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## Wilmington to seek \$1.3M in property taxes

BY MARNEY SIMON  
EDITOR

It's December. That means for local taxing districts, the time has come to organize finances and comb through the books to see exactly how much in total property taxes need to be levied to help support operations.

Taxing districts, including the city of Wilmington, Wilmington School District 209-U, the Wilmington Public Library District, and the Wilmington Fire Protection District, each have until the end of the month to file the annual levy with the Will County Clerk's office.

In Wilmington, the city is seeking \$1,312,846 to be levied for 2022.

Those funds, which were up for approval by the full City Council this week, are all earmarked for the city's general corporate fund, with the exception of a small portion carved out for ESDA.

According to the city's levy documents, the

funding is expected to be distributed as follows:

- Finance and Administration — \$382,825
- Police — \$738,046
- FICA/IMRF — \$96,888
- Accounting — \$7,388
- Insurance — \$85,517
- ESDA — \$1,182

In short, this is specifically where your tax dollars are going.

The estimated expenditures by the proposed levy represent only a small portion of the total amount the city will spend, with other funding coming from sources outside of property taxes. Which is to say, local property taxes alone do not fund the city, but rather support the city's overall budget.

The property tax levy is only a portion of the funding that taxing districts raise for operations. State funds, federal funds, grants, loans, fees, and other funding sources make up the remainder of the operating budget.

The city of Wilmington's current operating budget includes \$18.9 million in revenues, and \$19.4 million in expenditures.

Estimated total expenditures for the general corporate fund are currently budgeted at just over \$5.4 million, which means that \$4 million will come from revenue streams outside of property taxes.

The remaining anticipated expenditures in the general corporate fund that will come from sources other than property tax dollars include:

- Finance and Administration — \$306,662
- Buildings and Grounds — \$173,400
- Police — \$2.2 million
- Public Works — \$766,657
- FICA/IMRF — \$162,768
- Accounting — \$11,372
- Building Department — \$51,700
- Planning and Zoning — \$82,000
- Insurance — \$277,714

Funding for the Wilmington Police Department includes both police protection and police pension.

Funding for the water department, sewer department, capital funds, and TIF does not come from property taxes.

The levy represents the funding the city seeks by way of property taxes, and not true figures, which will not be calculated until spring.

Funding is based on the equalized assessed value (EAV) of properties within the city's corporate boundary. EAV is determined by the local and county assessors and used for determining and allocating the extended property taxes.

What the city can actually collect is limited by the consumer price index (CPI).

The CPI is published by the federal government as a measure of inflation, and is the factor used to compute the fixed rate for the amount of property taxes and related revenue available from the beginning of the year.

Due to tax cap legislation, the CPI percentage increase cannot exceed 5% in any year. This year's levy in Braidwood did not exceed 5% of the previous year's levy collected.

All taxing districts are required to approve the levy and submit it to the County Clerk annually on or before the last Tuesday in December.

## Spreading warmth to 209U students



Photos by Eric Fisher

**MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK** as Wilmington Middle School student council members found out Tuesday when the The Goodwill Committee at Constellation's Braidwood station showed up with winter coats, hats and boots to be given away to about 70 students. The committee selected District 209U to be the recipient of its Holiday giving campaign, helping those students living in a community it serves who could use a warm coat. "It's caring teachers who come home with ideas trying to think of ways to help the kids they teach. It's compassion like that that helps lend ideas to companies like ours that have platforms to be able to help," said Colleen Hansen of the Goodwill Committee who helped in coordinating the donation. Curt Hansen (WMS 7th grade teacher) coordinated with Constellation's Carol Ringler and Tim Schott in coming up with a list of items needed. WMS student council members helped to unload them items where they were then sorted for distribution to over 70 kids (elementary through high school). With the WMS Student Council are (back row) from Constellation: Colleen Hansen, Schott and Ringler who worked with building principals Beth Norman, Venita Dennis, Scott Maupin and Adam Spicer. At right, students Weston Lancaster (left) and Taylor Tenn help sort through coats, boots and hats delivered by Constellation's Braidwood Station.



## Train speeds set to increase Dec. 13

STAFF REPORT

Residents in Wilmington can expect some faster moving trains through the city's five crossings, beginning on Dec. 13.

Last summer, the city's crossing on Kankakee Street was shut down as the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) completed crossing upgrades to accommodate High Speed Rail (HSR).

The work was part of the effort to construct a second mainline track adjacent to the existing mainline track between Elwood and Braidwood.

Last week, Mayor Ben Dietz announced that the Interstate Commerce Commission approved a large segment of the HSR track for increased speeds, including Wilmington. That means speeds through the city are now approved at up to 110 miles per hour.

However, the mayor noted that at this time, Union

Pacific has only authorized speeds up to 90 miles per hour. The increased speed limit will only apply to Amtrak passenger trains, not freight trains.

The Amtrak Lincoln Service between Chicago and St. Louis utilized the UP line six times daily, three trips northbound and three trips southbound.

The city of Braidwood already has a second track extending from Coal City Road south. But in Wilmington, just the one track is in place.

After the second mainline is added, the service through Wilmington will be category 6, which allows freight trains to travel 70 mph, and be two miles long.

Modifications to the Kankakee Street crossing in preparation for the addition of a second track were completed in 2018. Those included a partial track on the south side of the existing track and a 5-

SEE TRAINS, PAGE 2

## Shadow Lakes home destroyed in fire

STAFF REPORT

A home in Shadow Lakes was destroyed and its two occupants received minor injuries after a fire swept through the structure in the early morning hours of Friday, Dec. 2.

The fire broke out around 5 a.m. at the residence on Hole in the Wall Court.

The Braidwood Fire Department responded to the fire, reporting that there were flames visible from the home upon the department's arrival on the scene.

Fire officials said one of the occupants of the home was alerted to the fire by a

smoke detector, which allowed the pair to escape the fire quickly. Both individuals were transported to Riverside Hospital and treated for smoke inhalation.

According to reports, the structure was a complete loss, suffering approximately \$350,000 in damages.

The cause of the fire is under investigation, but foul play is not suspected.



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# Trains

foot increase in the height of the rail bed at Kankakee Street, as well as a modification to the slope of Kankakee Street south of the tracks and a retaining wall in front of Milltown Market.

That said, additional information about HSR remains difficult to come by. With the exception of posting press releases from the governor and Amtrak, the state's website and information center on the project, www.idothsr.org, has not been updated since 2018.

Even the link announcing the increase in speeds for the Lincoln Service include just the Dec. 13 start date, with a link only to Amtrak's website.

The most recent press release on the site is dated August 2021.

HSR will accommodate trains of up to 110 miles per hour. New Amtrak locomotives designed to reach that speed

were introduced in 2017.

The high speed rail project began in 2010, an effort to add faster service on the 284-mile long Chicago to St. Louis corridor.

At that time, IDOT secured \$1.2 billion in federal funds to add HSR between Dwight and St. Louis. In 2012, the state received an additional \$186.3 million for corridor improvements between Joliet and Dwight.

Approximately 99% of the 35 million annual trips made in the Chicago to St. Louis corridor are accomplished through automobile and air travel, according to IDOT.

The HSR project intends to establish a more balanced modal use of the transportation network by improving rail service.

The overall purpose of the project is to enhance the passenger transportation network within the corridor.

In July Of 2018, the HSR project released the Historic Property Identification and Effects Assessment

Report for the project between Elwood and Braidwood.

That report was used by IDOT and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to identify historic properties and assess effects for the proposed Elwood to Braidwood track construction.

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) listed Historic Route 66 as the only historic property identified along that section of corridor. The report determined that the project would have no adverse effect to Route 66, and would not substantially alter the roadway's integrity or its ability to convey its historic significance.

The report also identified 11 archeological sites along the local corridor, but that none would be adversely affected by the second line.

Last year, Gov. JB Pritzker announced a \$10.1 million project to modernize rail operations, improve safety and enhance the mobility of goods, people and services throughout the Metro East in St. Louis, part of the HSR line.

## Wilmington Coalition awarded prevention grant

The Wilmington Coalition for a Healthy Community (WCHC) was recently notified that it is being awarded an underage drinking prevention grant by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.

As of Sept. 30, the WCHC began its first year of implementing the Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking Act grant, which provides \$50,000 per year for up to four years.

The purpose of the program is to prevent and reduce alcohol use among youth and young adults ages 12-20 by addressing social norms and creating community changes that lower rates of use and prevent related consequences such as vehicle crashes, assaults, and alcohol poisoning.

WCHC President Paula Ekstrom said the coalition board and members are

excited about the opportunity to better support the prevention of underage drinking in the Wilmington area and provide additional funding to educate youth, promote healthy family and community norms, improve server and seller training, and improve local access to counseling and other programs that assist youth and families.

The grant will enable the WCHC to hire a full-time coordinator to work on the STOP Act grant alongside another grant aimed at reducing opioid and prescription drug misuse and abuse.

The WCHC was eligible to compete for this award because of its status as a former Drug-Free Communities Support Program grantee under the fiscal oversight of the City of Wilmington.

As a result, the City of Wilmington is currently the fiscal agent for the STOP Act grant.

## Braidwood seeks creation of special service area for D'Orazio, Arnie Bauer developments

BY MARNEY SIMON EDITOR

BRAIDWOOD — The city of Braidwood is proposing a special service area as part of the planned development that will move D'Orazio Ford and Arnie Bauer Chevrolet Buick out of Wilmington and into the commercial development on Braidwood's northwest side along I-55.

The members of the Braidwood City Council signed off on the latest batch of paperwork to accommodate the new dealerships during their regular meeting on Nov. 22. The ordinance provides for a public hearing on the proposal prior to its passage.

In June, the City Council approved a redevelopment agreement with Bauer & D'Orazio, LLC, to bring D'Orazio Ford and Arnie Bauer Chevrolet into the subdivision at EZ Street and Division Street, which is located inside the city's Tax Increment Financing (TIF) III district.

The agreement includes a total of 64 acres of land that will be purchased by the City of Braidwood for \$1.8 million, and conveyed to Bauer & D'Orazio, LLC for construction of a new Ford dealership and a new Chevrolet dealership. The D'Orazio Ford dealership is expected to be built on 11.7 acres, while the Arnie Bauer Chevrolet dealership will take up 8 acres. The new dealerships will sit adjacent to Camping World and Warren's Collision Center.

The city paid that \$1.8 million with the issuance of debt certificates—bonds that the city can sell to investors in order to raise funds. That money is deposited into a debt service fund dedicated for specific appropriations, and investors are paid back plus interest when the bonds mature.



Free Press file photo  
THE CITY OF BRAIDWOOD will hold a public hearing on a proposed special service area along EZ Street, to help capture taxes to pay for bonds that purchased the land for the future sites of D'Orazio Ford and Arnie Bauer Chevy Buick, both of which will relocate from their current Wilmington locations to Braidwood by the end of 2024.

City leaders said the creation of the special service area will include a tax levy that, if approved, will provide sufficient revenue equal to the amount of those annual debt service bonds.

"The agreement made with the land acquisition, they will be making the payments on the loan for the land until the time that they start producing sales tax, and then it will transfer back to the city," city administrator Tony Altieri said. "This ordinance is setting up a special assessment area so that the [LLC] will be making all the payments on the land, not the city of Braidwood. So, it has to do with all of that. The buildings, the development, it's one big area that includes the development, the dealerships, all of that. We have to set up the special service area so they make the payments."

Back in August, the city approved an ordinance authorizing the sale of property along EZ Street for the project.

The deal includes TIF eligible incentives up to \$4.765 million, including:

- Real Estate Tax Increment — the city will reimburse the developers 100% of the annual net real estate tax increment generated by the dealerships, until the developer has received the TIF eligible project costs. For other development within the 64 acres, the city will reimburse 50% of net real estate tax increment generated by retail or commercial development.
- Municipal Sales Tax — The city will reimburse the developer 55% of municipal sales tax revenues generated by the dealerships in calendar years 2025 through 2034.
- Construction projects —

Those projects to be constructed by the developer that are eligible for TIF reimbursement include site preparation, grading, engineering, architectural services, legal services, planning, infrastructure improvements, utilities extensions, and job training.

In addition, the city will waive all permit fees and utility tap on fees for the two dealerships. The city will also construct a left turn lane onto north Division Street, which is currently a right in/right out only.

Per the agreement, both dealerships must be completed on or before Dec. 24, 2024.

The public hearing on the special service area will be held during the regular meeting of the Braidwood City Council on Tuesday, Dec. 13, at 7 p.m. at Braidwood City Hall.

## Reed-Custer approves tax agreement with Braidwood Station

BY MARNEY SIMON EDITOR

The Reed-Custer Board of Education signed off on a six year agreement with Constellation Energy's Braidwood Station earlier this month, approving the property tax settlement agreement to bring the district millions of tax dollars through the year 2027.

The agreement places the Equalized Assessed value (EAV) of Braidwood Station at \$500 million during the life of the agreement.

That agreement would place annual property taxes for Braidwood Station at \$29.5 million. Of that, the Reed-Custer School District will collect \$19.6 million.

Additional property tax allocations from the nuclear power plant will include \$2.8 million for Will County, \$663,272 for the Forest Preserve District of Will County, \$1.7 million for the Braidwood Fire Protection District, \$2 million for the Godley Park District, and \$612,746 for the Fossil Ridge Public Library District.

Additionally, Reed Township can expect \$165,446, the Reed Township Road District \$190,214, and the Reed Township Mosquito Abatement District \$139,193.

The Reed-Custer Board of Education approved the agreement unanimously, which will cover the current tax levy year through 2027.

All other taxing districts within Braidwood Station's boundary will also formally approve the agreement, which will then go before a judge for the final stamp of approval.

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## Correction

In the Nov. 30 issue of The Free Press Advocate we incorrectly identified a photo taken during the Wilmington Chamber Christmas parade.

The photo showed Kevin Olson, president and CEO of Grundy Bank walking with a float of a gingerbeard church made by the Island City Baptist Church. The Grundy Bank float preceeded the Island City Baptist Church's entry and Olson was catching up at the time.

That's how we associated it as the Grundy Bank's entry.

We give due credit to the Island City Baptist Church for designing a beautiful gingerbeard church. Designers Lisa and Dee created a perfect little church.

### 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 2022 will be held on Monday, December 12, 2022 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 Dr. Matt Swick, 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 2021 were \$8,533,189.29.

The proposed corporate and special purpose property taxes to be levied for 2022 are \$10,666,486.61. This represents a 25.00% increase over the previous year.

- III. The property taxes extended for debt service and public building commission leases for 2021 were \$2,448,331.23.

The estimated property taxes to be levied for debt service and public building commission leases for 2022 are \$2,447,350.00. This represents a .04% decrease over the previous year.

- IV. The total property taxes extended or abated for 2021 were \$10,981,520.52. The estimated total property taxes to be levied for 2022 are \$13,113,836.61. This represents a 19.42% increase over the previous year.

### PERSONAL INJURY



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Eric D. Fisher, publisher  
Marney Simon, editor

# Christmas in Prosperity in Wilmington, 1875

Last time we looked at a Wilmington Christmas it was 1861, the war was just starting. By 1865 it was over. It took a few years, but by the 1870's things were back to normal. In fact, better than normal.



TIME WAS....  
Sandy Vasko

merchants wanted "prairie chickens, hogs, chickens, ducks - both wild and domestic - geese, etc. The connection by water gave local farmers a ready market in Chicago and even New Orleans.

Everyone in town was raising poultry in their back yards, every boy that could shoot was bringing in wild game to the depot to ship. Money was easier to get than it had been for a long time.

It seemed that life in Wilmington that holiday season was one round of social events. Then as now, many of the dinners and dances were held to benefit a local organization.

For instance, a group from the Methodist church organized mush and milk festivals every Friday evening in December to raise money for the public-school library. I don't imagine that it would draw as large a crowd these days as it did then. When was the last time you had a good hearty bowl of mush and milk? Tuesdays were occupied



A TYPICAL XMAS party from the 1870's.

with the quadrille parties, a strictly social event where dancers dressed up and danced the dances a sort of a formal square dance. This was very popular with the ladies, but the men were not so eager.

In fact, there were so many holiday parties, all with live music, Editor Conley remarked, "The season for dancing and social merriment is near at hand, and the fiddleists are waiting for orders. Hoop 'em up, boys!"

While Christmas during the war was a private affair, by the 1870's the Christmas ad season was fully flourishing.

But since this art form was in its childhood the ads were mostly one-liners. Such as:

"General confectionary for the holidays in great variety at Mrs. Watson's."

"New invoice of slippers for the holidays at Tinslar's"

"Holiday goods rich, rare, and cheap at S. L. Monell's."

"Cracraft's shelves are filled with holiday goods of almost every kind. Books, china vases, toys, pictures and frames, artificial birds, beasts, etc."

"Blacking cases-Ottoman top in Brussels carpet, piece for blacking brush, etc. inside,

just the thing for a gentleman's holiday gift, at Krause's; call and see them."

If you are wondering what a blacking case is, it would be likened to a shoe polishing kit, shoe wax was not available, but they did blacken their shoes to take away the scuffs. This kit was probably a piece of furniture that looked like a footstool with a piece of Brussels carpet on the top.

Churches were getting crowded as people took seriously the holiday about to come, or at least that was the excuse. Editor Conley commented, "Sunday school classes in our various churches are running over now, as they are apt to do just before the distribution of Christmas presents."

They have a wonderful attraction." St. Rose's announced that there would be three services on Christmas Eve to accommodate the crowds.

All in all, the atmosphere couldn't be different than that of 1861. It was described like

this, "The shop windows are fairly glittering with Christmas fixings, and small children are hourly making the best possible resolutions."

Tonight, the little stockings will hang up invitingly and in the early morn millions of little hearts will swell with joy."

But one thing did not change, that was the annual New Year's Day ball. But in 1875 it became known as the Fireman's Ball.

The American Engine Company was sponsoring it, the name the Wilmington fire department had taken. They were going all out this year and hired Clark's orchestra from Joliet. There was some grumbling from local musicians, but in the end everyone who was anyone attended. Once again, they danced in the New Year with hopes, hopes that the good times would last. Once again, these hopes were not to be fulfilled.

## Jane Austen birthday celebration

The Wilmington Public Library is hosting a tea party to celebrate Jane Austen's 247th birthday on Wednesday, Dec. 14, at 1 p.m. It will be a traditional tea with finger sandwiches, scones, and desserts while listening to a short presentation about Jane Austen.

The afternoon will end with a craft and a party favor. Dress for the occasion if you like. Please stop by the library to register or call us at 815-476-2834.

## What it's like having an identical twin

BY CHLOE PROFFITT  
WHS STUDENT REPORTER

Look in the mirror and you'll see a reflection of yourself. But for Brandon and Blake Adolfo, juniors at Wilmington High School, all they need to do is look at one another. It's like looking in a mirror as the siblings are identical twins.

For most students walking the hallways at WHS it's difficult to tell them apart. Even though they physically are hard to identify, the brothers are different in other ways.

Brandon is involved in wrestling and enjoys water-skiing. Blake, who is really organized and clean, likes Marvel and DC movies. Both do yard work to get some extra cash. They also both play hockey and have a dog named Clark who they are obsessed with.

Which one is older or how do you tell them apart?

Between Blake and Brandon, Brandon is 47 seconds older. You can tell them apart by their hair or shoes. When they are playing hockey Blake's hair sticks out the back, making it easier to tell them apart on the ice. Truly though their dad is the best at telling them apart.

Clark is the family dog who brings so much joy the twin brothers. Blake spends the most time with Clark but they both love him so much! So much they will flood you with pictures of their adorable dog. Just ask them about Clark, trust me you won't regret it.

Brandon and Blake spend much of their time together that's because they grew up developing similar hobbies.

Growing up their parents would always dress them with matching clothing but those days are through. Now if they match it's simply by chance and that's not often.



BLAKE AND BRANDON ADOLFINO dressing in matching clothing at seven years old (above) and today in their hockey gear.



## WHS seniors of the week

BY CHLOE PROFFITT  
WHS STUDENT REPORTER

Each week the Free Press Advocate features members from the Wilmington High School class of 2023. Featured this week are Bryce Jewell and Casey VanDuyne who completed our questionnaire.

**Bryce Jewell**  
What do you plan to pursue upon graduation? Game design

What is something most DO NOT know about you? I have webbed toes

What's an every day activity you could win an Olympic medal at? Not answering my phone

Favorite thing on the school menu? Mac and cheese

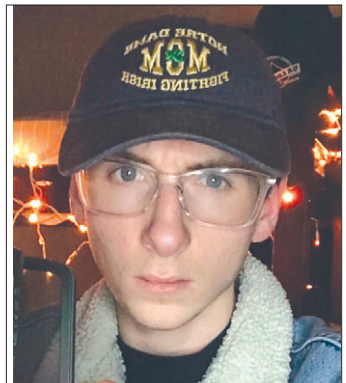
What is one thing you refuse to eat? Blue cheese

A sport or club that made an impact on you and why? Speech, I meet tons of new people and start to not care what others think.

If you could travel anywhere, where would you go? The hills of Switzerland

What class would you create? Common sense/ Common decency

Famous Person (dead or alive) you would like to meet?



BRYCE JEWELL

Rihanna, because I need to convince her to drop new music.

Teacher Shoutout? Mosier  
Advice you would give to underclassman? You can go two ways through high school. Be friends with everyone or no one at all. You get into drama if you chose sides so just go with the flow and sometimes focus on yourself.

Casey VanDuyne  
What is something most DO NOT know about you? I'm on the wrestling team

What's an every day activity you could win an Olympic medal at? Complaining!!!

Favorite thing on the



CASEY VANDUYNE

school menu? Mini corn dogs  
What is one thing you refuse to eat? Sloppy joes

A sport or club that made an impact on you and why? Wrestling because I learned to push my limits

If you could travel anywhere, where would you go? Ireland

What Class would you create? Gardening

Famous Person (dead or alive) you would like to meet? Jon Bon Jovi

Teacher Shoutout? MURPH!!!!

Advice you would give to underclassman? Don't be scared to quit.

Coffee & Newspapers  
One wakes you up  
One opens your eyes

Thank you

The family of John (Jack) Nicol would like to express their sincere appreciation for the many acts of kindness shown to us since the passing of our husband and father. The food, the flowers, the donations to Kuzma Care in his name and especially the cards of sympathy were immeasurable in helping us deal with our loss.

Thank you to Matt, Alex and the Baskerville staff for their compassion and understanding in helping us make the arrangements for our husband and father. They eased our burden by taking care of things and making sure all was done in the most dignified manner.

The family would like to thank St. Rose Church and extend a special thank you to the ladies of the CCW for their dedication and time for our family luncheon held after the service. To all those who were able to attend the wake and/or services it meant a lot to the family to have you there with us.

Sincerely, The family of John (Jack) Nicol  
Doris, Sandy, Barb and families

**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  
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Covid  
Vaccines or Boosters

between Sept. 1, 2022 and Dec. 31, 2022.

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, 2023. (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.

In addition, this year Oak Knoll is challenging individuals and businesses to do a "match." When we post the numbers of those who have been vaccinated, we will encourage folks to make a donation...any amount you choose. Match our \$5, \$1 per shot, or 50¢. Or stretch for this worthy cause and do \$20! Send your donations to the organizations and mark them "Match 2023."

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## By executive order

**SHADOW LAKES**—Here is one for you to fact-check! China Joe just signed an executive order to build an oil terminal in Texas for the oil we are selling to foreign countries. What are you paying for gas? Always, Margot Lane

## Welcome to Illinois

**COAL CITY**—Regarding the story in last week's Courant about the mountain lion they captured near Springfield and took to Indiana to a rescue where it will be cared for the rest of its life. Here's a male cougar who traveled across two states without any interference. But when he reaches Illinois the state has to take control and interfere. All they had to do was monitor it like Nebraska and Iowa did. It wasn't hurting anyone yet typical political reaction, have to control everything.

## Checkmate

**WILMINGTON**—I found Margo Lane's use of chess as a metaphor for government amusing. But as anyone who has ever played the game can tell you when played correctly a pawn can take a king. Checkmate Margo. Penny Lane, Wilmington.

## Were we perfect?

**WILMINGTON**—I agree with the caller from Coal City complaining about unruly juveniles. I ask myself why can't they be like we were, perfect in every way. What's the matter with kids today?

## When Joe?

**SHADOW LAKES**—I was watching Joe Biden on the news saying that he's been down to the border. His PR spokesperson says yes he's been down to the border and I'm sure at one point in time Biden was down to the border as I also have been down to the border in 1959. Dan Hill.

## Record profits

**WILMINGTON**—Caller Sharon made a very good point about how the U.S. should be drilling for more oil on our lands so the consumers could be paying a reasonable price for gas. But why should they drill more? Oil companies are making record profits and CEO's are getting hefty bonuses and stockholders are making fortunes the way it is now - screwing the American public! There are currently 7600 permits already out that would allow for more drilling and jobs. Do you see the problem here?

## Better for everyone

**WILMINGTON**—Thank you to the City of Wilmington for the purchase of a tractor to clear snow from the sidewalks! There are many people who do not have cars, or wish to reduce their dependence on cars in Wilmington, and this is a step in the right direction. When pedestrian safety and access are improved, it makes Wilmington better for everyone. Stay active this winter! Wes Smith

## Not it's role

**BRAIDWOOD**—When the government subsidizes pet technologies, it can distort the market and encourage malinvestments by the private sector. Just look at wind power: Although wind receives far more in subsidies than other sources of energy, average wind-power costs were higher in 2009 than they were

in 1994. And even still, the artificially cheap cost of wind power drives stable sources of energy, like oil and gas, out of the market. This isn't to say that government never funds winning technologies, just that it usually does so at greater expense and less innovatively than the private sector. The government is a crappy venture capitalist.

## Not so nice

**BRAIDWOOD**—My family and I went to see the Christmas parade Saturday in Braidwood it was very nice and I would like to say thank you to all who were involved, wonderful job. The only downside was when the parade got to the end where Rt 113 turns North there is a full size flag that has the complete "F" word directed at President Biden, Not showing too much class and not a very nice thing for kids to read on their way home from a nice family event. Brian Lewis

## Our real enemies

**SHADOW LAKES**—Abe Lincoln said a house divided can not stand. Maybe we should stop the infighting and go after our real enemies, China spy's and influences our elections with Tik Tok it's using your kids. Fentanyl kills 300 people a day, it comes from China to Mexico and into our open borders. They steal companies' information. China, and the politicians who accept money from them, are your real enemies. Eddie

## Clean up the town

**COAL CITY**—Clean Up Coal City. This is in reference to the article in the Nov. 16th Courant concerning seasonal parking rules. Instead of the location of where people park their campers, boats, snowmobiles, etc., I think the city should be focusing on the people who collect junk, cars, trucks, scrap metal, building materials, garbage cans, etc. and clean-up the city. People have expensive campers, boats, wave runners, etc. and the city wants to fine them and just let the junk piles grow. It is time to "Clean-up our city"! D.K.

## For the best advice

**WILMINGTON**—Food for thought. Of course I talk to myself. Sometimes I need expert advice.

## Something's amiss

**WILMINGTON**—I just wonder what is going on with the Wilmington post office and why people are not receiving their mail. Myself and at least three other people that I know of have not received their church envelopes. Obviously it's something at the post office. Sometimes I don't get mail until 7:00 at night and I get my neighbor's mail. A couple of weeks ago I didn't get my Free Press normally like I do on Thursdays. When the letter carrier got across the street from my house I said "I didn't get my paper" and then he looked in his pile and gives me the paper. So I don't know what he was gonna do, if he was gonna wait till Friday to deliver it or throw it away if I hadn't said something. And then a couple of days ago I opened up my door thinking I heard the mailbox close and it was a letter carrier she had a truck with a package asking me what my address was and the street number on the street. And I thought aren't they taught how to read numbers? You know, when they deliver the mail to look at the houses and look at the num-



bers. So I don't know what is going on with the post office. I know it's been a hard couple of years with Covid and everything like that but it's getting really ridiculous. Something needs to be done.

## Loss of morality

**BRAIDWOOD**—Today's public school students are taught marriage is marriage and gender has nothing to do with it. Children can be raised by two mothers, or fathers or a single parent. A father nor a mother has nothing unique to offer a child. And single parent households can live off of government hand-outs. It is a mortal sin to mention the "Bible" in a classroom. There are no moral truths because there is no religious basis for morality. During the Enlightenment, the Bible guided our founders in crafting Americas institutional values. Today they are being guided by a socially acceptable woke culture.

## TITA notices

**WILMINGTON**—Our local taxing districts are required by law to notify you that they will be receiving more money than expected from property taxes because there is an increase in taxable property in the district. Your existing property taxes will not increase because of what the library or school district is doing because that are already charging the maximum allowed by law. What these districts have to do is make notice to everyone that it will receive more money than expected because of the increased tax base. Again, odds are they are already taxing you at the maximum. This notice is to advise you it will get even more money than expected from other sources that it did not expect to get. This does not mean the district will lower your taxes because of this bonus. It only means it can take it and spend it legally along with the maximum it collects from you. Just another form of additional taxation.

## A national crisis

**BRAIDWOOD**—A toddler playing in a San

Francisco public park was nearly killed from fentanyl poisoning. If paramedics hadn't arrived as quickly as they had and administered Narcan, he would have likely died. The 10-month-old boy was crawling in the grass and playing with leaves at the park last week when he suddenly began struggling to breathe and turned blue, his nanny said. She called 911 and paramedics administered Narcan, a medication used to quickly reverse opioid overdoses. The toddler's father shared a copy of the hospital report which listed a fentanyl overdose as his son's diagnosis. The synthetic opioid can be accidentally absorbed through skin contact and by breathing the powder. It's odorless and can be undetectable by the naked eye. Two milligrams of the illicit opioid, the weight of a mosquito, is considered a lethal dose. Since last March, Texas law enforcement officers have seized over 352 million lethal doses of fentanyl in pill and powder form being brought in through the southern border, enough to kill everyone in the United States. Earlier this year, DEA agents in a three-month operation seized 10.2 million fake prescription pills laced with fentanyl across all 50 states after they'd seized more than 20.4 million fake pills in 2021, a 50-fold increase in three years. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, has called on President Joe Biden to designate the Sinaloa Cartel and the Jalisco New Generation Cartel, both primarily responsible for bringing in fentanyl to the U.S., as foreign terrorist organizations. Attorney generals from 18 states have called on Biden to classify fentanyl as a weapon of mass destruction. The governors and AGs also have repeatedly called on Biden to secure the border and stop the cartel-orchestrated violence, human and drug trafficking that is inundating American communities. They've yet to receive a response. This has become a national crisis that now is attacking innocent children. It's time for action from the very top and Americans should be outraged that the president is so lax on this. Call senators and congressmen and tell them to do more to fight fentanyl being imported.

## Dropoff string lights and electronics Thursday

Will County's free electronics drop-off event will be held Thursday, Dec. 8 from 5-7 p.m. at the Wilmington City Hall parking lot, 1165 S. Water St. Holiday string lights that are no longer working may be dropped off for recycling. This is for string lights only, no stand alone LEDs, CFLs or other fluorescent lights. Participants are reminded to remain in their vehicles at all times, show ID by holding it to the window for staff to see and then allow staff to remove items without assistance from each vehicle. Items accepted include: Televisions (limit 2), monitors, printers, computers (desktops, laptops, notebooks, tablets), electronic keyboards, fax machines, video-cassette recorders, portable digital music players, DVD players, DVD recorders, video game consoles, small scale servers, scanners, electronic mice, digital converter boxes, cable receivers, satellite receivers, cell phones, computer cable, portable digital assistants (PDAs) and zip drives. Electronic items contain materials that can be recycled countless times while other materials in items are considered hazardous. The recycling takes place in Wilmington the second Thursday of each month. An ID showing Will County residency may be required.

## Commentary

# Illinois businesses are breaking under the weight of excessive costs

BY JERRY EVANS

Nobody likes "For Lease" signs filling the windows on Main Street. The result of a bust in the economic cycle, mass business closures and unemployment are the extreme conclusion that political candidates swear to fight every time we have an election.

But as our state and national economy move into a recession, it's alarming that elected lawmakers are seemingly doing more to bring on the hardship than prevent it.

Much has been written about the Federal Reserve raising interest rates and the current Congress's propensity to approve astronomical stimulus spending. What I'm not seeing much of is a proper discussion about our own state government's role in burdening business owners to the point of near failure.

As the owner of a small business in Illinois, I've seen firsthand the detrimental effects that excessive costs can have on simply remaining solvent, let alone thriving. Opening and running a small business is difficult, and only about 1 in 3 small businesses survive past the 10-year mark. In spite

of this, over the past few years, we've all had to endure costly changes to worker's compensation, labor regulations, and inflation that are stacking up and making it difficult for businesses to stay afloat.

Our state lawmakers need to take action to reduce these types of costs so that the Illinois economy has a chance to survive the current economic contraction.

The high cost of worker's compensation is a good example of a significant burden for businesses in Illinois that lawmakers aren't addressing. While it is very important that workers injured on the job are given proper health-care, Illinois has a more expansive definition of a work-related injury and more extensive benefits than most other states - therefore raising costs.

In addition, loopholes that allow workers comp laws to be exploited by predatory lawsuits pushed by trial lawyers create additional costs that hurt employers and consumers alike.

As a result, businesses are forced to pay out more in worker's compensation costs, which raises the price of doing business in Illinois and makes it difficult for companies to compete with those

in other states. In addition to the high cost of worker's compensation, businesses in Illinois are also burdened by excessive labor regulations. For example, Illinois's minimum wage and employee health insurance regulations are more costly than in other places and make it difficult for them to compete with businesses in other states that do not have such strict requirements.

Additionally, lapses in defendant protection laws make these areas ripe for further lawsuit abuse and a prime way for predatory attorneys to cash in on the hard-earned income of everyday families. All of these higher business costs usually have to get put back on the consumer through higher prices in order for the small business to keep its doors open.

Mismanagement by the state of Illinois can be costly as well. A state audit from June 2022 found that almost \$2 billion of unemployment claims paid out from July 2020 through June 2021 were fraudulent. Because of this, unemployment taxes subsequently increased for many small business owners each month - making it even more costly to do business.

Finally, Illinois is struggling because of the rising cost of living.

Historic inflation rates are no longer a secret to anyone who made a purchase over the last year. And while you might think this has been good for people like me, it hasn't. My business has seen our purchasing power reduced, our necessary expenses like rent and utilities rise significantly, and our business can't raise prices quick enough to keep up with the skyrocketing rate of inflation.

Any increase in revenue that we do have has been quickly siphoned away by the increased price of rent, energy, labor, raw goods, and litigation payouts.

The costs associated with doing business in Illinois are becoming increasingly burdensome for small businesses. State lawmakers need to take action to reduce the costs of worker's compensation, labor regulations, and inflation so businesses can continue to thrive in our state.

There is a path to renewal for the Illinois economy, but it must come through free-market and fiscally responsible policies that cut excessive regulations and encourage small business growth.

*Jerry Evans is the founder and Director of the Jerry Evans School of Music in Wheaton, IL.*

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# The Cove welcomed to the community

The Grundy County Chamber and village of Coal City welcomed The Cove, a nutrition club offering beverages for your health and wellness.

Laura and Tyler Jones opened the business at 30 N. Broadway St. in Coal City about three months ago. It is open Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. "We are a nutrition club offering customizable beverages for your health and wellness, featuring protein shakes, protein coffees, and loaded vitamin teas," Laura Jones said. "We also offer space for the community for public and private events. It's also our goal to highlight local businesses and organizations that benefit the body and mind."

The Jones family is local and understands the importance of community and well-being. They have already hit the ground running offering fun events and participating in the Chamber's Eat, Drink,

Shop & Be Merry Passport program going on now through Dec. 20.

Mayor Terry Halliday joined the Chamber along with the Jones family for a ribbon cutting celebrating the new business on Nov. 23.

"The Cove offers delicious customizable beverages you don't have to feel guilty about indulging in. They truly fulfill a niche needed in the area," Grundy Chamber president & CEO Christina Van Yperen said.

Jones has plans to expand The Cove's event offerings by providing more rental options for meetings, workshops, celebrations and more. The space is open to the public during business hours for free wifi use and has a play area for younger children. It also has board games for entertainment.

"We are passionate about contributing to the community that our family is growing up in and provide wellbeing options for the surrounding people," Jones said.



**THE GRUNDY CHAMBER of Commerce & Industry** joined the village of Coal City in welcoming The Cove to the business community with a ribbon cutting ceremony. Taking part in the special event were [from left] Amanda Hiller, Chamber events director, Laura and Tyler Jones, owners of the Cove, and Coal City Mayor Terry Halliday.

Courtesy photo

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## Feeding a need, resources available for those seeking sustenance

### STAFF REPORT

For those who are in need of a hot meal or food to stock the kitchen pantry, there are many resources in the area of those in need of assistance.

The Coal City Food Pantry is housed at Coal City United Methodist Church, 6805 E. McArdle Rd., and is open Mondays from 9-11 a.m. and Thursdays from 1-3 p.m., except for holidays and during inclement weather. For information call 815-216-3288.

Help for Hope, 100 S. Baima St., Coal City is open Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to noon and 4 to 6 p.m. For more information or for 24/7 assistance call 815-518-2000.

The Braidwood Food Pantry at the Community Care

Center, 112 S. Center Street, Braidwood, is open Tuesdays from 8-11:45 a.m. Additional information can be obtained by calling 630-738-8863.

Ignite Christian Church, 1180 W. First St., Braidwood, is the site of a 24/7 micro-pantry.

Top Fuel Saloon Food Pantry, 275 S. Hickory St., Braidwood hosts a food pantry every Friday from 4-5 p.m.

In the Wilmington area the Kuzma Care Cottage food pantry, 635 S. Main St., Wilmington, is open Monday - Friday 9-11 a.m. and 1-3 p.m., as well as 8-11 a.m. on the second Saturday of each month. Call 815-476-2030 for additional information.

We Care of Grundy County Food Pantry, 530 Bedford Rd., Morris, is open weekdays from

1-3 p.m. by appointment. Call 815-942-6389 for information or to schedule an appointment.

The Original Secret Pantry operates from various locations to serve the needy. For hours and locations view their page on Facebook.

Those in need of a hot meal are invited to take a seat at the weekly St. Vincent Table dinners.

The weekly dinner service is sponsored by churches in Coal City and Braidwood is held on Monday evenings from 4:30-6 p.m.

St. Vincent Table is a non-profit group established to ensure everyone has access to a hot and nutritious meal.

Participating churches take turns hosting the dinners

on a regular rotation. Assumption Church, 180 S. Kankakee St., Coal City, is hosting the meals through the month of December.

The meals will move to Immaculate Conception Church, 110 S. School St., Braidwood, for the months of January and February 2023.

The table will once again be set at Assumption Church during the months of March and April.

First Baptist Church of Coal City, 4470 E. Route 113 will be serving up dinners in the months of May and June.

In July the meal service moves to New Hope Presbyterian Church, 80 N. Garfield St., Coal City, where it will remain through August.

## Hines VA Outreach Team to assist veterans with benefits

The Edward Hines Jr. VA Medical Center Outreach Team, along with the Grundy County Veterans Assistance Commission, will hold an outreach visit in Channahon at the Village Hall, 24555 Navajo Dr., from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 14.

The outreach team and the VAC staff can assist veterans with U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs benefits, along with veteran's benefits available from other agencies. This event is free and open to all veterans.

If a veteran is interested in enrollment in the VA Health Care System, bring a copy of their DD214 and a government issued photo ID. One may be eligible for VA health care benefits if they served in the active military, naval, or air service and didn't receive a dishonorable discharge.

Those who enlisted after Sept. 7, 1980, or entered active duty after Oct. 16, 1981, must have served 24 continuous months or the full period for which you were called to active duty. There are other conditions under which you might be eligible, attending these outreach events will allow you to discuss your situation with the enrollment coordinator directly.

For those not able to attend an outreach event the Grundy County VAC can be reached at [vac@grundycounty-il.gov](mailto:vac@grundycounty-il.gov) or 815-941-3152 to schedule an office appointment to discuss all of the benefits and services available to veterans.

## Pastoral vacancy has Grace Lutheran planning special Christmas service

Grace Lutheran Church in Wilmington is thinking outside of the gift box for worship. While the congregation currently has a pastoral vacancy, getting an ordained person to come on Christmas Eve has been a challenge. But it seems there are some options for the day before.

If family or work commitments keep you from a traditional candlelight Christmas Eve service, Grace is offering an option on Christmas Eve

Eve, Friday, Dec. 23, at 6 p.m.

This will be a great time to hear and sing your Christmas favorites. Gianna Kohl, soloist, will sing and play the guitar. Paul Kenyon is the pianist for the evening.

Pastor Kyle Johnson will deliver the message and preside at Holy Communion. Kyle spent time at Grace as an intern during Covid, so it will be nice to see his smiling face again.

All are welcome.

## Christmas Cantata to be performed in Coal City

The Coal City United Methodist Church invites the community to get into the spirit of the season with the Community Christmas Cantata "What Sweeter Music" at Coal City United Methodist Church, 6805 E. McArdle Rd., on Saturday, Dec. 17, at 6 p.m.

This is a free performance and everyone is welcome to attend.

## The Village Christian Church to open in Coal City

The Village Christian Church will open the doors of its new worship center this Sunday.

The Village is a non-denominational Christian church, meaning all backgrounds are welcome.

"I'm most excited about The Village coming to Coal City because it's in our hometown.

We want to heavily invest in people in our backyard so they can get to know Jesus," said Mike Strunga, pastor of the Coal City Campus.

The Village is one church with multiple locations and the mission is the same at all campuses: to help people experience life change, life growth, and life purpose.

Individuals may have a personal relationship with Jesus, or maybe they don't, or maybe they've grown up in the

church, but now are having some doubts. Or maybe have never been to church, or don't believe in God. The Village offers a place for everyone.

Currently, The Village Christian Church has campuses in Minooka and Seneca.

Church officials announced earlier this year a plan to open a location in the village of Coal City. It is currently leasing the space above Fitness Premiere, 965 E. Division St.,

Sunday morning services will be at 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. There will be in-person teaching from the Bible, inspiring worship, Kid Village for infants - grade 3 and Pulse Students for grades 4-8. High school students will have an opportunity to join the Pulse Students at the Minooka Campus on Sunday nights at 6:30 p.m. during the school session.

For more information visit the [thevillagechristianchurch.com](http://thevillagechristianchurch.com).



Front Row: Grace Smith, Dayna Vargocko, Samantha Olson.  
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## Re/Max Top Properties under new ownership

MORRIS—Ashley and David Welter have purchased Re/Max Top Properties, acquiring the real estate business on Nov. 28 from Vicki Geiger and Tana Nordaker.

Ashley Welter serves as president and will be running the day-to-day operations of the office while pursuing her broker's license.

David Welter has been a broker with the office since October 2018. In addition to working as an agent, David served as State Representative for Illinois' 75th District since July 2016. His terms ends in January 2023. He will remain as an agent with the office moving forward.

Geiger will continue as the managing broker of the agency as she has since 2006 when she opened the first Re/Max office in Grundy

County. Nordaker will also continue on as an agent in the office. Nordaker had been part owner of the Re/Max office since 2021.

The office is located in Morris at 101 E. Waverly St. All agents will remain on and continue providing great service to clients in the area.

The entire team at Re/Max Top Properties would like to thank the community for its support over the years as we begin this next exciting chapter together under new ownership.

Re/Max Top Properties is looking to grow its presence in the area and are looking for agents that want to join the office. Those who may be interested are encouraged to reach out to the office via social media or call 815-942-1133.

# An icon sailor's cocktail, the Dark 'n stormy

Jimmy Buffett was forced to cancel his fall tour dates following a health scare in late September. He was hospitalized briefly and on his doctor's orders, pushed pause on the Life on the Flipside - Redux tour.

It sounds like Jimmy is on the road to recovery, and the Coral Reefer band will be back on the road in 2023. In the meantime, let's drink a toast to Jimmy's health in the New Year with an iconic sailor's cocktail, the Dark 'n Stormy.

What's in a Dark 'n Stormy? It's the perfect marriage of Bermuda rum, ginger beer, and fresh lime juice. If you've never enjoyed a Dark 'n Stormy, it's time to change that.

Ginger beer and Bermudian rum are an unlikely pair that met by chance in Bermuda following the end of World War I.

The Royal Navy began brewing ginger beer as a remedy for seasickness in the early 20th century, and by the 1920s British sailors had introduced their spicy ginger beverage to the British Overseas Territories, among other ports around the globe.

The people of Bermuda were intrigued by this spicy ginger beer, but felt it was missing something. So, they did what islanders do, they added rum. Not just any rum, Bermuda rum.

The rest is mixology history. The Dark 'n Stormy would go on to become Bermuda's National drink and was the

first dink inducted into the Cocktail Hall of Fame in the "Modern Classic" category.

What's with the name? When the drink was relatively new to the Island, it didn't have a name. The drink was typically made by pouring the ginger beer into glass first, and then the dark rum was floated on top giving the drink a layered look.

A sailor looked at the color of the "cloud" of dark rum on top of the drink and remarked that the rum was the "color of a cloud only a fool or a dead man would sail under". There it was, from that point on the drink would be known as the Dark 'n Stormy.

The Dark 'n Stormy captures the essence of Bermuda in more ways than one. Bermuda has both a British identity, and what we in the US think of as an "island" or "tropical" identity. Bermuda is Britain's oldest colony (colonized 1611), recognizes "God Save the Queen" as their National anthem, and their citizens carry "British Overseas Territory" passports.

British legal descriptors aside, Bermuda's pink sand beaches, calypso music, rum, and Caribbean culture are 100% island.

Let's make our very own Dark 'n Stormy, starting with the ginger beer.



**THE SUNDAY COCKTAIL**  
Brian Rung

What exactly is ginger beer, and can you substitute ginger ale? Ginger ale and ginger beer are entirely different beverages, even though both carry dominant notes of ginger.

Ginger ale will be sweeter, similar to a sweetened soda whereas ginger beer is actually brewed and carries heavier notes of ginger spice.

Even though ginger beer is brewed, it is non-alcoholic. Outside of the Dark 'n Stormy, the most popular use for ginger beer is in the Moscow Mule. Goslings brand of ginger beer is the top selling brand in the US and it's right at home in a Dark 'n Stormy.

If you are unable to track down Goslings ginger beer, Fever Tree also makes a high quality ginger beer.

There is only one rum for the Dark 'n Stormy, and that rum is Bermuda's Goslings Black Seal. No seriously. Goslings Co. has trademarked the Dark 'n Stormy, and it is not officially a Dark 'n Stormy unless Goslings rum is used.

I suppose that you could use your favorite dark rum in your home bar, but a commercial bar is not allowed to advertise a Dark 'n Stormy on the menu without Goslings Black Seal rum. Fortunately, Goslings rum is widely available so you can make an authentic Dark 'n Stormy at home.

The standard garnish in nearly all tropical drinks is a lime, and given its ties to the British Navy the Dark 'n Stormy received a lime garnish almost immediately after the drink was first served. It's only natural that imbibers would squeeze their lime garnish into their drinks, and over time it became acceptable to add fresh lime juice to the Dark 'n Stormy.

I take mine with the juice from \_ of a small lime, or juice from a lime wedge. Don't go too heavy on the lime juice, it's not supposed to taste like a Bermudian Margarita. Keep the lime juice under \_ oz. and you will maintain balance in the drink.

Folks, this one is easy. Ice, ginger beer, rum, maybe squeeze in a lime. No special tools or talent required. Pour a Dark 'n Stormy while you make

plans to catch Jimmy Buffett and the Coral Reefer Band on tour in 2023. Both of the October Las Vegas shows have been rescheduled for March 2023 at the MGM Grand Arena.

The Dark 'n Stormy is built and served in a chilled Highball glass.

Fill glass with ice, than add:

- 3 oz. ginger beer
  - Top with 2 oz. Goslings Black Seal rum
  - Squeeze in \_ oz. fresh lime juice (optional)
  - Garnish with lime
- Until next week, enjoy responsibly.

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### Light Up Your House contest returns to Custer

The 14th 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 Friday, Dec. 15. Judging will be done that weekend.

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

\*\*\*\*\*

**Lighting Up Your House for the Holidays Contest**

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

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

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

## Federal REAL ID deadline extended

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has extended the federal REAL ID deadline an additional two years, from May 3, 2023, to May 7, 2025.

With this extension, current standard Illinois driver's licenses or ID cards will continue to be accepted at airports for domestic air travel until May 7, 2025.

Illinoisans interested in applying for a REAL ID are encouraged to visit [REALID.ilsos.gov](http://REALID.ilsos.gov) and use the interactive document checklist. This checklist is designed to help ensure REAL ID applicants gather all the

documents required by the federal government to obtain a REAL ID before visiting a driver services facility.

First-time REAL ID applicants are required by DHS to visit a driver services facility in person. Not everyone needs a REAL ID, and in Illinois, the Secretary of State's office gives Illinoisans a choice. Illinoisans who do not fly domestically do not necessarily need a REAL ID. Additionally, a valid U.S. passport is a compliant REAL ID document; therefore, those with valid U.S. passports do not necessarily need a REAL ID.

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## OPERATION ST. NICK

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Sunday December 11th

8:00am to NOON

WCSJ Radio - 103.1 FM

40th RADIO AUCTION

Sunday December 11th

8:00am to NOON

WCSJ Radio - 103.1 FM

Back in 1983 the Operation St. Nick Radio Auction was born with auctioning off one Cabbage Patch doll. Here we are 40 years later with 223 items for you to choose from, helping 150 children and their families from here in Grundy County have a Christmas they could only dream about.

Each child will receive \$250 in toys and gifts right from their own wish list they have given Santa. The family will also receive \$300 in food to help them enjoy this special time of year. St. Nick. will also pay \$1,000 on their winter utility bills.

To accomplish this Christmas Miracle here in Grundy County we have budgeted \$110,000, once again, not possible without your generous participation in the Radio Auction.

Pick up an Auction Brochure at Grundy Bank in downtown Morris or go to their website, [grundybank.com](http://grundybank.com) and view the entire brochure on line and be sure to call in on Sunday December 11th from 8 am 'til Noon.

KEY AUCTION ITEMS

- 4 Taylor Swift tickets for June 2<sup>nd</sup> Concert
- Custom made Golf Cart
- Green Mountain Peak Plus pellet grill
- White Sox vs Cubs package of 2 games
- 20 Year Old Pappy Van Winkle Bourbon
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# OBITUARIES

## Lawrence Boyle

**MORRIS**— Lawrence Andrew Boyle, 98, of Morris, passed away peacefully on Thursday, Dec. 1, 2022 at his son's house in Bourbonnais. Born Oct. 4, 1924 in Joliet, he was a son of Andrew and Hazel (Hartshorne) Boyle. Lawrence was raised and educated in Minooka and graduated from Minooka High School with the class of 1942. Lawrence joined the United States Army honorably serving during WWII with the Army 9th Division Artillery. On Oct. 26, 1946 he married Emma Prohaska in Passau, Germany. Together they made their home in Morris, and cherished 59 years until her passing on Dec. 5, 2005.



Lawrence attended Joliet Junior College and Illinois State University where he earned his Masters in Education. From 1952-1953 he taught and coached at Farmers City, before relocating back to Morris. In 1954 he began his career with CAT in Joliet, retiring as a Cost Analyst after more than 40 years. Lawrence was an active member of the Caterpillar Retirees Club and former parishioner of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church. He was active in Boy Scouts having been Cub Master for many years. Lawrence enjoyed lapidary arts, fishing, collecting fossils and traveling both domestically and internationally. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather and brother who will be deeply missed.

Survivors include three children: Larry (GraceAnne) Boyle, of rural Morris; John (Jan) Boyle, of Bourbonnais and Christl McCoy, of Morris; eight grandchildren: Erica (Devin) Doran, of Bloomington; Andrea Boyle and Larry

Boyle, both of rural Morris; Edward (Amber) Boyle, of Morris; Carie (Noah) Bellamy, of Belleville, MI; Amanda (Benjamin) Salgado, of Frankfort, IL and Christopher (Jennifer) Greenback, of Palmdale, CA and Patrick (Melinda) Greenback, of Arlington, WA; 16 great-grandchildren: Jacob, Ashley, Brian, Adam, Bailey, Lilly, Elora, Makenna, Logan, Shane, Madeline, Cecilia, Abigail, Abraham, Tucker and Cecelia, and one sister, Barbara (the late Calvin) Salars, of Silver City, NM.

Lawrence was preceded in death by his parents, wife, Emma; two brothers, Arthur (Margaret) Boyle and David (Mary Anne) Boyle, and his son-in-law, Tony McCoy. The family will receive friends at Reeves Funeral Home, 408 East Washington Street, (one block east of Illinois Route 47) in Morris on Thursday, Dec. 8, 2022 from 9 a.m. until time of funeral service at 11 a.m. Burial with full military honors will follow in Aux Sable Cemetery in Minooka. Pallbearers and honorary pallbearers will be: Larry Boyle, Edward Boyle, Christopher Greenback, Noah Bellamy, Benjamin Salgado, Jacob Fuss, Brian Fuss, Adam Fuss.

Preferred memorials in Lawrence's memory may be made as gifts to the Honor Flight of Chicago Program or to Lightways Hospice.

Friends and family are encouraged to log onto [www.ReevesFuneral.com](http://www.ReevesFuneral.com) to sign the online guestbook, upload photos and share Lawrence's memorial page via social media.

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

## Timothy Drapeau

**DWIGHT**—Timothy James Drapeau, 40 of Dwight, and formerly of Coal City, passed away Nov. 27, 2022.



Born Feb. 6, 1982 in Whittier, CA, Timothy James was the son of John Drapeau, of California and Vickie (Trujillo) Drapeau, of Dwight. He moved to Coal City in 1988, where he was raised and graduated from Coal City High School with the class of 2001.

A 'Jack of all trades,' Tim was a self-employed handyman, who was proficient in carpentry and roofing. His ability to take things apart and put them back together also complimented his love of working on cars. Tim liked to stay busy. He enjoyed video games and fishing, but most of all on his days off, Tim enjoyed spending time with his son. He was always helpful and one who made an impact on those whom he met. Tim will be remembered as a fun guy with an incredibly beautiful smile.

Survivors include his mother, Vickie Drapeau; father, John Drapeau; one son, Aidan, of Dwight; four siblings: Kristie (Craig) Dock, of Coal City; Alisha Drapeau, of Odell and Teena Drapeau and Ryan Drapeau, both of California; nieces and nephews, Destinie Drapeau and

Victoria Ybarra-Drapeau, and several aunts, uncles and cousins.

Tim was preceded in death by his maternal grandparents: Velma Southall and Joe Trujillo; paternal grandmother, Lucille Drapeau; brother, Anthony Drapeau, niece, Grace Hope Drapeau; cousins, Peggy Taylor and Sonny Southall; uncle, Rudy Gallegos and aunt, Peggy Taylor.

Cremation rites have been accorded. The family will receive friends for a memorial visitation at Reeves Funeral Home, 75 North Broadway, one block north of Illinois Route 113 in Coal City on Sunday, Dec. 11, 2022 between the hours of 12 noon and 2 p.m.

Preferred memorials in lieu of memorials may be made as gifts in Tim's memory to his family for their distribution.

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

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

## Marilyn Canup

**BRAIDWOOD**—Marilyn E. Canup (nee Sneed), 73, of Braidwood, passed away Friday, Dec. 2, 2022 at Alden Estates of Orland Park.



She was born Sept. 8, 1949 in Albuquerque, NM to Marlin and Vera (nee Padgett) Sneed. Marilyn was an active member of the Phelan Acres Bible Church where she considered church members, family. She was a proud homemaker, who loved unconditionally and dedicated her life raising four children. She was a very supportive wife, mother, and grandmother.

Surviving are four children; James Canup Jr., Thomas Canup, Kevin Canup and Kimberley (Brian) Elias; two grandchildren, Adam (fiancé, Hannah Mueller) Elias and Breanne Elias; one sister, Kathryn Padgett and numerous nieces.

Preceding her in death were her parents and husband of 53 years, James Canup Sr., who

predeceased her Feb. 2, 2021.

Visitation for Marilyn will be at the R.W. Patterson Funeral Home & Crematory, Braidwood, Sunday, Dec. 11, 2022 from 2-5 p.m. Funeral services will also be at the funeral home Monday, Dec. 12 at 11 a.m.

Interment will follow in Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood, IL.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in her name may be directed to the American Legion Koca Post #39.

For more information and to visit her online guestbook, please log on to [www.rwpatersonfuneralhomes.com](http://www.rwpatersonfuneralhomes.com) or find them on Facebook.

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

## Alyce Mae Rink

**WILMINGTON**— Alyce Mae Rink, 93, of Wilmington, and formerly of Custer Park, passed away peacefully on Friday, Dec. 2, 2022 at her home in the presence of family.



Born Jan. 27, 1929 in Custer Park, Alyce Mae was a daughter of James Hugh and Margaret Rose (Weikum) Cunning. She was raised and educated in Custer Park, and on Aug. 7, 1948, Mae married William "Bill" Rink in Wing, IL.

Mae worked at various places throughout the years including early on at Mary's Restaurant, Reynolds Aluminum and the Joliet Army Ammunition Plant. Most recently and memorable to the community Mae was a Beautician working out of her home as Mae's Beauty Salon. She was an active member of St. Rose Catholic Church in Wilmington, where she served as a Eucharistic Minister and taught Religious Education. In addition Mae volunteered for Kuzma Care Cottage for 25 years.

Known as Grandma Mae by family and friends, Mae cherished spending time with family, and took great pleasure in attending all of her grandchildren's school activities. She was an exceptional cook and baker; was known for her pies, and would frequently return a good deed done with an apple or cherry pie. She enjoyed playing cards with friends, traveling and following the Wilmington Wildcats. Gardening and tending to her flowers preoccupied her time in the seasons that allowed, and her exceptional cleanliness was never ending. Forever in our hearts, Mae will be deeply missed and lovingly remembered by all who knew and loved her.

Survivors include two children: Mike (Diane) Rink, of Hoffman Estates and Judith (Patrick) Mann, of Wilmington; six grandchildren: Ryan (Holly) Rink, of Cypress, TX; Jill (Ted) Lorenzen, of Evanston, IL and Jacqueline Mann

(Jake), Joe Mann (Amanda), Luke Mann (Madysen "Mini") and Megan Mann, all of Wilmington; four great-grandchildren: Lily Rink, Gage Rink, Eliza Lorenzen and Margaret Lorenzen; one sister, Shirley (the late John) Cavanaugh; two brothers: Ray (the late Kay) Cuning and Donald (Jody) Cuning; numerous nieces and nephews, and several cousins, as well as her special friends: Ruby Green, Irene Walsh and Mary Hendron.

Mae was preceded in death by her parents; husband, William; one son, Daniel; three brothers: William (Dolly) Cuning, Robert (Lorraine) Cuning and Harold Cuning, and two sisters: Minnie (Alfred) LeRoy and Fae (Ray) Lain.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, Dec. 7, 2022 from Baskerville Funeral Home in Wilmington to St. Rose Catholic Church in Wilmington, for a Mass of Christian Burial with Reverend Sebastian Gargol presiding.

Burial was in Mt. Olivet Catholic Cemetery in Wilmington, where Mae was laid to rest with her late husband, Bill and son, Daniel. Pallbearers were: Ryan Rink, Jill Lorenzen, Jacqueline Mann, Joe Mann, Luke Mann and Megan Mann.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Mae's memory to Kuzma Care Cottage, 635 S. Main Street, Wilmington, IL 60481 or to the Wilmington Foundation for Excellence, 209 Wildcat Ct., Wilmington, IL 60481.

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

Funeral services and arrangements were made under the direction and care of Baskerville Funeral Home in Wilmington.

## Elizabeth Mulvihill

**PORT ST. LUCIE, FL**— Elizabeth "Betty" L. Mulvihill, 70, of Port St. Lucie, FL, passed away on Thursday, Nov. 24, 2022 at Treasure Coast Hospice in Fort Pierce.



She was born on Oct. 22, 1952 in Kankakee, the daughter of Raymond and Joanne (Pommier) Devine. She married Ronald Mulvihill on Jan. 27, 1973 at St. Theresa's Church. They later moved to Wilmington, where they made a home and raised their three children. After retirement, Betty and Ron built their dream home in the Lake Charles community in Port St. Lucie, FL; and she continued in her role as a very proud and doting grandma "Nonnie" to her then small grandchildren who also reside in Florida.

Betty had an accomplished career, starting as bank teller and culminating in her role as Vice President of Human Resources with First National Bank of Wilmington. After moving to Florida, she continued utilizing her talents and managed the Indian River Community College (now University) Training Center, quickly becoming well versed in all the technology this cutting-edge educational facility had to offer. Later in life, she decided to try her hand at writing and became a published author, going on to write five novels. Her final book, The Price of Freedom, was born out of a deep admiration for her husband's grandparents. Of all her books, this labor of love to honor the Mazzini family was one in which she was particularly proud,

and elated when it was showcased in her hometown at the Kankakee Public Library.

Betty was a lifelong fan of the Bee Gees and all things creative: arts, crafts, jewelry and gift making, baking, and writing. She was also an avid and ferociously competitive card and game player, as well as the undisputed family Scrabble champion. She loved spending time with her children and grandchildren and enjoyed road tripping and vacationing together.

Betty is survived by her devoted husband of 49 years, Ron Mulvihill; daughter, Joy (Joe) Sikora, all of Port St. Lucie, FL; her sons: Chris (Dawn) Mulvihill, of Elburn, IL and Ryan (Jamie) Mulvihill, of Plainfield; grandchildren: Andrew, Aliya (Alex), Ariel (Chris), Reif, Skylar, Zachary, Matthew and Nicholas, and one great-grandson, Mason; sister, Sue (Rich) Bergan, of Bradley; brother, Ray (Debbie) Devine, of Lantana, FL; mother-in-law, Leola Mulvihill; sister-in-law, Madonna (Lynne) Brown, all of Danforth, IL; brother-in-law, Gary (Debbie) Mulvihill, of Oak Forest, IL and numerous nieces, nephews, and cousins.

She was preceded in death by her parents, and her beloved sister and friend, Mary Jo Wells.

Cremation rites have been accorded.

The family will receive friends for a memorial at the Shamrock Golf Course, 6575 E Illinois Highway 17 in Saint Anne, IL, on Saturday, Jan. 7, 2023 between the hours of 1 and 4 p.m..

## Morris Hospital to host blood drive

Morris Hospital is hosting a blood drive in cooperation with Versiti Blood Center on Wednesday, Dec. 14, from 2-6 p.m. in Conference Rooms 2 & 3 on the lower level of Morris Hospital, 150 W. High Street in Morris.

Those who donate will be helping replenish the local blood supply as Versiti supplies blood products for Morris Hospital. All blood types are needed.

Blood donors must be age 17 or older, weigh at least 110 pounds, be in good health and free from cold or flu symptoms on the day of donation. In Illinois, 16-year-olds may donate with written approval from a parent or guardian. Donors may be required to wear a mask while inside Morris Hospital depending on COVID community transmission levels.

The entire process for

donating blood takes about 1 hour, including registration, a brief medical screening, blood collection and refreshments. Donors should bring a photo ID with proof of age. Those planning to donate should eat a healthy meal and drink plenty of water before donating.

To schedule an appointment, call Ashley Wagner at Morris Hospital at 815-705-7370. Walk-ins are welcome.

## The health benefits of pumpkin

Even though Thanksgiving and the traditional pumpkin pie serving may have passed, don't give up on eating pumpkin and its health benefits.

We're not talking about pumpkin spice which this year has been added to hummus, Pringles, and Twinkies; even instant pumpkin spice latte for dogs!

OSF HealthCare Dietitian Kaela Ketcham says be careful because pumpkin flavor is often added to sugary products.

"You do want to be cautious about what pumpkin spice products you are buying because one, they may not contain any pumpkin at all and two they might just contain a lot of sugar."

Ketcham says pumpkin is a highly nutrient-dense food. It is rich in vitamins and minerals but low in calories. Also, pumpkins seeds can be a good

protein snack because they are high in fiber and make you feel full longer, so they suppress hunger pangs.

The seeds also contain serotonin which can help promote better sleep and their monounsaturated fatty acids help lower bad cholesterol and increase good cholesterol in the blood.

"If you're making a smoothie, you can always add a little bit, two tablespoons or so, of pureed pumpkin. Even if you're making pumpkin spice lattes at home, you can even add a couple of tablespoons of real pumpkin to get that depth of the pumpkin flavor to have it a little bit healthier, not as much sugar and actually get more pumpkin than what they use in a store."

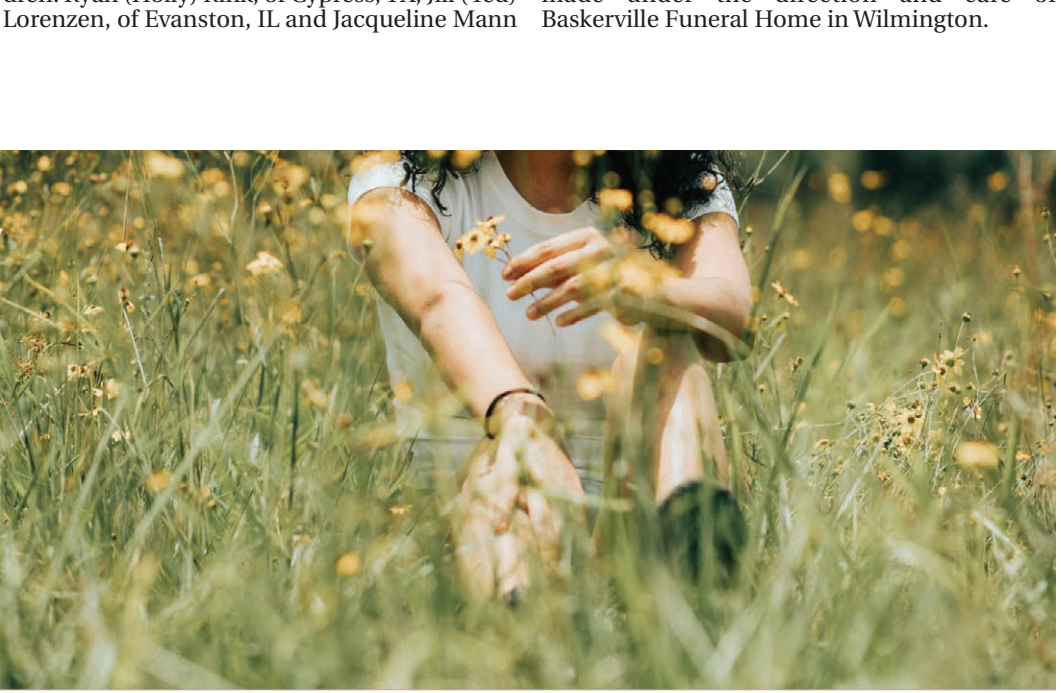
Pumpkin is a fruit that contains 94 percent water. That is what makes it low in calories. Ketcham adds it's also

great for a body's immune system because it's high in beta-carotene which your body turns into Vitamin A which boosts your ability to fight infection.

Because of all of its great nutritional qualities, Ketcham suggests talking to your grocer's produce manager about stocking edible pumpkins all year long.

"You can also incorporate it in your oatmeal. You can put it in soups and stews and chilies. I saw a recipe for pasta shells. You stuff pasta shells with pumpkin and cheeses. You really get the benefit of pumpkin all year round without having to put it in a baked good and then putting all that sugar on top of it."

Fun fact about pumpkins, 85% of the processed pumpkin in the United States comes from Libby's plant in Morton, IL.



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# Respect needed between Illinois Democrats, Republicans

The state legislative debate last week over amending the Pre-Trial Fairness Act provisions within the controversial SAFE-T Act featured many of the same obfuscations and outright misinformation that characterized the fall campaign by Republicans and many of the same insufficient answers by Democrats.

One of the problems that the super-majority Democrats have in both chambers is that when they know their bill is going to pass, they usually don't take the Republicans' objections seriously enough to fully engage with them. But on bills like this, misinformation can spread when points aren't adequately rebutted.

For just one example, during the House debate, Republican Leader Jim Durkin and his leadership successor, Rep. Tony McCombie (R-Savanna), repeatedly blasted the Democrats at length for forcing victims of violent crime, via the Pre-Trial Fairness Act, to be dragged into court for hearings within 48 hours of an arrest.

Leader Durkin has been making this argument in public venues for months, so the Democrats had to know this was coming.

Durkin appeared furious that the Democrats didn't fix what he claimed was their egregious mistake in drafting the original bill back in 2021, and claimed it directly violated the Illinois Constitution's protections for crime victims. He predicted that it would have a horrible impact on victims by victimizing them all over again.

But the only answer provided by the sponsor, Rep. Justin Slaughter (D-Chicago)

was that some victims' rights organizations supported the law.

Rep. McCombie amped up the rhetoric even further than Leader Durkin by asking if her 8-year-old niece was abducted by two men, brutally raped, buried alive and rescued, then would she be compelled to go to court for a detention hearing.

After saying that the bill "didn't make that possible," Rep. Slaughter then said the law would make it more difficult for that to happen. McCombie said what Slaughter claimed wasn't true, and that claim was followed by more emotional and unenlightening back and forth.

Rep. Slaughter was right, but the actual explanation he could've offered and didn't is pretty simple. Before the Pre-Trial Fairness Act, judges were given full discretion to compel a victim to appear at a hearing on a defendant's culpability and dangerousness. That's no longer the case.

The law was changed in 2021 to force judges to explain why they were granting a request, and then they could "only grant the request if the court finds by clear and convincing evidence that the defendant will be materially prejudiced if the complaining witness does not appear." That's one reason why victims' rights groups supported the overall reforms.

Before the changes were first made in 2021, judges were admonished to "be consider-



**CAPITOL FACTS**  
Rich Miller

ate of the emotional and physical well-being of the witness," and that particular statutory language was not altered.

The Pre-Trial Fairness Act even eliminated previous statutory language which gave accused criminals "the right to present witnesses in his favor" at those hearings. So, to claim that this revision is a horrific sop to accused violent criminals just doesn't make sense.

The Democrats decided to exclude legislative Republicans from the revision talks, perhaps because they believed that the GOP was more interested in theater than responsibly negotiating the new bill. Rarely does one negotiate with someone who will undoubtedly wind up being a hard and public "No." That's understandable on one level. I get it.

But, again, this problem is not just about the Pre-Trial Fairness Act or the SAFE-T Act. Time and time again I've watched the Democrats stand mute while Republicans lambasted their legislation, drafted without GOP input, and then jammed it through with their superior numbers. It's an arrogance of power and it resulted in a whole lot of scrambling during this past election season as wild claims were made about the bill they had passed.

On the other side, though, the fact that this amendment was not officially opposed by any statewide law enforcement groups (which tend to be dominated by Republicans) should've prompted an

attempt by at least some legislative Republicans to find common ground and maybe steer the end product even further their direction. Maybe they just didn't have anyone who was open-minded enough or who was brave enough to confront their fellow Republicans by negotiating. Neither is a good sign.

I guess what I'm arguing for here is more respect by both parties for each other, for the legislative process and for the state we all inhabit and the people they all represent.

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

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# Gas price lowest in almost a year

Average gasoline prices in Illinois have fallen 18.4 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.60/g Monday, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,378 stations in Illinois. Prices in Illinois are 69.5 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 10.6 cents per gallon higher than a year ago.

"For the first time in 670 days, the national average price of gasoline has fallen below its year-ago level, dropping for the fourth straight week to its lowest level since January," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in downstate Illinois was priced at \$2.92/g, while the

most expensive was \$5.87/g, a difference of \$2.95/g.

Locally, the cheapest station was Mohsen on Lorenzo Road, Wilmington at \$2.97; Joliet stations at \$2.99; Braidwood \$3.41; Wilmington \$3.56; Morris \$3.75; Bourbonnais \$3.84; and Coal City \$3.93.

The national average price of diesel has fallen 13.6 cents in the last week and stands at \$5.06 per gallon.

The national average price of gasoline has fallen 15.8 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.36/g. The national average is down 43.0 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 1.5 cents per gallon higher than a year ago, according to GasBuddy.

"Every state has again

seen average gasoline prices drop in the last week, and it remains very possible the national average could fall under \$3 per gallon by Christmas. There has also been a drop in diesel prices, which this week will fall back under \$5 per gallon, and could soon thereafter fall to their lowest level since March.

"However, despite all the good news about fuel prices, there may be some concerns coming as the price cap on Russian oil kicks in. Retaliation is possible, and while OPEC+ upheld production cuts from last month, they could always cut more production. For now, however, we'll likely see another week of declines at the pump in nearly all areas," De Haan said.

# IDNR monitoring avian flu outbreak among waterfowl

At least 300 waterbirds, primarily snow geese, have died of suspected avian influenza at public hunting areas throughout southern Illinois, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) has confirmed.

Deceased wild birds have been found at Baldwin Lake, Pyramid State Recreation Area, Rend Lake, and Carlyle Lake in recent days.

IDNR will continue to monitor for ongoing outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza, or HPAI, during the fall bird migration. Members of the public are encouraged to report large concentrations of 20 or more deceased birds at

one location. Reports can be made to the local IDNR district wildlife biologist.

IDNR first announced HPAI was detected in wild Canada geese in Illinois in March 2022. IDNR continues to remind waterfowl hunters to take precautions by thoroughly cooking game meat to an internal temperature of 165 degrees F.

Hunters should avoid handling sick or dead waterfowl found in the field, and they should not allow dogs or other pets to consume waterfowl that died from unknown causes.

Rubber gloves and a mask should be worn when disposing of any deceased wild birds,

and carcasses should be double-bagged in sealed plastic bags. The bags can be buried away from scavengers or placed in the garbage if approved by the local waste service provider.

# Christmas in the Commons

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STARTING ON GIVING TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2022, THROUGH DECEMBER 18TH:

# Matching Angels

Our Anonymous Matching Angels have returned again this holiday season! The first \$3,000 in donations received until December 18th will be matched.

Mark your donation "Angel Fund" and mail to:  
Kuzma Care Cottage, 635 S. Main St., Wilmington IL 60481  
or donate online at [www.kuzmacarecottage.org](http://www.kuzmacarecottage.org)

Commentary

# Give one hour, donate to warm your heart

The late, great Martin Luther King once said, "Not everyone can be famous, but everyone can be great because greatness is determined by service. You only need a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love."

For many years, I have been of service to the Christian Help Association (CHA) to provide a wonderful holiday season to the families of Wilmington who are struggling.

The smiles, the hugs, the "thank you" is all a volunteer needs to warm our hearts (and cold toes). The thought that families will have a blessed Christmas because we gave a few hours of our time and donated to organize, pack and distribute food, clothes and gifts will warm your heart on the coldest day. There are

many ways you can help make a difference and warm your heart.

Monetary donations are used to cover additional food, toiletries, packing and other expenses. Donations can be dropped off at local churches, Kuzma Care Cottage or mailed to 635 S. Main St., Wilmington. Another easy way to help CHA is by supporting the Chamber of Commerce Christmas Elves. Local businesses throughout town have donation boxes near the register to collect money for CHA. As you check out, look for a bright painted box with a photo of a cute elf or two. Deposit your change, or a few dollars or even a check. All money is used for CHA expenses to provide a beautiful Christmas to 300 families in Wilmington.

Please join us on Friday, Dec. 16 at St. Rose School with giving little more than one hour of your time. By helping pack groceries, you can give back to others and will leave

with a wonderful feeling of helping.

We have jobs for everyone! If you are not able to stand or walk for long periods of time, I have a job for you. If you are young and have a strong back, I have a job for you. If you need some community service time for a school or civic organization, I have a job for you! We welcome new faces and are happy to be able to come together this year.

Donations of unwrapped toys and non-perishable food (can goods, pasta, cereal, cake mix, and one-package meals) may be left with the local churches, local businesses or at Kuzma Cottage. It takes a lot of items to fill the bags for these families.

With the cold winds starting and snowflakes in the air, CHA is also in need of winter clothing (coats, gloves, hats, etc) for Our Caring Closet. Collections for clothing are set up at churches, the library and few other locations around

town. Donations can also be dropped off at 205 N. 1st Street.

Please bring any new or slightly used winter wear for distribution. Others items they need are boots, snow pants, mittens, and scarves. With 400 kids and over 450 adults receiving assistance, it takes a lot of clothes to keep them warm and dry.

Service means the act of helpful activity to others. Give one hour. Give a donation. Give the warmth of hat & gloves. Give a smile to someone struggling. You only must touch one life to make a difference.

The warmth in your heart from putting others ahead of yourself will be a positive in your life, in your community and in your spirit. If you take a few hours to help a charity cause, your heart will grow. You will receive more in appreciation than you can give.

Cynthia Ragain  
Christian Help Association  
Chamber of Commerce Elves

**SATURDAY, DEC. 10**  
Rock & Roll Music by **ST. JUPITER**  
9:30 pm - 1:30 am

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## Something fishy is going on at Four Rivers

The smallest fish in a new 2,000-gallon aquarium at Four Rivers Environmental Education Center in Channahon has a big story to tell.

The redspotted sunfish is struggling out in the wild. The fish is no longer on the state endangered list thanks to a state program designed to help the species recover. But redspotted sunfish are still threatened.

As part of the redspotted sunfish recovery program, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources has asked public aquariums to include the fish and to educate the public about its plight.

"Most people have never even heard of the redspotted sunfish," said Trent Thomas, a streams biologist with IDNR's division of fisheries. "Having these fish in public aquariums will bring attention to the species and draw attention to the threats it and other vulnerable species face and what needs to be done to protect and/or recover these species."

After viewing the fish at Four Rivers, Thomas said he hopes people will realize there are things they can do on a personal level to help threatened and endangered fish species.

"Don't pollute," Thomas advised. "Don't release unwanted pets or move species from one waterbody to another. Report dead fish or fish kill events to local conservation and/or law enforcement. Participate in cleanup events. Advocate for funding to restore aquatic habitat."

**Ambassador fish**  
Jerome Gabriel, Forest Preserve facility supervisor at Four Rivers, said he was happy to add a dozen redspotted sunfish at IDNR's request to the mix of native river fish in the aquarium.

The redspotted sunfish once lived in the types of waters found around Four Rivers, he explained. Including the redspotted sunfish in the aquarium will help initiate a conversation about the species and its threatened status, Gabriel said.

"We host the fish as an animal ambassador to be able to talk about the impact of industrialization of waterways and the efforts IDNR is making today to reestablish populations of the animal," he said.

The new aquarium at Four Rivers features around 50 fish including bluegill, crappie, smallmouth bass, walleye and channel catfish. Gabriel would like to add gar and pumpkinseed sunfish to the tank in the months to come.

"We feed the fish three times a week, Mondays (when the building is closed), Wednesdays and Saturdays. And it's always a highlight to do feedings when there are families in to watch."

**Fostering biodiversity**  
The redspotted sunfish is only 6 to 7 inches long and it has horizontal rows of red-orange spots in males and yellow-brown spots in females. The sides of the fish's body are dark olive but its belly is yellow to red-orange.

Since March 2010, a total of 17,257 redspotted sunfish

have been released in wildlife areas and preserves around the state and more were stocked in refuge populations. Because of these efforts and those of other organizations, the species was moved from the endangered list to the threatened list in 2020.

In its native habitat, redspotted sunfish inhabit quiet, sluggish, well-vegetated streams, oxbows and backwater lakes, Thomas said. The species is struggling because of the deterioration of water quality, reduction of aquatic vegetation, and draining of swamps and bottomlands.

"These threats include levees that isolate backwater habitats from large rivers, the draining of their preferred habitats for development and agriculture, and invasive species that uproot or consume aquatic vegetation," he said.

Redspotted sunfish can be found in the Illinois River Basin, the Mississippi River Valley and the Gulf Coast. The two remaining stable populations in Illinois are found in the lower Sangamon River and the lower Saline River.

It's important to help the redspotted sunfish make a comeback to foster ecosystems with higher biodiversity, Thomas said. Those ecosystems are better able to withstand disturbances from human activity, natural phenomena, climate change and invasive species, he added.

"Every species lost results in higher vulnerability and potential ecosystem collapse," he said.

December 7, 2022

RE: Notice of Semi-Retirement

To my clients and friends:

After 40 years in a rewarding career that allowed me to help and counsel thousands of clients on their legal matters, I am announcing my retirement from the full time practice of law while I am still healthy and able to properly finish business at hand. Starting Jan. 1, 2023, I will be semi-retired, handling limited estate planning and real estate legal matters through Meents Law, P.C. retired, handling limited estate planning and real estate attorneys in the law firm. All my client files coordinated by my partner, Frank Meents and other attorneys in the law firm. All my client files and records will be retained and kept under my supervision through Meents Law, P.C.

Over the past four decades I've had the privilege and honor to represent many entities and individuals during some of the best events in their lives such as buying or selling a home, starting new business or standing before a judge to help a couple adopt a newborn child. Other clients experienced tragic events such as the death of a family member, work accidents or personal injuries arising from a motor vehicle accident. Every day of my law practice was handling different challenges dealing with many personalities and fact situations that kept my career interesting. I appreciate all the business and clients for the support they provided so I could live in Wilmington and raise my family.

It has been my great pleasure and sincere honor to represent you as clients, and many of you are, and have remained, my friends over the years. I tried to provide each client with honest and diligent representation to the best of my ability. I hope your contact and experience with me met your expectations.

My health continues to be good as does that of my wife, Theresa, but we never know for certain how much sand is left in our individual hourglass. I hope to travel and spend more time with my children, grandchildren and friends. I have many activities and hobbies I still want to participate in and accomplish. There are many books to be read, places to see and community events to attend. I also plan on volunteering for charitable causes and to pass on my knowledge and experience to the Associates at Meents Law, P.C. I know I have an excellent partner, Frank Meents, who has the skills, compassion and ethics to uphold the legal standards I followed in building my practice. May you have the same confidence in Meents Law, P.C. as you had with me.

Very truly yours,  
**Jeffrey Fisher**  
Attorney at Law

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My family and I wish to thank everyone who has supported us during our sad loss of Jim Hunt. Your donations in so many ways are greatly appreciated and will never be forgotten.

Mary Hunt & Family,  
 Steve, Russ, Dan & Cyndi

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**CLUES ACROSS**

1. Chop up
5. Ones who utilize
10. Sings with closed lips
14. South American hummingbird
15. Serves as a coxswain
16. Liquor distilled from coconut or rice
17. Spur
18. Senile
19. Tanzanian people
20. Cruel
22. Boxing's "GOAT"
23. Yokels
24. London soccer team
27. Chinese chess piece
30. Supervises flying
31. 007's creator
32. Shaft horsepower (abbr.)
35. A spider makes one
37. Liquefied natural gas
38. Opaque gem
39. Brazilian palm
40. Periodical (slang)
41. You might step on one
42. Marvin and Horsley are two
43. Partner to cheese
44. Unpleasant smell
45. Field force unit (abbr.)
46. Fashion accessory
47. Cool!
48. Time zone
49. Songs to one's lover
52. German river
55. Go bad
56. Sword
60. Very cager
61. Leaf bug
63. Italian seaport
64. Napoleon Dynamite's uncle
65. Member of Jamaican religion
66. Large wading bird
67. Carries out
68. Eternal rest
69. It holds up your headwords

**CLUES DOWN**

1. Not low
2. Small water buffalo
3. A mark left behind
4. Archaic form of have
5. Fiddler crabs
6. Popular Hyundai sedan
7. Deport
8. Making over
9. Midway between south and southeast
10. Arabic masculine name
11. Type of acid
12. Popular 1980s Cher film
13. Outdoor enthusiasts' tools
21. Chinese city
23. "Star Wars" character Solo
25. The bill in a restaurant
26. Old, ugly witch
27. Burn with a hot liquid
28. To claim or demand
29. "A Doll's House" playwright
32. Involuntary muscular contraction
33. Pea stems (British)
34. Double or multiple fold
36. No longer is
37. Lakers' crosstown rivals (abbr.)
38. S. American plant cultivated in Peru
40. Cloth or fabric
41. Flanks
43. Disfigure
44. Angry
46. Baltic coast peninsula
47. Large, flightless birds
49. Plants of the lily family
50. Medieval Norwegian language
51. Polio vaccine developer
52. Not soft
53. Exchange rate
54. Voice (Italian)
57. Baseball's Ruth
58. Famed guitarist Clapton
59. Take a chance
61. Wife
62. Elaborate handshake

# More money to be pushed to help the climate crisis

Dear EarthTalk: What is the EPA's new Green Bank all about?  
 -- Rick D., Asheville, NC

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently proposed the creation of a so-called green bank, known as the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) to help leverage the power of traditional financial markets in solving the climate crisis.

Investing in carbon offset projects from lower income communities across the United States, the GGRF, at face value, has a social-ecological conscience. However, beneath the guise of green goodwill, darker forces are at play.

As a by-product of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), there are fears that the GGRF is a 'green trojan horse' created to give fossil fuels another chance and push out foreign business.

"The IRA is rife with corporate giveaways and handouts aimed at allowing the fossil fuel industry to continue business as usual," says Ebony Twilly Martin, the Executive Co-Director of Greenpeace USA.

Meanwhile, Frederick Erixon, the Director of the European Centre for International Political Economy adds that the European Union (EU) has concerns about the discrimination inherent in the IRA: "Many of the IRA policies take an 'America first' attitude that will

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Questions & Answers About Our Environment

hurt European green industries and cleantech."

Furthermore, the new independent national green bank, by virtue of its association with the IRA, may struggle to convince a crucial player in the climate war, the risk-averse private sector, to invest in the development of low emissions services and products from disadvantaged communities.

Delegates to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27) stressed that not enough finance is supplementing the right sectors of the economy to create green technologies and infrastructure.

In theory, championing green banks as an effective means of financing climate action and optimizing social-ecological system resilience is a good idea — especially for communities that have been left behind in the transition to cleaner energy, transport and living.

However, green bank models like the GGRF can only succeed when detached from the design of coal barons, protectionist policies and political



RESEARCHERS HAVE found that the more people are exposed to air quality monitoring data, the more they will do to reduce air pollution.

scabbling.

Global biodiversity is in the headlights of the climate crisis. With a burgeoning population of 8 billion, humans must take account of our carbon footprint and develop innovative strategies that lift nature and all walks of society to reduce our impact.

Green banks can be part of 'the solution' but must first escape fossil fuel interests and discriminatory bills to coax the private sector to follow them into a brave new world of green financing.

"The climate test is simple. It requires jobs, justice and restoration of the environment," says Edward Markey, U.S. Senator from Massachusetts. An independent national green bank could be the answer.

"Through the GGRF, fund-

ing can be leveraged to advance green initiatives and infrastructure in disadvantaged communities while creating good, local jobs."

With less than six months for EPA to distribute funds to eligible projects across the U.S., stakeholder input on the implementation, design and structure of the GGRF is currently being sought.

Now is the time for the public to question the evolution and motives of the scheme, so that when a national green bank does arrive, it is truly transformational to the global economy, ecology and climate.

EarthTalk® is a 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. See more at <https://emagazine.com>. To donate, visit [earthtalk.org](http://earthtalk.org). Send questions to: [question@earthtalk.org](mailto:question@earthtalk.org).

# Food prices remain high, but supplies strong

BY RICHARD GUEBERT JR.  
 ILLINOIS FARM BUREAU PRESIDENT

Americans look forward to celebrating the simplest of gifts and gathering with family and friends around the table during the holiday season. It is also often a time of giving thanks as Illinois farmers mark the end of another growing season.

The past few years have confronted all Americans to pivot, adapt, and learn as we navigate uncharted waters. In March 2018, American farmers were dealing with market destruction because of China's trade wars. The May 2019 spring planting season reminded Midwest farmers that Mother Nature was in charge when many acres went unplanted.

The pandemic that began in March 2020 forced all of us to pivot. Farmers continued to grow food to feed our neighbors in rural, urban, and global communities.

The curveballs continued in 2022 with high inflation, the Russian invasion of Ukraine,

and uncertainty for an already fragile economy. Farmers vividly remember the role inflation played in the '80s farm crisis. That crisis is forever etched in farmers' memories as historically high-interest rates reached 19%. Many farmers didn't survive the crisis. Those who did spent many years paying off the debt created by the high-interest rates.

Despite the adversity many family farms have faced over the years, 96% of Illinois farms are still family-owned.

I understand firsthand the role inflation has had inside our home and farming operation. Inflation running at 7% to 9% in recent months is robbing consumers (and farmers) of their buying power. Food price inflation is even higher. Other factors include supply

chain disruptions and the war in Ukraine, with other countries pulling back on exports to protect domestic food supplies.

When I've been interviewed by news media over the past four years, the standard question is, "How will this impact consumers?" The truth is a farmer's share of the food dollar is only 7.4 cents.

Illinois shoppers participating in the 37th annual American Farm Bureau Federation's Cost survey captured a statewide average price of \$65.53 for a classic holiday meal for 10 people, a 13% increase over the previous year's state average of \$58.15. General price inflation is a big part of the increase in cost for the meal.

It is likely those high

prices will continue through the new year.

Food prices reflect many factors including transportation, distribution, and food company marketing costs. Rising costs for fuel, which have more than doubled, and fertilizer, which have tripled, are driving food prices up. As President Kennedy said many years ago, "Farmers are price takers and not price makers."

The food we grow is shared with our family, friends and neighbors. Farmers understand the pain consumers are feeling at the checkout counter this holiday season. As we give thanks again this year for our many blessings, please know farmers will strive to provide affordable food sustainably to make sure our traditions continue.

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# WILDCAT SPORTS

## Dooley sets the standard for Wildcat matmen

The Wildcat wrestlers hit the mat Saturday in the Prairie Multi Duals tournament, suffering five losses on the day while getting a good gauge which Wildcats will wrestle at what weight divisions.

Wildcat junior Ladon Dooley (113/120) had an impressive day, winning all five of his matches by pin. Junior Matt Swisher also wrestled well, winning three of five matches with 5-2 and 8-5 decisions before getting a pin. Freshman Logan Van Duynne set the tone, winning by forfeit before recording a pair of pins. Senior Joel Greenidge pinned two opponents while getting pinned three times.

The Wildcats, which include 13 boys and six girls, will compete in a ICE quad at Lisle Thursday against Reed-Custer, Herscher and the hosts. Their next home match will be Dec. 16 against Sandwich and Bishop McNamara.

### Hoopston Area 66, Wilmington 18

- 145—Ceasar Espinoza (Hoop) by forfeit
- 152—Ayden Larkin (Hoop) by forfeit
- 160—Cohen Brown (Hoop) over Matt Swisher by fall 2:00
- 170—Angel Zamora (Hoop) over Parker Adams by fall 3:41
- 182—Joel Greenidge (Wilm.) over Jason Moore by fall 0:11
- 195—Logan VanDuynne (Wilm.) by forfeit
- 220—Landon Mills (Hoop) over Memphis Iwen, by fall 0:47

- 285—Brady Brefeld (Hoop) over Sam Payne, by fall 0:24
- 106—Owen Garrett (Hoop) by forfeit
- 113—Landon Dooley (Wilm.) over Charlie Flores by fall 4:22
- 120—Talon Nelson (Hoop) by forfeit
- 126—Aiden Bell (Hoop) by forfeit
- 132—Brian Armstrong (Hoop) by forfeit
- 138—Rasiah Jones (Hoop) over Nate Romano by fall 1:16

- El Paso-Gridley 66, Wilmington 12**
- 152—Waylon Melick (EPG) by forfeit
- 160—Dax Gentes (EPG) over Matt Swisher by fall 1:45
- 170—Ethan Whitman (EPG) over Parker Adams by fall 2:26
- 182—Logan VanDuynne (W) over Dominic Ricconi by fall 1:16
- 195—Parker Duffy (EPG) over Joel Greenidge by fall 1:49
- 220—Chris Blackmore (EPG) over Memphis Iwen by fall 2:23
- 285—Jesse Gerber (EPG) over Sam Payne by fall 0:25
- 106—Nolan Whitman (EPG) by forfeit
- 113—Landon Dooley (W) over Caleb Graham by fall 1:34
- 120—Double Forfeit
- 126—Tyler Beck (EPG) by forfeit
- 132—Jack Erwin (EPG) by forfeit
- 138—Parker Key (EPG) over Nate Romano by fall 1:37
- 145—Haze Welsch (EPG) over Forfeit

- Gibson City 60, Wilmington 24**
- 106—Justice Mulligan (GC) by forfeit
- 113—Landon Dooley (W) over Gage Martin by fall 4:33
- 120—Gabe Ward (GC) by forfeit
- 126—Shawn Schlickman (GC) by forfeit
- 132—Jakob Howell (GC) by forfeit
- 138—Corbin Ragle (GC) over Nate Romano by fall 1:48
- 145—Carson Maxey (GC) by forfeit
- 152—Carter Kallal (GC) by forfeit
- 160—Matt Swisher (W) over Carter Kallal by fall 2:13
- 170—Parker Adams (W) over Jaxon Wright by fall 1:56
- 182—Logan VanDuynne (W) over Sam Manson by fall 0:28

- 195—Lincoln Eastin (GC) over Joel Greenidge by fall 4:49
- 220—Aiden Sancken (GC) over Memphis Iwen by fall 2:25
- 285—Cohen Kan (GC) over Sam Payne by fall 0:38

- Prairie Central 39, Wilmington 24**
- 170—Caden Travis (PC) over Parker Adams by fall 1:15
- 182—Jack Rathbun (PC) over Joel Greenidge by fall 2:28
- 195—Connor Steidinger (PC) over Logan VanDuynne by fall 0:31
- 220—Memphis Iwen (Wilmington) by forfeit
- 285—Sam Payne (Wilmington) by forfeit
- 106—Double forfeit
- 113—Landon Dooley (Wilmington) over Wyatt Strait by fall 1:27
- 120—Casey VanDuynne (Wilmington) by forfeit
- 126—John Traub (PC) by forfeit
- 132—Double forfeit
- 138—Nate Romano (Wilmington) by forfeit
- 145—Priscilla Prescott (Wilmington) by forfeit
- 152—Double forfeit
- 160—Matt Swisher (W) over Ethan Ziller, dec 8-5

- Monticello 57, Wilmington 15**
- 182—Joel Greenidge (W) over Christian Mikulich by fall 0:24
- 195—Caleb O'Linc (M) over Logan VanDuynne by fall 2:27
- 220—Riley Jones (M) over Memphis Iwen by fall 0:35
- 285—TJ Nickerson (M) over Sam Payne by fall 1:05
- 106—Marrissa Miller (M) by forfeit
- 113—Double Forfeit
- 120—Landon Dooley (W) over Westin O'Linc by fall 0:28
- 126—Preston Bettinger (M) by forfeit
- 132—Isaiah Ducker (M) by forfeit
- 138—Tristan Slade (M) over Nate Romano by fall 0:58
- 145—Gavin Ridings (M) by forfeit
- 152—Dawson Sheets (M) by forfeit
- 160—Matt Swisher (W) over Russ Brown dec 5-2
- 170—Hunter Romano (M) over Parker Adams dec 11-4

## Wildcats open season with loss

The varsity Wildcats opened their season Friday at home, losing to Manteno, 48-36.

For Wilmington coach Doug Krop it was his first game at the helm and a good way to get assess his nine-man roster.

Ryder Meents, the only senior on the roster, paced Wilmington with 11 points. Sophomore Kyle Farrell chipped in with 9 points and 6 rebounds.

Another sophomore, Ryan Nelson, hustled for 8 points and 3 rebounds while Reid Juster, a junior, finished with 4

points, 4 rebounds and 2 assists. Wilmington travels to Streator on Friday.

### Attorney Meents files Whalen estate claim

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
STATE OF ILLINOIS  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF MARY CATHERINE WHALEN, Deceased; No. 2022 PR 628

**CLAIM NOTICE**  
Notice is given of the death of MARY CATHERINE WHALEN, Letters of Office as Independent Executor were issued on November 28, 2022, to BARBARA WIEBE, whose address is 387 Gwen Avenue, Willow River, BC VOJ3C0, Canada; whose attorney is Meents Law, P.C., 25158 West Eames Street, Unit A, Channahon, Illinois 60410.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois, or with the representative, or both, on or before June 15, 2023, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a Claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

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

BARBARA WIEBE Executor of the Estate of Mary Catherine Whalen, Deceased  
Frank J. Meents  
25158 West Eames Street, Unit A  
Channahon, Illinois 60410  
Telephone: (815)534-9515  
Facsimile: (815)534-9516  
Attorney Code: 06298859  
E-mail: frank@meentslaw.com  
Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, Dec. 7, 14 and 21, 2022.

### Attorney Meents files Maticic estate claim

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
STATE OF ILLINOIS  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF MARY MATICIC, Deceased; No. 2022PR657

**CLAIM NOTICE**  
Notice is given of the death of MARY MATICIC, Letters of Office as Independent Executor were issued on November 3, 2022, to MARY DUBROVICH, whose address is 196 Sunfish Circle, Wilmington, Illinois 60481; whose attorney is Fisher Meents LLC, 25158 West Eames Street, Unit A, Channahon, Illinois 60410. Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois, or with the representative, or both, on or before May 28, 2023, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a Claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

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

MARY DUBROVICH Executor of the Estate of Mary Maticic, Deceased  
Frank J. Meents  
Fisher Meents LLC  
25158 West Eames Street, Unit A  
Channahon, Illinois 60410  
Telephone: (815)534-9515  
Facsimile: (815)534-9516  
Attorney Code: 06298859  
E-mail: frank@fishermeents.com  
Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, Nov. 23, 30 and Dec. 7, 2022.

## PUBLIC NOTICES

Because it's your right to know

### Attorney Meents files Shoemaker estate claim

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
STATE OF ILLINOIS  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF LARRY JOSEPH SHOEMAKER, Deceased; No. 2022PR659

**CLAIM NOTICE**  
Notice is given of the death of LARRY JOSEPH SHOEMAKER, Letters of Office as Independent Executor were issued on November 3, 2022, to Christen Jane Longfellow, whose address is 2675 Hamstrom Road, Portage, Indiana 46368; whose attorney is Meents Law P.C. 25158 West Eames Street, Unit A, Channahon, Illinois 60410. Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at the Will County Courthouse, 100 West Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois, or with the representative, or both, on or before May 28, 2023, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a Claim filed with the Clerk must be mailed or delivered by the claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

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

CHRISTEN JANE LONGFELLOW Independent Executor of the Estate of LARRY JOSEPH SHOEMAKER, Deceased  
Frank J. Meents  
25158 West Eames Street, Unit A  
Channahon, Illinois 60410  
Telephone: (815)534-9515  
Facsimile: (815)534-9516  
Attorney Code: 06298859  
E-mail: frank@meentslaw.com  
Published in the Free Press Advocate on Wednesday, Nov. 23, 30 and Dec. 7, 2022.

### Attorney Black files Kelly estate claim notice

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
WILL COUNTY, IL - IN PROBATE  
No. 2022 PR 619

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF DOROTHY V. KELLY, DECEASED

**CLAIM NOTICE**  
NOTICE is given to creditors of the death of Dorothy V. Kelly. Letters of office as Independent Executor were issued to Thomas Kelly, 3243 Cathy Dr., Joliet, Illinois 60431, whose attorney is Timothy J. BLACK, BLACK & BLACK LAWYERS, 201 Liberty Street, 201 Liberty St., Suite 211, Morris, Illinois 60450.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Court at Grundy County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson St., Joliet, IL 60432, with the representative, or both, within six months from the date of the first publication of this notice or, if mailing or delivery of a notice is required by Section 5/18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the clerk must be mailed or delivered to the representative and to the attorney within 10 days after it has been filed.

THOMAS KELLY  
INDEPENDENT EXECUTOR  
Timothy J. Black  
ARDC #06281037  
Black & Black Lawyers  
201 Liberty Street, Suite 211  
Morris, IL 60450  
PH: 815-942-0594 Fax: 815-942-0849  
Email: tblack03@yahoo.com  
Published in the Free Press Advocate on Dec. 7, 14 and 21, 2022.

### Attorney Lynch files Thompson estate claim

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
STATE OF ILLINOIS  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF TERENCE A. THOMPSON, Deceased; No. 22PR577

**CLAIM NOTICE**  
Notice is given to creditors of the death of Terrence A. Thompson. Letters of Office were issued to Patricia A. Wilkinson whose address is 926 Meadow Avenue, Rockdale, IL 60436 as Independent Administrator, whose attorney of record is Jennifer M. Lynch of June, Prodehl, Renzi & Lynch, L.L.C., 1861 Black Road, Joliet, Illinois 60435.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Circuit Clerk's Office, Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before the 7th day of June, 2023, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the clerk must be mailed or delivered by claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

Jennifer M. Lynch  
For the Estate of Terrence A. Thompson, Deceased  
BY: Jennifer M. Lynch  
1861 Black Road  
Joliet, IL 60435  
815-725-8000  
Atty No.: 06275404  
Published in the Free Press Advocate, Wednesday, Dec. 7, 14 and 21, 2022.

### Attorney Lynch files Ely estate claim

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
STATE OF ILLINOIS  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF JOSHUA D. ELY, Deceased; No. 22PR696

**CLAIM NOTICE**  
Notice is given to creditors of the death of Joshua D. Ely. Letters of Office were issued to Linda M. Ely whose address is 1339 Saxon Lane, Naperville, IL 60564 as Independent Administrator, whose attorney of record is Jennifer M. Lynch of June, Prodehl, Renzi & Lynch, L.L.C., 1861 Black Road, Joliet, Illinois 60435.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Circuit Clerk's Office, Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before the 23rd day of May, 2023, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the clerk must be mailed or delivered by claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

Jennifer M. Lynch  
For the Estate of Joshua D. Ely, Deceased  
BY: Jennifer M. Lynch  
1861 Black Road  
Joliet, IL 60435  
815-725-8000  
Atty No.: 06275404  
Published in the Free Press Advocate, Wednesday, Nov. 23, 30 and Dec. 7, 2022.

### Attorney Lynch files Parrish estate claim

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
STATE OF ILLINOIS  
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF DARRELL D. PARRISH, Deceased; No. 22PR683

**CLAIM NOTICE**  
Notice is given to creditors of the death of Darrell D. Parrish. Letters of Office were issued to Virginia A. Wisniewski whose address is 25237 South Tyron Street, Channahon, IL 60410 as Independent Executor, whose attorney of record is Jennifer M. Lynch of June, Prodehl, Renzi & Lynch, L.L.C., 1861 Black Road, Joliet, Illinois 60435.

Claims against the estate may be filed in the Circuit Clerk's Office, Will County Courthouse, 100 W. Jefferson Street, Joliet, Illinois 60432, or with the representative, or both, on or before the 23rd day of May, 2023, or if mailing or delivery of a notice from the representative is required by Section 18-3 of the Probate Act of 1975, the date stated in that notice. Any claim not filed on or before that date is barred. Copies of a claim filed with the clerk must be mailed or delivered by claimant to the representative and to the attorney within ten (10) days after it has been filed.

Jennifer M. Lynch  
For the Estate of Darrell D. Parrish, Deceased  
BY: Jennifer M. Lynch  
1861 Black Road  
Joliet, IL 60435  
815-725-8000  
Atty No.: 06275404  
Published in the Free Press Advocate, Wednesday, Nov. 23, 30 and Dec. 7, 2022.

## Elwood Community Unit School District No. 203 files annual financial report

### PUBLIC NOTICE

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF AFFAIRS SUMMARY FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2022

The summary must be published in the local newspaper.

Copies of the detailed Annual Statement of Affairs for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2022  
Individuals wanting to review this form should contact:

will be available for public inspection in the school district/joint agreement administrative office by November 30 annually.

<b>Elwood CCSD 203</b>	<b>409 N Chicago St Elwood, IL 60421 9367</b>	<b>815-423-5588</b>	<b>7:30am - 4pm</b>
<i>School District/Joint Agreement Name</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Telephone</i>	<i>Office Hours</i>

Also by January 15 annually the detailed Annual Statement of Affairs for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2022 will be posted on the Illinois State Board of Education's website at [www.isbe.net](http://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, 2022

	Educational	Operations & Maintenance	Debt Services	Transportation	Municipal Retirement/Social Security	Capital Projects	Working Cash	Tort	Fire Prevention & Safety
Local Sources	1000	1,418,867	459,857	0	260,798	71,949	17,450	197,318	0
Flow-Through Receipts/Revenues from One District to Another District	2000	295,862	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
State Sources	3000	29,076	0	0	(11,709)	0	0	0	0
Federal Sources	4000	42,151	50,443	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Direct Receipts/Revenues</b>		<b>1,785,956</b>	<b>510,300</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>249,089</b>	<b>71,949</b>	<b>17,450</b>	<b>197,318</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Direct Disbursements/Expenditures</b>		<b>927,081</b>	<b>47,953</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>41,403</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7,458</b>	<b>0</b>
Other Sources/Uses of Funds	0	0	0	0	(8,131)	0	0	0	0
<b>Beginning Fund Balances without Student Activity Funds - July 1, 2021</b>		<b>1,346,244</b>	<b>800,834</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>597,564</b>	<b>138,334</b>	<b>86,548</b>	<b>153,453</b>	<b>0</b>
Other Changes in Fund Balances	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Ending Fund Balances without Student Activity Funds - June 30, 2022</b>		<b>2,205,119</b>	<b>1,263,180</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>838,522</b>	<b>168,880</b>	<b>103,998</b>	<b>343,313</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Ending Fund Balances (all sources) with Student Activity Funds - June 30, 2022</b>		<b>2,236,255</b>	<b>1,263,180</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>838,522</b>	<b>168,880</b>	<b>103,998</b>	<b>343,313</b>	<b>0</b>

#### GROSS PAYMENT FOR CERTIFIED PERSONNEL

Salary Range: Less than \$25,000

K. Achter, D. Anderson, G. Carboni, K. Cope, B. Davis, R. Demecio, K. Dunne, L. Gilberg, J. Hansen, S. Hohenwater, T. Hugunin, R. Hunter, K. Kalisik, D. Krop, W. LeBeau, H. Mattson, A. Offerman, D. Pich, J. Smith, M. Telfer

Salary Range: \$25,000 - \$39,999

C. Lynch, T. Maas, L. Mavor  
Salary Range: \$40,000 - \$59,999

E. Kuypers, T. Walsh, M. Mangun, C. Majack, E. Koenig, S. Ruzich

Salary Range: 60,000 - \$89,999

M. Kraus, J. Dooley, A. Flaws, B. Perry, K. Corcoran, L. Bodem, K. Rea, C. Dooley, C. Forsythe, S. Francimore, J. Bauer, T. Rompala, K. Ditzler

Salary Range: \$90,000 and over

S. DeMaso, K. Fields, T. Page, R. Rekruciak

#### GROSS PAYMENT FOR NON-CERTIFIED PERSONNEL

Salary Range: Less Than \$25,000

K. Busby, K. Noel, J. Olsen, D. Zumpf, C. Bosonetta, B. Stilp, A. Viol, S. Mader, N. Walsh, D. Bosonetta, U. Carreno, C. Elens, S. Weisfus, R. Roche, J. Duda, R. Silverman, M. Walsh, D. Butt, T. Fanning, K. Conroy, R. Braley, J. McNeely, S. Thorpe, L. Kavanaugh

Salary Range: \$25,000 - \$39,999

N. Simmons, J. Viol, K. Carreno, V. Hall, J. Viol, P. Boersma

Salary Range: \$40,000 - \$59,999

K. Sitar-Nawa  
Salary Range: \$60,000 and over  
N. Wlodarczyk

#### PAYMENTS TO PERSON, FIRM, OR CORPORATION OVER \$2,500 EXCLUDING WAGES AND SALARIES

Person, Firm, or Corporation	Aggregate Amount	Person, Firm, or Corporation	Aggregate Amount	Person, Firm, or Corporation	Aggregate Amount
Brown's Carpet Care, Inc	\$2,656	Mechanical Plumbing	\$3,588	Laraway CCSD #70C	\$4,910
Verizon Wireless	\$5,654	NuWay Disposal Service In	\$7,685	Midwest Mechanical	\$9,057
NWEA	\$2,688	Follett School Solutions	\$9,687	SHI International Corp.	\$5,320
Illinois Assoc. of School Boards (IASB)	\$5,849	CDW Government	\$7,875	GFC Leasing - WI	\$9,238
Veterans Floors, Inc.	\$2,725	Coit Drapery Cleaners, Inc	\$3,785	Johnson Controls	\$5,428
Aramark Uniform Services	\$6,092	E.T. Paddock	\$7,881	KS Statebank	\$10,161
Haddock Corporation Technologies	\$2,870	K-Log, Inc.	\$3,822	Wolf's Sealcoating, Inc.	\$5,600
Gordon Flesh Company, Inc. (Usage)	\$6,250	Elliott Electric Inc.	\$7,894	Amazon Capital Services	\$11,047
Palos Sports - School Health Corp	\$2,894	Hinckley			

## Seniors in band, Showcats recognized



**WHS SENIOR SHOWCAT** Veronica Weck is escorted by her parents, Norman and Gloria Weck. Veronica has been involved in Soccer, ShowCats, Student Council and Tri -M. After graduation Veronica plans to attend a 4 year university to study pathology.



**WHS SENIOR SHOWCAT** and band member Tyler Sivertson was escorted by parents, Sean and Andee Sivertson during Senior Night. Tyler has been involved in Band, ShowCats, the musical, the play, Speech team, Tri -M and the Gaming Club. After graduation Tyler plans to get involved with cyber security.



**WHS SENIOR SHOW CAT** Abbigail Friddle is escorted by her parents, John and Amy Friddle. Abbigail has been involved in Student Council and the Spring Musical. After graduation Abbigail plans to join the Local 150 Operators Hall.

Photos by Eric Fisher



**WHS SENIOR SHOWCAT** member Ella Cooper is escorted by her parents, Bill and Sheila Cooper. Ella has been involved in ShowCats, Scholastic Bowl, the Fall Play, the Musical and Speech. After graduation Ella plans to earn a degree in psychology.



**WHS SENIOR SHOWCAT** Max Higgins is escorted by his parents, Robert and Jeanette Higgins. Max has been involved in ShowCats, Gaming Club, Robotics, the Play, the Musical and the Math Team. After graduation Max plans to go to college to study game design and software engineering.



**WHS SENIOR BAND** member and cheerleader Savannah Gorski was escorted by her parents Carey and Jessica Gorski. Savannah has been involved in Band, Cheer, NHS, FCA, Interact Club, Basketball and the National Guard. After graduation Savannah will be in the National Guard and earn a degree in business management.



**WHS SENIOR BAND** member James Quigley was escorted by his parents, Patrick and Tracy Quigley and siblings. James has been involved in band. After graduation James is considering a life in comedy, but will probably continue his life on the family farm and be a heavy machine operator.



**WHS SENIOR BAND** member Bryce Jewell is escorted by his mother, Melissa Jewell during Senior Night. Bryce has been involved in Band, the Play, Speech Team and Scholastic Bowl. After graduation Bryce plans to attend ISU to study game design.



**WHS SENIOR BAND** member Tristen Doyle is escorted by Jeff and Cathi Sexton. Tristen has been involved in Band for 3 years, Football for 2 years, Scholastic Bowl, AV Club, Math Team and the School Play. After graduation Tristen plans to attend college and medical school to become an orthopedic surgeon.



**WHS SENIOR SHOWCAT** and band member Ren Jewell was escorted by her father, Daniel Jewell. Ren has been involved in ShowCats, Band, AV Club, Interact Club, Scholastic Bowl and NHS. After graduation Ren plans to go to college to study engineering.

## Lady 'Cats fall to Coal City



**FIGHTING FOR THE BALL** against Coal City's Tanna Curry is Lady Wildcat Breanna Horton (3) on Thursday. The Coalers came to Wilmington ready to play, jumping to an early lead to win 41-27. The next home game for Wilmington will be Thursday against Herscher.

Photo by Alyssa Ohlund



**EYE ON THE BASKET** and determined to score during last week's home game is Skylar Rossow.

Photo by Alyssa Ohlund



**DISHING A PASS** to a teammate on Thursday is Wilmington junior Lexi Liaromatis.

Photo by Alyssa Ohlund



**UP AND OVER** - Wilmington junior Gracie Sanders takes a shot over a Coal City defender on Thursday during a home loss.

Photo by Alyssa Ohlund

## Wildcat trio aids JV victory

The Wilmington junior varsity squad opened the season with a 44-35 win over Manteno Friday night. The hosting Wildcats had three players score double figures, led by freshman Ryan Kettman with 15 points, three assists and three rebounds. Sophomore guard Joey Van Duyne chipped in with 11 points and two rebounds. Hunter Osipavicius provided the muscle inside the paint with 10 points and six rebounds.



**PULLING UP** for a one-handed shot over Coal City's Carter Gill is Wilmington freshman Zach Ohlund. The young Wildcats beat the hosting Coalers 38-31.

Photo by Eric Fisher



**STEAL AND A BASKET** - Wilmington freshman Ryan Kettman frustrated Coal City several times on Thursday by slapping away the ball and turning it into a quick layup. Kettman led all scorers during the 38-31 victory.

Photo by Eric Fisher



**DOUBLE DEFENSE** - Wilmington freshmen Dierks Geiss (31) and Ryker Feil (15) get a hand on the ball being shot by Coal City's Carter Gill during Thursday's 38-31 victory.

Photo by Eric Fisher