

**Grade 10:** Addison Billingsley, Ivy Bruner, Sally Clifford, Sierra Dannelley, Kaylyn Falcon, Morgan Farrell, Noah Kerwin, Gabrielle Kluk, Brysen Meents, James Neagle, Miley Swearengen and Keeley Walsh.

**Grade 11:** Makenna Adams, Peyton Buza, Alyssa Chiappetta, Austin Dietz, Caius Drown, Mark Gable, Dierks Geiss, Ella Hansen, Melia Hincherrick, James Iwen, Grace Jones, Alexander Lawson, Hunter Lewis, Logan O'Donnell, Rachel Smith, Molly Southall, Ava Spicer, Taylor Stefancic, Alexis Strohm, Aubrey Strong, Sydney Swann, Rianna Swearengen, Norah Unley and Logan Van Duyne.

**Grade 12:** Alaina Clark, Cole Drown, Kaylen Hansen, Shawn James, Maggie Lindsey, Anna Morgan, Spencer Parrish, Evan Surdey, Joseph Van Duyne and Waldon.

**High Honors-GPA of 3.9 to 4.299**

**Grade 9:** Lailah Beck, Cameron Corlett, Cecilia Corlett, Olivia Countryman, Cole Cutter, Sarai Duran, Holly Eighner, Karissa Fritz, Taryn Gilbert, Aubree Jandura, Abigail Kirchner, Hank Lindsey, Mickenzie Marquette, Logan Moore, Haylee Osipavicius, Layla Reno, Madisyn Rossow, Jadyn Sorensen, Madilyn Strong, Zander Van Duyne, McKenna Van Tilburg and John Weitendorf III.

**Grade 10:** Alyson Allgood, Bly Bianchetta, Ali Daniels, Ryan Donovan, Declan Moran, Samuel Nunez, Owen O'Donnell, Hunter Racer, Makenzie Rodriguez, Hailey Romano, Addison Schlieper, Ryan Schraeger, Larkyn Thompson, Addison Van Duyne and Gracie Wilkins.

**Grade 11:** Abigail Harding, Anthony Johnston, Nathan Kirchner, Edward Kurze, Koreen Ligid, Kailyn Motykowski, Audrey Powlick, Delaney Redwitz and Remington Thomas.

**Grade 12:** Hannah Basinger, Jamie Cahill, Nevaeh Cardoza, Sara Falcon, Kyle Farrell, Brycen Feil, Cheyenne Haga, Emily Hughes, Alivia Ingram, Kylee Knowles, Rylee Lehnert, Faith Mackenzie, Jonathan McGonagle, Hunter Osipavicius, Nicole Quigley, Lucas Plese Rink, Jessica Schnittger, Isabella Villadolid and Lilliana Zavala.

**Honors-GPA of 3.5 to 3.899**

**Grade 9:** Sophia Albright, Cole Boersma, Amara Bown, Bradford Christiansen, Jack Daniell, Katelynn Dedo, Jaxin Hicks, Hunter Kaitschuck, Isabelle Larsen, Annabelle Lawson, Ryne Liva, Noah Morris, Maecyn Rodriguez, Makayla Sanchez, Barry Switzer, Kylie Tafoya, Lyla Tolland, Ian Turcany, Ryan Van Duyne

**Grade 10:** Michael Baez, Gavin Biskupski, Veronica Boyer, Isabel Brajas, Fynton Bryant, Nina Egizio, Ian Fruge, Lucas Galik, Dakota Kutina, Samantha Liaromatis, Edward Martens, Aiden McCallister, Grace Mroz, Evan Ostheim, Nash Rink, Taylor Stickel, Calleigh Struthers, Travis Van Duyne and Ashlyn Warriner.

**Grade 11:** Alana Bown, Lyla Bruner, Nathaniel Cupples, Jack Cutter, Ryker Feil, Grace Gougis, Reagan Jandura, Evan Kuypers, Joseph Lewsader, Isabelle OHalloran, Zachary Ohlund, Aiden Poulos, Decklan Proffitt and Timothy Shelton.

**Grade 12:** Nolan Arbogash, Emma Boudreau, Kurtis Brassard, Alexandra Delangel, Ava Durflinger, Brooklyn Flores, David Freeman, Tanner Haddon, Alexander Hertz, Drew Jackson, Erica Maynard, Ryan Nelson and Skylar Rossow,

# WMS announces third trimester honor roll

Wilmington Middle School announced those students who made the honor roll for the third trimester. Students who achieved academic excellence include:

**Sixth grade honor roll**

Laura Allen, Krystoffer Armes, Matthew Aspel, Noah Beck, Kylie Burgess, Rocco Ceci, Avry Crisman, Declan Crutchfield, Brooke Dickover, Noah Frazier, Evan Gebhardt, James Georgeff, Keely Henke, Paityn Hester, Brextin Hicks, Rylee Hollingsworth, Gabriel Holm, Harper Hunley, Cruz Islas, Morgan Kelly, Chloe Kohl, Jacob Leonard, Lexy Locascio, Else Luchene, Jaxson Mack, Emma McMahon, Brianna Musick, Sophie Palmer, Blake Planinsek, Sutton Proctor, Sophia Romano, KJ Skole, Gawain Spangler, Mason Strohm, Liam Sukley, Carson Virgin, Willow Weathersby, Allie White and Emmaleigh

Workman.

**Sixth grade "A" honor roll**

Maeve Beasley, Maeve Bryant, Emma Corlett, Sawyer Cravens, Madelynn Cutter, Aiden Dumycz, Aria Jandeska, Grace Keane, Bentley Key, Jonathan Long, Caleb Machalek, Daniel McMicken, Ryder Meskill, Ian Mitchell, Aryanna Princko, Natasha Rivera, Lucy Rozak, Madison Smith, Katherine Staton, Ryan Sukley, Kennedy Tafoya, Nolan Van Duyne, Emily VanDuyne and Audrey Woodard.

**Seventh grade honor roll**

Caden Argenta, Lillian Bailey, Bristol Billingsley, Skylar Boersma, Amber Bradley, Christopher Brueggert, Hayley Carrillo, Savannah Dannelley, Andres Diaz, Dylan Dietz, Chloe Eisenhour, Jack Grygiel, Raelynn Grygiel, Aiden Gunty, Kate Guzman, Claire Hall, Lorelai Hand, Mason Hansen, Russell

Hawkins, Talon Hincherrick, Logan Iwen, Oliver Kruck, Zackary Latham, Johanna Laud Mauricio Mejia, Erik Morris, William Panepinto, Arieana Perry, Edie Petrovich, Aubrey Ptacek, Tyler Redwitz, Aiden Riggs, Cooper Rivera, Brysen Ruggiero, Carissa Sapp, Riley Shepherd, Markus Sogale, Hannah Stiehler, Tandon Sukle, Isaac Svartoien, Jackson Sweeney and Tucker Thompson.

**Seventh grade "A" honor roll**

Payden Backhoff, Landon Bennett-DeVault, Tessa Biskupski, Aiden Browning, Nathan Cutter, Holly Holm, Aiden Lawson, Brooklyn Long, Kaylee Lovig, Baylee McInerney, Layla Pape, Charlie Prendergast, Madison Rivera, Gage Sorensen, Jayce Strong and Jackson Van Duyne.

**Eighth grade honor roll**

Peyton Adams, Joseph

Banas, Aubrey Becker, Jaxsen Brockman, Aubri Christiansen, Evelyn Clark, Madilyn Coyne, Laynah Dempsey, Asher Dodd, Kevin Eibell, Aiden Florey, Aubrey Frazier, Adelle Freeman, William Friddle, Lillian Govero, Lesly Gutierrez, Tracy Jones, Kaelen Kelly, Stephen Kinnett, Tanner Kutina, Lucas Leja, Khyrell Ligid, Khloe Longest, Julian Lowery, Jack Medlin, Joshua Meyer, Johnathan Neese, Xyrille Olidar, Jayden Ortiz, Keagon Peterson, Jacob Powlick, Julia Prescott, Nicholas Pridemore, Jordan Rader, Lucas Reynolds, Axel Rivera, Kelsie Roeder, Bobby Smith, Kayedee Jo Sogale, Natalie Strohm, Elijah Strohmeyer, Emilie Strong, Taylor Tenn, Benjamin Tesar, Saraeah Thompson, Lailah Ullrich, Colby Wengelewski, Roslyn Wengelewski, Abygail Winker, Kailyn Winkle and Alex Xolo.

**Eighth grade "A" honor roll**

Ricardo Castro, Drew Daniels, Isabelle Edgeworth, Chesnee Geiss, Payton Govero, James Jimenez, Mariah Krand, Weston Lancaster, Cainen Machalek, Shawn Schnittger, Eli Spicer, Violet Turcany, Phoenix Uthe and Eli Van Duyne.



STUDENTS OF THE Trimester from SIS fifth grade are (from left) Alexandra Skaggs, Brady Van Duyne, Jude Corlett, Jayden Vance, Elly Grygiel, Julian Subach, Steven Hester and Patrick Flynn.



STEVENS INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL'S PE. stars from the fifth grade for the third trimester are (from left) Lilly Donnelly, Cheyenne Deane, Brayden Brockman, Gracelynn Johnson, Kinley Van Duyne, Liam Brueggert, Chanzse Jurkowski and Carson Alsbury.



SIS SECOND GRADER Evan Kinnett received an award for perfect attendance during the entire school year.

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## Who will benefit?

SHADOW LAKES—To annex or not to annex. The Wilmington planning and zoning committee approved annexation nearly 152 acres of land. Gone are 152 acres of farm land, and replaced by a project that is only 20% efficient. Check that out about the efficiently of solar panels. My question is, who is going to benefit from this green energy produced here in Illinois? Obediently yours, Margot Lane.

## Term limits

COAL CITY—Former Illinois House Speaker Mike Madigan was sentenced to 7 1/2 years in prison for corruption. He will also have to pay a \$2.5 million fine. U.S. District Court Judge John Robert Blakey ruled that Madigan lied repeatedly on the witness stand when he testified. He had every opportunity to set the standard for honest government. But instead...he fit right into the mold of yet another corrupt leader in Illinois. Too many Illinois governors, legislators and lobbyists have been convicted of corruption over the last few years. Sadly, none of these convictions has been enough to motivate Democrats in Springfield to pass real, meaningful ethics reform. For 36 years Madigan ran this state, profiting off the taxpayers. That's too long, renewing the argument that term limits are needed. The longer they're in, the more corrupt they get.

## Rotten stench

BRAIDWOOD—Will we miss the delicious fruits and vegetables unpicked in the abandoned fields across the country? Immigrants who spend the day bent down to the ground in the hot sun have been unjustly treated by Trump while Trump himself is a felon convicted on 34 counts and at the same time claims to care about law and order. You can't make this stuff up. But is Trump showing signs of yielding to the needs of undocumented immigrant farmers? If so, it's not because he cares about immigrants and it's not because it's the right thing to do. It would only be because Trump finally realizes his economy will implode if he doesn't. The 'mass deportation' slogan was adopted by Trump as a means to throw red meat to his base, and, along with the spoiled vegetables, it's producing a rotten stench. In other words, has Trump just caught on now to what most of us ordinary folks knew all along? Does Trump finally realize the value of immigrants? Can we hope that Trump might yield a little for the good of all as we have been crying for in the streets? Sadly, it's very unlikely because Trump is a hateful man and cares only for himself as we see every day.

## Keep the trees

WILMINGTON—Why is it the city of Wilmington is cutting healthy trees down in the park just so they can show off their giant. Stupid. They want it to be all open for the giant. Don't worry about the people having shade. Leave the trees alone until they are dead. They have growth in them, leave them. I don't know if it is the city administrator pushing this or the mayor. I doubt if it is the aldermen because the alderman don't have any courage to stand up and be heard. So people get out and voice your opinion on this. Quit wasting the taxpayers' money. At one time you had a guy down there cutting trees down for free. Now it's going to cost thousands of dollars to have trees cut down. Pretty stupid I think.

## Wake up Illinoisans

DIAMOND—It was stated by the Illinois Governor on the news that non-

U.S citizens will be given more legal rights in this state. He is causing more Americans to go further into poverty because the Governor and Illinois lawmakers want crime to flourish. Elected public servants in Illinois just raised taxes and gave themselves a raise. Taxes will rise to support people in the U.S.A. illegally. But to the elected public servants in Springfield there is profit and chaos but only in their pockets. The people in the state of Illinois better wake up before it's too late.

## The slush fund

WILMINGTON—The Democrats in Springfield included a \$100 million slush fund for Governor Pritzker to use "just in case" the federal government withholds funding from other programs. The governor will be empowered to declare a "state of emergency" and sweep away \$100 million from other state funds at his sole discretion. This is unprecedented spending power given to a Governor who has already shown his willingness to abuse executive authority. How can he be trusted when he took toilets out of his mansion to lower his taxes.

## It's common practice

BRAIDWOOD—It's hilarious to see how Braidwood residents absolutely lost their minds when the city of Braidwood asked residents to help conserve water and water their lawns, etc. on a schedule. But, less than two hours after Braidwood made their request, the village of Diamond also asked their residents to do the same thing and none of their residents went crazy. Obviously people do not even realize that summer watering restrictions or water conservation requests during the summer is an extremely common practice, regardless whether or not a water tower is out of service. It's just been a few years since Braidwood has actually asked residents to do something this simple. The village of Diamond does it every single year.

## Eaten alive

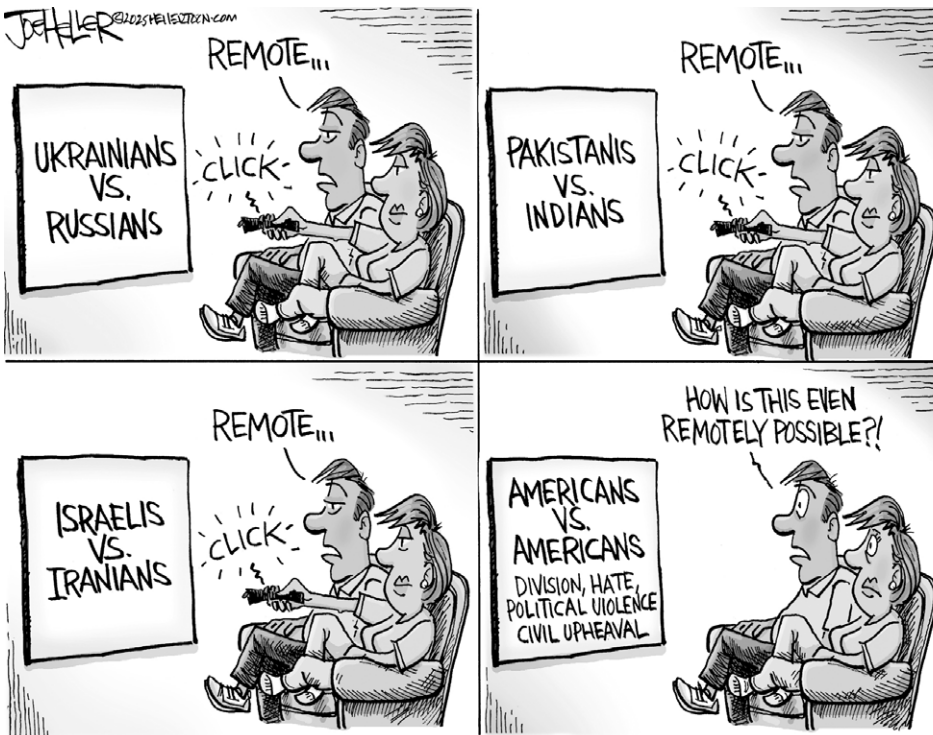
BRAIDWOOD—When is the Reed Township Mosquito Abatement District going to start spraying for mosquitoes? We can't even sit on our back patio in the evening without getting eaten alive by mosquitoes. You see a lot of other area towns posting notices on Facebook that they will be spraying for mosquitoes. We pay property taxes to the Reed Township Mosquito Abatement District so it's time to spray or we start cutting off their funding and turn over their operations to someone else. We shouldn't have to wait for a confirmed case of West Nile virus in town before they will spray.

## Quite delusional

WILMINGTON—How delusional are Republican Trumper lawmakers in DC.? Governor Pritzker was asked by Lauren Boebert, she of improper physical displays at a play, if "destruction of private and governmental property" was peaceful protest? Pritzker fired back with "look what happened on Jan. 6. You were at the Capitol...You want to talk about an absolute insurrection." Boebert, straight-faced, responded "Yeah, that didn't happen here," about the Jan. 6 riots. Then why were all of the House members hiding from the "peaceful patriots" that day? Was Boebert conducting a peaceful tour of the Capitol that day?

## Lacks ADA compliance

BRAIDWOOD—How can a business on Main Street get approval to open without meeting Americans with Disabilities



Act compliance. The building lacks a wheelchair ramp and designated handicapped parking spaces. We believe that these requirements would have been enforced if it involved any other citizen before they were allowed to commence their business operations. ADA requirements include an entrance ramp must be compliant when it is used for public access or when it serves as an accessible route to a building or facility for people with disabilities. Here are some key scenarios where an entrance ramp needs to comply with ADA standards: Public Buildings and Facilities: Any public building or facility that is newly constructed or altered must have an accessible entrance for people with disabilities. If there are stairs at the main entrance, an entrance ramp is required to provide access. Someone needs to look into this.

## Standing ground

WILMINGTON—Obama kissed Iran's butt. Biden kissed Iran's butt. Trump kicked Iran's butt.

## New and nice

WILMINGTON—I just want to say how nice the new truck stop and especially the new Hardee's Restaurant is. I was there about a week ago and the food at Hardees was very good, one of the best hamburgers I've had in a long time. It will be nice to have a place to go if you get hungry during the night and want something to eat. Otherwise you would have to go to the Circle K gas station by Burger King if you wanted to buy a sandwich. McDonald's is open 24 hours again but I'm sure that's just for the summer. I don't know why the people at Water's Edge complained about it coming. The way they made it sound if you looked out your window the truck stop was going to be right there and it's not even that close to the subdivision at all so they were just complaining because they had nothing better to do. It would have been nice if the aldermen for Ward 1 would have been at the ribbon cutting ceremony. They should have been there.

## Bombing Iran

WILMINGTON—Apparently Trump found out Obama called the Middle East the Holy Land and decided to make it holier.

## Sad killings

WILMINGTON—Watching what's happening in Israel and Iran I am baffled by the people who believe in God would allow this behavior. Did "Thou shall not kill" get edited from the 10 Commandments?

## Impossible to open

SHADOW LAKES—I would like to know who to contact about people that seal food, bottles and containers because they are impossible to open. Dan Hill

## Aiding and abetting

COAL CITY—The Governor of New York has decided to take \$50 million of taxpayers funds to pay for legal expenses for people in the USA illegally. The Governor of Illinois is also using taxpayer funds to protect undocumented individuals. These governors are aiding and abetting criminal activity which is a felony and they should be removed from office. They say they believe in the rule of law but that is for everyone but themselves. No one is above the law.

## Black Lung disease

WILMINGTON—Trump's demand for increased coal mining is bringing back Black Lung disease. Does Trump think he can get away with dirty smokestacks and blackened lungs after ripping apart protections from the EPA which protects working folks while he sits in the air conditioned Oval Office? Yes, apparently Trump does think he can get away with it. But Trump has another thing coming. Our country has worked decades to clean our dirty air and we're not about to let some con artist in a red tie dirty it up again. And there's more. Trump's fossil fuel friends will make a fortune squeezing the last dollar they can out of an industry taking its last gasp of breath while the rest of us pay higher electric bills. Yes folks, it's a triple whammy. At jeopardy is the health of coal miners as well as the general population especially children under the age of two while Trump's big ugly bill is eliminating health care for 16 million Americans. Meanwhile, the rest of the world, especially China, makes progress in leaps and bounds using clean energy which is cheaper. Does Trump think we are as stupid as he is? Or perhaps Trump is not dealing with a full deck.

## Commentary

# Congress must act to pull USPS back from the brink

MARTHA DIAZ ASZKENAZY

The United States Postal Service is on the brink of a self-induced collapse. The failed policies of the Delivering for America Plan have driven away customers through a combination of sky-high rate increases and degraded service.

David Steiner, who will take over as Postmaster General on July 14, has a tough job to do and little time to do it with some estimates indicating the USPS could be insolvent as soon as 2028.

Congress has a key role to play in helping him right the ship but must get off the sidelines and act. A useful step occurred earlier this week with a hearing before the House Oversight Subcommittee on Government Operations.

The National Newspaper Association (NNA) provided a statement for the hearing that lays out key actions Congress can take to help restore the USPS.

We emphasized that NNA members serve their communities, providing news on local events and

civic matters that are not covered anywhere else, and that they depend on the USPS to get their papers to subscribers. The USPS -- and by extension the small businesses in the communities they serve -- faces an immediate and existential crisis. We urge Congress to act swiftly and compel meaningful reform at the USPS.

Here are three actions Congress can take right now to get the USPS back on track and keep commerce in America moving:

- Demand the USPS Board halt the Delivering for America Plan including the large rate increase planned for July 13, 2025. This increase, far above the rate of inflation will only deepen the hole and ties the hands of incoming Postmaster General David Steiner, who should have the opportunity to assess the situation.

The same holds true for the network consolidations and service cuts. Every customer that is lost through these increases and service reductions is one less Steiner can rely on in the future.

- Modernize and empower the USPS regula-

tor. Effective checks and balances are needed to keep the USPS on track. Congress needs to update and modernize the postal regulatory process to better safeguard against excessive rates and poor service by passing H.R. 3004, The USPS SERVES US Act.

- Measure newspaper costs accurately. Congress should compel accurate measurement of newspaper service and hold the USPS accountable for maintaining and improving service quality by enacting H.R. 2098/S.1002, the Deliver for Democracy Act.

These are all common-sense steps Congress can take to address what has been clearly a failed approach by USPS management.

Steiner has a huge job ahead of him and will need all the help he can get. Congress must act now to make sure the nation's next Postmaster General is not the last one.

Martha Diaz Aszkenazy is the Chair of the National Newspaper Association and Publisher of the San Fernando Valley (California) Sun/El Sol Newspapers.

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# Talk about community solar

Dear EarthTalk: I'm a renter and can't put solar panels on my building's roof even though I would like to. Someone suggested I look into "community solar" but I don't get how that works let alone where to find such a program near me.

-- Peggy B., Austin, TX

## EARTH TALK

Questions & Answers About Our Environment

For many Americans, solar energy is still a luxury rather than the energy of the future. In fact, only around 25 percent of Americans can install a rooftop solar system. However, community solar is a workaround for renters because it's a subscription-based solar energy model, and subscribers pay a monthly fee to a local provider in return for a portion of the electricity produced.

In this case, the local utility company purchases the generated power from a nearby solar farm, and a credit reflects this on the electricity bill, which helps to reduce overall costs. Most important, subscribers still pay for solar

power and can join the green transition movement, but don't need to own or maintain solar panels.

According to Laurel Passers from the Coalition for Community Solar Access, "It's like subscribing to Netflix" because it's an extremely straightforward process that only requires a verification that you live within the service area and a basic credit check. Additionally, subscribers receive solar credits on their utility bill, amounting to annual savings up to 15 percent.

However, the accessibility of community solar depends on location. For example, many Southern states have monopolistic solar farms that can charge higher subscription fees and raise the cost barrier. To quote Jill Kysor from the Southern Environmental Law Center, "The way that they price those products, it's been more of a premium product."

Community solar is subject to massive changes following President Trump's recent pausing of federal funding for the \$7 billion Solar for All initiative, which helped 900,000 low-income households subscribe to community solar and provided grants to 60 solar farms.

Moreover, Trump has halted energy grants under



COMMUNITY SOLAR PROGRAMS allow renters and homeowners alike to "subscribe" to solar and other forms of renewable energy through their local utilities.

the Inflation Reduction Act, causing states like Nevada to lose access to \$156 million in community solar funding. While the effects on subscription pricing are still uncertain, the massive cuts towards community solar can mean that all involvement with solar energy will become indefinitely more expensive, as Trump seems unwilling to relent.

After all, one of his primary messages in his campaign was "not wasting American taxpayer dollars on expensive, unreliable green energy projects."

In light of the unforeseeable future of community solar, all prospective subscribers should reach out to providers to inquire about

how recent events can influence community solar availability or fees before subscribing. Many community solar projects have helpful customer services, and resources are linked below in the contacts section to help prospective subscribers make an informed decision.

Lastly, it's most important to spread the word about community solar. Buildings in the United States account for 40 percent of the country's total energy consumption, and empowering renters to go solar is essential to accelerating the green transition.

EarthTalk® a 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. Send questions to: [question@earthtalk.org](mailto:question@earthtalk.org).

## O'Shea named to dean's list

Darby O'Shea of Braidwood, has been named to the Dean's List for the spring 2025 semester at Marquette University in Milwaukee, WI. O'Shea is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology.

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# Illinois taxpayers pay \$6 million for NASCAR race, golf tournament

BY JIM TALAMONTI  
THE CENTER SQUARE

The \$55.2 billion Illinois budget signed by Gov. J.B. Pritzker on last week includes \$5 million to Chicago for costs associated with operating expenses for NASCAR races July 5 and 6.

State Senator Don DeWitte, R-St. Charles, questioned the Illinois Senate Appropriations Committee on May 31, hours before the General Assembly passed the record-high spending plan.

"So if it's such a wonderful economic development program to bring these folks into town every year and it brings so much economic income to the city, why do we need to subsidize it?" DeWitte asked.

State Sen. Elgie Sims, D-Chicago, said NASCAR weekend in Chicago has an economic impact worth tens of millions of dollars.

"These are investments in communities. There's our investments in our tourism. These are investments in showcasing

our state," Sims responded. DeWitte noted that lawmakers also appropriated \$1 million for 2026 Presidents Cup golf at Medinah Country Club and suggested that there were much more significant priorities for the state.

Chicago's three-year deal with NASCAR ends after the races next month.

Mayor Brandon Johnson did not say what might happen next when he was asked at a recent media briefing, but he did thank NASCAR.

"They've done an incredible job working with the community all over the city of Chicago. The programming that they have provided, the investments that they have made have been solid," Johnson said.

NASCAR driver and Springfield native Justin Allgaier said transitioning to downtown Chicago in 2023 was interesting.

"Especially the first year, it wasn't as easy or as seamless as ourselves or I'm sure that the folks who live in downtown Chicago would have liked, right? There were definitely some headaches with it, but I felt like last year, the event was extremely good," Allgaier said.

Street closures and lane closures are scheduled to begin affecting downtown

Chicago this week. NASCAR officials say they have reduced the total build time for the event from 43 days in 2023 and 38 days in 2024 to 25 days this year.

NASCAR Xfinity Series and Cup Series races in Chicago are scheduled July 5 and 6. NASCAR returns to Illinois Sept. 6 and 7 for Craftsman Truck Series and Cup Series races at World Wide Technology Raceway in Madison.

## Youth fishing contest Saturday at Heidecke Lake

A free fishing derby for boys and girls ages 12 and under will be held Saturday, June 28, at Heidecke Lake in Grundy County.

Illinois Senator Chris Balkema and State Rep. Jason R. Bunting will be hosting the two-hour contest derby at the Heidecke Lake fishing bank area, located at 6350 E. Collins Road in Morris from 9 a.m. until 11:30 a.m.

Registration starts at 9, with the Illinois Conservation Police conducting a water safety presentation at 9:10. Fishing will start at 9:30, with kids

eligible to win prizes for the biggest fish, the most fish caught as well as a sportsman award.

A free rod/reel combo will be given away to the first 50 youngsters who register.

This is a great opportunity to introduce kids to the joy of fishing and learn a thing or two about safety on the water.

Sponsors include Grundy County Land Use, the Illinois Conservation Police and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

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## University of Wisconsin-Madison dean's list

The University of Wisconsin-Madison has recognized Marie Simonelli of Braidwood and Jenna Dabulskis of Wilmington named to the Dean's List for the spring semester of the 2024-2025 academic year.

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Bus departs the Wilmington Moose parking lot at 8:30 a.m. & returns approximately 5:30 p.m.

# 19 Democrats who refused Madigan did the right thing

I reached out last week to several members of the "19" - the Democratic House members who refused to vote to re-elect House Speaker Michael Madigan in 2021, thereby forcing him into retirement.

I asked for their reaction to Madigan's 90-month federal prison sentence handed down a few days earlier. Because it was a holiday (Father's Day), I didn't expect to hear much back.

But in talking with several members who didn't want to be quoted, and some who were, their minds were clearly more focused on the still-unfolding events following the shootings of some Minnesota legislators than on their role years ago in ousting Madigan.

The alleged assassin of former Minnesota House Speaker Melissa Hortman and her spouse, who also allegedly attempted to assassinate state Senator John Hoffman and his spouse, reportedly created a "hit list" of numerous Minnesota Democratic state legislators as well as abortion rights advocates.

If you had any interaction with a state legislator since the shootings, you know this horrific crime has struck many of them at their very core.

More legislators than you may realize have received credible threats of violence, or have been



**CAPITOL FACTS**  
Rich Miller

stalked. Most refuse to talk about it for the record, but those shootings showed what could've happened to them and what may still happen in the future. And the fact that family members were also targeted in Minnesota only makes things worse.

"I've found myself thinking less about Michael Madigan and more about another former speaker, Melissa Hortman, who I had the privilege of meeting through our work as Uniform Law Commissioners," said "19" member Rep. Dan Didech (D-Buffalo Grove) in response to my question about Madigan. "We should all aspire to serve and to be remembered like Speaker Hortman: ethically, impactfully, and with a steady commitment to doing the right thing for as many people as possible."

Rep. Didech went on to say, "As legislators, our good reputations are like a cup filled drop by drop, and can be emptied in a single moment. We owe it to our families, our constituents, and our state to one day leave office with our cups still full."

Some "19" members managed to stick solely to the question at hand:

• Rep. Kelly Cassidy (D-Chicago) was a persistent thorn in Madigan's side: "After so many years and so much turmoil, I am glad to see this chapter finally reach a conclusion, although I can't celebrate

anyone going into a prison system that doesn't truly make people better. Speaker Madigan's corruption caused real harm to the wellbeing of our communities, and I won't forget his impact on my own life anytime soon, but we are moving on as a state. Both chambers have new leaders and they're charting their own courses forward. I'm looking forward to the progress we can make together now that this painful period has reached its conclusion."

• Former Rep. Deb Conroy, who is now the DuPage County Board Chair and who had to deal with threats of violence when she was a legislator about a bill she sponsored: "Nineteen legislators took a stand individually and stood together for what they felt was the right thing to do for the future of our party and the state of Illinois. It was often a difficult road. Members turned against members and caucuses chose sides. My hope is we can turn the page and move forward united in our democratic values."

• Rep. Stephanie Kifowit (D-Oswego): "I had no idea back then what the outcome would be. In the end, due process was afforded to former Speaker Madigan, the jury made its

ruling and the Judge rendered the sentence. It is an unfortunate end to his legacy and legislative tenure, and a difficult situation for his wife, Shirley and his family.

However, as elected officials, we need to continue to strive to repair the damage to the public trust and strive to ensure we are held to the highest ethical standard."

• Rep. Anna Moeller (D-Elgin): "The sentencing of former House Speaker Michael J. Madigan underscores a fundamental American principle: no one is above the law. I was one of the 19 House Democrats who chose not to support Speaker Madigan's re-election in 2021. That decision was rooted in my belief that elected officials must be held to the highest ethical standards, and that real reform starts with leadership. As a state legislator, I remain steadfast in my commitment to transparency, accountability and integrity. The people of Illinois deserve a government at all levels that works for them - not for entrenched power or political gain."

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

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# Construction begins on New Will County Veterans Assistance and support center

Will County leaders have announced the start of construction at the future home of the Will County Veterans Assistance Commission (VAC) at 1300 Copperfield Avenue in Joliet. Once completed, the new facility will serve as a unified Veteran Assistance and Support Center at the heart of a unified campus for veteran services.

"This project will transform how Will County provides services to veterans and their families, providing a centralized location and expanded space for the Will County VAC," said Will County Executive Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant. "The new center will be at the heart of the first unified veteran assistance and support campus in the state, solidifying the VAC's role as a national and state leader in providing veterans with the services they've earned. I'm proud to see this project coming to fruition."

County Executive Bertino-Tarrant and the Will County VAC announced in Oct. 2024 a plan to create a unified "one-stop shop" by moving the commission into the currently vacant county-owned building, alongside other veteran services. The construction that is kicking off this week will retrofit the first two floors of the four-story office building, leaving the remaining space in the building for future services easily accessible to veterans.

The expanded footprint will empower the VAC to expand services to Will County veterans and their families, including by hiring more veteran service officers, reducing appointment wait times, and increasing programmatic offerings. The VAC also plans on expanding their mental health and physical health programs to focus more on overall wellness, utilizing an on-site fitness center and personalized



INTERNAL CONSTRUCTION has begun at the future home of the Will County Veterans Assistance Commission, located at 1300 Copperfield Avenue in Joliet. The space will serve as a centralized Veteran Assistance and Support Center for Will County veterans and their families.

spaces for counseling.

The VAC is also planning to expand their food pantry and donation room, increasing capacity to meet the basic needs of veterans and their families. The new space will also include communal spaces for veterans and their families, creating opportunities for connection, support, and a stronger sense of community.

"This new space has been a long-standing vision driven by the needs of our veterans and the belief that they deserve more than just thanks, they deserve action. I'm proud to see this vision becoming a reality," said Will County VAC Superintendent Jen Solum. "With this new facility, we'll not only be able to serve more veterans, but also expand critical services, especially in the area of mental health, where the need is urgent and ongoing. We're deeply grateful to our leaders and community partners who helped bring

this project to life."

VAC services include financial assistance, employment assistance, combat veteran counseling, and a homeless veteran prevention program. VAC also coordinates with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs on case management and is the only commission of its kind in the state to include in-house staff from the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs.

"The Will County Veterans Assistance Commission gives veterans the support and assistance they earned through their military service," said Will County Board Capital Improvements Committee Chair Mica Freeman. "I am thrilled to participate in our community's efforts to continue and expand the VAC's services with a welcoming facility they deserve. Our veterans should be honored every day, and the new location is just one way in which we

can show our appreciation to the men and women who have served our nation."

Preliminary construction has occurred on the facility, including repairs to the roof and critical systems. Planned construction will focus on the interior, with an emphasis on the expanding space for the VAC. Construction is estimated to be completed in early 2026. Will County acquired the building in 2021. Previously a medical office building, it was built in 2003 and was previously connected to the former Silver Cross Hospital.

The new center will join both the Hines VA's Joliet Community Based Outpatient Clinic and the Volunteers of America Illinois' Hope Manor Housing at a new unified Veteran Support Campus on the east side of Joliet. This unified campus will make it easier for veterans and their families to access wrap-around services.

# Holland graduates

Kaylee Holland of Braidwood, graduated from Mercer University in Macon, Georgia during the 2024-2025 academic year with a degree in School of Business, Bachelor of Business Administration.

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## Share-A-Shot

Photo by Matt Youell

THE RURAL INLAND Australian town of Holbrook acquired a decommissioned submarine to honor WW1 Commander Norman Holbrook. The giant submarine was recently visited by another giant, a replica Gemini Giant owned by the Youell family of Australia. They shared their shot from "down under" for Illinois readers more familiar with the popular Route 66 icon. If you have an interesting or creative photo you've taken while on vacation why not submit it to [news@fpnusa.com](mailto:news@fpnusa.com).

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Photo by Eric Fisher

**STONE TO HAVE** a new home in Gardner. Darren Deskin, (left) director of the Lockport Cemetery, presents the stone of Medal of Honor recipient George Theodore Hyatt at the Gardner American Legion to Jonathan Hyatt, a fourth generation grandson, and Mike Serena, the mayor of Gardner.

## Gardner to honor local war hero

BY ERIC FISHER  
PUBLISHER

On Saturday, June 21, local veterans gathered at the American Legion Hall in Gardner to honor one of their own: Medal of Honor recipient George Theodore Hyatt.

During a brief ceremony steeped in Civil War history and patriotism, the Legion was presented with Hyatt's original government-issued headstone—a lasting tribute to a soldier whose bravery has never been forgotten.

Born in Pennsylvania in 1830, Hyatt later moved to rural Gardner, where he enlisted in the Union Army in August 1862. Serving as

a First Sergeant in Company D of the 127th Illinois Infantry, Hyatt displayed remarkable courage during the Siege of Vicksburg on May 22, 1863—an act that would earn him the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest military award for valor.

According to the Congressional Medal of Honor Society, Hyatt was one of 150 volunteers chosen for what was grimly known as a “forlorn hope,” a near-suicidal mission ordered by General Ulysses S. Grant to breach the Confederate defenses at Vicksburg, Mississippi.

Their task was to build a bridge across a moat and plant scaling ladders

against a fortified enemy embankment—all under relentless enemy fire. The odds were so dire that only unmarried men were accepted, and still, more than twice the number needed stepped forward.

The assault was launched in the early morning following a naval bombardment. Hyatt and his fellow volunteers were immediately pinned down in the ditch they had set out to cross.

With no possibility of retreat, the men endured enemy fire for hours until nightfall. Nearly half the storming party perished. Of the survivors, 79—including Hyatt—were awarded the Medal of Honor for their gallantry.

Hyatt's official citation reads simply: “Gallantry in the charge of the ‘volunteer storming party.’” The brevity of those words belies the extraordinary courage he showed that day.

Following his heroics at Vicksburg, Hyatt continued to serve until March 1865, when he was honorably discharged due to wounds sustained during the Atlanta Campaign. He died in Joliet in 1900 and was originally buried in

Lockport Cemetery

His remains were later reinterred at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood, one of the first burials at the national site. Each national veterans cemetery strives for at least one Medal of Honor recipient—and Hyatt serves as that honored figure for ALNC.

Saturday's event included Darren Deskin, director of the Lockport Cemetery who presented the Hyatt's original headstone which was removed from his grave sight in 1998.

“We discovered his stone high on a shelf when we were cleaning the cemetery garage out six months ago,” Deskin said. “I looked into Hyatt's history and saw he was accredited to Gardner and knew it needed to come here. When I discovered there is an American Legion post here, it made sense that this is where it belongs.”

Deskin presented the stone to Commander Dan Anderson and Mayor Mike Serena who are already drafting plans to display it near a veterans memorial in downtown Gardner that was erected in 1973.

“We're thinking of a



**THEODORE HYATT** was from Gardner, IL when he entered the Civil War where he earned a Medal of Honor.



**A BRAVE HERO**—First Sgt. Theodore Hyatt, (Civil War), Company D, 127th Illinois Infantry, 2nd Division, 15th Army Corps, who fought in the Battle of Vicksburg, May 22, 1863 was interred to the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood when it first opened.

display very specific and very dignified where we have our two-cell jail,” Serena said. “It will be a nice tribute to the only man from Grundy County to earn a Medal of Honor, something we all can be proud of.”

Anderson noted that the permanent display will be a symbol of Hyatt's sacrifice and the enduring values of bravery, integrity, and love of country.

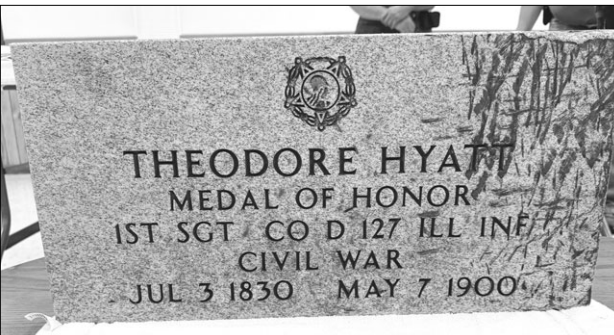
In attendance was Jonathan Hyatt, a fourth generation descendent who last week moved to Chicago from Utah. He was thankful for Deskin's and the town's efforts for bringing awareness to his family's history.

“Our family feels honored and is thankful. I am looking forward to telling the rest of my family what is being planning and hope

someday, when the memorial is complete, many of them will come visit my 4th great grandfather,” Jonathan Hyatt said.

He is unaware what happened to Theodore's actual medal but as a researcher at the University of Chicago, his pursuit will include where it has ended up.

The Medal of Honor, established during the Civil War in 1861 by Senator James W. Grimes, has since been awarded to just 3,528 individuals. Though the medal's design and criteria have evolved, it remains a symbol of unparalleled heroism in the face of overwhelming odds. Each recipient has etched their name into history through selfless service—and Gardner's own Theodore Hyatt is no exception.



**THE ORIGINAL HEADSTONE** for Medal of Honor recipient George Theodore Hyatt has been presented to the American Legion in Gardner.

## OBITUARIES

### Hubert G. Bishop

**MANTENO**—Hubert G. Bishop, of Manteno passed away Sunday, June 22, 2025 at his home. He has been living in Manteno for many years. He was born Jan. 12, 1931 in Rockville, St. Clair County, Missouri.

He was employed for 17 1/2 years at Caterpillar Tractor Company of Joliet, and retired from there to farm. He enjoyed being outside and in his younger days going antiquing. He was a longtime member of the Ritchey Methodist Church in Ritchey.

Survivors include his wife, Ann (Zusag) Toepper Bishop, of Manteno; daughter, Sandra K. (Bishop) Windell (Robert), of Rock Island, TN; grandson, William R. Windell (Patricia); great-grandson, Tyler Murray, of McMinnville, TN; sister, June (Dotson) Jacque, of Wilmington



and three nieces; stepchildren; Joe (Lori) Toepper, of Manteno; Deb (Toepper) (Tom) Kavanagh, of Wilmington; Kathy Toepper (Keith) Smith, of Holden, MO; Patty (Toepper) Ulrich, of Manteno; and many step-grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his father, George Raymond Bishop (1934) and mother, Emma E. (Rosbrugh) Bishop Dotson (2002); stepfather, David Dotson (1975); sister, Alice M. (Bishop) (Sorensen) (2012); his first wife, Martha A. (Warriner) Bishop (1991); and nephew, David Sorensen (2024).

All services are private per his wishes. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Manteno Library.

Brown-Jensen Funeral Home in Manteno is handling the arrangements.

### Sandra Paul

**COAL CITY**—Sandra Lee Paul, 89, of Coal City, passed away peacefully on June 21, 2025.

Born on Feb. 28, 1936, Sandra was a daughter of Eunice (Gardner) and James 'Rip' Stewart. She was employed at APSA and later retired from the Rock Island Arsenal as a librarian for over 30 years.

She is survived by her sisters, Kay Veronda, and Judy Darin; many nieces and nephews and good friend, Barb Gartke.

Sandra is preceded in death by her parents.



Preferred memorials may be made in Sandra's memory to a hospice facility of their choosing.

Cremation rites are being accorded.

Private family services are being held at a later date.

Family and friends are encouraged to log onto [www.ReevesFuneral.com](http://www.ReevesFuneral.com) to sign the guest book, upload photos and share memories.

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

### Judy Lang

**BRAIDWOOD**—Judy Lang, 79, of Braidwood, formerly of Downers Grove, passed away on June 20, 2025 at her home.

Born on Aug. 24, 1945, Judith Ann was a daughter of Francis and Lillian (Pittra) Erhardt. She was born in Oak Park, IL and was raised in Downers Grove where she attended Saint Joseph's Catholic School. Judy attended Sacred Heart Academy in Lisle, IL where she went on to graduate with the class of 1963. She worked for Pepperidge Farms in Downers Grove and Saint Mary's Hospital in Kankakee before gaining employment as a mechanic at the Braidwood Nuclear Power Plant, where she proudly worked until her retirement.

Judy was a longtime member of Immaculate Conception Church in Braidwood and an active participant in the Red Hat Society. She enjoyed gardening, traveling, spending time in nature, and dancing. A devoted animal lover, she especially cared for her two cats. Above all, she valued time spent with her family and close friends.

She is survived by her three children: Clarence (Melissa) Lang, Linda (Doug) Bowers and Frank Lang; grandchildren: James, Jessica and Justin Lang; Alex (Chase) Platz, Alicia (Alex) Forrest, Ciara



(RJ) Osborne, Cory (fiancé Callie) Bible, and Dale (Chip Eubanks) Bible; great-grandchildren: Alaura, Jasper, Silas, William, Charlie, Bristol and Danny; sister, Bonnie (Ted) Mooney; nieces: Kristen and Katie, as well as her special childhood friends, Marla and Lonnie and good friends: Sue, Delores, Connie and Elaine.

Judy is preceded in death by her parents and her granddaughter, Savanna Lang.

The family will receive friends for a visitation at Reeves Funeral Home, 75 N. Broadway St., one block north of Illinois Route 113 in Coal City on Friday, June 27, 2025, from 10 a.m. until the time of service at 12 p.m. A burial will immediately follow at Oakwood Cemetery in Braidwood, where Judy will be laid to rest.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Judy's memory to the Grundy County Humane Society.

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

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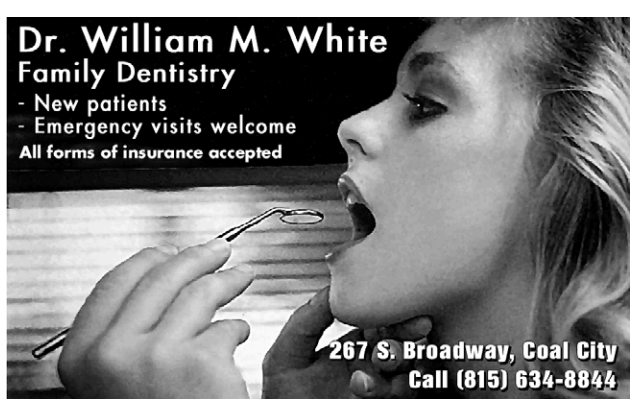
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**MO-GAS – Momence Bottle Gas**

**Reel Justice – State's Attorney Jim Rowe**

**Bounce – Bounce With Us**

**Tall Timbers – Kankakee Forest Preserve**

**Mr. Whitetail – Kankakee River Valley Whitetails Unlimited**

**T-Bird, In Memory of Tracy Tofte – The Tofte Family**

**"Sparky" Boat Motor Trailer**

**N.E.C.A./I.B.E.W. Local 176**

**Adjust I – Koehler Chiropractic**  
\$1,000 in Services or \$250 Cash

**Adjust II – Koehler Chiropractic**  
\$1,000 in Services or \$250 Cash

**"Little Haulers"**

**Bird Park Quarry for Kids Only**  
**United Disposal**

**Sunfish Sonny, Emma Lynne Fin, Reel Recycler, Front Load Fry, Joey Jaws, Hawg Hauler, Musky Mike, Ally Cat, Stink Bait, Cash for Trash**

\$100 per fish caught by a child under 16.  
2 fish maximum per registered family.

**Hook an Old or Early Tag for \$50 in Merchandise**

June 1 - June 26 • NIAA

**NORTHERN ILLINOIS ANGLERS ASSOCIATION**

**Only \$20 per family entry!**

**\$500 MERCHANDISE**

**Raynor – Tousignant, Inc.**  
\$500 Gift Certificate

**Rub-It-Out-II – Ahhh.... Massage**  
\$500 Massage Package

**Bronco Billy – Court Street Ford**  
\$500 Services

**Fancy Nancy – Elliott's Bait and Tackle**  
\$500 in Merchandise

**All Power Angler – All Power Equipment**  
\$500 Merchandise or Service

**Trader – Kankakee River Trading Post**  
\$500 in Merchandise

**Mr. Black – NIAA**  
Lifetime NIAA Membership plus \$100 Cash

**Wing Dinger – JR's Chicken**  
\$500 Gift Certificate

**Amish Bass – Panozzo's Amish Furniture**  
\$500 Gift Certificate

**Larry – Reed's Rent All**  
\$500 in Rentals

**Mr. Zyer – NIAA**  
Lifetime NIAA Membership plus \$100 Cash

**Leprechaun – Ryan's Pier**  
\$10.00 Each Week for 1 Year in Food

**Lumber Jack – Security Lumber**  
\$500 in Merchandise

**"Lasso A Double"**

**\$100 CASH BONUS**

NIAA

**Meat Head – South Side Meats**  
\$10 per week for 1 Year in Merchandise

**Shady Deal – Tholens' Garden Center**  
Two - 2" Sunset Maple Trees

**Billie Eyefish – WFAV 95.1 FM**  
\$500 in Merchandise

**Morgan Walleye – WIVR 101.7/103.7 FM**  
\$500 in Merchandise

**Hooked On A Feeling – WVLI 92.7 FM**  
\$500 in Merchandise

**Oakey – Oak Springs Golf Course**  
2025 Single Membership

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Win An Additional \$100 Prize! Sponsored by Sam Thomas

**DERBY DOLLAR DAYS – \$100 CASH**

Fri. June 27 ..... Rough Fish – Buffalo Roamin Day – X-line Sportsmen's Club

Sat. June 28..... Largemouth Bass – Large Lunker Day – Diamond Indoor Trap & Pistol Range

Sun. June 29 ..... Smallmouth Bass – Smallie Searchin Day – Kankakee River Trading Post

Mon. June 30 ..... Rock Bass – Rock Mining Day – Nancy Witthoft

Tues. July 1 ..... Flathead Catfish – Mayor Charles Steele

Wed. July 2 ..... Northern Pike – Pike Plugging Day – Reed's Rent All

Thur. July 3 ..... Crappie – Crappie Jigging Day – APBA

Fri. July 4 ..... Walleye – Wally Walleye Day – Daily Journal

Sat. July 5 ..... Any Species Excluding Catfish and Rough Fish – Kids Corkin Day – Kankakee Sportsmen's Club

**ADDITIONAL SUPPORT PROVIDED BY:**

**Angelo's Bait & Tackle, Elliott's Bait and Tackle, The Free Press, Rose Gianotti, Kankakee River Trading Post, Reed's Rent All, North Walmart Supercenter, South Walmart, Van Drunen Farms, and Nancy Witthoft**

**4 FISH**

**\$1000 CASH**

**DAILY JOURNAL**



## Carreno graduates

More than 2,100 students received their bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees from Northern Illinois University in May. Included among the graduates was, Reyna Carreno of Elwood with Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences degree.

## Catfish Days Craft Show and Flea Market

A craft show and flea market is planned for Saturday, July 26, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the downtown antique district during Catfish Days. Spaces are assigned first come, first served with a limited number of spaces available. No electricity available.

Check in as early as 6:30 a.m. at North Water and Van Buren street. Vendors must arrive by 8 a.m. and remove all vehicles by 8:40 a.m. or your spaces will be forfeited.

The non-refundable cost is \$35 for 10-foot x10-foot spaces postmarked on or before July 12; \$50 post-marked July 13-19. Do not mail after July 19. Spaces paid for the day of the event will be \$65. Fresh food vendors who prepare food on site pay \$100 through until July 12 for a 10'x20' space. If paid after July 12 the price will be \$150. Food vendors must also be permitted by the Will County Health Department so be sure to contact them.

All interested parties, including Wilmington non-profit organizations, must pay for a space.

Complete the contract below. Detach and return it with a check made payable to **Women of Wilmington**. Mail to: Women of Wilmington, PO Box 13, Wilmington, IL 60481. Email questions to the-womenofwilmington@gmail.com. Post dated checks will not reserve a space. Confirmations will be emailed the week of the show.

Catfish Days Committee and Women of Wilmington will not assume liability for any losses, damages or injuries sustained by exhibitors or spectators.

\*\*\*\*\*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

List what will be sold: \_\_\_\_\_

How many spaces? (Circle one): 1 2 3 4 5

## Recycle bigger items too

Recycling needs to include more than cans and bottles. Even bigger, household items you're considering to throw away can be "recycled" by offering them up to your neighbors. That's right, consider creating "free piles" in your neighborhood.

One Iowa community encourages residents place items on the curb with the understanding that if someone can use them, they'll take them. Even broken items are finding new life this way as the town's handymen pick them up and repair them, just for the challenge, and give them away.

Place it curbside with a note stating if it works or not. If things remain unclaimed after a few days, you might contact Goodwill and ask if they can use it.

## Braidwood Lions Club 2025 Summerfest Parade

Sunday, July 20, 1 p.m.

Lineup - 12:30 p.m. on Mitchell Street near Casey's

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of entry: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Put an X only one:

Vehicle \_\_\_\_\_ Band \_\_\_\_\_ Float \_\_\_\_\_ Walking \_\_\_\_\_

Color Guard \_\_\_\_\_ Horse \_\_\_\_\_ Golf Cart \_\_\_\_\_ Historical \_\_\_\_\_

Political: \_\_\_\_\_ (A monetary donation of \$25 to the Braidwood Lions Club will be appreciated)

The theme for the parade is "An Under The Sea Adventure".

Parade Route: Begins at Main/Mitchell Street, travels west on Main Street, turning south on Walker Street where it will end. Participants will continue South on Walker Street to Kennedy Road and disperse to an unloading location of their choice or pull into the horseshoe drive behind the Reed-Custer Intermediate School to unload.

For more information or questions contact Parade Coordinator Angie Hutton at 815-353-3053 or Jessica Adam-Keymon at (815)274-1498.

Send entry form by email braidwoodlionsclub@yahoo.com or mail to Braidwood Lions Club Summerfest, Attn: Parade Coordinator, 198 N. Lincoln St., Braidwood, IL 60408

## University of Iowa dean's list

More than 8,000 students at the University of Iowa were named to the dean's list for the 2025 spring semester.

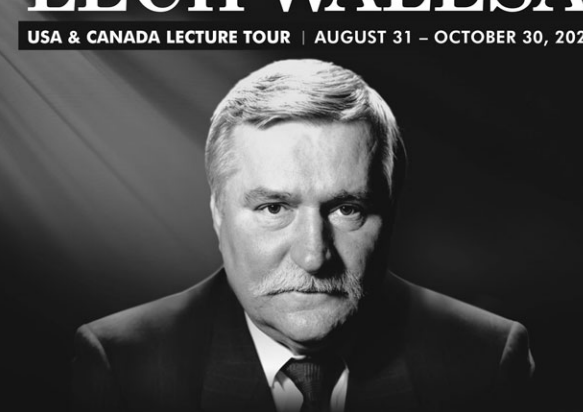
Among those students were Ashley Bollino of Braidwood and Brecken Johnson of Coal City.

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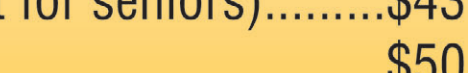
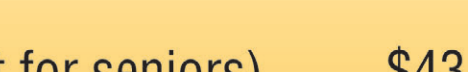
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19. Satisfy
23. Central European river
24. Brass instrument
25. One who gets paid to perform
26. Propel with oars
27. Long period of time
28. Woman (French)
29. Type of plane
34. Pitching stat
35. Pointed end of a pen
36. Pro sports league
37. Body part
39. Inoffensive
40. Yellowish cotton cloth
41. Feline
42. Does not tell the truth
44. Set out to attract
45. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
46. Abba \_\_\_\_, Israeli politician
47. Repair
48. Genus of flowering plants
51. Tributary of the High Rhine
52. Prejudice
53. C. European river
54. Restrain
58. Father



# WHS volleyball camp continues to grow

Summer started off with a bang with 65 kindergartners through 8th graders having a blast at volleyball camp hosted by Coach Kelly Van Duyne, Coach Teesha Page and the Wilmington High School team.

"The players are the ones that make the camp so great every year," said coach Coach Van Duyne. "I demonstrate and explain the different aspects of the game, but they are the ones that really help the kids. They deserve all the credit for how successful our camp is and why it continues to grow every summer."

Besides learning about the game, the campers love all the games that they get to play every day. The prizes, popsicles, and candy help too. At the end of every session, Coach Van Duyne would ask the kids what their favorite part of the day was. Her most favorite response was "YOU!"

Coach Van Duyne's favorite thing about camp is seeing the same faces summer after summer and watching them grow as players.



Photos by Elaine Fisher-Ohlund

A SUMMER CAMP for future volleyball players took place last week at Wilmington High School where head coach Kelly VanDuyne (center, back) and her varsity players taught the fundamentals (emphasis on fun) during morning sessions over three days. Girls and boys in grades kindergarten through 8th grade were split into two, two-hour sessions where they learned about the game. The camp included some running, drills in hitting, serving and bumping, along with games. Lady Cat varsity players helped to put on break-out sessions where each camper could have a little fun.



SESSION TWO—The recent WHS volleyball camp included a session for kindergarten through fourth grade players who were awarded T-shirts, prizes and volleyballs on the final day.



A GOOD TURNOUT was had among those who attended the WHS volleyball camp for those in grades 5-8.

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## WILDCAT SPORTS



CAMP FUN—Mabil Francis and Maggie Skoryi run the circle of other volleyball campers during Duck, Duck, Goose drills.



Photo by Elaine Fisher-Ohlund

WILMINGTON'S BRISTOL BILLINGSLEY spikes the ball during the WHS volleyball camp on Friday.



Photo by Elaine Fisher-Ohlund

TAYLOR TENN serves the ball while playing "queen of the court" during WHS Ladycat volleyball camp on Friday.