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Winterfest Market

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WILMINGTON, IL | WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2023 | A FREE PRESS NEWSPAPER (815) 476-7966



Photo by Alyssa Ohlund

STATE CHAMPIONS! Wilmington football co-captains (from left) Brody Benson, Joe Allgood, Brendan Moran and Cade McCubbin hoist the Class 2A State Championship trophy inside Hancock Stadium in Bloomington on Friday after defeating Athens 28-3. This is the third time in school history the Wildcats have won a state champion but the first they knocked off three undefeated teams in order to get there.

Keeping Wilmington clean and tidy

BY MARNEY SIMON
EDITOR

Lawn care isn't exactly on everyone's minds this time of year.

But the city of Wilmington has made an investment in the next five years to make sure city-owned properties will look their best when the seasons change.

On Nov. 21, the members of the Wilmington City Council approved a contract with HL & Associates, Inc. for lawn care services, which followed a request for bids that was issued in September. HL

& Associates, Inc. was the lone bidder on the contract.

The lawn care maintenance will total \$294,750 over the course of five years, which breaks down as the following:

- Year 1 - \$56,950
- Year 2 - \$57,950
- Year 3 - \$58,950
- Year 4 - \$59,950
- Year 5 - \$60,950

"Typically they'll come every Friday," Public Works Director James Gretencord said. When the grass speeds up they keep the parks looking really nice, they do a good job. When we have festivals and things of that nature,

they're always great at working around it."

City properties to be addressed include City Hall, the police department, Claire's Corner, Veterans Memorial Park, North Island Park, South Island Park, the water reclamation plant, the water treatment plant and public works, the Welcome to Wilmington Sign area on Route 53, and the municipal parking lots and easements at Bridge and North Water Streets.

The contract will include mowing, trimming, weeding, edging, tree pruning, lawn fer-

tilization, seasonal cleanup, maintenance, and any necessary herbicide/pesticide applications.

The service will begin with the mowing season in 2024 and end with the conclusion of the mowing season in 2028.

Meanwhile, Gretencord discussed with members of the Committee of the Whole in mid-November plans for the city's future street sweep- ing needs.

This fall, the city con-

SEE CLEAN, PAGE 2

Wilmington PD to add additional patrol officer

BY MARNEY SIMON
EDITOR

The Wilmington Police Department is on the fast track to add another officer to its ranks.

On Nov. 14, Wilmington Police Chief Adam Zink told members of the Committee of the Whole that a candidate was available for consideration for hire. Last week, the City Council approved a motion to hire an additional officer.

"We're looking to hire one more officer. We were

approached by a potential lateral candidate, I can't disclose who that is at this time but I would like to get this person before someone else snatches them up," Zink said. "We need to hire anyway, and now is a good a time as any. It's a good officer with good reports from

SEE WPD, PAGE 2



SALE VALID 11/30-12/6/23

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COAL CITY 815-634-4224
BRAIDWOOD 815-458-2114

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Charmin Essentials Soft or Strong 6 Mega Roll
Reg Sale Price: \$4.99

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Clean

tracted out those services, after the street sweeper had mechanical issues which has caused a lengthy repair schedule.

Gretencord told city officials that he will prepare a cost comparison to see what makes more sense—repair the aging sweeper and have public works crews do the work, or continue contracting the work out. Gretencord pointed out

that the city's sweeper is nearly 20 years old and will need replacement soon.

"Your maintenance and breakdowns are going to increase, and we already know that there's not a repair shop within an hour [drive]," Gretencord said. "To keep the town looking as it has, I would recommend we sweep once a month, and that is purely for aesthetics. For keeping storm sewers clean and things of that nature, I would say a minimum of three times a year."

Gretencord said a contract would run between

\$12,000 to \$32,000 per year, depending on the city's needs. The daily costs for sweeping is roughly \$1,600 per day.

Gretencord said during warm weather seasons, areas along Route 53 and North Water Street would get swept once a week, while the remainder of town would be swept once a month, with call-outs made as necessary. The first sweep of the year typically takes three days, while monthly sweeps last one to two days in summer, and four to five days in October and November.

Gretencord will break down specific costs for the committee in December, but estimated that outsourcing will cost the \$25,000 to \$30,000 per year.

A new street sweeper would run the city about \$350,000 plus annual maintenance and labor costs for employees, he added.

The city utilized Illinois Central Sweeping this past fall. However, if the City Council elects to outsource sweeping on a permanent basis, a request for proposals will be issued.

WHS seniors of the week

BY LILY TURCANY
WHS STUDENT REPORTER

Each week the Free Press Advocate features members from the Wilmington High School class of 2024. This week we're featuring Paige Eighner and Talin Yakima who completed our questionnaire.

Paige Eighner

What do you plan to pursue upon graduation? Going to college to study nursing.

What is your favorite high school memory? Home volleyball games.

What is one trend you wish you could get rid of? Velvet.

What teacher or staff member has influenced you the most? Why? Snyder has influenced me the most because without taking his Honors Anatomy and Physiology class I would not know what I want to do with my future career.

What is your favorite Wilmington tradition? Catfish Days.



PAIGE EIGHNER

Describe senioritis using one word. Uninspired.

What has been your favorite class? Why? My anatomy class because it has made me realize what career path I want to take and it is interesting to me to learn about.

What has been your favorite extracurricular that you've participated in? Volleyball and National Honors Society.

What's your favorite thing



TALIN YAKIMA

on the lunch menu? Mac and cheese.

Advice you would give to underclassmen? Work hard and make these few years enjoyable.

Talin Yakima

What do you plan to pursue upon graduation? Journeyman lineman.

What is your favorite high school memory? Wildcat time with Farrell.

What is one trend you wish you could get rid of? The mullet.

What teacher or staff member has influenced you the most? Why? Farrell because he has taught me to enjoy my time at school no matter what.

What is your favorite Wilmington tradition? The Spook Hike.

Describe senioritis using one word. Relax.

What has been your favorite class? Why? Building trades because it gives me basic knowledge on how to build a house and more real-world experience for after high school.

What has been your favorite extracurricular that you've participated in? Junior Marshal.

What's your favorite thing on the lunch menu? Grandma cookies by far.

Advice you would give to underclassmen? Everything goes by really fast so make it all count and have a good time.

Lunch at 209-U schools

Mon., Dec. 4: chili w/beans, PBJ sandwich, grandma cookies, applesauce and milk

Tue., Dec. 5: chicken noodle, corn, roll and butter, mandarin oranges in gel and milk

Wed., Dec. 6: chicken patty sliders, broccoli cheese rice, sorbet cup and milk

Thu., Dec. 7: goulash, romaine salad, garlic bread, peach cup and choice of milk

Fri., Dec. 8: chicken bacon wrap, Baked Lays, celery sticks, strawberry cup and milk

Coffee & Newspapers

One wakes you up
One opens your eyes

Elwood CCSD 203 public hearing for eLearning

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given by the Board of Education Community Consolidated School District #203 in the County of Will, State of Illinois, that a public hearing will be held at 6:00 p.m. on the 12th day of December, 2023, for eLearning. The meeting will be held at Elwood School, 409 North Chicago Avenue, Elwood, Illinois. BOARD OF EDUCATION OF ELWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT 203 in the County of Will, State of Illinois.

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, November 29, 2023.



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WPD

their current department."

The potential hire will still have to go before the police commission.

Meanwhile, Zink reported that the officers of the WPD continue their efforts at keeping overweight trucks off of non-truck route roadways in the city.

"Truck enforcement is still doing a great job out there. We had \$9,300 in fines last month," Zink said, noting that the truck enforcement unit pulled over 11 trucks in October on suspicion of being overweight

Zink also reported the following activity for the month of October:

- 3 Pedestrian/Suspicious Stops
- 47 Business Checks
- 3,638 Premise Checks
- 1 felony arrest
- 40 written traffic citations
- 55 written traffic warnings
- 6 compliance/parking tickets

In October, Officers handled an additional 214 calls for service and wrote 29 related reports.

The Investigations Division closed 11 cases, added 18 news cases, and completed the background investigation completed for that lateral candidate.

Officer also engaged in firearms training, online training, and completed several certifications in October.

Light Up Your House contest returns to Custer

The 15th annual Lighting Up Your House For the Holidays Contest. Enter your house or a neighbor's.

Entry forms are available at Santa's mailbox at the Custer Park Fire Department, or use the one below, and return it to the mailbox by Thursday, Dec. 14. Judging will be done that weekend. Prizes will be awarded Dec. 19 at 6:30 p.m. during the Custer Town Board meeting.

For more information call Bill Marquardt at 708-372-2500.

Lighting Up Your House for the Holidays Contest

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Go Wildcats! State Champions!



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Sheriff's sale of 916 Laurel Dr. Unit B

PUBLIC NOTICE

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

STATE OF ILLINOIS } SS.

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

Freedom Mortgage Corporation, Plaintiff,

vs.
Toni M. Henderson; et al. Defendant.

No. 23 FC 0304

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE

Public notice is hereby given that pursuant to a judgment entered in the above cause on the 13th day of September, 2023, MIKE KELLEY, Sheriff of Will County, Illinois, will on Thursday, the 21st day of December, 2023, commencing at 12:00 o'clock noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 904, Joliet, IL 60432, sell at public auction to the highest and best bidder or bidders the following-described real estate: THE SOUTHERN 42.50 FEET OF LOT 23 IN MEADOWBROOK, 2ND ADDITION, A SUBDIVISION OF PART OF THE NORTH HALF OF SECTION 20, TOWNSHIP 34 NORTH, RANGE 10 EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED MAY 23, 1997 AS DOCUMENT NO. R97-43158, IN WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

Commonly known as: 916 Laurel Dr Unit B, Elwood, IL 60421

Description of Improvements: Single Family Home

P.I.N.: 10-11-20-202-014-0000

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

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

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

FOR INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Codilis & Associates, P.C.

15W030 N. Frontage Road Suite 100

Burr Ridge, Illinois 60527

P: 630-794-5300

F: 630-794-9090

Plaintiff's Attorney

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, Nov. 29, Dec. 6 and 13, 2023.

MIKE KELLEY

Sheriff of Will County

ARDC #06182562
J. Steven Butkus, Esq.
GUERARD, KALINA & BUTKUS
3310 S. County Farm Road, Suite H
Wheaton, IL 60187
(630) 665-9033, Ext. 15
E-Mail: sbutkus@ameritech.net
FederatedFoxPizzaUnknown102323/cp
Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, Nov. 22, 29 and Dec. 6, 2023.

Sheriff's sale of 1923 Roberts Street

PUBLIC NOTICE

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

STATE OF ILLINOIS } SS.

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

U.S. Bank National Association, not in its individual capacity but solely as trustee for

RMTP Trust, Series 2021 Cottage-TT-V, Plaintiff,

vs.

Briget Howard; Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; Lakewood Shores

Improvement Association; Unknown Owners and Nonrecord Claimants, Defendant.

No. 23 FC 0001

NOTICE OF SHERIFF'S SALE

Public notice is hereby given that pursuant to a judgment entered in the above cause on the 7th day of September, 2023, MIKE KELLEY, Sheriff of Will County, Illinois, will on Thursday, the 14th day of December, 2023, commencing at 12:00 o'clock noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 904, Joliet, IL 60432, sell at public auction to the highest and best bidder or bidders the following-described real estate:

LOT 355 IN FIFTH ADDITION TO LAKEWOOD SHORES, A SUBDIVISION OF PART OF THE NORTHWEST 1/4 OF THE NORTHEAST 1/4 AND FRACTIONAL NORTHEAST 1/4 OF THE FRACTIONAL NORTHWEST 1/4 OF SECTION 12, ALSO PART OF THE SOUTHWEST FRACTIONAL QUARTER AND THE SOUTHWEST FRACTIONAL QUARTER OF THE NORTHWEST FRACTIONAL QUARTER OF SECTION 1, TOWNSHIP 32 NORTH, RANGE 9, EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF RECORDED JULY 16, 1955 IN PLAT BOOK 28, PAGE 97, AS DOCUMENT NO. 778121, IN WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

Commonly known as: 1923 Roberts Street , Wilmington, IL 60481

Description of Improvements: Unknown

P.I.N.: 08-24-01-303-012-0000

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

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

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

FOR INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Sottile & Barile, LLC

1415 West 22nd Street Tower Floor

Oak Brook, IL 60523

P: 1-312-736-7336

Plaintiff's Attorney

MIKE KELLEY

Sheriff of Will County

Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, Nov. 22, 29 and Dec. 6, 2023.

BY: Jennifer M. Lynch

1861 Black Road

Joliet, IL 60435

815-725-8000

Atty No.: 06275404

Published in the Free Press Advocate, Wednesday, Nov. 15, 22 and 29, 2023.

Jennifer M. Lynch

For the Estate of Felicitia Carmona,

Deceased

Commerce, it's what a town is all about

All towns have one thing in common. It is the place where people in the surrounding area go to purchase the goods they need to survive. It is still big news when a new business comes to town. So, what kind of businesses were in Wilmington early on? Let's look at the newspapers and find out.



TIME WAS....
Sandy Vasko

It is from the August 6, 1850 Joliet Signal that we have our first description of the businesses in Wilmington. "No town in the west possesses advantages of a more substantial character than Wilmington. It is situated about sixteen miles from here, on the Kankakee River, where there is one of the best water powers in the State.

This of itself is sufficient to ensure the prosperity of the town. There are two splendid flouring mills in the town; one owned by A. W. Bowen & Co. and the other by Mr. Alden. Farmers from a large portion of the county, as well as from portions of Iroquois, Livingston and Grundy get their wheat floured at these

mills. Mr. Alden has just laid the foundation of a three-story brick ware-house, 40 by 100 feet, which will add greatly to the town when completed. A number of buildings have recently been erected."

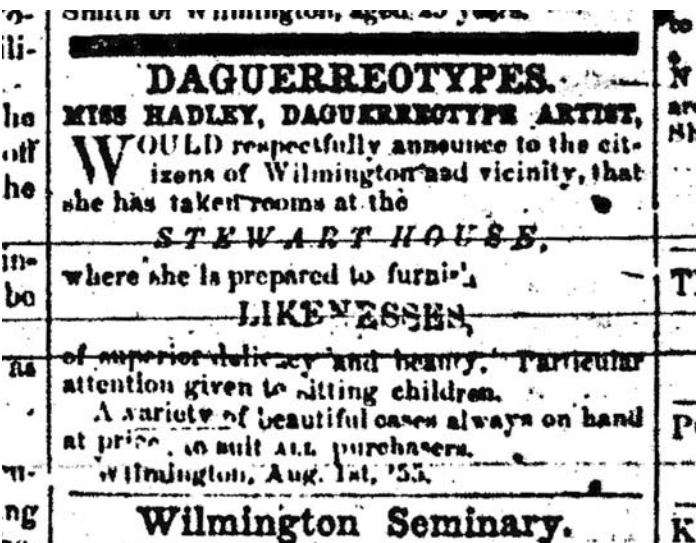
"But the place that attracts the attention of the sojourner most, while tarrying in Wilmington, is Mr. Mitchell's elegant Hotel, for it is there that the weary can find rest, and other things needful to sustain life, and to cheer up the desponding spirit. Mr. M. has an addition to his Hotel (this refers to the Eagle Hotel) in progress of erection, which, when completed, will render it second to none in the country. This building is constructed of brick. His barn for dimensions and conveniences cannot be beat anywhere. The fact is, friend Mitchell is one of the cleverest fellows in the world, and consequently is bound to prosper."

In November of the same year we read in the Signal, "Wilmington Flour Store -

Extra superfine, superfine and common flour, by the barrel or hundred at P. A. Lampings - Coarse flour, made of best winter wheat a good substitute for buckwheat at Lampings"

Not all early merchants had a brick and mortar store. Some made a good living going door to door. We read in 1851, in the Joliet Signal, "D. A. Watson, of Wilmington, agent for Mills & Co., of Chicago, is traveling through the country with a peddling wagon, and selling goods at astonishing low prices. He carries a complete assortment with him, and his acquaintance throughout this section of country will enable him to do a good business. Those wishing a superior article of letter or cap paper should purchase of him."

There are but a few surviving newspapers from this early decade. A single surviving ad from a female owned business in August of 1855 tells of the following: "DAGUERREOTYPES - Miss Hadley, Daguerreotype artist, would respectfully announce to the citizens of Wilmington and vicinity, that she has taken rooms at the Stewart House, where she is prepared to fur-



An ad from the 1850's.

nish LIKENESSES, of superior delicacy and beauty. Particular attention given to sitting children. A variety of beautiful cases always on hand at price to suit all purchasers.

In 1855 Dr. Bowen went into business with a man named Henderson, their huge ad told of the amazing variety of things they sold. There were clothing, boots and shoes, wooden and stone wear, farming implements like scythes, forks, rakes, crowbars, chains, axes, plows, sash & doors, and

many more things than can be listed here.

In 1861 Bowen sold out to Jerome Stewart and the business was moved, "We are glad to see that Messrs. Henderson & Stewart have at length changed their quarters, and are now comfortable ensconced in their new store on Water Street, three or four doors north of Baltimore. The room is about 25 feet front by

100 feet deep, and makes one of the finest and pleasantest stores in town. The room over the store is to be used as a public hall we are informed, which is a desideratum most devoutly to be wished.

In 1856 J. H. Brown opened his store. His ad exclaimed "Look to your lights! Burning fluid, camphene, Lard Oil, pure Elephant Oil, Wax and Spermin (from whales) Candles, for sale low, at J. H. Browns."

But the number of hair tonics beats them all. "For the hair! Pomades and Ox Marrow! Savage's Ursmas of pure Bear's Grease, a truly beautiful article. Also Sand's Bear Oil, Katharion Barry's Trycopherous (which is still sold today), Noble's Hari Gloss, Bogle's Hyoerion, Bazin's Philacole (?), Crystalline Pmatum, Bandaline, Fixatrix, and Jayne's Hair tonic."

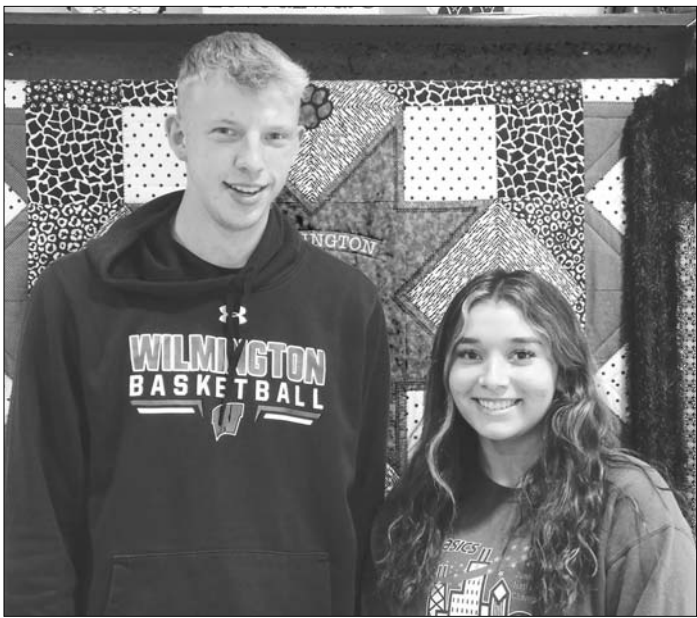
Wilmington in the 1850's had it going on, with businesses selling anything you could dream of, and some things that you couldn't in a million years.

WHS Students of the Month



Courtesy photo

WHS SENIORS Rylee Kettmann and Brandon Aldofino were the October students of the month. Each month the staff picks two classmen from each grade level who has shown leadership or extra kindness.



Courtesy photo

BRYCEN FEIL and Alea Del Angel were the WHS junior representatives chosen for the students of the month.



Courtesy photo

WHS SOPHOMORES Sydney Swann and Rianna Swearngen were chosen by staff for the students of the month for October.



Courtesy photo

WHS FRESHMEN Isabel Brajas and Nathan Wilhelmi were nominated for students of the month for October.

Breakfast at school

Mon., Dec. 4: cinnamon toast crunch cereal, animal crackers, apple juice and choice of milk

Tues., Dec. 5: confetti pancakes, orange juice and choice of milk

Wed., Dec. 6: Reese's cereal, scooby snacks, very berry juice and choice of milk

Thurs., Dec. 7: waffles, orange juice and choice of milk

Fri., Dec. 8: Lucky Charms, strawberry grahams, fruit punch and choice of milk

Daily milk choices are fat free chocolate or 1% white milk.

THANK YOU & MERRY CHRISTMAS!

I would like to thank the following individuals and groups for helping to make the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce's annual Christmas parade such a huge success:

The City of Wilmington, Adam Zink, Justin Dole & Wilmington Police Dept., Todd Friddle & Wilmington Fire Dept., James Gretencord & Public Works Dept., Kirstin Van Duyne & Wilmington Park District, Marty Orr, Eric Fisher & the Free Press Newspapers, Dennis Housman & Rich Princko from the Wilmington ESDA and all the ESDA volunteers, Kevin Kirwin, Ralph "Tuffy" Stevens, Sarah Krohn, Band Director Ellen Georgeff and the WHS marching band, and to the ShowCats for performing under the gazebo and getting everyone into the Christmas spirit, D'Orazio Ford, and Berkot's Super Foods for donating hot chocolate.

Thank you, Steve Evans
President, Wilmington Chamber of Commerce

Join the Oak Knoll teams in supporting the Christian Help Association, Kuzma Care Cottage, and Our Caring Closet.

If you received a vaccination for

Influenza
Shingles
Pneumonia
Covid & RSV
Vaccines or Boosters
between Sept. 1, 2023 and
Dec. 31, 2023.

We are once again offering you the chance to support these Wilmington organizations without spending any money.

Bring the receipt from your doctor's office or the pharmacy administering the injections to the Oak Knoll office at 205 South Water Street in Wilmington, during business hours, by January 3, 2024. (We won't keep the receipts, we just need to see them.) A donation of \$5 per vaccination will be made to each of the above organizations to help with their financial needs to help Wilmington families.

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FINANCIAL ADVISOR

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Free Press Newspapers readers

SOUND-OFF

To voice your opinion 24 hours a day, go to
www.freepressnewspapers.com or call 815-634-0317

Work for taxpayers

BRAIDWOOD—I would like the mayor of Braidwood and the commissioners to respond to a few questions. Why did you remove Chief Lyons? He did everything to improve the image of our town and you promised to keep him as chief. Why haven't you replaced the police commissioner? Why did you rehire the city administrator who was fired, given a \$17,000 payout and then rehired and given a raise? He makes \$10,000 a month. And what has he done besides build for himself? A real estate business on Main Street and some houses that he is selling for-profit for himself. The city of Diamond has no city administrator has already started the groundwork for Jewel. And now has Heroes coming there. There seems to be a problem with how you're running this city. It's time to work for the taxpayers.

For both sides

DIAMOND—I'm not a fan of Trump but there are a few things the left likes to conveniently forget about. Last week a writer stated that the rhetoric spewed by our lying ex-president is the source of the violence in this country. I'm not suggesting that there is truth to that or not. My point is the day Trump was elected president our cities were burning and being looted. This continued for four years while the politicians on the left turned their backs to it. It takes two to tango. I am an independent that closely watches the lies spewed from both sides.

Opportunity lost

CARBON HILL—We figured it was a no brainer that Carbon Hill would annex the proposed solar farm. I can't believe the board turned down \$400,000 for the town coffers and a 30% discount on our electric bills for all residents in the community. Now I wish I had gone to the meeting and spoke up in favor of it. Now all the solar company has to do is go to the county and still build their project. Carbon Hill will get nothing. The board needs to rethink this, call the company up and tell them they are still interested. Let's talk this over, I don't think the board did it due diligence in asking everyone in the community what they want. Thanks for reading and thanks for the opportunity to voice my opinion.

Candidates of wisdom

WILMINGTON—When presidential candidates host an election rally, it's important for them to know what city they are speaking to. But recently Trump did not know where he was at and looked quite pitiful as he started blubbing and making excuses. Should we overlook this mistake as a symptom of his age? Perhaps. But it's more important to acknowledge that experience brings wisdom and that the young and inexperienced are sometimes downright dangerous. We should guard against the policies of the young Republicans such as Lauren Boebert, Matt Gaetz, Jim Jordan, Marjorie Taylor Greene and J.D. Vance all of whom promote the destruction of our democracy with the ugly policies of MAGA. Irene

Remember the betrayal

BRAIDWOOD—Looking back at the years when Trump was president, the chaos was overwhelming, but we can recall some hilarious moments. Remember when Trump advised everyone to ingest chlorine bleach to fight Covid-19? His decision was made on live TV before advisors could intervene and prevent the exposure of Trump's slow perceptive abilities. Remember the hurricane chart and the magic marker when he tried to correct his meteorological mistake? Remember when he betrayed our country by agreeing with Putin rather than the intelligence community of the United States of America. Of course, that wasn't funny at all. That was a dead serious revelation of the traitor that Trump was and still is. PD.

Sound-Off is a 24-hour phone line provided to give readers a chance to voice their opinions. Calls may be anonymous.

The Free Press Newspapers reserves the right to edit remarks for taste, length, personal attacks, racism, threatening, calls for boycotts and libel. In cases where the publisher selects not to publish these remarks the newspaper makes every effort to forward unpublished comments to the parties to whom they are directed.

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

Submissions by email to: courant@fpnusa.com with "soundoff" in the subject line or go to www.freepressnewspapers.com, -> Submit Sound-off or call 815-634-0317. Please state the town in which you are calling from or in regards to. Mail comments to Sound-Off, 271 S. Broadway, Coal City, IL 60416 or 111 S. Water St., Wilmington, IL 60481.

If we don't grow

BRAIDWOOD—To all of the residents of Braidwood who are against growth, against bringing in business and against increasing the commercial and property tax base in our community, do yourself a favor. Go to YouTube, search for Exelon Zion Illinois and watch the clip titled "2 Investigators: Zion's Nuclear Legacy." If you can't figure out why Braidwood needs to increase its commercial and residential tax base after watching what happened to Zion, then you obviously are out of sync with reality. Just imagine what would happen here in Braidwood if the same thing were to happen because of a failure to grow our community in preparation for the same situation. Give it a watch, it's definitely an eye opener and a reality check. The Braidwood nuclear power plant won't be around forever folks, so start preparing now because we'll be in the same boat as Zion if this town doesn't start to grow.

They're all heroes

COAL CITY—I can't praise the Coal City Police Department, Fire Department and EMS enough for their quick action when there was an emergency at my house on Nov. 6, 2023. Officer Casey Roth was the hero of the day and first on the scene and I've never seen anybody move any faster in an emergency situation as he did. I greatly appreciate all the professionals that were there that day. CJ Woychek

Anonymity is protection

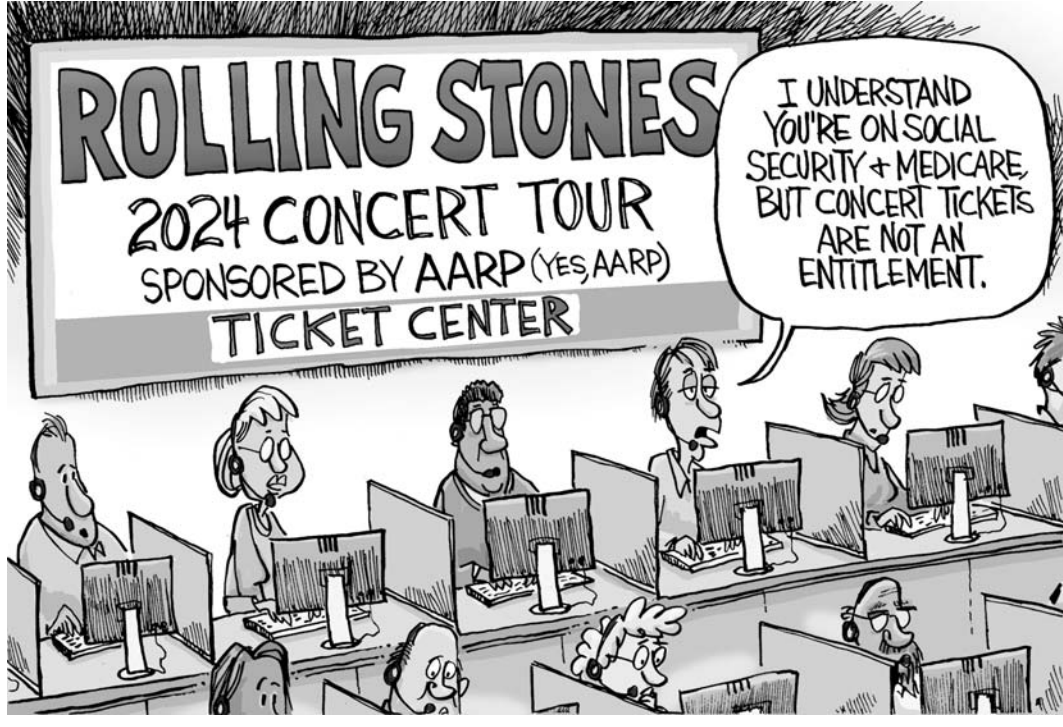
WILMINGTON—A recent letter to the editor suggested verifiable signatures for Sound-off. How does one sign a phone call? This person stated they have only lived here for two years and yet they want to change the format of the sound-off page which has been a staple of the Free Press Newspapers for years as is. Anonymity is protection against the violent retribution espoused by Trump and his minions. Penny Lane

Freedom of speech

WILMINGTON—In regards to the letter to the editor from the person who said that people need to sign their names to have things published in Sound-off. Besides Dan Hill there is one other person who always signs her name and that is Sheri Michaels. Dan and Sheri, whether they are praising, criticizing, asking questions or just looking for answers they always sign their names and as a citizen I thank the both of them. A friend of mine gets the Daily Southtown and in order to have an article published you have to submit your name, address, town you live in and phone number. Only your name and the town you live in are published. It's the same with the Herald News. Americans do have the right to the freedom of speech and if you don't believe that, look at all the comments the former president is allowed to make. He offends people, criticizes people, etc. So, it is hard but most people when they read sound-off they take it with a grain of salt and they don't believe everything that they read. What I do if I see something that I question if it's true or not I go to the person who the article is directed at and I get the facts from them. Sure, people try to cause trouble and hide because they don't have to publish their name. But at least Dan and Sheri always do. So just remember that we do have freedom of speech in this country and I hope that sound-off will continue every week.

War on non-Christians

WILMINGTON—As we go into the holiday season despite what Fox News says there is no war on Christmas. The opposite is true that Christmas is a war on non-Christians. There's no way to avoid the holiday. I saw Christmas items at Walmart before Halloween. So I say Happy Holidays, Seasons Greetings and Merry Solstice which is the real reason for the season and finally have a Happy New Year.



Green energy's failure

DIAMOND—Texans died in part because the green wind turbines they relied on for electricity to heat their homes failed when it got cold. That's right. Americans died in Texas where there's enough oil and natural gas to heat this great country of ours for generations into the future. I'm very concerned regarding the Left's plan to use the "green new deal" to shut down our pipelines, to deny us access to our own vast, affordable and reliable energy reserves and to use billions of taxpayer dollars to subsidize failed "green energy" like solar and windmills made in China as part of a green new deal plan to bankrupt our economy and let our people freeze. Sharon

A perfect choice

WILMINGTON—I would just like to say how happy I was when I read that Steve Evans was named the Businessman of the Year by the Chamber of Commerce for the Christmas parade. Steve has been a businessman in Wilmington for many years and has done an excellent job. He also did an excellent job when he served as alderman when his mother got sick and he took over her seat. He had a big pair of high heels to fill and he did an amazing job. Steve truly cares about the city and whenever the council had to vote on something he never automatically voted yes. He would always ask questions and raise concerns he had. He never rubber stamped automatically voted yes on anything no matter who the mayor was and as a citizen I truly appreciate that. So congratulations Steve on your well deserved honor. I'm very happy for you. Sheri Michaels

Express our opinions

COAL CITY—If everyone had to sign their name to their sound-offs there wouldn't be a sound-off column any more. That's the purpose of the sound-off column, to be able to express opinions about things anonymously.

We saw the truth

WILMINGTON—House Republicans are praising the release of the Jan. 6 tapes so Americans can see the real truth what happened that day. Truth? I watched live what happened on multiple channels the entire day and I did not see a peaceful protest. I saw violence triggered by the ex-president's speech. Republicans say events were cherry picked by both parties. How in the world is live television cherry picked? Did the police fake their injuries? Did people not break windows to enter the Capitol. But I saw plenty of Trump flags. I know what I saw. It's called an insurrection, all because the sulking ex-president could

not handle losing the election. That's the real truth in all of this.

Makes me sad

SHADOW LAKES—When I drive the neighborhood and see Trump flags it makes me sad to see how many naïve people there are. I clearly remember when Donald Trump jumped into the picture of politics. It was obvious that Donald Trump did not like a black man becoming President. That's actually when his web of lies started by making false accusations, that Barack Obama was not born in the U.S. He did everything possible to discredit the man and all the racist people in this country lined up behind him. Never mind the fact that Barack Obama was a community organizer, fighting and defending the rights of the underprivileged. Obama had a constitutional law degree from a prestigious university and spent 10 years teaching constitutional law at the University of Chicago. Obama worked his way up the political ranks, walking the streets and knocking on people's doors himself. The only thing that Trump saw, was a black man wanting to become the President. Donald and racism and hatred are our emotions that can blind a person to reality and Donald Trump capitalized on that. Anybody who says that racism doesn't exist in this country is very naïve. I've never seen this country more divided than it is now, and it started the day Trump came into the political picture. At first he started by telling people how bad things were in this country by telling people how other countries were taking advantage of us, but he was going to save us from everything. He was going to build a wall on the southern border. He was going to get rid of Obama insurance. He was going to drain the swamp, he was going to make America great again. All lies, nothing ever happened. The only thing he accomplished was the divided country turn Americans against each other, and by the way, for those naïve people that think that he was the Democrat that made the prices of all the products and create it, one of the worst inflation that this country has seen in years, and that was actually Trump doing it. Yes, how you may ask American people seem to have a very short memory. It was Trump's tariffs, which is just another word for Texas Trump had the brilliant love here of imposing Texas, and almost every pirate coming from other countries in the United States. So logically that's going to raise the prices of imports which most of everything that we buy is imported, specially from China, a country that got hit with the most tariffs. If you don't believe it, do your own research about it and find out for yourself. The bottom line, if you are a Trump supporter, you need to do some soul-searching.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX INCREASE FOR ELWOOD CCSD 203

- I. A public hearing to approve a proposed property tax levy increase for Elwood CCSD 203, for 2023 will be held on December 12, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the IMC of Elwood School at 409 North Chicago Avenue, Elwood, IL.

Any person desiring to appear at the public hearing and present testimony to the taxing district may contact Mr. Tim Page, Superintendent of Elwood CCSD 203, at the Unit Office at 409 North Chicago Avenue, Elwood, Illinois, 60421, telephone number 815-423-5588.

- II. The corporate and special purpose property taxes extended for 2022 were \$6,211,766.81.

The proposed corporate and special purpose property taxes to be levied for 2023 are \$10,305,000. This represents a 66% increase over the previous year.

- III. The property taxes extended for debt service and public building commission leases for 2022 were \$0. The estimated property taxes to be levied for debt service and public building commission leases for 2023 are \$0. This represents a 0% decrease over the previous year.

- IV. The total property taxes extended for 2022 were \$6,211,766.81. The estimated total property taxes to be levied for 2023 are \$10,305,000. This represents a 66% increase over the previous year.

Jennifer Wedic, Secretary Board of Education
Elwood CCSD 203, Will County, Illinois

NOTICE OF PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX INCREASE FOR WILMINGTON COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 209-U

- I. A public hearing to approve a proposed property tax levy increase for Wilmington Community Unit School District No. 209-U for 2023 will be held on Monday, December 11, 2023 at 6:15 P.M. at the Wilmington High School, 209U Wildcat Court, Wilmington, Illinois 60481.

Any person desiring to appear at the public hearing and present testimony to the taxing district may contact Mr. Kevin Feeney, Superintendent of Schools, 209U Wildcat Court, Wilmington, Illinois 60481. Phone: 815-926-1751.

- II. The corporate and special purpose property taxes extended or abated for 2022 were \$9,030,445.

The proposed corporate and special purpose property taxes to be levied for 2023 are \$11,288,057. This represents a 25.00% increase over the previous year.

- III. The property taxes extended for debt service and public building commission leases for 2022 were \$2,445,375.18.

The estimated property taxes to be levied for debt service and public building commission leases for 2023 are \$2,447,950.00. This represents a .11% increase over the previous year.

- IV. The total property taxes extended or abated for 2022 were \$11,475,821. The estimated total property taxes to be levied for 2023 are \$13,736,007. This represents a 19.70% increase over the previous year.

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Garden Ripe Beefsteak Tomatoes

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240 ct- Outdoor Fresh
Reg Sale Price: \$9.99

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- Thank You -

The family of Steve Bolatto would like to thank everyone for all the love and support during this difficult time. For the many cards, phone calls, texts, prayers, hugs and kind words. Along with the beautiful flowers, delicious food, Mass offerings and the generous donations to the Braidwood Lions Club and the Bohemian National Cemetery. Special thanks to Pastor Dale Tolly, The Presbyterian Women, Uplifted Care, The Braidwood Fire Department and Patterson's Funeral Home. Your special ways and generous hearts made a beautiful difference. Thank you so much.



Photo by Eric Fisher

COMING UP NEXT—Dancers from Finale Studio standby for their turn in performing on North Water Street prior to the start of the Wilmington Chamber Christmas parade on Saturday.

You're Invited!

HOLIDAY CRAFT & VENDOR SHOW

December 2 • 9am - 3pm

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\$25 per table
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More info call:
Chris 815-260-1721 (after 5pm)
Traci 815-405-8063
Janice 815-922-9039

Saturday, Dec. 2

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BELLY DANCING HOW-TO. Miss Casie, an instructor of belly dancing classes at the Wilmington Park District, gave a brief lesson on North Water Street near the Christkindlmarket. About two dozen females, even a couple of males joined in the fun shortly before the parade.



CHRISTMAS CLARINETIST— Claire Lenart, a senior in the WHS marching band, dons a holiday hat and string of lights while performing during Saturday's parade.

Godley Park District to host lighting

The Godley Park District's Tree Lighting Celebration will be held Saturday, Dec. 9 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Free for all ages. There will be many activities

such as an inflatable obstacle course, human hungry hippos, hot chocolate, visit with santa and much more.



NOT ALL YOUNGSTERS enjoy sitting on Santa's lap. This little angel was good for about 15 seconds before she realized she was no longer being held by her father during a visit with Santa under the gazebo Saturday.

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WE CARE BEYOND THE REPAIR!

Thank you from St. Vincent's Table Monday Night Meals

St. Vincent's Table Monday Night meals would not be possible without help from our local businesses and pantries. We would like to take this time during the month of Thanksgiving and Christmas to acknowledge our donors:

Top Fuel Saloon, Kaluzny Brothers, Babes Tap, Coal City Lions Club, Subway, Rosati's Pizza, Corleone's Italian Restaurant, Mustachios, Whistle Stop, Berkot's, Assumption Food Pantry, Coal City Food pantry, Braidwood Food Pantry, Help for Hope, Helping Hands in Joliet, the Milano Bread Company and Crane Nuclear.

We are thankful for the many private donors who contribute food and money, and for the drivers who deliver food to the food pantries, and those who deliver to the homebound.

We would also like to thank the 80 plus volunteers who joyfully work to make this ministry possible. Some of their duties include planning, prepping, cooking, serving, delivering, cleaning up, dishwashing and baking for our meals. We could not serve the 150 meals per week we prepare without the help of all of the volunteers, parishioners, and businesses that contribute to our ministry.

THANK YOU to All and GOD BLESS!

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church
Immaculate Conception Catholic Church
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Coal City First Baptist church

Candlelight Vigil On December 6 Offers Healing and Hope For Those Who Have Lost A Child

When:

December 6 at 7:00 p.m.

Where:

Campbell Memorial Park
South Broadway Street
Coal City, Illinois

Who:

Bereaved parents along with their family and friends.

Guests are encouraged to participate by bringing a single white flower.



For more information, please visit our website
www.angelsofhopecnc.org

Christmas parade kicks off the holiays in Wilmington



Photo by Eric Fisher

THE SPIRIT OF the holidays grew a little brighter on Saturday with Christmas tunes sung by the WHS ShowCats.



Photo by Eric Fisher

THE GRINCH showed up with Grand Dental's float for Saturday's Christmas parade but did not sour the mood of the holidays.



Photo by Eric Fisher

HO HO HO! Come on in kids. Santa, and his snowman assistant, wave at children under the gazebo at Claire's Corner park Saturday. The jolly old elf made a stop in Wilmington to right in the Chamber parade and then greeted youngsters for one hour under the gazebo. Every child was given a Christmas stocking to take home and hang for the holidays.



ELF ON A BOAT—Wilmington ESDA joined in the fun of Saturday's parade, which had a theme of "Elf on a Shelf" by decorating one of their rescue boats.



THANK YOU STEVE! Ralph "Tuffy" Stevens, vice president of the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce, presents Steven Evans of Davy Industrial Park with the 2023 Business Person of the Year plaque during a brief ceremony held under the downtown gazebo following the Christmas parade.

Craft show Saturday

The Women of the Moose are looking for crafters for their craft show on Saturday, Dec. 2, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The show will be held at the Wilmington Moose Lodge, 32050 West River Rd. The cost per table is \$25 while admission for the public is free. Lunch and bake sale items will

be available for purchase.

For more information call Chris (after 5 p.m.) 815-260-1721, Traci 815-405-8063 or Janice 815-922-9039.

Checks or money orders made out to Women of the Moose can be mailed to P.O. Box 506, Wilmington, IL 60481.

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Photo courtesy Elizabeth Strong

THE WILMINGTON VOLLEYBALL program raised over \$10,000 during its Volley for a Cure event, donating it all to Megan's Mission. Presenting the check to Megan's parents are (front, from left) Addison Van Duyne, Gabby Kluk, Addison Billingsley, Cole Drown, Keeley Walsh, Taylor Stickel and Peyton Buza. Middle row: Aubrey Strong, Emma Grace Strong, Melia Hincherrick, Head Coach Kelly Van Duyne, Clara Smith, Deb Bugg, Kent Bugg, Autumn Lancaster, Ashlyn Warriner, Paige Eighner, Alyssa Chiapetta. Back row: Rachel Smith, Lexi Liaromatis, Molly Southall, Reese Van Duyne, Ali Daniels, Ella Hansen, Maggie Lindsey, Taylor Stefancic, Alyssa Johnston, Makenzie Rodriguez and Aly Allgood.

Sleepless nights

In Illinois a new study reveals 2,432,922 people have insufficient sleep due to money worries. This equates to 20% of all adults in the state. In fact, Illinoisans are also among the most likely to experience finance-related sleepless nights. They ranked 17th overall.

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Lady 'Cats raise \$10,073 for Megan's Mission

Kent and Deb Bugg recently traveled to Wilmington so the Wilmington High School Volleyball Team could present them with a check for \$10,073.25 in honor of their daughter, Megan Bugg, and her dream of ending childhood cancer.

The donation will go to the Megan's Mission Foundation, where they have raised over \$2 million for childhood cancer research.

Coach Kelly Van Duyne said, "As long as I am the head coach we will always play for this amazing cause. Deb and her family have a special place in my heart so this is the least we can do for them. Megan continues to be an inspiration to so many others that we must fight for her dream and legacy that children deserve more than 4 percent funding for cancer research."

Megan Melissa Bugg, of Coal City, 20, died March 9, 2022 after a seven-year and three month battle with Alveolar Rhabdomyosarcoma.

She lobbied legislators for the cause and helped lead marches on Washington, DC calling for increased funding for childhood cancer research.

Community Christmas Cantata coming Dec. 16

Mark those calendars and plan to attend the performance of the Community Christmas Cantata "Walk in the Light" on Saturday, Dec. 16 at 6 p.m. at First Baptist Church of Coal City, located at 4470 E. Route 113. The cantata, written by Lani Smith, is directed by Shanan D'Agostino and accompanied by Clare Everitt.

Don't miss this powerful performance by a very talented combined community choir. Please plan to include the Christmas Cantata on your list of holiday events.

St. Rose to host "Cookies with Santa"

Saint Rose of Lima Catholic Church will be hosting "Cookies with Santa" on Sunday, Dec. 3, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

It will take place in the former St. Rose school gym and there will be a cost of \$5 (pre-register) or \$8 (day of event). To pre-register, email

jhooper@saintrosewilmington.org or text 815-600-6053.

Please include your last name and number of children attending when pre-registering. Come out and see Santa, eat delicious cookies, shop local vendors and win great door prizes.

Chamber Elf contest begins

The Wilmington Chamber of Commerce Christmas Elf Contest starts this week with the delivery of 51 collection boxes adorned with photos of the community's most precious youngsters.

Every penny dropped in one of the elf boxes is a vote. The three children with the most votes will receive Chamber of Commerce gift certificates, which can be redeemed at nearly all Chamber member businesses.

Moms, dads, grandparents, friends and neighbors are encouraged to vote for their favorite elf.

Vote over and over again.

Stuffing the ballot boxes is appreciated and encouraged.

Proceeds from the contest are donated to the Christian Help Association to make Christmas a little brighter for over 400 needy families in the Wilmington community.

Organizers hope to surpass the \$6,000 record raised in 2007.

The contest this year will run until the first week of January.

back to Bethlehem
a journey through Bethlehem on the night of the birth of Jesus

December 8th & 9th
Friday 6:30-8:30 pm
Saturday 5-8:30 pm

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On Sunday, Dec 10th the Joliet American Legion Band will commence with their 40th edition of the "Sounds of Christmas" concert at the historic Rialto Square Theatre, 102 N. Chicago Street in Joliet. This annual event was conceived in 1982 as a means of giving back to the community that has so richly supported this all-volunteer band since its formation in 1946. Pre-concert entertainment is being provided by "The Dixie Bandits" in the Rotunda at 1:00 which is comprised of local musicians including Concert Master Ken Spreitzer. As the curtain rises sharply at 2:00 Director Mike Fiske will take to the podium followed by the presentation of colors by the JALB color guard Veronica Konow and Ray Seeman with band vocalist Autumn Cha singing the National Anthem. It will then be time to sit back and relax as clarinet player and our very own emcee Gary Picha addresses the audience with a warm welcome and sets the tone during this presentation of holiday magic. With a wide array of the finest and most familiar Christmas selections being presented; "Away in the Manger" will be conducted by associate director Jill Kohler followed by Dr. Jim Kreuz directing "Christmas Music for Winds". Guest vocalists Paula Camp Shorp and Del Bergeson will take to the stage during the second half of the program that includes an audience sing-a-long. As snowflakes gently fall during the closing number "Sleigh Ride" this will conclude another successful JALB Championship year! May all of our patrons from near and far have a "Happy Holiday Season" and we look forward to seeing you again this coming spring!

TICKETS

Monday	Dec 4th	10am - 4pm	Rialto Square Lobby
Wednesday	Dec 6th	3pm - 7pm	American Legion Post 1080 (Ingalls Ave)
Thursday	Dec 7th	10am - 1pm	Rialto Square Lobby
Friday	Dec 8th	10am - 1pm	Rialto Square Lobby

REQUESTED COST OF TICKETS

Generous Donation of Non-Perishable Food and/or Paper Products (monetary donations will also be appreciated)

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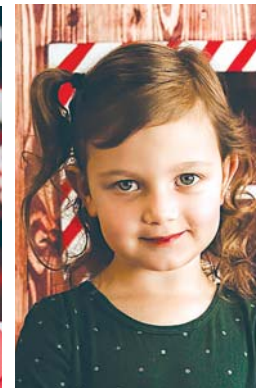
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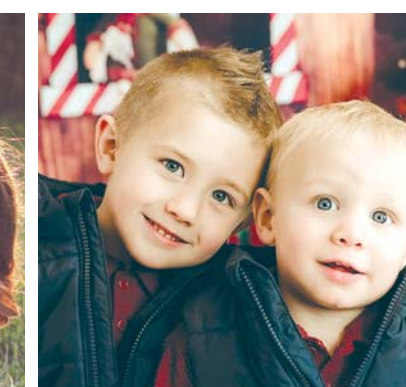
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REAL ESTATE

SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE OF 916 Laurel Dr Unit B, Elwood, IL 60421 (Single Family Home). On the 21st day of December, 2023 to be held at 12:00 noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 904, Joliet, IL 60432, under Case Title: **Freedom Mortgage Corporation Plaintiff V. Toni M. Henderson; et. al. Defendant.** Case No. 23 FC 0304 in the Circuit Court of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, Will County, Illinois. Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County. In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the purchaser of the unit, other than a mortgagee, shall pay the assessments and

legal fees required by subdivisions (g)(1) and (g)(4) of Section 9 and the assessments required by subsection (g-1) of Section 18.5 of the Illinois Condominium Property Act. Pursuant to Local Court Rule 11.03 (J) if there is a surplus following application of the proceeds of sale, then the plaintiff shall send written notice pursuant to 735 ILCS 5/15-1512(d) to all parties to the proceeding advising them of the amount of the surplus and that the surplus will be held until a party obtains a court order for its distribution or, in the absence of an order, until the surplus is forfeited to the State. For Information Please Contact: **Codilis & Associates, P.C.** 15W030 N. Frontage Road Suite 100 Burr Ridge, Illinois 60527 P: 630-794-5300 F: 630-794-9090 PURSUANT TO THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT YOU ARE ADVISED THAT THIS LAW FIRM IS DEEMED TO BE A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. Published in the Free Press Newspapers on Wed., Nov. 29 & Dec. 6 and 13, 2023.

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REAL ESTATE

SHERIFF'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE OF 1923 Roberts Street, Wilmington, IL 60481 (Unknown). On the 14th day of December, 2023 to be held at 12:00 noon, at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Room 904, Joliet, IL 60432, under Case Title: **U.S. Bank National Association, not in its individual capacity but solely as trustee for RMT Trust, Series 2021 Cottage-TT-V Plaintiff V. Briget Howard; Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; Lakewood Shores Improvement Association; Unknown Owners and Nonrecord Claimants, Defendant.** Case No. 23 FC 0001 in the Circuit Court of the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, Will County, Illinois. Terms of Sale: ten percent (10%) at the time of sale and the balance within twenty-four (24) hours. No judicial sale fee shall be paid by the mortgagee acquiring the residential real estate pursuant to its credit bid at the sale or by any mortgagee, judgment creditor, or other lienor acquiring the residential real estate whose rights in and to the residential real estate arose prior to the sale. All payments shall be made in cash or certified funds payable to the Sheriff of Will County. In the event the property is a condominium, in accordance with 735 ILCS 5/15-1507(c)(1)(H-1) and (H-2), 765 ILCS 605/9(g)(5), and 765 ILCS 605/18.5(g-1), you are hereby notified that the

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Send resume to Eric Fisher

The Free Press Newspapers

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The worries of the giant sequoias trees extinction

Dear EarthTalk: What is the status of California's giant sequoias trees and what's being done to save them from extinction?

-- M.L., Sacramento, CA

EARTH TALK

Questions & Answers About Our Environment

Giant sequoias, which can grow upwards of 300 feet tall with circumferences of 90+ feet around at ground level, are among the largest and longest living species on the planet today.

Some are over 3,000 years old. But climate change, human activities and wildfires are threatening their very existence in their native habitat on the western slopes of California's Sierra Nevada mountains.

Biologists estimate there are about 80,000 naturally occurring giant sequoias left there and worry that another bad wildfire year—like 2015, 2017 or 2020, when National Park Service biologists clad the lower flanks of the biggest trees with tin foil to deter the flames—could decimate those remaining trees.

Giant sequoias have evolved to withstand moderate fires, but the recent infernos, exacerbated by climate change, have been catastrophic. Not only do these fires destroy the trees directly, they also hinder the natural reproduction process by killing young sequoias and preventing seeds from germinating.

While fire has been the most immediate threat in recent years, climate change in general is altering the trees' environment—and may be



CLIMATE CHANGE, HUMAN activities & wildfires are threatening giant sequoias very existence in their native habitat in California.

the final nail in their coffin. Rising temperatures, prolonged droughts and erratic precipitation patterns have weakened the trees, making them more susceptible to pests and disease, and disrupting the natural fire regime that they have depended on for regeneration for millennia.

To mitigate the impacts of climate change, researchers and conservationists are studying how these trees respond to changing environmental conditions. They are also implementing measures like controlled burns to mimic natural fire cycles and create a more suitable habitat for the sequoias.

Human activities, such as logging, urban development and recreation further exacerbate the challenges faced by giant sequoias. Urbanization around these groves disrupts their ecosystems, and recreational activities can harm their shallow root systems.

Efforts are also being made to limit human impacts in sequoia territory. Strict regulations on logging, urban

expansion and recreational activities near these groves aim to preserve the natural ecosystem and minimize disturbances to the trees.

Moreover, collaborative initiatives between government agencies, conservation organizations, and local communities are crucial for the long-term protection of these ancient giants. Public awareness campaigns, educational programs, and eco-tourism practices that emphasize responsible visitation also play a vital role in ensuring the survival of these magnificent trees.

Whether or not our grandchildren will get to visit these giant sequoias may well depend on our ability to rein in carbon emissions here and around the world in time to stave off cataclysmic climate change. Indeed, the fate of these giant trees, as well as thousands of other plants and animals, hangs in the balance.

EarthTalk® is a 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. Send questions to: question@earth-talk.org

Gas priced at under \$3

Area motorists were giving thanks on Monday when the price at the pump dropped below \$3/g.

Stations in Joliet and Bourbonnais were priced at \$2.99 while locally, the cost per gallon ranged from \$3.11 in Coal City, \$3.12 in Morris, \$3.19 in Wilmington and \$3.35 in Braidwood.

"With the national average price of gasoline declining for the 10th straight week, motorists are enjoying the longest downward trend at the pump since the summer of 2022. The timing couldn't be better as Americans head into the holidays, leaving them

with more in their wallets at a time of year many start to spend on gifts for loved ones," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy.com

Average gasoline prices in Illinois have fallen 8.7 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.36/g. According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Illinois was priced at \$2.73/g while the most expensive was \$4.84/g, a difference of \$2.11/g.

Prices in Illinois are 20.0 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 42.4 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national average

price for gas is \$3.21/g while diesel has fallen 5.2 cents in the last week and stands at \$4.23 per gallon.

"In addition, gasoline demand continues to be dragged lower as Americans stay inside more often, helping to put continued downward pressure on gasoline prices. However, we're carefully monitoring OPEC's delayed meeting, set to occur this week, for potential surprises that could eventually mean an end to lower gas prices should they make any surprise oil production cuts."

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Mobile food pantry to visit Kuzma Cottage

Catholic Charities of Joliet will be hosting Mobile Food Pantry at Kuzma Care Cottage on Thursday, Nov. 30, at 635 S. Main St., Wilmington from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

When you arrive, please line up in the St. Rose Church parking lot by entering on the Main Street side. (Please do not arrive before 9 a.m.) All Mobile Food Pantries will use a "drive thru" method to dis-

tribute food.

Please clear space in your trunk or backseat so volunteers can load boxes of food directly into your vehicle. Food is free to neighbors in need; no ID, proof of address or income is required. Everyone is welcome.

Food is distributed on a first-come, first served basis, while supplies last.

Santa Claus will be visiting Festival of Trees
Sat., Dec. 2, 3-5pm
Sun., Dec. 3, 12-2pm



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Festival of Trees

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Head of the Class

'Cats flex their muscles for second title in three years

BY JIM SHELTON
SPORTS

Fitting that when they needed it the most, Wilmington (13-1) put together one of those patented back-breaking drives and added two insurance scores, claiming the Class 2A state championship 28-3 over Athens (11-3) Friday at Hancock Stadium in Normal.

"I'm just ecstatic to be in this situation with these guys. It was a tough game. Our defense stood out to me today," said WHS coach Jeff Reents.

"Offensively, we did well. Athens did a good job defending us in certain situations, making us do different things. A lot of credit goes to them and congrats to them on their season."

After an uncharacteristic first half which saw them fumble the ball away twice, the Wildcats held a slim 7-3 lead at half-time thanks to a Ryan Kettman four-yard touchdown run late in the first quarter.

The Wildcats got the ball first to start the third and kept it for 8:27, capping a 16-play drive with a Cade McCubbin quarterback keeper.

"I thought the kids did a nice job of being coachable and making those adjustments at half. Our defense gets a lot of publicity and well-deserved. Our kids did a great job today, but when their offense is off the field, that's

the best defense you can have," said Reents.

"For folks that have followed us, that's who we are. We're not fancy, but we do what we do and part of that is time of possession and grinding out the ball."

To start the fourth, facing a third and 14 from their own 22, a misdirection handoff got junior running back Kyle Farrell in space and he raced down the sidelines 78 yards to all but seal the title for Wilmington.

He finished with a game-high 24 carries for 192 yards and his 2,248 rushing yards are the most in a single-season for Wilmington, besting the 2,030 of Owen Weaver in 2016 in 12 games.

"Great blocking and I was able to slip out there and score. Just seeing everyone come piling in the endzone with me was a great feeling," said Farrell.

Athens then went for it on fourth and 12 from their own 22 and quarterback Drew Cushman was sacked by Farrell at the two yard line.

Senior Jake Castle then scored on a three yard run to make it 28-3 with 8:46 left. All that was left to do was run out the clock and bring home some hardware.

"We didn't play a complete game with some of the turnovers, but we are just ecstatic to be state champs," said Reents.

Braden Anderson had 35 yards on nine carries, Kettman

tallied eight rushes for 18 yards and Castle added nine yards on four touches.

Linebacker Brendan Moran and guard Brody Benson became the first Wildcats to start in two state championship games. They were sophomores in 2021.

"We are a tight team. All these seniors are guys you want to be at practice with and guys you love seeing in the hallways at school. They make your school and community better so I'm very proud of them," commented Reents.

There's something different about football in Wilmington and that culture is instilled from a young age.

"We're a supertight group and have been that way since we were six years old playing Bobcats. The work that everyone put in paid off today," said Moran.

Athens who came into the game averaging 7.5 yards per carry was held to just 104 yards on 36 attempts (2.9 ypc) while the Wildcats accounted for 254 yards on 48 carries (5.3 ypc).

The Wilmington defense was led by Moran with seven tackles, one assist and one sack. Sophomore Logan VanDuyne had a standout day with five tackles while seniors Joey Cortese (five assists) and Joe Allgood (three assists, one sack) had four tackles each. Ryan Nelson and Kettman were in on three stops each. Making two tackles each were

Reid Juster, Zach Ohlund (two assists) and Matt Swisher and Farrell who each made a sack. Petey Rampa finished his last game as a senior with one tackle and one assist.

"In preparing for them, it was a lot of work and our coaching staff does a tremendous job. I'm very fortunate to have the guys that I do," said Reents.

Going through three undefeated teams to reach the title game certainly wasn't an easy task and the Seneca game certainly tested their resolve, but Wilmington got stronger with each passing week and recorded their 15th double-digit win season in Reents' 30 years and third title.

"When I took the job 30 years ago, you always said to yourself can we get there? For it to be our program's fourth time being here and third title is tremendous."

"It was great after the game seeing a lot of former players in the stands. I got a lot of texts from former players talking about playing football the Wildcat way and we couldn't be prouder of you coach and please tell the players we're proud of them too."

"That's the goal as a head coach to establish that family culture for as long as you can. I know these guys looked up to a lot of players as they came through the system and there are a lot of little kids that look up to these guys."

We are Wilmington. We are one.



Photo by Alyssa Ohlund

LOOKING TO PASS—Wilmington senior quarterback Cade McCubbin rolls out to pass during the state championship game against Athens. He attempted just one pass as the 'Cats got the job done with their rushing the ball.



Photo by Eric Fisher

WILDCAT SENIOR Jake Castle scores on a three-yard touchdown run during the fourth quarter of Friday's Class 2A state championship game held in Bloomington. Wilmington won 28-3 over Athens.



Photo by Alyssa Ohlund

COMING THROUGH—Wildcat senior Braeden Anderson (1) blocks an Athens defender, while Brendan Moran (44) moves in from the left side to open a hole for running back Ryan Kettman (9) who scored a 4-yard touchdown. Zach Ohlund (59) followed Kettman with a final push into the endzone.



Photo by Eric Fisher

JUMP SHOT—Lady Wildcat Lexi Lairomatis one hands a shot against Reed-Custer.

Lady 'Cats avenge earlier loss to Reed-Custer

The Wilmington varsity girls basketball team played a strong second half at Reed-Custer to win 44-34.

The ICE rivals, who played each other during the Comet Classic tournament with RCHS winning by nine, matched each other point-for-point in the opening stanza before the Lady Cats took a 20-18 lead at the half.

Three-point shooting in the third allowed Wilmington to pull away 35-28 after three and the Lady Cats held on in the fourth to win it and improve their record to 4-2 overall, 1-0 in the conference.

Sami Liaromatis led Wilmington with a pair of three-pointers as she finished with 13 points and six rebounds. Clara Smith also sank two treys to contribute 11 points and five rebounds.

Lexi Liaromatis tossed in 10 total points while grabbing four steals. Also scoring were Nikki Quigley with five points, Cole Drown with three and Alaina Clark with two.

The Lady 'Cats will host Manteno on Thursday.



Photo by Eric Fisher

REACHING LOW to pass the ball around to two Reed-Custer defenders is Wilmington's Cole Drown.

WILDCAT FOOTBALL



2023 Class 2A State Champions!