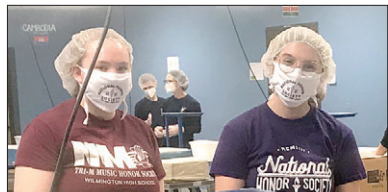


Students pack food for the needy



WHS girls basketball dream team picks



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WILMINGTON, IL | WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2020 | A FREE PRESS NEWSPAPER

Survey complete, but dam discussions just getting started

BY MARNEY SIMON
EDITOR

The final results are in, and the majority of those responded to the city of Wilmington's survey on the Kankakee River Dam said they'd like to see it taken out.

But the survey is just the first step of a long journey to address the dam, and if it will ever be removed from its spot along the South Island.

The survey results were revealed during the Nov. 11 meeting of the Buildings, Grounds, Parks, Health and Safety Committee. The final tally:

- Compete removal of the dam — 304
- Construction of a rock ramp — 55
- Construction of a rock-ramp with canoe/kayak passage — 59
- Leave the dam alone — 26

Surveys were sent out with water bills in August. The survey was a result of renewed interest earlier this year in pursuing changes to or removal of the dam, sparked by conversations initiated with the public by Alderman Ben Dietz and former Alderman Jake Tenn.

Since 1982, at least 16 people have lost their lives after being swept into the hydraulic roller dam.

The survey was based on guidance from a 2017 study, conducted by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), that compared the costs of changes at the dam.

"My understanding was that we would turn the dam over to the state at this point," Alderman Lisa Butler said after the committee reviewed the survey results.

But that thought was met with a resounding 'no' from Wilmington Mayor Roy Strong.

"No, no, no, no, no, no, no. Not yet," Strong said emphatically.

Strong, who has been a vocal proponent of keeping the dam, said the survey was misleading, because the cost of turning the dam over to the

state is free.

He said that people naturally opted for the cheapest option, when in reality there might be ways to keep the dam that are far below the millions it would cost the city if the only other options were the ones available on the survey.

"The survey was kind of biased," Strong said. "It basically, it's saying, do you want to spend this money, and [the respondents] are saying no, we don't want to spend the money. That's what it's about. I couldn't agree with them more, do you want to borrow \$3 to \$5 million? Well, who is going to agree to that? I'm not going to agree to it either."

Strong said that while the survey worked to gauge public opinion on a handful of options, the next step would be to meet with the Army Corps of Engineers to see what steps the city can take to address safety at the dam.

Strong has long been in favor of adding rip rap to the face of the dam in an effort to reduce the danger should someone get pulled in.

"I think we can get rock in there for a lot less, maybe \$150,000 or something, we might be able to do that, get rip rap in there," he said.

In 2018, the city submitted a regional permit application seeking approval from the Army Corps of Engineers and IDNR to add rip rap to the face of the dam, proposing the placement of approximately 500 cubic yards of rip rap in the scour hole below the dam to break the submerged hydraulic jump (boil), reducing or eliminating the undertow and improving public safety.

One year prior, Strong, the city engineer and city administrator met with State Senator Sue Rezin and representatives of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to discuss the city plan for the river dam.

An IDNR Office of Water Resources report on the options for the future of the Kankakee River and millrace dams dated October 2017 was the result of that meeting. That

report was the basis of this year's dam survey.

That report indicated that adding fill to the face of the dam would likely require a detailed individual permit application to the Corps of Engineers because of the placement of a large quantity of fill into a waterway of the United States.

The individual permit has to come with an Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Water Quality certificate.

Also per that report, the city would have to provide an engineer's structural design, a hydraulic design so that the dam system passes the 100-year flood test, an analysis of potential options for future spillway capacity increases, and development of a detailed early warning and emergency evacuation plan for a dam breach.

Still, Strong argued to the committee last week that rip rap is a viable option.

"I think we have more options here than just that survey," Strong said. "If we had rip rap, even if they fall in there, they could get out. So, for a minimum amount, we could make it safe."

Regardless of what the city ultimately decides, Strong said nothing should move ahead until there is a solid picture of what's to come.

"If they did take the dam down, we need engineering," Strong said. "Exactly what is going to happen when that dam comes down. Because right now, anything could happen. We don't know. Right now behind the Rustic, it's seven to eight feet deep. What's going to happen when that goes down? Is it going to be down to two feet, what are we going to do with that dirt in that canal?"

"I think we need to step there next," he continued. "If they (the state) do take over the dam, what's next, what's the process when it's all taken out, what are we left with, is the canal going to run at all, they're saying it is but they're

SEE DAM, PAGE 2



Photo by Marney Simon

SAFETY FIRST — Orange sawhorses are seen on the ground in front of the dam along the Kankakee River in Wilmington. The city is working through options for dam safety once again. A survey sent this fall to residents indicates that many folks would like to see the dam removed. The city is looking into adding concrete barriers near the dam to keep people away.

Interchange projects at Lorenzo, Route 129 ready for public input

BY MARNEY SIMON
EDITOR

It's been nine years since the Illinois Route 129 ramp from southbound I-55 was shuttered.

Now, with plans to add a new interchange at Route 129 and a second at Lorenzo Road in the works, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has opened the comment period for the public to weigh in.

The comment period is open through mid-December for the proposed I-55 project.

Lorenzo Road is under the jurisdiction of the city of Wilmington, while Route 129 is a state road.

Phase 1 of the study was initiated in 2008, but in 2013 the project was absorbed into the Phase 1 study for the Illiana Expressway. The Illiana Expressway project was put on hold in 2015. In 2018, the I-55 study for Lorenzo

Road and Route 129 was pulled out of the Illiana study and moved ahead on its own.

The study aims to address three basic needs for the area:

- Improve safety
- Improve facility condition and design
- Improve regional and local travel and access

The interchange improvements at Lorenzo Road will address Wilmington's Elion Logistics Center and the proposed BNSF intermodal facility.

The Route 129 exit will allow for access to Route 129 both to and from the southbound I-55 lanes. Access to those lanes has been shut off nearly a decade ago.

According to the study documents, traffic through the region has continued to increase. Estimated traffic volumes for the year 2050 show that the current interchanges would suffer from congestion by

that time if not addressed, which could lead to dangerous highway conditions

The public outreach seeks input on two alternatives for both interchanges.

The proposals for Lorenzo Road include two modified trumpet designs. In the first, traffic entering Lorenzo Road from southbound lanes of I-55 would utilize a loop ramp, while traffic entering I-55 from Lorenzo Road would use the same exit, with the ramp making a north-south split.

The second option would keep the current Lorenzo Road exit from southbound lanes as is.

The two options for Route 129 are a standard diamond, and a diverging diamond.

None of the proposals would involve any change to the Kankakee River bridge on I-55.

SEE I-55, PAGE 2

Dist. 209-U sells building trades home

Project went unfinished due to pandemic

BY MARNEY SIMON
EDITOR

The novel coronavirus pandemic put a dent in the plans of the Wilmington High School building trades class as they aimed to complete last year's home project.

But, the Wilmington School District 209-U was able to find relief when it comes to unfinished project.

On Nov. 9, the board of education approved the cash offer sale of the unfinished home in the amount of \$135,000.

"I think that's a great outcome for our district," Superintendent Dr. Matt Swick told members of the board. "The buyer is a developer who is going to refinish that house and I'm sure re-sell it at some point. So, we're making \$10,000 more than we had advertised for."

That home, which is partially constructed on Winchester Green Drive including foundation, walls and roof, was closed up after the shut down for the pandemic began back in March.

After discussions when

SEE HOUSE, PAGE 2



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I-55

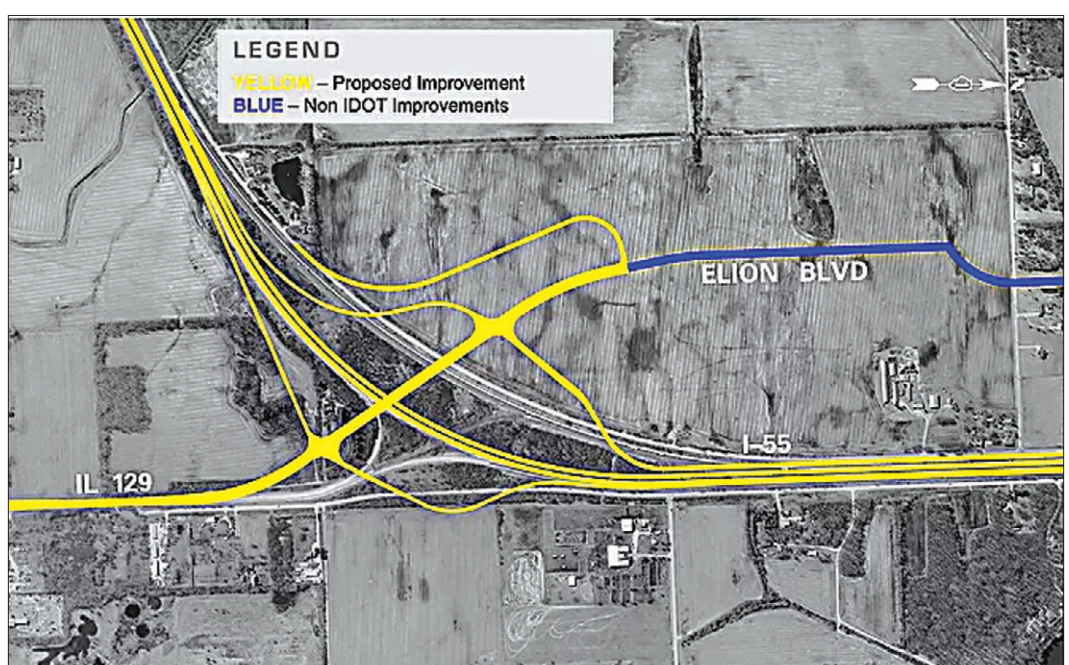
Environmental impacts being studied include wetlands, floodplains, prairie lands, farmland conversion, historic resources, threatened and endangered species, noise, right-of-way, and residential and commercial relocations.

Once the public comment period ends, IDOT will announce the preferred alternative, followed by a public hearing this winter. Completion of this phase of the project is expected in mid-2021, which will be followed by final design and construction.

The state of Illinois has allocated \$112.7 million in the Fiscal Year 2021-2026 proposed highway improvement program for these improvements, which includes design and construction.

In 2017, a freight study conducted in Will County showed \$623 billion in freight value moves through or in and out of Will County every year. The Will County Center for Economic Development (CED) said that represents 3.5% of the U.S. gross domestic product, and that \$65 billion worth of freight activity either starts or ends in Will County.

Wilmington at Lorenzo Road is one of 17 freight clusters in Will County.



ONE OF TWO ALTERNATIVES FOR a new interchange at I-55 and Illinois Route 129 includes a standard diamond design, with exits and entrances for both north and southbound I-55 traffic, with a connection to Elion Boulevard after Route 129 ends. The exit ramp from southbound I-55 lanes at Route 129 was removed in 2011.

Closure of the Route 129 ramp from southbound I-55 happened in 2011. At the time, the interchange served roughly 4,700 vehicles per day. Local municipalities were told the ramp was scheduled to be replaced, however, the overpass was removed with no date in sight to build a new one.

Traffic toward Braidwood was rerouted to Route 113, where a temporary light to help control traffic remains in use today.

Interested parties can comment on the project online at www.i55lorenzoil29outreach.org, or via email to LorenzoIL129Study@gmail.com.

Comments can also be sent via mail to:

IDOT
Bureau of Programming
Attn: Anna Kutryn, PE
201 West Center Court
Schaumburg, IL
60196-1096

Comments will be accepted through Dec. 14, 2020.

Dam

just guessing. I think that's where we need to be, where our options really are."

The city's liability coverage related to incidents at the dam was limited to \$500,000 in 2018.

The city has taken some action to improve safety at the dam.

Two years ago, the city created an exclusion zone along the west bank of the

South Island, prohibiting people from entering the water. The police were also empowered to write up tickets for those who ignore the signs and enter the zone anyway.

Last week, the city announced that they may be purchasing up to 11 concrete Jersey barriers for placement along the roadway in the park to keep people away from the dam.

Currently the only obstruction to keep folks away from the dam are signs and wooden sawhorses.

House

the school year picked up again, the district decided the best course of action was to sell the not-yet-completed house.

While the building trades class continues with its regular in-class curriculum, the home building portion has been suspended for this school year.

The building trades program has been available at WHS for 25 years.

Building trades students have been constructing one single-family home per year on property owned by the school district since 2007.

Upon completion, those homes are sold. While the sales are always a potential for the district to make a profit, it's also a unique opportunity for those students to gain valuable hands-on experience.

Pandemic plea throughout the state: Please stay home

Mitigations remain in place as Grundy positivity rate tops 25%

STAFF REPORT

As a second wave of COVID-19 outbreaks continue to sweep across the state, Illinoisans are being urged to stay home as much as possible for the remaining days of November.

The pandemic plea is not a renewal of the stay at home order from the spring, rather a call to limit outings in hopes of once again slowing the spread of the virus.

At the close of last week, Grundy County's seven day rolling test positivity rate topped 25% and the number of new cases was just short of 500 according to the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH).

On Monday, Nov. 9, the state health agency reported a total of 1,557 cases had been identified in Grundy County. On Nov. 16, the case count was up to 2,053.

In Will County, the seven day rolling test positivity rate as of the close of last week was 19.9%.

Will County is now reporting a total number of cases since the pandemic began of 29,859, with 485 deaths.

Both counties remain at an orange warning level as it saw increases in four of eight indicators the state uses in determining if a county is

experiencing stable COVID-19 activity or if there are warning signs of increased risk.

Each of the state's 11 regions have resurgence mitigations in place that are aimed at slowing the spread, however the numbers are not showing improvement.

Will County is included in Region 7, while Grundy County sits inside Region 2.

Gov. JB Pritzker has given warning that if mitigation measures are not followed and the metrics don't begin to show improvement, more drastic actions will be needed.

"With many community leaders choosing not to listen to the doctors, we are left with not many tools left in our toolbox to fight this. The numbers don't lie. If things don't take a turn in the coming days, we will quickly reach the point when some form of a mandatory stay-at-home order is all that will be left," Pritzker said last week.

At particular concern is the number hospitalizations. As of Sunday, 5,581 hospital beds were in use by COVID-19 patients and according to Pritzker just 1,100 intensive care beds are open across the state. On a regional level about 65% of ICU beds are in use.

"If we wait to take action until our hospitals are full, it will be too late, and countless patients — COVID patients as well as those with all the other ailments and injuries that bring people to the hospital — will die unnecessary deaths, because there aren't enough beds or people to staff them," Pritzker said in his daily press briefing on Monday.

Ventilator usage is also up

with 514 in use as of late Sunday. Utilization on a regional level was most recently reported at 22%.

State officials also indicated concerns about proper staffing as health care workers are being forced into quarantine because of virus exposure in the community.

Public health officials continue to urge citizens to wear face coverings and maintain appropriate social distance when in public, and to practice good hygiene including frequent hand washing and sanitizing.

These steps along with others like gathering limits and limiting non-essential travel were outlined by the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus as ways to help flatten the COVID curve.

"While each of our 275 member municipalities is unique, they all agree that it is critically important that we come together in the days and weeks ahead to combat the coronavirus pandemic. Endorsing these strategies is one of the most coherent methods for dealing with the current increase in positivity results, hospitalizations, and loss of life," the Mayors Caucus stated in a Nov. 16 release.

As the holiday season approaches, state officials continue the call for individuals and families to rethink Thanksgiving plans that include travel and mixing households.

IDPH director Dr. Ngozi Ezike said people should consider virtual get-togethers and food drops on family member's doorsteps.

Ezike indicated the next

few months could be difficult ones for Illinoisans.

"Just how bumpy it really gets depends on each of us," she said. "Let's hang in there together and be all in for Illinois."

On Tuesday, IDPH announced 12,601 new cases of COVID-19 and 97 additional deaths, including three people in Will County. All three deaths were in people over the age of 80.

As of Nov. 17, IDPH is reporting a total of 597,849 cases in Illinois, including 10,875 deaths. The age of cases ranges from younger than one to older than 100 years.

The preliminary seven-day statewide positivity for cases as a percent of total test from Nov. 10 through Nov. 16 is 12.5%.

For health questions about COVID-19, call the hotline at 1-800-889-3931 or email dph.sick@illinois.gov.

Getting Tested

As a second wave of COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations surge people of all ages are seeking testing, and its resulting in a flood of phone calls and misuse of hospital emergency rooms.

More than 9 million COVID-19 tests had been administered in the state of Illinois as of Monday, and more than 175,440 of those occurred in the previous 48 hours. As the virus resurges in the state, more and more Illinoisans are searching for testing sites.

Testing is available through local hospital systems, as well as sites staffed by the Illinois Department of Public

Health (IDPH). A number of medical clinics and even some pharmacies offer COVID testing.

Protocols at each location are subject to change based on available resources, and the availability of results differ from site to site.

Medical professionals are seeing many asymptomatic people turning to their local hospital emergency department with the hope of seeking quick testing, and they want to remind people emergency rooms should be reserved for medical emergencies.

A simple internet search of COVID-19 testing sites yields multiple returns, but before heading out to get tested individuals should understand the protocols at various locations — typically outlined online.

Locally testing locations include:
• Will County — The Will County Health Department hosts free walk-in clinics throughout the week at two county locations.

All locations will test from 9 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

Lewis University will have testing each Tuesday and Thursday except holidays at 1 University Dr., Romeoville (at the Fieldhouse in the back). This location is walk-in, first-come-first-served.

Walk-in testing is also available at Governor's State University Grants Office, 1 University Parkway, University Park, each Wednesday except holidays.

The Will County Community Health Center is providing COVID-19 testing to anyone who wants to be test-

ed. The health center will not collect any money at the location. If you have insurance, a small administrative fee may be billed directly to your insurance by the Illinois Department of Public Health to cover the cost of processing the sample at the laboratory.

Will County also hosts testing by appointment in Romeoville and Joliet.

Site information can be found online at www.willcountyhealth.org.

• Morris Hospital outpatient drive-thru testing is available by appointment only Monday-Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 150 W. High St., Morris (corner of Lisbon and High streets). A physician order is required and a scheduling representative from the hospital will call once the order is received from the physician. Results are typically available in three to six days.

• Morris Hospital Diamond-Coal City Campus Convenient Care, 1450 E. Division St., Diamond. Walk-in testing is available Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Requires an exam with a convenient care provider who determines if testing is appropriate based on patient's medical history and symptoms. An exam with a provider does not guarantee a COVID test will be done. Results for those tested are typically available in three to six days.

Toys for Tots

The Custer Fire Protection District is proudly teaming up with the U.S. Marine Corps. Reserve for this year's Toys for Tots Program. Area residents who wish to participate, can drop off a new unwrapped toy at the Custer Fire Station 21750, Hwy 113, Wilmington. between the hours of 9 a.m. 5 p.m., from now until Dec. 11, 2020 at 5 p.m.

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Eric D. Fisher, publisher
Marney Simon, editor

NOTICE OF PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX INCREASE FOR THE ELWOOD COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT #203

I. A public hearing to approve the proposed tax levy increase for the Elwood Community Consolidated School District #203, Will County, Illinois, for 2020 will be held on December 8, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in the Board of Education meeting room, 409 North Chicago Avenue, Elwood, IL.

Any person desiring to appear at the public hearing and present testimony to the taxing district may contact Cathie Pezanoski, Superintendent, Elwood Community Consolidated School District #203, 409 North Chicago Avenue, Elwood, Illinois, 60421, telephone number of 815-423-5588.

II. The total property taxes extended for 2019 were \$2,839,969.30.

III. The proposed total property taxes to be levied for 2020 are \$4,062,105.00, including all new property.

There are no property taxes to be levied for debt service and public building commission leases for 2020. Elwood Community Consolidated School District #203 has no construction debt.

On both sides, teens and crime

I have heard many adults describe the wild times of their youth and murmur, "That's when I was young and stupid."

We were all young and stupid at one time, some of us were lucky and our stupidity did not reach to the level of calling law enforcement. Today we look at teenagers and the law.

Our first story involves an innocent young man who got involved in a man hunt. From May 26, 1868, "On last Friday two convicts made a singular attempt to escape from the penitentiary. They were at work in the boot and shoe manufactory of Mr. F. Mack, and the foreman, Mr. Butler, being unwell, laid down in his office a moment to rest, during which time - not over ten minutes - these two convicts, assisted by some of their fellow prisoners, were boxed up and placed on the wagon with a number of other boxes filled with boots and shoes, to be brought to the city."

"On that day Mr. Mack happened to drive the load himself. When he had left the prison and reached the open prairie, his strange freight



TIME WAS....
Sandy Vasko

came forth from their boxes with large knives in their hands and told him if he attempted an arrest or gave an alarm they would take his life."

"As soon as they had left the wagon, he turned and drove rapidly to the residence of Mr. Wm. O'Brian, one of the guards of the prison, who, fortunately, happened to be at home. In company with Mr. O'Brian, Mr. Mack then pursued the convicts, and soon captured one of them."

"The other still continued to run and threatened to kill any who should attempt his arrest, when he came near Mr. Albert Stevens, a young man about seventeen years old, who was practicing with a revolver. Mr. O'Brian requested him to shoot the ferocious convict, which he did, wounding him in the shoulder so that he was easily captured. They were both returned to their quarters in the prison."

Our next story involves a young man who had not even reached his teen years. From July 15, 1876, "A precocious youngster distinguished himself in the town of Homer a few days ago. He stole a horse and buggy and was only captured after a vigorous pursuit of

three of four hours." "The buggy and horse stolen belonged to Mr. E. B. Shaw, of this city (Joliet), and was taken from in front of Mr. Granger's House, where Mr. Shaw had momentarily left it. The little cub when found, was several miles away and had stopped with a farmer for the night, having first told him that his father had just bought the horse and that he was taking him home. The little fellow is a tramp and claimed to be from Chicago, and is about nine years old and small for his age."

Hopping a freight was a common infraction of the law. From November 23, 1876, "One young gentleman of Irish extraction, aged about 15, was marched into the calaboose on Saturday evening for jumping a moving railroad train - a common trick of the hoodlums about town now-a-days. A sympathizing son of Israel (a Jewish person) came near sharing the "lonely cell" on the same occasion. Serves 'em right."

Young love is the cause of the next criminal deed. From February 1, 1879, "James Hanley and James Broderich, the two young ruffians who shot and nearly killed Miss Sullivan on the public highway near Braidwood last fall, and were at the time, released on bail by a justice of the peace,

were Friday morning taken to Joliet by Deputy Sheriff Stewart. Bail was taken by State's Attorney Flanders, in the sum of \$1,200 each for their appearance when wanted by the circuit court, which is now in session. This shooting was done, it is claimed, because Miss Sullivan refused to dance with one of the indicted parties at a ball, and was in all respects an aggravated case."

The young ladies in this story, while in trouble, let fear overwhelm them. From January 20, 1911, "Freda Kempa, aged 17, and Stella Maxwell, aged 18, two Joliet young ladies were arrested Tuesday in Lemont, and placed in the jail there for having fur garments in their possession which it is said were taken from a dance hall in that city."

"The young ladies for fear of public scorn chose death to disgrace, and Wednesday evening during the absence of the jailer deliberately set fire to their clothing, turning their bodies into living torches. When discovered they were horribly burned and later placed on a train and taken to Joliet where they both died Thursday. The former young lady was well known in Florence where she had resided with her sister, Mrs. A. Roush, for several months."

WHS seniors of the week

BY BRIDGET KNOWLES
WHS STUDENT REPORTER

Each week the Free Press Advocate features seniors from the Class of 2021. Wilmington seniors this week include Daniel Sanders and Evelyn Shepherd.



DANIEL SANDERS

Daniel Sanders
What do you plan to pursue upon graduation? I plan to attend JJC to get my paramedic degree and become a firefighter/paramedic

Do you have a hobby you're good at? I enjoy lifting and personally I'd say I'm pretty good at it.

What is one thing most people don't know about you? I have a deformity in my chest called pectus excavatum.

What is one skill you wish you had but don't? I wish I had the ability to jump high.

What is your favorite thing to eat? I would say anything seafood, I'm a big fan of seafood.

I want to give a shout out to (favorite staff member)... Mr. Tyler, best teacher in my opinion at WHS. Very laid back guy and he will keep you on the right path if you choose to listen to him.

Famous person (dead or alive) you would like to meet and why? Russell Orhii would be the one guy I'd want to meet. He has been an inspiration to my fitness journey and that journey has changed me.

If you could create a class, what would it be? Affiliate marketing class

Funniest memory from high school? I don't think I have a funniest memory from high school, every experience you get to be around your friends and the staff at WHS are enjoyable memories.

What advice would you give to underclassmen? Enjoy the time you have in high school. I know people tell you that all the time that it flies by, but it really does. Enjoy all of your friends in high school, you never know what will happen after high school. Set a goal in life, whether it has something to do with sports or a future job, but once you set that goal, chase it. Don't let anyone change your mind and do what you need to do.



EVELYN SHEPHERD

Evelyn Shepherd

What do you plan to pursue upon graduation? I plan to go to college and study social work and psychology.

Do you have a hobby you're good at? I like painting and watching Harry Potter movies.

What is one thing most people don't know about you? I'm a vegan.

What is one skill you wish you had but don't? I wish I could understand math but I cannot, Sorry Mr. Barnes.

What is your favorite thing to eat? Pasta for sure

I want to give a shout out to (favorite staff member)... Drew Tyler

Famous person (dead or alive) you would like to meet and why? Ruth Bader Ginsburg because she's a queen. Oh, or Juice Wrld

If you could create a class, what would it be? A class on how to respect women. Yeah.

Funniest memory from high school?

What advice would you give to underclassmen? Walk on the right side of the hallway and if you're a freshman don't date a senior.

Students volunteer in feeding starving children



WHS NATIONAL HONOR Society and Tri-M Music Honor Society members recently spent the morning packing food at Feed My Starving Children in Aurora. Students from the two organizations earned volunteer hours while help children from around the world. Feed My Starving Children partners with donors who fund nutritious MannaPack meals, has volunteer groups like NHS and Tri-M come in daily to pack them and then ships them to countries with starving children. Students who participated include (from left) Ben Kavanaugh, Becca Horton, Rachel Wandless, Keegan Parsons, Jack Narine, Emily Watson, Emily Dooley, Ellen Dooley, Eren Overmyer, Gabrielle Mathus, Apryl Proffitt, Alee Vargocko, Payton Koopman, Evelyn Shepherd, Jake Plese, Kinsey Roth and Haley Crescenti.



WILMINGTON NHS and Tri-M members work together to pack food for people all around the world at the Feed My Starving Children facility in Aurora. Work was completed while social distancing. Helping are (from left) Ben Kavanaugh, Ellen Dooley, Gabrielle Mathus, Eren Overmyer and Emily Dooley.

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CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™
steve.francis@raymondjames.com

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You're fired

CUSTER PARK—What's so hard about conceding an election? It's pretty certain that Joe Biden has won the presidency. Yet loser Trump is refusing to concede and instead is forcing millions of dollars to be spent on legal proceedings that will end up going nowhere. Come on ex-president Trump, just admit you've been fired by America's voters.

Election questions

SHADOW LAKES—What I'm very surprised at in my lifetime of voting is that the liberal media has already confirmed Biden as President-elect. He has also been on TV announcing some of his plans as President-elect when states have not confirmed their votes yet. So how can he be President elect? It's simple, liberal media is projecting this without any confirmation. There were 100,000 votes that showed up in Pennsylvania with the only part of the ballots that were filled out was for president, nothing else, and they were all for Biden, which raises some questions. In Michigan, 140,000 votes were mysteriously found and these were all mailed in and it happened right after Biden had his campaign there. If you remember back when Al Gore ran for president it took 30 days before he was actually confirmed the loser. So the liberal media is really jumping at something because they want Biden. Why? I don't know. Dan Hill

Celebration will end

COAL CITY—All the people who are enjoying the election of Joe Biden for president had better enjoy celebrating now. When he gets through enforcing the things that he is going to do after the inauguration, the people that elected him president will discover that their lives will also be affected by the new rules which they will also have to obey. And when the employment is taken over by China again and all their taxes will rise, then maybe you can say to yourself, what have I done, my children will not be able to live the American dream. But every person from foreign lands will have the American dream handed to them on a silver platter while Americans become third class citizens and have to cater to every foreign country. Good luck trying to survive while government employees live on easy street.

America going to pot

COAL CITY—I read voters in Arizona, Montana, New Jersey and South Dakota approved to legalize recreational marijuana. Now 15 states as well as Washington D.C. allow recreational marijuana use and 36 permit for medical usage. Oregon residents voted to decriminalize possession of small amounts of harder drugs like cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine. It's like a sledge hammer is being taken to the war on drugs. Brain specialists will confirm using those drugs causes brain damage. Next the users will be wanting their marijuana for free.

Sold out America

WILMINGTON—According to the news media we have a president named Joe Biden. They say he is a great world leader, so let's take a short look at his resume. Joe Biden was involved with giving over \$1 billion to Iran. Joe Biden may have some ties with his son's involvement with the Chinese corporation. Joe Biden stated on the news that he demanded the individual in

Ukraine be fired that was investigating this corporation while his son was on the board of directors or Ukraine would not receive any aid from the USA. The individual was fired from the investigation within six hours and Joe Biden bragged about this on the news. He is truly a great leader that sold out the USA once and he will sell out our country again so that the Democrat party in Washington DC can play mommy and daddy to American citizens. Everyone should go get a dictionary and look up the words traitor and treason.

What a fake

WILMINGTON—Did you see Trump lay a wreath at the tomb of the unknown sucker?

Like a vacation

BRAIDWOOD—Gov. Pritzker gets on TV to announce that COVID numbers are going up so what happens next? We have state offices, yes with all those government paid workers, close up before the day this through. The DMV locked up its doors, now the court system is talking about closing down. That's like giving all those employees a paid vacation at a time when this state can least afford it. If these state agencies are going to close then the governor should force them all to take furlough days.

Hand them over

WILMINGTON—I don't know why Trump won't give Biden the daily intelligence briefings, it's not like he reads them.

Check red states

WILMINGTON—Why isn't the GOP suing states that Trump won? Maybe there were ballots illegally cast for the president in those states.

Life flows by

COAL CITY—It is easy to be pleasant when life flows by like a song, but the man worthwhile is the one who will smile when everything goes dead wrong. For the test of the heart is trouble and it always comes with years and the smile that is worth the praises of earth is the smile that shines their tears.

An avid President Trump supporter



PLUCKED

Winter is coming

COAL CITY—I read that 33 million Americans are unemployed. Thanks to an extra \$600 per week in expanded unemployment benefits some of them got more money from unemployment than their old wages. But Congress let that supplement expire in August and the jobless are facing a desperate situation as their savings quickly dwindle. White-color layoffs are mounting. Many had been able to work from home. Corporate America is tightening its belt in anticipation of a rough economic winter. Europe is going into lockdown. What's happening in Europe is a leading indicator for the USA for sure to anticipate a rough economic winter.

No blue wave

COAL CITY—The Democrats spent \$1 billion to win the election. The Blue Wave did not happen. Their plan was to take over the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives by 10-12 seats. We remain a very much divided country. There seems to be something sinful spending that kid of money on an election while many are struggling to make ends meet. Trump voters still make up half the country. Political polling is a fraud.

Still lying

COAL CITY—Donald Trump ran for president twice in the last five years. Both times he lost the popular vote by millions of votes. Due to the electoral college he served the last four years as president, but this time he lost. He told us a few weeks ago that we were rounding the curve on the coronavirus. He failed to mention that around the curve are the hospital and the cemetery. Trump, unfortunately, is not man enough to accept reality and admit he lost. The whiny lowlife continues to make up unfounded lies about the election and thus undermines our democracy, but that is exactly what his benefactor Mr. Putin wants him to do.

Why invoke God?

WILMINGTON—It's Saturday and I'm watching the rally for Trump and these people keep invoking God, but if He was really on their side wouldn't Trump have won?

Biden the actor

SHADOW LAKES—Why is it the day after the election Biden is standing in front of a blue wall with the printing president-elect? That has never happened in my voting history. Also, CNN always had a little news print on the bottom of how bad the Coronavirus is. After they announced Biden won you can no longer see it there. Does anyone have an answer? Maybe Biden waved a magic wand and it's gone? After all, he is quite an actor. Dan Hill

Letter to the editor

The costs of failing to protect our planet

Dear Editor,
There is no question that the health of humanity is inextricably tied to the health of nature. As explorers, we have witnessed the wonder of our world's biodiversity firsthand. However, we have also seen the threats it faces - and the clear correlation between promoting natural security abroad and strengthening our national security at home.

logical integrity and stopping criminals from robbing its natural resources for profit.

During Geography Awareness Week, it is appropriate to consider how actions on the other side of the planet can affect us here in the United States. When tropical forests are destroyed, fisheries collapse, coral reefs die off, or elephants are killed by ivory traffickers, this 'nature loss' has catastrophic impacts that can ripple across the globe. There is much uncertainty in this world, but one thing is clear: America's security and prosperity depend in part on protecting our planet's eco-

The past year has driven home the costs of failing to protect our planet. We've seen record breaking hurricanes and wildfires, and our health and economy are suffering from a new disease that, like other pandemics, originated from the exploitation of wildlife and nature.

The good news is we have effective and affordable solutions to address these problems, starting with U.S. government investments in international conservation. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, and conserving nature can help us prevent many future challenges. As a new political era dawns, enhancing our natural security should be among America's top priorities.

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Ashlan & Philippe Cousteau

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It pays to get a flu shot



STEVE FRANCIS (left) of Oak Knoll Financial Strategies accepts a pile of vaccination receipts from **Anita Goulding** of Trinity Services. The staff and clients at Trinity Services recently held a flu shot day at its Buchanan Street facility when 52 people were vaccinated. For each shot Oak Knoll Financial will donate \$5 to each of three local charities including the Christian Help Association, Kuzma Care Cottage and the Caring Closet. Goulding said this is the third year in a row Trinity Services has held a clinic on site, making it convenient for workers and clients. "We can't afford to have the flu spread through our facility so it makes more sense to get vaccinated. Plus the incentive by Oak Knoll Financial in donating to the community helps too," Goulding said. Anyone who recently has been vaccinated can bring their receipt to Oak Knoll at 207 S. Water St., Wilmington through Dec. 31

Illinois facing long-term deficits, growing bill backlog

BY PETER HANCOCK
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

SPRINGFIELD - A new report from the Governor's Office of Management and Budget shows that without significant new revenue, spending cuts or a combination of both, the state will face a budget deficit of \$3.9 billion in the current fiscal year and continuing deficits of \$4 billion or more in each of the next five fiscal years.

It also projects that the state's backlog of unpaid bills could grow to as much as \$33 billion by fiscal year 2026, up from the current backlog total of about \$7.8 billion, if lawmakers do not make structural changes.

"Sizeable deficits in the general funds budget are projected for fiscal years 2022 through 2026, ranging from \$4.8 billion in fiscal year 2022 and falling to \$4.2 billion by fiscal year 2026," the report stated.

The report does not actually predict that those deficits will occur. Instead, it is intended to show what would happen under the state's current revenue structure and spending obligations.

The report, which was released late Friday, Nov. 13, attributes much of the current fiscal year's deficit to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has resulted in dramatic revenue losses for state and local governments throughout the country.

But it also notes that vot-

ers' rejection of Gov. JB Pritzker's proposed constitutional amendment to allow for a graduated income tax on the Nov. 3 ballot - which would have allowed higher tax rates to be levied on people with higher incomes - means the state will have fewer tools at its disposal to address its ongoing "structural" budget deficits.

Revenue officials had estimated that passage of the amendment would have brought in an additional \$1.2 billion during the last six months of the current fiscal year, and roughly \$3.2 billion per year after that. But the rejection of that amendment now means lawmakers and the administration will have to look elsewhere for solutions.

"Looking ahead to the fiscal year 2022 budget [which begins July 1, 2021] and recognizing that Illinois continues to face significant financial challenges, there are limited ways to address the structural deficit of the state budget in the absence of the tax rate structure flexibility that would have been provided under the changes in the proposed constitutional amendment," the report stated.

Earlier this year, Pritzker advised state agency directors to prepare for a 5% budget reduction this year, and to make plans for a potential 10% cut in fiscal year 2022, which begins July 1. But the report says even that would not be enough to close the gap between anticipated revenues and expenditures, and that Pritzker is unwilling to make

deeper cuts, which means he will have to seek legislative approval for some form of tax increases.

According to the report, one of the options being considered is some form of tax increase or elimination of corporate and business tax "loopholes."

"As the cuts that would be required to bring Illinois' budget to balance would harm education and human services programs and damage essential areas of the state's economy, the Governor continues to believe that cuts alone cannot be the solution and revenue adjustments need to be considered as well," the report states. "The Governor will work with the legislature to identify corporate and business tax loopholes that can be closed and tax adjustments that can be made that will minimize the impact to lower- and middle-class families while ensuring that Illinois can meet its financial responsibilities."

It remains unclear, though, how much the state could raise through such measures or whether that would be enough to address the state's long-term revenue problems.

Illinois 126 to close

The Illinois Department of Transportation announces that repairs to the Canadian National Railway crossing on Illinois 126, just east of Illinois 59 in Plainfield, will require a full closure now through Nov. 21.

A detour will direct vehicular traffic to Illinois 59, 135th Street/Pilcher Road and Essington Road. Truck traffic will be detoured to Illinois 59, U.S. 30, northbound Interstate 55, Weber Road exit, southbound Interstate 55 and Illinois 126 exit.

Motorists can expect delays and should allow extra time for trips through this area.

Springfield moves to fine people \$50 for not wearing masks

BY GREG BISHOP
THE CENTER SQUARE

Potential fines for businesses that don't follow COVID-19 masking mandates have been in place for months across the state, but some municipalities are taking the mandate further, including the city of Springfield.

Springfield will now issue fines to people who don't wear a mask when required.

The Springfield city council held back a resolution that requires bars and restaurants with indoor dining to have 25 percent capacity and require patrons to answer a questionnaire. Local officials are allowing indoor dining despite Gov. J.B. Pritzker's blanket prohibition he's issued in regions across the state because of increased COVID-19 positivity rates.

While Springfield leaders held back the resolution laying out the local guidelines to allow indoor service, it passed a mandate, not just for businesses, but for individuals with a \$50 fine if they are caught by police without a mask inside a bar, restaurant or retailer.

Springfield Mayor Jim Langfelder said the ordinance requires individuals to wear a mask while indoors at a bar, restaurant or retailer. He said the civil penalty will be in

place as long as necessary and enforcement is immediate.

"Right now a restaurant can be cited, right now," Langfelder said. "The addition is really the \$50 per violation for the individual."

Alderman Joe McMenamin said the ordinance cuts through having multiple steps for immediate enforcement.

"I think this is trying to get right to the police officer eyeballing the violation, someone being maskless, and writing the citations," McMenamin said.

McMenamin attempted to amend the measure to remove an exemption for someone who claims to have a medical condition, but that provision remains in the ordinance.

Illinois Retail Merchants Association's Rob Karr said the move puts the onus on the individual, not the business owner.

"You can't physically detain them, you open yourself up to a lot of different charges of discrimination," Karr said. "So it is where it belongs, having the enforcement done by law enforcement and on individuals."

Karr said he'd like to see a statewide mandate, but urged other communities to follow suit.

Illinois Municipal League Executive Director Brad Cole applauded the city for the mandate.

Springfield is believed to be the first municipality in Illinois to pass such a measure.

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Post 1336 observes Veterans Day

Tropical storm Eta with 50 mph winds and flooding rain couldn't stop the Floridian Club of Sarasota and St. Juvin Post 1336 Veterans of Foreign Wars from sponsoring a Veterans Day luncheon for 24 vets and guests.

Veterans and guests enjoyed lunch and a patriotically decorated cake along with the camaraderie usually found when vets gather. Post 1336 past commander Charlie Brown and his wife, Kathy served as hosts.

Coal City's St. Juvin Post and the Floridian Club also sponsor a monthly veteran's coffee and doughnut event at the Venice, FL housing development.

How to track down old friends online

Dear Savvy Senior, I'm interested in tracking down some old friends I've lost touch with over the years but could use some help. What websites can you recommend that can help me find them? Tracking Tom

Dear Tom,
Thanks to the Internet, tracking down long-lost friends from many years ago is relatively easy to do and, in most cases, it won't cost you a cent. Here are some tips and online tools to help you get started.

Before you begin your search, a good first step is to jot down any information you can remember or find out about the people you're trying to locate. Things like their full name (maiden and married), age or birth date, last known address or phone number, old e-mail address, names of family members, etc. Knowing details can help you turn up clues while you search.

After you compile your information, a good place to start your search is at social media sites like Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram. And search engines

like Google and Yahoo.

When using search engines, type in the name of the person you're searching for in quotation marks, for example, "John Smith." You can narrow your search by adding other criteria like their nickname or middle name, the city or state they may live in, or even their occupation.

If your initial search comes up empty, you can also use people searches like AnyWho.com, Intelius.com or WhitePages.com. These sites will provide a list of potential matches from across the U.S.

Because many people share the same name, these sites will also supply details to help identify the right person, perhaps including their age, prior hometowns, names of relatives, colleges attended or employer.

While these sites are free to use at a basic level, they charge a small fee for providing certain details like the per-



SAVVY SENIOR
Jim Miller

sons contact information. WhitePages, however, sometimes provides home phone numbers for free.

Here are a few other niche people-finding websites to help you with your search.

To look for old high school classmates, try Classmates.com. This site has contact information only for people who have registered with it. But even if your friend hasn't registered, it could provide contact info for another classmate who remains in touch with your friend.

Another option is to check out your high school alumni website. Not every school has its own site, but some do, and you can look for it by going to any search engine and typing in the name of the school with the city and state it's located in. You can also search at AlumniClass.com, a huge hosting site for thousands of high schools across the U.S.

If you're looking for old

college friends, look for an alumni directory on the school's website. You might be able to access your friend's contact info by completing an online registration. Or, try calling or emailing your alumni relations department and ask them to pass on your contact info to your friend.

If you're looking for someone you served with in the military, Military.com offers a free "Buddy Finder" service that has a database of more than 20 million records - visit Military.com/buddy-finder. You can also search for free at G I S E A R C H . C O M , TogetherWeServed.com and VetFriends.com.

If you can't find any current information about the person you're searching for, it could be that he or she is dead. To find out if that's the case, use obituary databases such as Tributes.com and Legacy.com, which has a newspaper obituary search tool from hundreds of U.S. newspapers.

Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit SavvySenior.org.

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| Sun., Nov. 15 | 9-11 a.m. | Breakfast Skilllets |
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Library to host family reading night

The Coal City Public Library will celebrate a Virtual Family Reading Night with the theme "Dig Deeper: Read, Investigate, Discover."

Join the library staff as it observes the state of Illinois' Family Reading Night virtually.

Complete at least three of the activities on the Choice Board posted on their Facebook page beginning at 5 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 19 to receive a small prize bag of goodies.

Google forms must be filled out by Tuesday, Nov. 24 at 8 p.m. to receive your prize. Register only if you want to do the craft and the Secret Decoder, so the library can get the supplies. Otherwise, participants can stop in to pick up a recording sheet. Activities to choose from include Masked Readers who will read a story and you guess who the reader is, crafts, escape room and more.

CCPLD also offers digital resources that are fun, interactive and educational such as ABCMouse.com, only available in library; BiblioBoard, Novelist Plus, and TumbleBooks. These resources can be accessed from the library website at www.ccpld.org using a CCPLD library card. For more information call the library at 815-634-4552.

Woman's Club makes birthdays brigher



GFWC-IL COAL City Junior Woman's Club collected items for Birthday Bags for Advocate for Children's Week in October. Some of the items the bags held were cake mixes, frostings, cake plates, napkins, small toys, bracelets, birthday badges, as well as other items to assist parents in having a birthday party for their child. These bags were donated to Help for Hope. Coal City Juniors are "making a difference" in the lives of others. Anyone wishing to help make a difference in our community are welcome to join. Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month September-June at 6:30 p.m. in person and virtually. Pictured are Marsha Vaughn, Coal City Junior member and Cathy Milne of Help for Hope.

Unemployment claims remain high in Illinois

BY CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

As the number of infections and hospitalizations for COVID-19 are setting daily records, new unemployment claims continued pouring in to the Illinois Department of Employment Security.

During the week that ended Saturday, Nov. 7, IDES reported, 67,158 workers filed first-time unemployment claims, down roughly 9% from the previous week, but still more than six times the number who filed such claims during the same week a year ago.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, 338,899 Illinois workers were receiving continuing unemployment benefits during the week, down about 1% from the previous week.

In addition, another 9,726 people filed initial claims for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, a federally-funded program for gig workers, independent contractors and others who don't normally qualify for traditional unemployment insurance.

Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker noted that the PUA system has been plagued by fraud nationwide, and he blamed federal officials for failing to enact adequate controls to prevent fraud.

Make a Difference Day



FOR MAKE A Difference Day, the GFWC-IL Coal City Junior Woman's Club collected new socks and underwear for those in need. They collected 149 pairs of socks and 58 pairs of underwear and delivered them to Help for Hope. Seats and Feet's: Coal City Juniors will continue to collect new socks and underwear as well as blankets and throws. There will be a collection bin at the Coal City Library or contact any club member to donate. Items will be collected through Thursday, Jan. 14, 2021. All donated items will be delivered to Help for Hope. Everyone is encouraged to show kindness to others through giving. Pictured is Marsha Vaughn (left), Coal City Junior Club member and Cathy Milne from Help for Hope.

Braidwood Lions to collect used Christmas lights

The Braidwood Lions Club will be collecting used/non-working strands of Christmas lights starting Sunday, November 15th.

Collection bins will be located inside Whitmore Ace Hardware in Braidwood and Coal City, and inside Braidwood City Hall until January 31st. The strands of lights will be recycled by the

Lions of Illinois Foundation with proceeds to benefit the foundation's sight & sound services provided to local Lions Clubs.

A collection bin will also be available during the club's annual Christmas Tree Sale fundraiser, hours of operations. For more information please call (815)791-8093 or visit www.braidwoodlionsclub.org.

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As the cold comes, warm up with a Hot Whiskey

I can't say that I look forward to cold weather, but I do look forward to the first Hot Whiskey of the year. This week we will take a look at a drink with no "official" recipe, many regional variants, and a legend that has survived every winter for over 200 years.

The Hot Whiskey is technically a Hot Toddy that calls for whiskey, but most of the time when a spirit other than whiskey is used. The recipe below works with nearly any dark, aged spirit. Aged rum, brandy, and cognac are all popular spirit options in the Hot Toddy.

The "hot" anything is more of a platform than it is a recipe. The platform traces its roots back to a time when nearly all cocktails were served hot. A few cocktails may have been served at room temperature, but most were served hot. Why? Because in the era before commercially available ice, there were simply no other options.

Hot Toddy-type cocktails were popular during the Colonial era, and were often prepared in large batches to be served to weary travelers in early American inns and taverns. The hot drinks of this era likely used brandy, or dark rum which was acquired via trade routes.

Meanwhile, the Irish were enjoying Hot Whiskey using their own Irish whiskeys, and the Scots were doing the same.

Is there a "best" whiskey for the Hot Whiskey? There

sure is, and it's the whiskey in your cabinet. Use your favorite if you have one. If you do not have a favorite, use bourbon. Bourbon is great in the Hot Whiskey because it pairs well with honey and brings natural vanilla/oak flavor notes to the drink.

If you decide to use scotch or Irish whiskey, used something blended. Blends are typically smoother in character and are better suited to mixing.

The same general mixology principles that work in cold drinks will also work well in hot drinks. For example: most whiskey cocktails are spirit, something sweet, and something sour. In a Hot Whiskey, the sweet comes to us through the honey, and the sour is the fresh lemon juice.

Sure, there is no ice to dilute the Hot Whiskey, but the drink has plenty of dilution due to the hot water. Speaking of the hot water, there are some advantages to mixing a drink with hot water. The main advantage to using hot water is the dissolvability of granulated sugar and honey. In a cold drink, granulated sugar simply will not dissolve. This is why simple syrup is used in most cold drinks as opposed to granulated sugar or raw honey.

Speaking of sugar, go



THE SUNDAY COCKTAIL
Brian Rung

ahead and use sugar in place of honey if you are not a fan of honey. Sugar works quite well in Hot Whiskey, be sure to use a "dark" sugar. Brown sugar or demerara sugar will bring a nice complexity to the drink and will not overpower the whiskey. The hot water does a great job of taming ingredients that would normally overpower a drink, such as a lower quality whiskey or pure lemon juice.

How hot should the water in the Hot Whiskey be? It should be hotter than warm, but not boiling. I guess the optimal temperature for the Hot Whiskey would be "simmering", about to boil. This way the water will be hot enough to dissolve your honey or sugar, and will be at a nice warm temp long enough to finish the drink.

Start your water in a saucepan on the stove, serve in a quality "tempered" mug.

If you have a Hot Toddy/Hot Whiskey fan in your family, you may have noticed their crockpot filled with whiskey, water, honey, apples, cinnamon, oranges, cloves, and you name it. The sky really is the limit here, the recipe below is merely a jumping off point for your own version of Hot Whiskey. Any combination of the aforementioned ingredi-

ents will work, I also add a dash of Angostura Bitters to my Hot Whiskey.

If you are serving a group, heat enough water to fill the mugs. Once your water is heated, add the water to the mugs and follow the recipe below. When serving Hot Whiskey, garnish each mug with a lemon wheel or lemon wedge, and a cinnamon stick to stir. Stirring the Hot Whiskey with a cinnamon stick

is a delicious way to dissolve the honey or sugar into the drink.

I get it. Winter is coming, and that means shoveling sidewalks, disappointment in college football teams not named Clemson or Alabama, and two solid months of Christmas music. Hang in there, and remember that with each setting of the sun we are one day closer to the end of 2020.

I'll drink to that.

The classic Hot Whiskey is built and served in a preheated tempered mug.

Combine in mug:
3/4 cup hot water
1 1/2 oz. whiskey
2 to 3 teaspoons honey
2 to 3 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
Stir until honey dissolves
Garnish with lemon wheel and cinnamon stick
Until next week, enjoy responsibly.

Democrats cancel veto session

BY CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

SPRINGFIELD – The fall veto session of the Illinois General Assembly that was scheduled to begin this week has been canceled amid a worsening COVID-19 pandemic.

Democratic leaders announced their decision to cancel the session, prompting Republicans to question the motives behind that decision.

House Speaker Michael Madigan and Senate President Don Harmon, both Democrats, said that the decision was made out of concern for the safety of lawmakers, staff, their families and the general public, although they left open the possibility that it could be rescheduled if public health conditions improve.

Lawmakers typically hold a brief session in the fall to deal with any legislation from the regular session that was vetoed by the governor. This year's

session was scheduled to run Nov. 17-19 and Dec. 1-3.

This year, however, there were no vetoes to deal with, largely because the regular session was severely shortened due to the pandemic, which reached its initial peak in April and early May. The House and Senate held a brief, four-day special session in late May.

Since early October, however, cases throughout the state have been rising sharply to levels exceeding those of the early pandemic phase, particularly in Region 3 of central Illinois, which includes the capital city.

Even though there were no pressing veto issues to deal with, the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus had hoped to use the veto session to advance its agenda of racial justice and equity reforms across a wide range of issues – an agenda that both Harmon and Madigan said they would support.

But Senator Kimberly Lightford, D-Maywood, the Senate Majority Leader and chair of the ILBC, said those issues would have to wait until it is safe for the General Assembly to convene.

The 101st General Assembly officially comes to an end on Jan. 12, the day before the next session begins and newly-elected and reelected lawmakers are sworn into office. If the committee does not conclude its work before then, Republicans will have to petition again to form a new committee in the next General Assembly.

Democratic Gov. JB Pritzker, who had hoped to use the veto session to get legislative approval for significant budget cuts in the wake of the failure of his proposed graduated income tax amendment on Election Day, also expressed disappointment over the cancellation.

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OBITUARIES

Connie J. Adams

BRAIDWOOD—Connie J. Adams (nee Fielder), 63, of Braidwood, passed away Monday, Nov. 16, 2020 at the Joliet Area Community Hospice Home in Joliet.

She was born Feb. 8, 1957 in Joliet. Connie married Harry "Jim" Adams on Feb. 28, 1976 in Wilmington. She previously taught Sunday School and Kindergarten at the Christian Faith Center in Wilmington. She was a member of the Christian Life Assembly in Diamond. Connie enjoyed making jewelry, shopping and her two cats.

Surviving are her husband, Harry James Adams; one son, Todd Adams, of Custer Park;

her mother, Margaret (nee Sullivan) Fielder, of Wilmington and one brother, Mark (Donna) Fielder of Braidwood.

Preceding her in death were her father, Robert Fielder and one brother, Bob Fielder.

Cremation rites have been accorded. Private services will be held. Inurnment will be at Oakwood Cemetery in Wilmington.

For more information and to visit her online guestbook, log on to www.rwpattersonfuneralhomes.com.

R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory, 401 E. Main St., Braidwood is in charge of arrangements.

Charlie Hart

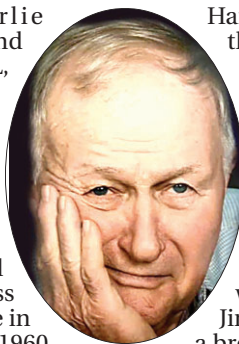
BRAIDWOOD—Charlie Hart, 83, of Braidwood and formerly of Westchester, IL, passed away Friday, Nov. 13, 2020 at Morris Hospital.

Born Oct. 3, 1937 in Waukesha, WI, Charles Owen was a son of Francis "Frank" and Ida Elizabeth (Bolland) Hart. He moved to Westchester at an early age with his family where he was raised and educated. Charlie graduated from Proviso High School with the class of 1955 and went on to honorably serve in the United States Army. On Oct. 30, 1960, Charlie married Karen Compton in Westchester and together they made their home and raised their family in Westchester until moving to Braidwood after his retirement.

Charlie worked as a lineman for Commonwealth Edison and retired after 37 years of faithful service. He was a charter member of Westchester Community Church; belonged to CECO Recreation Club, where he served on the board for more than 25 years; was a member of Midwest Street Rod Association (MSRA) and was currently serving on the council for the City of Braidwood.

One who truly enjoyed being retired, Charlie remained active with various hobbies. He was an avid purist woodworker, who leaves behind countless handmade white oak pieces both big and small. In addition he cherished his '32 Ford three window coupe street rod, and took pleasure in being in the yard and gardening. Charlie will be missed over early morning coffee meetings with the guys, and afternoon beers.

Survivors include his wife of 60 years, Karen; son, David (Tina) Hart, of Port Orchard, WA; two daughters, Julie Hart, of Wilmington and Tracy (Jeffrey) Markey, of Westchester; eight grandchildren: Katelin (Colt) Monroe, of Wilmington; Christine (Damien) O'Brien, of Australia; Martin Patrick, of Kentucky; Bobby Markey and Olivia Markey, both of Westchester and Tad Campbell, Zachary Campbell and



Hanna Campbell, all of Washington; three great-grandchildren: Revan, Luke and Anabelle; one brother, Jon (Betty) Hart, of Sun City, AZ; four brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law; one niece, Elizabeth (Kevin) Drum and nephew, Peter (Linda) Hart, in addition to more than 100 nieces and nephews on Karen's side of the family; numerous great-nieces and great-nephews, as well as cousins including his cousin, Jim Hart, of Oquawka, IL who was like a brother to Charlie.

Charlie was preceded in death by his parents and one son, Brian Hart on Nov. 5, 2013.

Per Charlie's wishes, green flameless cremation rites have been accorded.

Due to the current restrictions of the pandemic, a private family memorial service will be held at Coal City United Methodist Church with Reverend Brad Shumaker officiating.

Those wishing to participate in Charlie's memorial are welcome to join the live streamed service available on Charlie's memorial page, Thursday, Nov. 19, 2020 beginning at 11 a.m.

Charlie will be laid to rest in Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood with full military honors at a later date.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Charlie's memory to Westchester Community Church, 1840 Westchester Blvd., Westchester, IL 60154 or to a charity of the donor's choosing.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the guestbook, upload photographs, join the live stream memorial, and share Charlie's memorial page online through social media by logging onto: www.ReevesFuneral.com/obituary/Charlie-Hart

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

Joyce Brimer

WILMINGTON—Joyce Antoinette Brimer (nee Righton), 79, of Wilmington, passed away Friday, Nov. 13, 2020 at home.

Born April 14, 1941 in Chicago, IL, she was the daughter of Stanley and Petronella (nee Pronckett) Righton. Joyce married Donald A. Brimer on Aug. 20, 1960 in Chicago. She was previously an administrative assistant for Lemont School District. Joyce enjoyed her card club and attending her grandkids sporting events. She was a member of St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church in Wilmington.

Surviving are one son, Daniel (Dawn) Brimer, of Wilmington and two daughters, Dawn Peatross and Susan (Karl) Ruraede, both of Wilmington; five grandchildren: Lynsey



Marshall, Tyler and Madison Brimer and Kelsey and Kendall Peatross; one great-grandchild, Kaelen Kelly; two sisters, Audrey Manley and Wynn Righton, both of Lockport, IL.

Preceding her in death were her parents, her husband, Donald A. Brimer (Jan. 2, 2009); one son, Richard Brimer and son-in-law, Randy Peatross.

Cremation rites have been accorded. A memorial service will be held at a later date.

For more information and to visit her online guestbook, log on to www.rwpattersonfuneralhomes.com.

R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory, 401 E. Main St., Braidwood is in charge of arrangements.

Edward L. Pierard

COAL CITY—Edward L. Pierard, 85, and a lifelong resident of Coal City, passed away Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2020 at Riverside Rehabilitation Center in Kankakee.

Born April 18, 1935 in Coal City, Edward Louis was a son of Ernest Joseph and Talia (Farrero) Pierard. He was raised in Coal City; graduated from Coal City High School with the class of 1953, and later went on to earn his Associates in Applied Science from Joliet Junior College.

Edward honorably served in the United States Army, as well as the United States Corps Reserves from 1957-1963. On Sept. 23, 1961 Edward married Lorraine Novotney in St. Stephen Church in Streator, and together they made their home and raised their family in Coal City. Ed was a member of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Roman Catholic Church in Coal City and retired from Exelon in 1992, following 33 years of faithful service.

Remembered for his sharp sense of humor and financial savviness, Ed took pleasure in automobiles and computers, as well as watching NASCAR.

Survivors include his loving wife of 59 years, Lorraine; four children: Mark Pierard, of Summerville, SC; Aaron Pierard, of Rumford, RI; Monique Pierard Freeman, of Joliet and Brandon Pierard, of Bloomington, IL; five grandchildren: Michael Pierard, of Rumford; Derek Freeman, of Joliet; Justin Pierard, of Bloomington; Mason Freeman, of Joliet and Talia Pierard, of Bloomington; brother, Ernest Pierard, of Santa Fe, NM and several nieces and nephews, as well as dear friends, Pete Giandrone and Tom Fedash.

Edward was preceded in death by his par-



ents; son, Jason Edward in infancy (1970); sister, Alice Fedash Pierard and brother, David Pierard.

Green flameless cremation rites have been accorded.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Wednesday, Nov. 25, 2020 at 11 a.m. in Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Roman Catholic Church, 215 S. Kankakee St. in Coal City. Reverend Robert Noesen will preside.

Due to current pandemic guidelines, face masks will be required for attendees and measures of safe social distancing practices will be in order. The funeral home staff will assist the family not to exceed the safe number set forth for the service.

Those wishing to participate in Ed's services remotely are welcome to join the live streamed service available through a link on his memorial page beginning at 11 a.m. on Nov. 25, 2020.

Burial with full military honors will follow in Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood, where Ed will be laid to rest with his son, Jason.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Ed's memory to the Assumption Catholic Church Building Fund, Joliet Area Community Hospice or to Mercy Home for Boys and Girls.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the guest book, upload photographs and share Ed's memorial page online through social media by logging onto: www.ReevesFuneral.com/obituary/Edward-Pierard

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

Wanda Lou Johnson

ELWOOD—Wanda Lou Johnson, nee Button, 82, of Elwood, surrounded by love from her four adult children and while holding her husband's hand, breathed her last breath in comfort and peace and was welcomed into the presence of God on Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2020 at 11:50 a.m. Wanda was born in Joliet on Oct. 6, 1938 to Vernon and Lucille (Walker) Button and grew up in the Ridgewood neighborhood. She and her loving husband of 61 years, Gerald (Jerry) Dennis Johnson, raised their family in Elwood. Wanda has been under hospice care at Sunny Hill Nursing Home of Will County since January 2020.

An inspiration to all who knew her for her kindness, gentleness and integrity, Wanda graduated from Joliet Central High School in 1956. She then worked as an executive secretary at the United States Atomic Energy Commission and married the love of her life on Sept. 18, 1959. Together, she and Jerry grew a successful family grocery business that included JV Supermarket on Cass Street in Joliet, Festival Foods in Bourbonnais, and Food Expo stores in Kankakee and Streator. An accomplished bookkeeper and business administrator, Wanda's favorite career was as wife, mother and grandmother.

In addition to her husband, Jerry, Wanda is survived by their children: Susan (Christopher) Markgraf, Sharon (Cedric) Hentsch, Sandra (Mark) Chellios and Steven (Melanie) Johnson,



as well as her brother, Donald Button and brother-in-law, Ronald (Kathryn) Chaplin. She is the beloved grandmother of Matthew (Asia Burnett) Markgraf, Lindsay (Tyler) Chambers, Sarah (Adam Necklows) Markgraf, Alex Johnson, Kyle (Malai) Chellios, Brittany Hentsch, Corinne (Kory) Mitcheff, Kali Hentsch and Hannah (Marcus Melancon) Johnson. Her beloved great-grandchildren provided Wanda with great joy. They are: Carson Chambers, Ellie Johnson, Charlotte Chambers, Fitz Chellios, Griffin Markgraf, Mika Melancon and Briar Chellios. Wanda is also survived by many dear nieces and nephews. She will be dearly missed by all who knew and loved her.

Wanda is preceded in death by her parents, Vernon and Lucille Button; mother and father-in-law, Verner and Corinne (Allendorf) Johnson; sister, Kathryn Sue (Button) Chaplin and granddaughter, Lindsay (Chellios) Chambers.

Funeral services were held on Monday, Nov. 16, 2020. Private interment followed at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood.

Memorials are appreciated to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, www.stjude.org or the Alzheimer's Association, www.alz.org.

Wanda's arrangements were entrusted to Forsythe Gould Funeral Home in Manhattan, www.forsythegouldfh.com.

Joe A. Silvey

ESSEX—Joe A. Silvey, 80, of Essex, passed away peacefully, Tuesday, Nov. 10, 2020 at his home.

Born June 6, 1940 in Xenia, IL, he was the son of Leslie and Mary (nee Cope) Silvey. He was a Veteran of the United States Army Reserves. He served on the former RUCS School Board and was a member of the Coal City United Methodist Church and was the former treasurer of the parsonage committee for the Essex, Braceville and South Wilmington Methodist Churches. Joe was very active within his community, where he also served on the Essex Village Board, was a trauma coordinator for the Essex Ambulance, as well as a secretary, treasurer, EMT and Fireman for the Essex Fire District. If you knew Joe, you knew he had a love for gardening and will forever be remembered for his massive vegetable garden.

He also had a love for sports and was an avid St. Louis Cardinals fan. His children were his pride and joy; when they were in their youth he was passionate about coaching little league and the County West Soccer Association. Joe will be missed by many, but will never be forgotten.



Surviving are his wife of 58 years, Pamela (nee Wells) Silvey, who he married June 1, 1962 in Flora, IL; two sons, Todd (Jo Beth) Silvey, of Elgin, IL and Brock (Justine) Silvey, of Evanston, IL; one daughter, Robin Egerton, of Mulberry, AR; seven grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, one sister, Fayeanne (Dale) Baker, of Farina, IL; one sister-in-law, Joy Silvey, of Leadbetter, KY and numerous nieces and nephews.

Preceding him in death were his parents and his brother, Edward Silvey.

Cremation rites have been accorded. Private committal services will be at the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery, Elwood.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in his name to the Coal City United Methodist Church or to Joliet Area Community Hospice Home would be appreciated.

For more information and to visit his online guestbook, log on to www.rwpattersonfuneralhomes.com or find them on Facebook.

R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory, 401 E. Main St., Braidwood is in charge of arrangements.

Frances Strobel

WILMINGTON—Frances Ruth Strobel, 80, of Wilmington, passed away Thursday, Nov. 12, 2020 at Riverside Medical Center in Kankakee.

Born Oct. 28, 1940 in South Amboy, NJ, Frances was a daughter of William Edward and Ruth Ann (nee Conner) Klegman. She was raised and educated in Coal City and graduated Coal City High School with the class of 1958. On Nov. 12, 1960, Frances married Douglas Strobel in Coal City. She was a member of St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church in Wilmington and was active with the County Line Kickers, line dancing group. Frances was a former board member of the Wilmington Public Library and remained a longtime supporter of the library. After high school, she was employed at the Joliet Arsenal and later in life enjoyed working with her sister, Peggy at Western World Racing Hut. She was accomplished at crocheting and enjoyed sharing her work with family and friends. She enjoyed playing tennis, gardening, cooking, and was dedicated to sending birthday cards and cards of celebration to those she knew and loved.

Survivors include her husband, Doug; three children: Reverend Scott (Renée) Strobel, of Lockport, NY; Sandra (Ron) Van Epps, of Northfield, IL and Amy (Patrick) Burke, of Macomb, IL; 11 grandchildren: Douglas (Holly) Strobel, Michael (Ashalea) Strobel, Timothy (fiancé Hope) Strobel, Wesley (Anja) Strobel,



Jacob Strobel, Annika Strobel, Kaitlyn Strobel, Krista (fiancé Alex Bloom) Van Epps, Zachary Van Epps, Joseph Burke, and Edward Burke; three great-grandchildren: Clayton, Kira and Nathanael; two sisters, Patricia (Ron) Fox and Kimberly (Dave) Brown; one brother, James Klegman and three sisters-in-law: Debbie Klegman, Ilene Kelgman and Sheri Friddle, as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

Frances was preceded in death by her parents; three brothers: Donald (Carol) Klegman, Thomas Kelgman and William "Jersey" Klegman and two sisters, Cathy Broderick and Margaret "Peggy" Ragain.

Per Frances' wishes cremation rites are being accorded and memorial services are being planned for a later date.

Frances will be laid to rest at Mount Olivet Cemetery in Braidwood.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made in Frances' memory to Kuzma Care Cottage, Our Caring Closet, or to the Wilmington Fire Department.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guest book, upload photographs, and share Frances' memorial page by logging onto: www.BaskervilleFuneral.com/obituary/Frances-Strobel

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

Ronald Parsley

WILMINGTON—Ronald Parsley, 62, of Wilmington, passed away Monday, Nov. 9, 2020 at his home.

Born May 29, 1958 in Smithville, TN, Ronald Earl was a son of Travis M. and Elvirda "Judy" (nee Saylor) Parsley. He was raised and educated in Wilmington and graduated from Wilmington High School with the class of 1976. On Oct. 2, 1976, Ronald married Kimberly Ann Jessen in Wilmington. Ronald had a passion of music and loved playing his guitar.

Survivors include his wife, Kim Schleeter; daughter, Melissa (Michael Holland) Parsley, of Manchester, TN; two grandchildren, Michael and Morgan Holland; siblings: Terry (Pat) Parsley, of Michigan; Pam (McClure) Cantrell, Travis E. (Shelly) Parsley and Regina (Jeff) Stone, all of Smithville, TN, as well



as numerous nieces and nephews.

Ronald was preceded in death by his parents, one grandson in infancy, Matthew Holland and his niece, Charity Stone.

Per Ronald's wishes, cremation rites are being accorded and private family services are being planned for a later date.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Ronald's name to the American Cancer Society.

Family and friends are encouraged to sign the online guest book, upload photographs, and share Ronald's memorial page by logging onto: www.BaskervilleFuneral.com/obituary/Ronald-Parsley

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

The Free Press Newspapers will limit hours of operation as Covid-19 positivity rates continue to climb. We are an essential business and intend to continue print operations as normal. However, we encourage you to call 815-476-7966 or 815-634-0315 before visiting either of our offices. Odds are we can service you over the phone. If not, we will arrange it so we can still conduct your business. We appreciate your understanding and please wear a mask everywhere you go

Bison Crawl brings worldwide audience to Midewin

On National Bison Day, bison enthusiasts learned about America's National Mammal in a virtual cross-country learning expedition from the Prairie State to the Treasure State.

The USDA Forest Service's third annual "Bison Crawl" included live presentations from Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie in Wilmington, the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center in Montana and from nearby First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park.

The first stop on the virtual education tour was at the spotting scopes along old historic Route 66 at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie.

Forest Preserve District of Will County Community Partnerships & Outreach Coordinator Ben Hecke and Midewin NTP Visitor Information Assistant Jasmine Lyons reported live from the Henslow Trail. They used mobile devices to show three bison grazing far off in the distance.

"It's just a beautiful day out here and everyone is happy to see bison on National Bison Day," Hecke said. "Jasmine tells me the entire herd might be headed this way."

As more bison approached, the expedition went to First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park in Ulm, Montana. From the edge of the cliff that is known to be the largest buffalo jump in the world, Park Manager Clark Carlson-Thompson said the jump was critical to human survival for hundreds of years.

"A buffalo jump is a site that was used by native peoples to harvest large numbers of buffalo, usually entire herds," Carlson-Thompson explained. "This spot has forever been known as a place of peace and gathering. Thousands of pounds of meat, hides; bones for tools and more were harvested. It looks just like a hill and as we get closer and closer to the cliff, it just appears out of nowhere."

Carlson-Thompson said that the jump was used for at least 600 years, starting at the year 900. The jump was used by 13 tribes from all over.

"From Montana, Idaho, Wyoming and even up into Canada." Depending on the specific spot, the buffalo jump is 20 to 50 feet tall. In some spots, bison bones are up to 22 feet deep. He said that most recent carbon dating is from 1500.

The next stop was the USDA Forest Service's Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center in Great Falls, Montana. Supervisory Interpreter Jeff LaRock said bison were essential to the expedition of Captain Meriwether Lewis and William Clark.

"They came here knowing that there was this creature called the bison, although many of them had never seen one before and had only heard about them," LaRock said. "They found their first sign of bison less than two months after they set out in 1804, but it wasn't until two months after that when Private Reuben Field



EDUCATION OUTREACH



Sarah Norlin



Clockwise, from top left: Midewin NTP Public Affairs Officer and Public Services Team Leader Veronica Hinke explains that female bison horns are c-shaped; Clark Carlson-Thompson, park manager of First Peoples Buffalo Jump and Tower Rock state parks, looks out on one of the most historic buffalo jumps in the world; bison are visible through spotting scopes along old historic Route 66 at Midewin NTP; Supervisory Interpreter Jeff LaRock at The Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center. Photo by Allison Cisneros / The Nature Conservancy in Illinois



bagged the first bison. It was a bull. They dragged it back from the river. The meat filled two barrels."

LaRock said bison hide was used as waterproof material for packing gear; for sleeping and winter clothing. "Even bison dung was used for creating a hot flame with not a lot of smoke," LaRock said. "Lewis thought it 'impacted a spicy flavor to the meat.'"

Interpreter Karlene Faulkner described bowls made of bison ribs, pudding made of bison blood enhanced with berries and bone marrow. Pemican, dried meat, was popular. Hair and cattail fluff stuffed mattresses and more.

"This way of life lasted for hundreds of years," Faulkner said. "Today, the bison are making a comeback thanks to partnerships with Tribal Nations and local, state, and federal partnerships."

Back in the Prairie State, Midewin NTP Range Management Specialist Kelly Gutknecht told about the bison project there.

"Bison were introduced five years ago, and the point is to see if the bison can help improve diversity of native vegetation during restoration," Gutknecht said. "Through natural seed dispersal and more, we hope to see increases in grasses like big bluestem, Indian grass and more."

Staff with Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie organize the Bison Crawl each year to bring together dozens of government and non-profit organizations that offer in-person or virtual education programs for the public.

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Morris Hospital COVID testing supply is limited

In an effort to balance limited testing supplies with increased demand for testing, Morris Hospital has asked providers on its medical staff to limit COVID testing orders to those who need it most: symptomatic patients and those at high risk for complications.

"Right now, there is a very high demand for COVID testing," says Kimberly Wolfer, Director of Laboratory Services at Morris Hospital & Healthcare Centers. "Due to our limited testing availability, we are unable to serve as a testing resource for all situations, especially in the case of asymptomatic people who are seeking testing because of concerns about potential exposure."

Wolfer says the recent increased demand for testing has also slowed test results. "We have a limited allocation of rapid tests each week and at this time have to reserve the rapid tests for patients being admitted to the hospital or having pre-surgical testing," explains Wolfer. "The rest of our COVID collections have to be sent out to a reference laboratory, and the results are currently taking 5-6 days. Previously, we were seeing a 2-3 day turnaround for test results that were sent out."

Morris Hospital continues to operate its outpatient COVID drive-thru testing site on the hospital main campus for patients who have a physician's order. After the physician's order is received, a Scheduling representative from Morris Hospital calls the patient to schedule the appointment. The drive-thru testing does not accept self-referrals or walk-ins.

COVID testing is also done at Morris Hospital's urgent care locations only if the provider determines testing is appropriate after evaluating the patient's medical history and symptom severity through a medical exam. The cost includes a physical exam

and a separate charge for COVID-19 testing if testing is ordered. Both get billed to insurance.

Morris Hospital's urgent care locations are in Channahon, Diamond-Coal City Campus, Morris and Yorkville. The rapid test is not being used at these locations at this time.

"Our immediate and convenient care centers are not the same as state testing sites where people can come just to get tested for COVID," explains Kim Smith, Director of Immediate Care and Occupational Medicine at Morris Hospital & Healthcare Centers. "This is where we provide walk-in care for patients with mild to moderate injuries and illness, including flu-like symptoms. Having an exam with an immediate/convenient care provider does not guarantee a COVID test will be performed. It's up to the discretion of the provider."

Morris Hospital also advises that the hospital emergency department should be reserved for those who are in need of emergency medical care.

New doctor joins Morris Hospital

Local internal medicine physician Dr. Olga Peplos has merged her independent practice with Morris Hospital & Healthcare Centers. The partnership allows Dr. Peplos more time to focus on patient care, while Morris Hospital oversees the business management responsibilities associated with her practice.

As a result of the affiliation, Dr. Peplos is now seeing patients at two locations: the

Remember our veterans by sponsoring a wreath

Sponsor a wreath for a veteran's grave at Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood. The wreath laying will be held on Saturday, Dec. 19.

The ceremony will be held at 11 a.m. Wreaths are placed after a brief ceremony. Volunteers of all ages are needed to help place wreaths, dress appropriately for the cold.

Sponsorship is a tax deductible donation and may be made for a specific veteran or any veteran.

Complete the form below. Checks or money orders should be made payable to Wreaths Across America and mailed to: Will County Farm Bureau, c/o OCP Wreath Project, 100 Manhattan Rd., Joliet, IL 60433 Group# IL0013P

Sponsorships are being collected through Nov. 24 for the year 2020 campaign. Donations after Dec. 2 will be for 2021. Order online at Wreaths Across America and include cemetery ID: ILALNE. For updates pertaining with wreath placement and coronavirus precautions visit the Facebook page: Wreaths Across America Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery.

Grave specific sponsorship

Complete a separate form for each veteran. Sponsors who attend the wreath laying on Saturday, Dec. 15, may place the wreath on that specific grave.

Veteran's name: _____

Section and grave marker (required): _____

Contact phone number (required): _____

Will you be there to place the wreath yourself: Yes ___ No ___

Non-specific grave sponsorship

One wreath at \$15 _____

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Courtesy photo

Dr. Olga Peplos, a local internal medicine physician, has merged her independent practice with Morris Hospital & Healthcare Centers.

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Think before you shoot

Deer hunters better know how to process own meat
BY SHAWN LONG
 Sports Writer

Deer hunters may want to think twice before pulling the trigger this weekend when the first of the split firearms season open.

The impact of the coronavirus pandemic has meat lockers already backed up few, if any, are willing to process deer meat.

Barney Faletti, owner of Faletti Meats in Wilmington, typically processes deer for hunters but up until last week he is turning hunters away.

Faletti processed about 40 deer the previous two weeks but was so backed up with butchering beef, pork and chicken that he was forced with drawing a line.

"We're so busy despite the COVID pandemic I can't keep up with processing meat for my year-round customers," said Faletti.

In the past Faletti's would have as many as three butchers processing deer. In about 20 minutes they'd skin a deer and process the venison into steaks, chops, backstraps and roasts. The rest would be ground into venison hamburger.

Faletti Meats would process as many as 150 deer during a normal year. This year with the way COVID-19 is keeping more people at home, Faletti's is busy selling more beef, pork and chicken for the table.

"I had a guy in here Thursday begging for me to process his deer. He drove 45 minutes and said he was in no hurry to get the meat. I explained I just don't have the time these days and I was sorry but it's hard to find an hour and a half to do a deer by myself when I have to take care of my regular customers."

The only other place the Free Press Newspapers could find still processing deer was S&J Lisbon Locker, about a 40-minute drive in Newark, IL.



File Photo

DON'T SHOOT BEFORE you know where you're going with the deer. There have been deer processing facilities that have shut down their operations for the season because they were not able to keep up with the rush. There are other deer processing plants but they may not be within 10 minutes.

Julie Guerrero from the S&J Lisbon Locker said that as of now, they don't intend to put a cap on the number of deer they will accept.

In addition to processing the venison they make jerky and salami sticks as well.

"We book it in and they tell us how they want it cut," said Guerrero. "We cut it, skin it and make whatever people want. It usually varies. A lot of people will take their cuts, their steaks, chops and roast, and a lot of people do cheese and jalapeno sticks."

Guerrero, daughter of the owner Sandy Marlat, estimated they have already processed around 80 deer for bow hunters. Their four-person operation has so far been

able to keep up but they are bracing for the rush of the shotgun deer season Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

"I personally think that a lot of new people are out hunting because of COVID," added Guerrero. "I think we're going to get buried. I think we've already gotten more from bow season than we have in past years."

Guerrero, who has been at S&J Lisbon Locker for the last 16 years, notes last year they processed around 250 deer.

They've already had several out of state hunters arrive with deer as they are having a hard time finding other meat lockers not backed up with the processing of beef and pork. When the coronavirus shut-

down several large meat packing plants back in the spring, farmers turned to smaller meat lockers to process their livestock. Most are still booked through 2021.

"We have customers that come from Wisconsin," commented Guerrero. "In previous years, we've had a guy come up here to hunt from Alabama, his brother lives here but he makes the trip back to come and get it. There are quite a few that come from the city. It just varies."

The best advice is to call butcher shops and meat lockers and check if they're accepting deer before heading into the field.

Free vouchers to visit national forests now includes fifth graders

The USDA Forest Service will expand its Every Kid Outdoors program to offer fourth- and fifth-grade students and family members free access to more than 2,000 sites on national forests and grasslands for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year.

A new voucher is available for download now through August 31, 2021.

"The year's events have made it harder for many students to get out to their local National Forest and to use their Every Kid Outdoors Annual 4th Grade Pass as intended," said Forest Service Chief Vicki Christiansen. "We hope the added time will encourage millions of families to use their free pass to get out to their National Forest, connect with nature, and experience the mental and physical benefits of the great outdoors."

Every Kid Outdoors is a federal public lands partnership created to inspire fourth-grade students and their families across America to recreate, explore cultures, discover connections to nature and spark a lifelong passion for America's great outdoors.

The program focuses on children ages 9-11 who, research shows, are beginning to understand the world around them, and are uniquely receptive to engaging with nature and the environment. By focusing on this age group year after year, the program aims to ensure every child in the United States has the opportunity to create a lifelong connection to America's big backyard.

To obtain a free 5th Grade Voucher, visit the Every Kid Outdoors website, click on the "Hey, fifth graders!" banner, and download a voucher.

Will County building closed

The Will County Office Building is now closed to the public. With the number of coronavirus cases rapidly rising across the state of Illinois, Will County Executive Denise Winfrey has closed the county office building to the public.

Residents are urged to contact any office within the county building by telephone or via e-mail to inquire how to handle any application, transaction, etc. This decision follows the Illinois Department of Public Health's new recommendations to work from home when possible, participate in only essential activities, limit any gathering to 10 people, and only travel if necessary.

"The number of positive cases for COVID-19 has risen dramatically," Winfrey said. "The health and wellness of our county employees and our residents is of

utmost importance. We want to do everything we can to protect people which includes encouraging the public to wear a mask at all times, wash your hands often, and to maintain social distance. Closing our office building to the public is a responsible move to help limit the spread of this highly infectious virus."

Statewide, the IDPH reports COVID-19 hospitalizations, including patients in Intensive Care Units and on ventilators, are at the same levels as the first peak of the virus earlier this year.

"We must all take these statistics seriously and not let down our guard," Winfrey added.

For more information about the IDPH and its response to the COVID-19 crisis, visit the website at www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19.

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HELP WANTED

City Pizza and Sub Co., 300 E. Baltimore St., Wilmington, seeking help. Apply within. ck44b-48a

Truck detailer/Shop hand/ Maintenance. Apply at Holt & Sons Inc., 504 S. East Street, Gardner, 60424 Phone 815-237-8450. cc43a-46b

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Coal City - 125 E. Blackstone, 1 BR, stove/refrigerator, furnished, no pets, good location, newly remodeled. \$650/mo. plus 1 month deposit, 1 year lease. 815-634-8800.

HOMES FOR RENT

Wilmington - Small remodeled 2 BR, full basement, 1.5 car garage, washer/dryer, refrigerator, stove, microwave included, \$950/mo. Security deposit \$1,450. Lease. No pets. 815-715-0000. cc45b-49a

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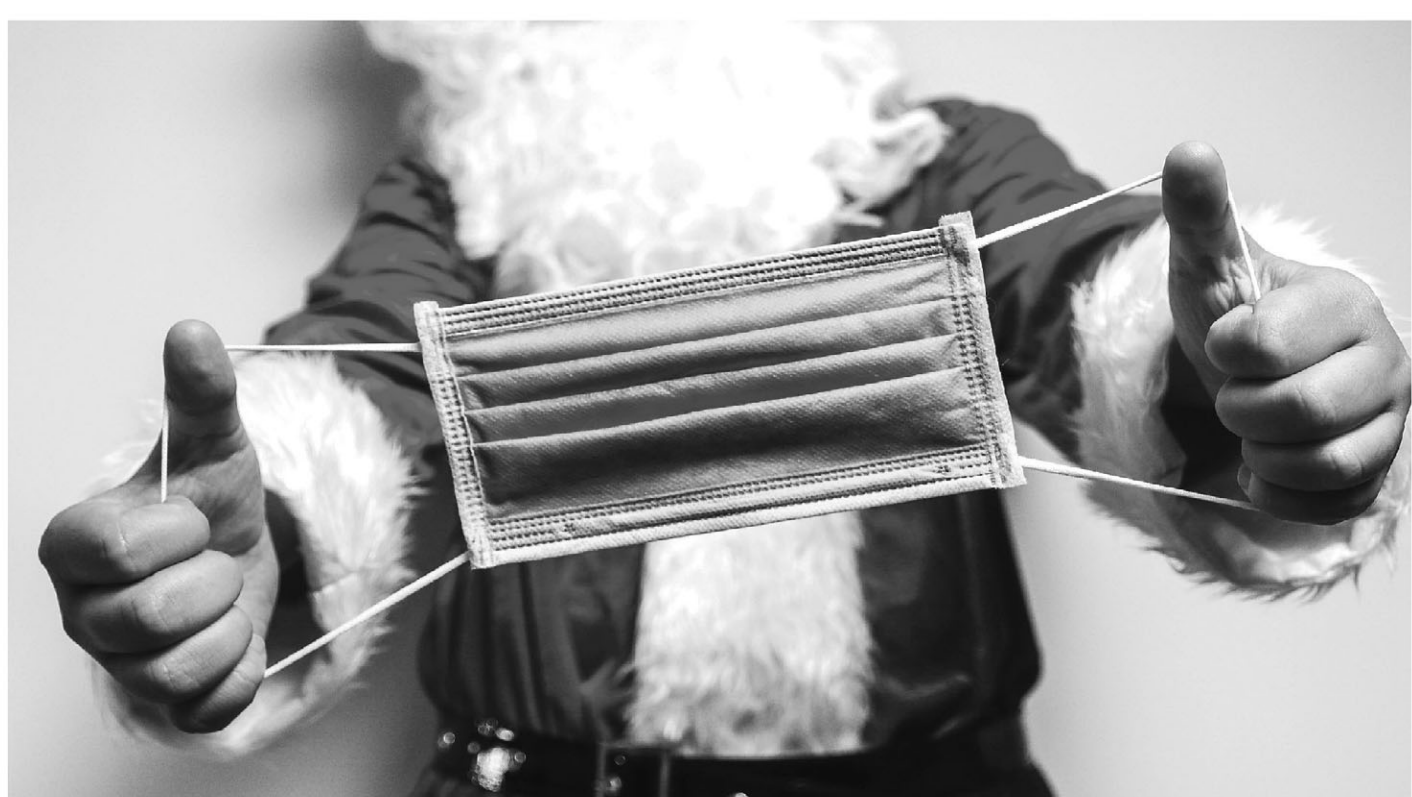
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The one person who could turn the tide against Madigan

With the announcement by Rep. Bob Morgan (D-Deerfield) earlier this month that he will not vote to reelect Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan in January, the opposition numbered eight House Democrats, with at least a few more privately leaning their way.

They'll need 13 or 14 Democrats, depending on final general election results, to deprive Madigan of the speaker's gavel. So, they may need some help to get over the hump.

And there's one person outside the House who may have enough votes to tip the balance either way.

And, no, it's likely not Gov. JB Pritzker. Not yet, anyway.

Pritzker controls no votes in the House. He can't just push a button and make something happen in that chamber.

Perhaps if he had followed through on his 2018 promises to supplant the moribund state party with a true statewide political organization for all Democrats at all levels, he might have some buttons to push. But he didn't, and the pandemic intervened and here we are.

Whatever the case, a governor directly confronting the House Speaker has never worked here. Others have tried. All have failed. A governor's opposition would, as it has in the past, give Madigan something external and concrete to push back against in order to distract from his internal problems.

And if Pritzker's effort to dislodge Madigan failed, so would the remainder of his legislative agenda. Not to mention that Pritzker certainly hurt himself when he not so subtly threw resources Sen. Kimberly Lightford's way during her unsuccessful run for Senate President almost a year ago. Once bitten, twice shy.

There is definite pressure on Pritzker to act, though. As the saying goes, "governors own," so he'll wear the jacket in 2022 if Madigan is still standing and remains as spectacularly unpopular as he is today.

Maybe Pritzker could quietly do something at the very end to make it happen if the opposition is still slightly short, but don't expect anything before that unless something major happens with the feder-

al investigation into the House Speaker's operation. But if Pritzker swings and misses, Madigan will still be around, Pritzker won't get anything accomplished and the voters will not be pleased.

The dude spent a zillion dollars to get elected governor only to find himself in a dozen trick bags. Welcome to Illinois!

The one person outside the House who could make a real and immediate difference is U.S. Rep. Chuy Garcia.

As I've told you before, Garcia, the Chicago Teachers Union and Madigan came to an understanding not long after Garcia, with the CTU's backing, lost the city mayor's race in 2015. Madigan's 13th Ward carried Mayor Rahm Emanuel to victory, but that took an extraordinary amount of work in Madigan's Latino-dominated area. Better to just cut a deal.

Since then, one after another of Congressman

Garcia's close allies have been elected or appointed to the General Assembly.

There are probably no better examples of this than in Madigan's own neighborhood. Garcia ally Celina Villanueva was appointed to the House in the summer of 2018 when Madigan loyalist

Rep. Silvana Tabares was appointed to the Chicago City Council in the neighboring 23rd Ward.

Rep. Villanueva then ran unopposed in a special election to replace resigned Sen. Martin Sandoval (Madigan's Senator) and Garcia's congressional aide Edgar Gonzalez was appointed to Villanueva's House seat. In between, Madigan successfully supported another Garcia staffer for a Cook County Board slot over Sandoval's daughter.

Congressman Garcia has significant influence over at least three Chicago Democratic House members

(Gonzalez, Aaron Ortiz and Delia Ramirez). But if he makes a strong statement either way on Madigan, several other progressives in the chamber could very well follow his lead.

Garcia, by the way, is also a member of Madigan's state party central committee. A few committee members have spoken out against Chairman Madigan, but Garcia has a stronger political organization and a larger public platform. He could make a real difference there, too.

But a deal is a deal and, in the long term, Garcia has the better end of it. Madigan gets peace and Garcia gets more of

his people into influential positions every time there's a path (or close to it, like when Madigan tried unsuccessfully to block Eva-Dina Delgado's appointment to the House this year after Garcia and the CTU supported someone else).

And that probably explains why Congressman Garcia isn't returning my phone calls and texts these days to ask what he's planning to do about all of this.

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



CAPITOL FACTS
Rich Miller

Illinois gas prices fall

Illinois gas prices have fallen 3.1 cents per gallon in the past week, averaging \$2.16/g Monday, according to GasBuddy's daily survey of 4,378 stations.

Gas prices in Illinois are 1.6 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 44.0 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Illinois is priced at \$1.82/g Monday while the most expensive is

\$2.79/g, a difference of 97.0 cents per gallon.

The lowest price in the state is \$1.82/g while the highest is \$2.79/g, a difference of 97.0 cents per gallon. The national average price of gasoline has risen 1.2 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$2.12/g Monday.

The national average is down 4.3 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 49.0 cents per gallon lower than a year ago.

"For the first time in seven weeks, GasBuddy data showed average gas prices rose last week, unsurprising given the previous 18% jump in the price of crude oil on promising vaccine news," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis for GasBuddy.

"This year has been anything but normal and such news of promising vaccine results will likely rekindle gas prices for a short while. We're likely to see prices inch up

slightly again this week as gas stations continue to try to pass along the rise from last week to retail, but ahead of Thanksgiving, prices should be mostly stable.

"For now, motorists shouldn't expect too many fireworks at the pump, but the upcoming release of GasBuddy's Holiday Travel survey highlights some big changes motorists are making for the last six weeks of the year."

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Wilmington Community Unit School District No. 209U files annual financial report

PUBLIC NOTICE

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF AFFAIRS SUMMARY FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2020

The summary must be published in the local newspaper.

Copies of the detailed Annual Statement of Affairs for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2020 will be available for public inspection in the school district/joint agreement administrative office by December 1, annually.

Wilmington CUSD 209U, 209 Wildcat Court, Wilmington, IL 60481, 815-926-1751, M-F, 8:00am-4:00pm

Also by January 15, annually the detailed Annual Statement of Affairs for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2020, will be posted on the Illinois State Board of Education's website at www.isbe.net.

SUMMARY: The following is the Annual Statement of Affairs Summary that is required to be published by the school district/joint agreement for the past fiscal year.

Statement of Operations as of June 30, 2020

Table with columns: Educational, Operations & Maintenance, Debt Services, Transportation, Municipal Retirement/Social Security, Capital Projects, Working Cash, Tort, Fire Prevention & Safety. Rows include Local Sources, State Sources, Federal Sources, Total Direct Receipts/Revenues, Total Direct Disbursements/Expenditures, and Ending Fund Balances.

STATEMENT OF REVENUES RECEIVED/REVENUES, EXPENDITURES DISBURSED/EXPENDITURES, OTHER SOURCES/USES AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE - FOR YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2020

Detailed financial statement table with columns for Description, Acct No, Educational, Operations & Maintenance, Debt Service, Transportation, Municipal Retirement & Social Security, Capital Projects, Working Cash, Tort, Fire Prevention & Safety. Includes sub-sections for Receipts/Revenues, Disbursements/Expenditures, and Excess of Receipts/Revenues.

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AS OF JUNE 30, 2020

Table with columns for Description, Acct No, Educational, Operations & Maintenance, Debt Service, Transportation, Municipal Retirement & Social Security, Capital Projects, Working Cash, Tort, Fire Prevention & Safety. Rows include Current Assets, Current Liabilities, and Long-Term Liabilities.

PAYMENTS OVER \$2,500, EXCLUDING WAGES AND SALARIES

Table listing various vendors and their payment amounts, including WILLIAM ADELAMNN, ADVANTAGE PAVING SOLUTIONS, INC., AFFILIATED PARTS, LLC, etc.

SALARY SCHEDULE OF GROSS PAYMENTS FOR CERTIFIED PERSONNEL AND NON-CERTIFIED PERSONNEL

Table detailing salary ranges for different job categories: Gross Payment for Certified Personnel (Less Than \$25,000), Gross Payment for Non-Certified Personnel (Less Than \$25,000), and Gross Payment for Non-Certified Personnel (\$25,000 - \$39,999).

This page must be sent to ISBE and retained within the district/joint agreement administrative office for public inspection.

Note: For submitting to ISBE, the "Statement of Affairs" can be submitted as one file to avoid separating worksheets.

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

School Business Services (217)785-8779

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF AFFAIRS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING

June 30, 2020

(Section 10-17 of the School Code)

SCHOOL DISTRICT/JOINT AGREEMENT NAME: Wilmington CUSD 209U; RCDT NUMBER: 56-099-209U-26-06; ADDRESS: 209 Wildcat Court, Wilmington, IL 60481; COUNTY: Will; NAME OF NEWSPAPER WHERE PUBLISHED: Wilmington Free Press Advocate

DISTRICT TYPE: Elementary, High School, Unit

ASSURANCE: The statement of affairs has been made available in the main administrative office of the school district/joint agreement and the required Annual Statement of Affairs Summary has been published in accordance with Section 10-17 of the School Code.

CAPITAL ASSETS table with columns: CAPITAL ASSETS, VALUE. Rows include WORKS OF ART & HISTORICAL TREASURES, LAND, BUILDING & BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS, etc.

NUMBER OF PUPILS ENROLLED PER GRADE table with columns: GRADE, ENROLLED. Rows include PRE-KINDERGARTEN, KINDERGARTEN, FIRST, SECOND, THIRD, FOURTH, FIFTH, SIXTH, SEVENTH, EIGHTH, SPECIAL, Total Elementary, NINTH, TENTH, ELEVENTH, TWELFTH, SPECIAL, Total Secondary, Total District.

Table with columns: CATEGORY, VALUE. Rows include SIZE OF DISTRICT IN SQUARE MILES, NUMBER OF ATTENDANCE CENTERS, 9 MONTH AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE, NUMBER OF CERTIFICATED EMPLOYEES, NUMBER OF NON-CERTIFICATED EMPLOYEES, TAX RATE BY FUND (IN %), DISTRICT EQUALIZED ASSESSED VALUATION (EAV), EQUALIZED ASSESSED VALUATION PER ADA PUPIL, TOTAL LONG-TERM DEBT ALLOWED, TOTAL LONG-TERM DEBT OUTSTANDING AS OF June 30, 2020, PERCENT OF LONG-TERM DEBT OBLIGATED CURRENTLY.

PUBLIC NOTICES Because it's your right to know. Published in the Free Press Advocate Wednesday, Nov 18, 2020.

WILDCAT SPORTS

Wildcats, Comets put winter season on hold

BY SHAWN LONG
STAFF WRITER

Basketball will have to wait as Reed-Custer and Wilmington High School join Coal City in announcing there won't be winter sports played locally.

The local schools are going to abide by the Illinois Department of Public Health in taking COVID-19 safety precautions by waiting until the go-ahead is given.

Coal City sent a press release out Thursday saying they would be following the guidance of the IDPH and Illinois State Board of Education on the winter basketball season. Coal City basketball players will be working on no-contact skill development and conditioning until the sports are approved.

After the Illinois High School Association went forth with planning for the winter season on Wednesday, Oct. 28, Gov. Pritzker held a press conference the day after, stating schools

could face legal consequences if illness or injury results from playing in defiance of the state's guidance.

So far 34 schools have said they intend to start their seasons while 300 said no and 212 are undecided.

Reed-Custer athletic director Chuck Anderson explained the Comets will be following the IDPH.

"We're like everyone else," said Anderson. "It's like the rest of the schools in our conference, most of them and the area, we're just not able to do it."

Anderson is hopeful for a more clear view on the season when the IHSA has a board meeting on Thursday.

"We'll hope to have a better direction on Thursday when everyone gets together but at this point in time, it's not feasible to move forward."

What influenced the decision for many was insurance companies that are warning that coverage will be dropped if they don't abide by the

state. "I expect they'll push our season back," added Anderson. "Who knows what will happen but that's what I expect they'd do."

Wilmington athletic director Brian Goff said the liability issue was the exact reason the Wildcats are going to wait.

"It was 100% that," said Goff. "The insurance company told us, 'that's on you'. They said if you go against the Illinois Department of Public Health Guidelines, we can't be liable. We would be liable for that so we would lose tort immunity which means if somebody sued the school, we wouldn't be covered. Now, they're going after individual coaches. It's just not worth it."

The IHSA had a virtual board meeting on Wednesday to discuss Thursday's agenda. Representatives from the IDPH and governor's office have been asked to attend. They also invited the Illinois Principals Association, the Illinois Association of School Administrators, the Illinois State Board of Education and a coal-

ition of the 200 school superintendents who made an effort to contact the Governor regarding school sports.

"The Board hopes to create a dialogue and build a more collaborative relationship with all the entities involved with developing sports policy in our state as everyone tries to navigate the myriad issues caused by the pandemic," said IHSA Executive Director Craig Anderson.

"The Board's decision to move forward with the IHSA basketball season was not meant to be adversarial. It was rooted in a desire to receive more direct communication and data from our state partners. They hope all the groups will see the mutual benefit of increased discourse and be represented at the meeting on November 19."

The IHSA Board said that while the schools can start practicing on Nov. 16, they will be held to Level 1 mitigations from the IDPH All Sports Policy until at least Nov. 19. They'll hope to have more direction after the meeting on Thursday.

Former Lady 'Cat coaches develop dream team of standouts

BY SHAWN LONG
SPORTS WRITER

They'd be considered the best of the best when it comes to Wilmington High School girls basketball.

Four former Wilmington girls basketball coaches gave us their list of players who would make up an ideal dream team.

Don Roach, who coached the first girls basketball team at Wilmington in 1978 and went on to win a sub-regional in 1979 with a regional in 1980, compiling a record of 65-54 in his six years, had a list of girls he would have on his dream team.

Tonya Duncan

Roach said Duncan was their leading scorer from 1977-80 during the regional championship season when the Lady 'Cats went 20-6. They finished the season with a victory in the only regional championship the girls basketball program has had. Duncan was one of the top scorers, finishing with a little more than 600 points.

"She shot the heck out of the ball," said Roach. "We knew right away she was going to be our go-to gal. She was our leading scorer in every season she played for me."

Cindi Mills

In 1979, Mills was a guard on the second Wildcat team and became the second overall scorer next to Duncan.

She was very good at stealing the basketball.

"She was just a scrapper," said Roach. "She had hands. She would just pick your pocket and she set up a lot of easy baskets for herself."

Karen Kavanaugh

Kavanaugh was a senior when the Lady 'Cats won the regional title.

"She was first team All-Conference along with Duncan," said Roach. "She was very good defensively. She was my point guard, honor roll student and she just handled the ball well and knew where to go all the time."

Debbie Vercelli & Lori Gresham

Vercelli and Gresham came in as freshmen during the first two seasons before reaching their junior seasons when the 'Cats won the regional.

"They contributed heavily to what we accomplished. Both girls were really good defensive players. The Gresham girl, she'd run through a wall for you to play

defense. She was always in somebody's face out on the court. Vercelli enjoyed doing all the dirty work in the lane."

Patti Gresham and Theresa Rodawold were mentioned as honorable mention players for Roach.

Gresham, Lori's younger sister, came off the bench to hit three consecutive shots late during the regional championship game that ultimately helped them win.

Mike Cluver, who coached the Lady 'Cats from 1996-01, had a list of nearly 20 different Lady 'Cats he'd have on the team that were all All-Conference players and all top of the line athletes

Jenny Dezee

Starting with Jenny Dezee, who was the points leader back in the day and did everything.

She would be his first pick because she could do everything.

"She played every position," said Cluver. "And she had to because the way teams defended her it was a must. She was by far our best player so she'd get double and triple teamed."

From 1996-2000, Dezee led the 'Cats with 1,165 points, leading her team to 65 wins in her four seasons.

Dezee went on to play college basketball at Kankakee Community College. There she is listed on the rebounds list, snagging 330 boards from 2000-02. She also scored 669 points in her career.

Jackie Rader

Rader, who played for the Lady 'cats from 1996-98 was a center and a top scoring center. Cluver notes she was close to a double-double in scoring and rebounding.

"Jackie was tall," added Cluver. "She went into coaching at Coal City which didn't surprise me. She did well at all sports. That little group of Rader, the two Barr girls, they actually went to state in track."

Stacie Hall

Hall, who Cluver nicknamed "Spud Webb" because of her small stature like that of the former NBA player Spud Webb (5-7), was the next girl selected.

Hall played point guard for the 'Cats from 1994-96 and she was an excellent outside shooter as she could knock down almost any shot.

"She was probably the first premiere outside shooter. She went to state in the three point contest so she was really good at shooting the outside shots."

Sandy Hoffman

Hoffman was before Cluver came to the program but she used to be a great center, close to a double-double in scoring and rebounding for the season.

Kathleen York

York, who played for Cluver during his final two seasons, was a center, who was really good at scoring.

She too was very good at backing down the defender to score as she was close to a double-double season average as well.

"She wasn't as big as Rader but she was tall and she did a good job on the inside. She didn't have the same skill set as Rader did but she was very dominant on the inside."

Darcy & Darthy Barr

The Barr twins main sport was track but they were fast Wing 2-3 defenders for Cluver during the 1996-98 seasons.

"They were really quick. They used their track speed and played really good defense for us."

Bridget Smith

Smith was playing the same time as York and she was a point guard. She was really sound on both sides of the ball.

"She just played both ends of the court very well," he commented. "She didn't score that much but she did score and ran the show from the defensive side of the ball."

Jenny Quigley

Quigley, who played a forward 3-4 for Cluver from 1999-01, was very good at using her big body to get to the basket.

"Jenny was kind of the scorer my last couple of years," said Cluver. "She had good moves to the basket."

Colleen Keeley

Even though she was before Cluver's time coaching, she was like Quigley in that she could get to the basket very easily.

"She was very much like Quigley," he continued. "She was the same size as Quigley and could box out the defender to get to the basket."

Kathy Martin

Martin was a center opposite to York, who was a very strong rebounder for the 'Cats.

"The York girl and Martin were interchangeable. She didn't score a lot but she was a good defender and a rebounder."

Vicki Ademczyk

Ademczyk was the point guard for the 'Cats from 1995-97.

She was quick defensively, could score and make passes for assists with ease.

"She was the point guard right before Rader and she was very unselfish. I couldn't get her to shoot enough. She could've been a better scorer had we not had a Rader and a Michelle Owens and a Molly Daniel."

Jenny Mills

Mills was a point guard during Cluver's final year.

"She was quick defensively and could get to the basket."

Michelle Owens

Owens played a forward 4 for the 'Cats from 1996-98 and she was so smooth around the basket and a great passer at that.

"She was the double-post with Rader and she did a lot of passing to Rader. She would catch and turn and then Rader would post up and we'd get the ball to her. They had a really good tandem going on between the two of them."

Molly Daniel

Daniel, who was on that same team, played the other forward.

She was a consistent shooter and could hit the short shot with ease.

"Molly Daniel, boy she really came on her senior year," exclaimed Cluver. "I



FORMER WILMINGTON GUARD Colleen Keeley was a dream team selection for girls basketball.

played her a little more higher in the post and she just developed into a really nice 10-12 foot jump shot at the high post area especially during ball reversal."

Sam Helfrich

Helfrich, who as on his last team, was very consistent on both ends.

"She was more of a rebounder than a scorer. She was definitely a team player."

Lady 'Cat coaches Stan Roeder and Andrew Johnson helped with a few more players from when they coached.

Jessoni Plese

Another girl that was picked to be on the team was Plese, who broke Dezee's record in 2005, setting a new record with 1,403 points.

Along with that, Plese was named a McDonald's for her performance during her senior season. Former girls coach Stan Roeder notes it is a very prestigious award.

"Only a thousand girls get nominated in the entire nation," said Roeder.

Jessoni was a sound all around player who could do it all.

"She could do everything," continued Roeder. "She could handle the ball, pass, start the transition and she always drew the opponents' best defenders. They would double team her and she would find a way."

"As good of an offense player as she was, she was just as good on defense. She led the team in steals every year and always played tough."

Gina Vercelli

Vercelli played forward for the 'Cats during Roeder's 2003-05 run with them. Her leadership was the best.

"She was a great player and one of the smartest players I have coached. She would be able to make adjustments during the game that would put her in the stronger position either on offense or defense."

Gina could really go get the rebounds.

"She was always our top rebounder, one of our top scorers and had a great understanding of the game," added Roeder. "She was a great teammate and leader."

Tara Spell

Spell, who broke Plese's

record in 2008 with 1,435 points when the 'Cats were 10-14, is another girl deserving of a spot on the dream team.

Tara's coach, Andrew Johnson said she had natural born talent.

"She was a dominant post player on both sides of the ball," said Johnson. "She scored a double-double in points and in rebounds every game. She was a great kid with a tremendous work ethic to match her skills."

Erin Murphy

Murphy, who played point guard for Johnson from 2008-11, was an all-around solid player, who worked hard for the 'Cats.

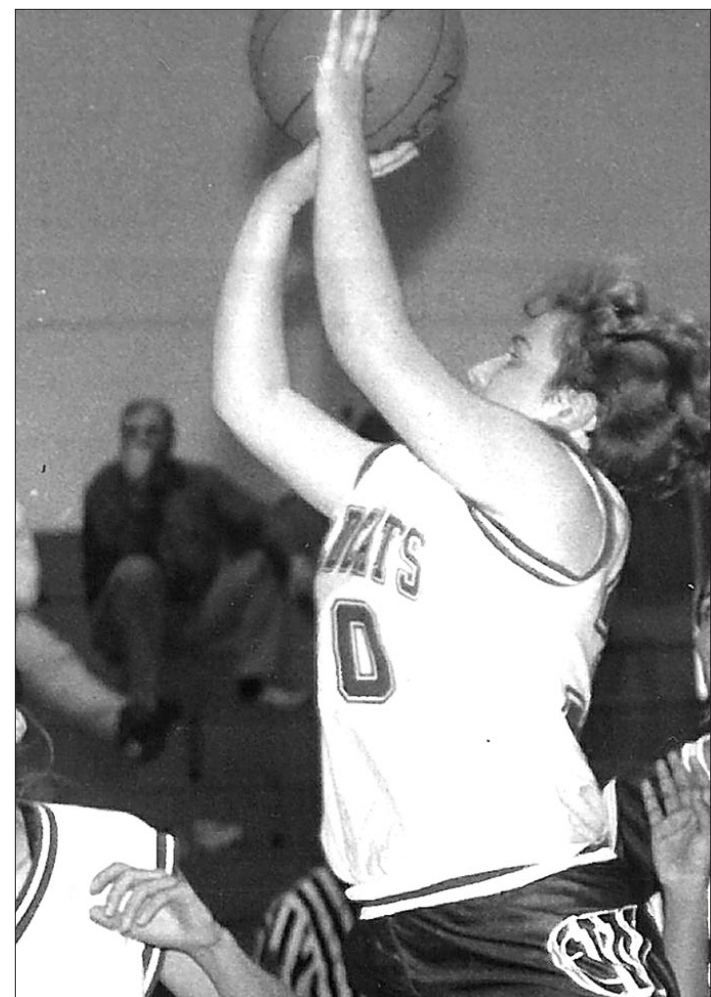
"Her stats were alright but

that's not why she deserves a mention," commented Johnson. "She deserves a mention because she was such a bulldog when it came to handling the ball."

"She would hustle like crazy and was an effective perimeter shooter. She was an overall tough kid who outplayed her athletic gifts with IQ and sheer heart and determination."

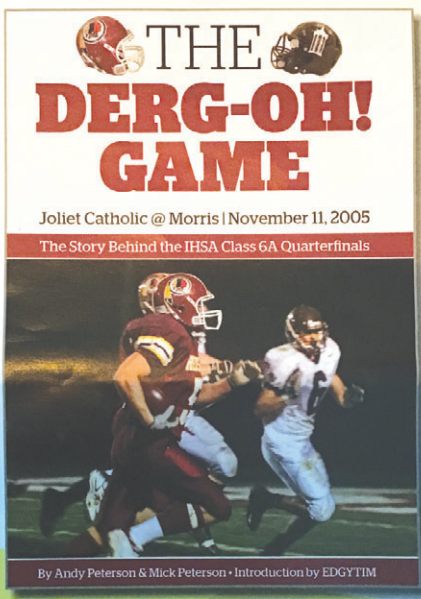
Johnson notes it may have had something to do with the way she grew up.

"It probably helped she was raised with two older brothers that I assume didn't really take it easy on her. Great kid to coach."



FORMER LADY 'CAT Stacie Hall (shooting the ball) was recently selected by former 'Cats coach Mike Cluver as a selection on the girls basketball dream team.

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